



# THE RHODENIZER REPORT

OCTOBER 2009

www.rhodenizer.com

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>FIGHTING BACK AGAINST HACKERS</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>NEW WIN7 FEATURE RECORDS PROBLEMS</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>BUSINESS SPENDING ON I.T. PLUMMETS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>QUESTIONS FROM THE INBOX</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE SECRET TO DISCOUNT PRICING ON WINDOWS 7</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ABOUT RHODENIZER IT</b>	<b>4</b>

## FIGHTING BACK AGAINST HACKERS

Since the early days of computer security, our strategy has largely been to create thick walls to keep bad people out. Over time, as attacks have become more sophisticated, some companies are beginning to pull their collective heads out of the sand and go on the offensive.

Symantec, for example, is one of the companies trying to turn the tables. Realizing that we are losing this battle, they are taking a new approach. They plan to enlist the aid of customers who have fallen victim to attacks, or attempted attacks, and have them provide forensic data that can be used by law enforcement to go after the

original culprits. Symantec is also posting the FBI's most wanted hackers and their various schemes on the website where Symantec users go for updates. Next year, the company plans to begin offering cash rewards for information leading to arrest and conviction. Rowan Trollope, Senior VP for consumer products, says "It's time to stop building burglar alarms to keep people out and go after the bad guys. I'm convinced we can clean up the Internet in ten years if we can peel away the dirt and show people the threats they're facing."

Microsoft is also joining the



ranks of AVG, Avast, and Avira security software companies by providing a free version of their own antivirus software for public download. "Security Essentials" is now available as a free download from the Microsoft website (actually, it used to be called OneCare but when Microsoft couldn't sell it they decided to give it away under another name). *(cont. P.2)*

## THE TAKE-AWAY POINTS:

- **Free security solutions are available, but it's up to you to use them.**
- **Record your problem and e-mail it to a Tech.**
- **Peak efficiency is top priority for businesses.**
- **Get deep discounts on pricing for Windows 7.**

## NEW WIN7 FEATURE RECORDS PROBLEMS

By now, you've probably heard that Microsoft launches the new release of Windows on October 22nd. What you may not know is why this is such a big deal to some businesses.

Windows 7 is a much improved version of Vista. Same basic foundation, but more refined. It has fewer problems, better performance, and some new features that may make it worth upgrading to.

One of my favorite features in Windows 7 is the Problem Steps Recorder. This handy tool is a great time saver when trying to help someone over the phone who is having a problem they can't explain very well.

All the user has to do is bring up the program and click the "Start Record" button. Then, they go about whatever they were trying to do and replicate the error message or problem.

Afterwards, they click the "Stop Record" button and send the zipped file generated by the program to the person helping them. The recipient can then open the file and view the recorded steps as a slideshow to see exactly what happened.

I'm sure this feature is going to be used by everyone from tech support professionals to savvy users helping Mom and Dad with their computer at home.

## BUSINESS SPENDING ON I. T. PLUMMETS

A recent survey by Information Week magazine reveals some interesting statistics on how American businesses are reacting to changes in the current U. S. economy.

Last year, 62% expected their IT spending to increase in the coming year. This year, only 37% do. Those expecting to cut their IT budgets rose from 20% last year, to 42% this year.

The majority of businesses surveyed also expressed a clear shift in priorities when it comes to IT spending. Projects to improve customer

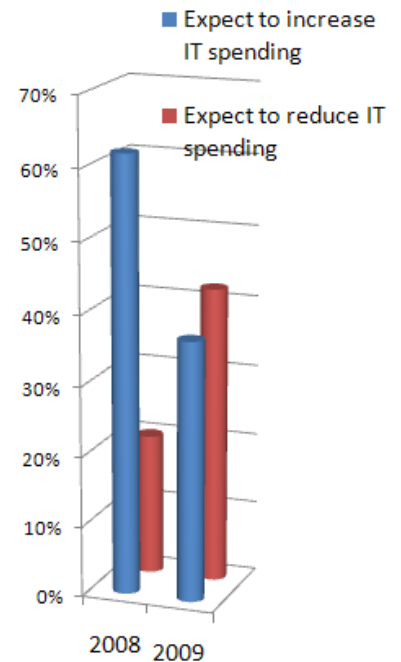
experience or to improve interaction with suppliers have dropped in importance while two priorities have risen to the top of the list. The top two priorities for this year among those businesses surveyed were:

- #1). Improve efficiency.
- #2). Lower IT or business costs.

So, what specific technologies were seen to yield the best productivity gains? Collaboration and analytics software are most often cited. 60% picked collaboration

software as a top productivity tool. 25% chose remote computer access for telecommuting employees and contractors.

Almost as interesting is what did NOT make it to the top of the list. The use of smart-phones (BlackBerry, Palm, iPhone, Zune, etc.) is cited by only 12%. This finding suggests that while PDA's are a personal convenience to many, their "cost vs. benefit" is not impressive enough for the majority of businesses to consider them a top productivity tool.



## FIGHTING BACK AGAINST HACKERS (CONT.)

(cont. from P.1) Netcraft, a British network security company, provides a free web browser plug-in toolbar that alerts users if the website they are landing on has been used by criminals in phishing attacks. As soon as a phishing site has been reported and identified, access to the site is blocked for all Netcraft toolbar users. Netcraft receives notification of some attacks through its Netcraft Toolbar Community (which I am a member of) in advance of reports from the banks being impersonated.

Netcraft provides information to the banks to identify compromised accounts, works with Internet Service provid-

ers to shut down websites that have been identified as illegitimate, and provides the IP addresses and other specifics needed for law enforcement to investigate.

Because most hackers operate across multiple state and national borders, it's often very difficult to get law enforcement agencies to pursue them. It's up to us, the victims, to collect as much information as possible to aid in the investigation and give them more to go on.

You can also fight back by:

- #1). Don't forward "chain e-mails" along to your friends when you don't know where they originally came from.

- #2). Keep your PC's operating system current with all the latest service packs and updates.

- #3). Regularly check to ensure that your antivirus program is updating itself and that your subscription has not expired.

- #4). Use Firefox as your web browser instead of Internet Explorer whenever possible.

- #5). Use passwords that cannot be guessed, or found in any dictionary. Like "4ndruz" instead of "Andrews". Mix it up with numbers.

Above all, take seriously your responsibility to keep your PC from being used as a weapon by those who know how.—CR

**"... Take seriously your responsibility to keep your PC from being used as a weapon..."**

## QUESTIONS FROM THE INBOX

**Q- “I have an employee that knows very little about computers and she requires constant help with her PC. Covering her IT support costs is becoming a real problem. Is there anything you can suggest to help us?”**

A- “I don’t mean to sound cold, but the days of typewriters and Rolodex are over. Modern computer skills are now a basic necessity for anyone who wants to compete for a job in the workplace of the 21st century. Strictly from a business perspective, I would view office workers without computer skills the same as a lifeguard that can’t swim, or a teacher that can’t spell.

There are numerous training classes available online as well as local training centers. My only suggestion would be to invest in those if you think the value she brings to your company is worth the cost of bringing her PC skills up to par with the rest.

**Q- “How do I use “Remote Desktop” to access my home computer from my laptop while I’m on the road?”**

A- It’s very easy once it has been configured for you, but it doesn’t work that way out-of-the-box. If your home PC is behind a router or firewall, those devices have to be configured as well. It’s a process that usually takes

me about an hour or so to setup and test, but well worth it for those who need it done correctly and securely.

**Q- “My PC is running out of space. I’ve deleted everything that I don’t need and emptied the “Recycle Bin”. Is there any way to add more space?”**

A- Yes, if you have the space. Not trying to be funny, I just mean physical space in your PC. It’s easy to open the cover and install an additional hard drive as long as there is room for it. Some of the micro PC’s and laptops have no place for an additional hard drive to go. But most standard desktop PC’s have plenty of room inside.

Current prices on a 640 GB drive are around \$69.00, so now is a great time to buy.

**Q- “I have been getting messages on my screen asking me if I want to upgrade to the latest version of Adobe Flash. Should I? And, does it cost anything?”**

A- This is a normal update and I would recommend you do it. It doesn’t cost anything and it may save you some headaches in the future. These “updates” from Adobe, Microsoft, Apple, Java, etc., are usually to fix a problem or potential problem that has been reported. They wouldn’t

bother unless there was a reason for it. On the other hand, an “upgrade” is usually not free because it has new features, enhancements, and significant changes to the original product. You may or may not want these.

**Q- “Do you create all these newsletters yourself?”**

A- I gather information and write the content. My lovely wife proof reads and corrects my mistakes for me.

**Q- “When you say that your first consultation is free, what exactly is included in that?”**

A- The consultation involves many things. You’ll likely want to know more about my experience and qualifications. I’ll want to know more about your business and the IT issues you’re facing. We’ll discuss ideas for cutting your costs, solving problems, or any other IT needs you have. Then, we can either come up with a plan for moving forward, or you can call me later if you like. There’s no pressure, no obligation, and no commitment necessary.

I’m more interested in building long-term relationships with clients than trying to make a quick buck.

**E-mail your questions to:**  
[questions@rhodenizer.com](mailto:questions@rhodenizer.com)



*Cathy & Cliff Rhodenizer*

**“I’m more interested in building long-term relationships with clients than trying to make a quick buck.”**



## THE SECRET TO DISCOUNT PRICING ON WINDOW 7

Did you know you can buy OEM editions of Windows 7 at discounts of 45% to 55% off Microsoft's retail editions?

Even cheaper than upgrades, OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) editions are the same as retail versions except that:

- A). No software support services are included.
  - B). It can only be used for a "clean" install, not upgrade.
  - C). It cannot be transferred to another PC.
- OEM copies of Windows are

traditionally cheaper than full or upgrade editions because they're intended for system builders who install them on custom-built PCs. However, there's nothing to prevent an individual from buying and installing an OEM version on their PC.

Where can you buy these? Just go to the "Cliff's Pick's" page of my website and click on the icon for "Best prices on PC parts". That will take you to the website for my online supplier. But don't wait too long - prices are good only through Oct. 20th.

RETAIL PRICING	Windows Vista	Windows 7
Home Premium	239.99	199.99
Business/Professional	299.99	299.99
Ultimate	319.99	319.99

UPGRADE PRICING	Windows Vista	Windows 7
Home Premium	129.99	119.99
Business/Professional	199.99	199.99
Ultimate	219.99	219.99

OEM PRICING	Windows Vista	Windows 7
Home Premium	109.99	99.99
Business/Professional	149.99	134.99
Ultimate	179.99	174.99

Note the recent price drops for Windows 7 Home Edition in **RED**

## ABOUT RHODENIZER IT

We are a different kind of IT service provider. We don't resell any hardware or software. We find the best deals on what you need and pass the savings along to you.

Our mission is to help small businesses reduce expenses, increase productivity, and safeguard private information.

It's about more than just fixing computers. We also

provide IT consulting and services that include finding the best solutions to your business problems.

We work with clients to prepare disaster recovery plans that ensure their critical data remains safe, yet easily accessible. Additional benefits include money-saving ideas for managing your computer resources and planning for future business expansion.

We have the training, experience, and know-how to provide the right solutions for your needs, and your budget.

Just call to schedule your **free initial consultation with no risk, and no obligation.**

Tell me about your computer needs or IT issues. I'll recommend a course of action that makes sense for your situation at no cost to you. What have you got to lose?



P. O. Box 768122  
Roswell, Georgia 30076

**(404) 202-8657**

[www.rhodenizer.com](http://www.rhodenizer.com)

The Rhodenizer Report is published and distributed by Rhodenizer IT, Inc. © Copyright 2009. All Rights Reserved.

DISCLAIMER: The information, opinions, and recommendations expressed within are for general knowledge and are not intended to be a substitute for personal consultation. Furthermore, some information may be based upon other information provided by third parties. Unless specifically stated, no form of independent verification is undertaken. The author is not responsible for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies. This information is provided free of charge and is without warranty, neither explicit nor implied. The reader assumes all risk when performing any computer modifications without the direct supervision of a qualified IT professional.