

THE DOWNLO@d

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//COMPUTERCARE/
I.T. SERVICE SOLUTIONS



Wayne's Word

Almost four years ago, ComputerCare set up a Board of Directors and Ben Vanderkolk has held the position of Chairman since then. Recently, due to other commitments, Ben has had to relinquish the position. We are incredibly grateful to Ben for all the hard work he put in in establishing the Board and the associated structures. His commitment and enthusiasm for the potential he saw in ComputerCare was evident in all he did during his time in the role. Thanks

Ben, your contribution over the past four years will have a lasting impact.

To fill the role, it is with great pleasure that I welcome Derek Walker to the position of Chairman of the ComputerCare NZ Ltd Board of Directors. Derek has a comprehensive resume including governance roles with organisations such as The Bio Commerce Centre, Palmerston North Airport, NZ Windfarms, Quotable Value, Speirs Group and Central Energy Trust as well as his position as Director and Principal of Third Bearing.

His extensive experience and knowledge will certainly be a significant asset to ComputerCare and we are privileged to have someone of his calibre on board. Welcome Derek, we look forward to a long and fruitful relationship.

NZ Masters Games Sponsorship



ComputerCare is pleased to be renewing its two year sponsorship agreement with New Zealand Masters Games.

The Sponsorship Agreement is the culmination of several months planning and sees ComputerCare join the ranks of The Lion Foundation, Suzuki New Zealand and DB Breweries as a premium top level sponsor.

As part of the agreement ComputerCare is providing the organising infrastructure for the management of the lead up to, and actual games, as well as IT access and support for the athletes and volunteers.

With over 7,000 competitors from 22 countries competing having easy access in the games village to keep in touch with friends and family, as well as to initially register, check the climate and book accommodation is a huge help.

The Sponsorship Agreement is a renewal and extension of our previous one, and runs for the next two years.

We would like to encourage clients to consider supporting the games and entering the corporate challenge.

Upside to Viruses?

Where computer viruses have been the scourge of the industry and cost annually almost incalculable amounts in terms of downtime, loss of productivity, let alone the almost compulsory investment in network security, updates and annual renewals, maybe there is an upside.

The yet to be explained release of the extremely virulent Stuxnet virus in the Iranian nuclear weapons development facilities, has possibly seen the first inter-country use of a virus as a weapon of war.

While speculators point to the extremely high tech resources available in Israel, and its objection to being threatened with a nuclear attack as indicating it as a possible source, this is yet to be, and may never be confirmed.

DEBKA.com has reported that the "Malworm Stuxnet Proved More Destructive than a Conventional Attack" with over 30,000 computers infected, bringing thousands of centrifuges spinning out weapons grade nuclear material to a standstill. This then brings the question whether the harm of a virus attack is actually preferable to that of a conventional military attack with its associated collateral civilian damage. Perhaps computer viruses do have something to offer.

The admission by Ali Akbar Salehi, head of the Atomic Energy Organisation, that Iran has put to death a number of atomic scientists and technicians suspected of helping plant the Stuxnet virus in its nuclear program has not encouraged international IT companies to rush to fill contracts to help remove the virus.

When is a Thin Client too thin?

Thin Clients can be an attractive option when you are upgrading your network. These small devices can offer your staff nearly all of the features of a full workstation, and certainly in many environments they are appropriate.

With all their applications and data sitting on the Terminal Server managing updates and changes from a central point is very easy and quick. However this is offset by their very limited ability to connect peripherals, such as digital cameras or a local printer, and their lack of a CD drive means that all applications must be either web or server based. Traditionally Thin Clients were often implemented for users with 'light' IT requirements, but as technology has evolved they can be implemented across multi-branch environments with heavier processing needs, and can now be implemented with dual screens. As with any IT implementation careful consideration of user needs and planning is needed.



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Dan's Tech Talk with Nick White stepping in...

As I stare at a blank Word page, I try to think what gems of wisdom Daniel would write this time. Unfortunately he is off work recovering from an accident and I am stepping in to write his piece. It brings to mind just how much we rely on the Technical Teams knowledge to advise us solutions and emerging technologies. We heavily rely on this to ensure every proposal is both best practice and the most suitable option for the client. This takes a huge amount of time investigating, checking, picking the brains of our business partners like Hewlett Packard and project managing solution implementations.

For the Account Management team this is an invaluable resource in which we invest over six figures annually. Very early on in my IT career I learnt just how careful one has to be with IT solutions. As I look at my backyard building project I think its not like working with wood, where you can have it near enough and just sand the final edges to make it fit. There's no 'she'll be right' in IT.

Every solution and option you suggest you have to be 100% certain of. What might seem like a brief seven page quote may actually only take a couple of hours to type out, but what this few sheets of A4 represents is often up to several weeks work, referencing, investigating, corresponding with our partners and lab testing on specifically bought in loan equipment. ComputerCare has a strict policy of only proposing 'approved solutions', each carefully tested and documented by our internal teams, peer reviewed and championed by an internal expert which may take months to work through.

With the Account Management team I am always emphasising the need to be responsive to clients queries and manage expectations of how quickly we can respond in full. That seven page quote they present to you, which may have taken a few days or even a week, is the culmination of a huge amount of resource, training, experience and organisational knowledge. Each solution must be based on a full appraisal of the current network infrastructure and resources, the current and future needs of the client, and be worked through a specification, implementation and project management process, checked and rechecked by several internal teams before we can lay keyboard to Word on our letterhead to synthesis all those hours into a short coherent document for you to consider. The fact that we have taken the extra time to ensure its correct is only in your best interests, and ours of remaining a trusted, professional Premiere Business Partner. – Nick White, National Sales & Marketing Manager

The Harmless Thumb Drive

You can buy them in the bargain bins at the large format stores for what seems a dime a dozen. The USB Thumb Drive comes in a myriad of colours, and can have more storage space than a not too old laptop. They're so cheap you can now have them personalised as your business giveaway doo-dacky, like pens and branded golf balls - they're almost a throw away item.

Their very accessibility and minimal cost has mean that most of us have a few hanging around, and they are great for that occasional time when its just more practical than emailing a really big file, or taking your PowerPoint presentation with you to quickly load onto the venues laptop.

However just like the long defunct floppy drive, they are a very easy means of innocently introducing a virus into your network. Having secure routers and up to date anti virus can be easily circumvented by an employee simply plugging in their thumb drive for something as simple as printing off some photos. They can also be very easily used to copy and take off site confidential files.



M86 Security, formally Marshall, the New Zealand company, who have the likes of WebMarshall and Mail Marshall in their stable have the solution End Point Security. This product prevents unwanted data transfers to or from portable devices, allows users to have varying levels of access and tracks all portable device connections, as well as encrypts any files downloaded to an external drive.

Christmas Hours

As the busy end of the year quickly approaches many clients are teeing up their network upgrades.

ComputerCare Palmerston North, Wanganui, Hawkes Bay and Bay of Plenty will only be closing on the Statutory Holidays. As usual our after hours on call service is 24/7.

This months newsletter is pink in support of Breast Cancer Awareness.

Top 3 Challengers for IT Managers

There are a range of issues and challenges that IT Managers and decision makers face. Research company Gartner has identified the top three concerns. Unsurprisingly these face both small and larger organisations, and are often the catalyst for exploring a wholistic long term IT plan rather than band aiding temporary fixes across a network.

Concerns about data growth ranked number one with 47% of those surveyed, followed by 37% with system performance and scalability as the second biggest challenge for them in the coming year, and 36% citing network congestion and connectivity issues. 67% of respondents planned to add capacity to their networks in the coming year.

Chamber of Commerce Business Awards

Its the biggest event on the Wanganui Business Calendar, and ComputerCare's Wanganui Account Manager Peter Allison, and Technical Team Leader Justin Dickon dusted off their dinner jackets for the 'Cirque du Soleil' themed evening.

Operating in regional New Zealand brings a completely different aspect to our business. Whereas in Auckland IT can evolve around doing the deal quicksmart and moving onto the next opportunity, for ComputerCare being in the regions means developing long term business relationships and supporting the local business community.

ComputerCare sponsored the Micro Business Excellence Award, which went to the Glastonbury Dance Studio.



Peter & Colleen Allison with Justin & Trish Dickon at the Awards

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