



Nortec IT News – Spring 2009

Welcome to Nortec News Spring Edition.

Nature's definition of spring has several meanings, such as "the season of growth", "the time of bloom" as well as "a transition period". When it comes to business, these meanings run true especially when contending with your PC's, printers or the whole IT Network. How often have you put off updating those patches, replacing that PC which holds important data or calling my local IT support? "I'll wait next month," or "when things slow down a bit"... There are very few businesses these days that don't rely heavily on their computer network, email, data – and if these items stop working, your business comes to an alarmingly, frustrating halt. An easy way by avoiding such occurrences is by putting preventative measures in place.

This newsletter is aimed to keep you updated with Nortec IT's movements, new products and services and other IT related items which may be applicable for your business.

Start enjoying the warmer weather and remember, don't wait till next Spring to make those changes. There's no better time than now.

Regards,
The Nortec IT Team



Letter from the Managing Director

Well I woke up this morning to an unusual sight – Red. The worst dust storm in memory hit Sydney. Naturally it does not take much to disrupt Sydney traffic.

Thankfully in today's environment being able to work functionally from home is a reality.

VOIP phone extensions allow your staff to answer calls at home, Remote access technology means everything they can do at work they can now do at home.

As a matter of fact I was talking to a friend who I used to work with at IBM. He is now one of the senior analysts for them. He told me he has not been in the office at all since 2005.

This same technology allows us to act as a fully functional helpdesk for you. Other than a hardware failure we can pretty much do anything remotely. This has allowed me to create and offer fixed price support plans. I'm really excited about these as they really are great value.

By the time you receive this newsletter, you have probably seen the news – "The recession is officially over". Whilst I have seen some optimism creep back into the market, it will be a long process to get back to the buoyant market we had 18 months ago.

Things are only going to improve from now on and I look forward to working with you over the coming year and I hope you find the newsletter interesting.

David

General News Articles

Dangerous Browser Passwords

Your web browser will gladly store passwords for you. But did you know that you (or anyone) can readily view these passwords stored in your PC's web browser?

If your notebook or PC is stolen, the thief can easily access all your passwords. Anything from subscription passwords to different websites, maybe even your own website, to banking passwords, and any other web based application passwords.

Here's how to view your passwords:

Mozilla Firefox Go to Tools - Options - Security - Saved Passwords. You will see all the websites you visit including the usernames you use to login. Now click "Show Passwords", your passwords are available for all to see. But, on the Security tab, you can check the tab "Use a Master Password" then you will be required to enter a master password before viewing the



website password list. Even this Master Password can be hacked with an easily obtained tool so it's not completely secure.

Google Chrome Click on the wrench icon in the upper right corner, select Options - Minor Tweaks - Show Saved Passwords. You will see your website list with the associated usernames. Select a username then click on the "Show Password" button and your password will be displayed. There is currently no provision to protect these passwords.

Internet Explorer Internet Explorer is only slightly safer because, although it stores passwords, it doesn't allow you to readily view them. But are applications available to allow you to view your passwords. Also, there is a snippet of readily available code that you can enter into your address window which will allow you to view the obscured password (*****) at any website. This Java script works with all browsers.

What to do?

Don't store your passwords in your web browser. The setting to disable password caching can be found in the same location as to view your passwords. Also clear out the cached information.

Create strong passwords. Use at least 8 characters/numbers and always use a mix of capital letters, lower case letters, numbers, and special characters.

Use unique passwords. In other words, don't use the same password to login to your webmail and your bank account. That way if someone hacks one account, they won't automatically have access to all your accounts.

Don't share your high security passwords with anyone. If necessary, create a special shared password, for example, if your staff all use a single login to access a vendor website.

Don't write your passwords on a sticky note and paste it on your monitor or under your keyboard.

Install Roboform to securely save website passwords. Roboform is free, easy to use and passwords are stored in an encrypted format.

Top Time Wasters at Work

- **Instant Messaging:** While there is a good business case for Instant messaging, especially for remote workers, it can also be a big time waster. While most staff won't abuse the privilege, some will. It's one to watch.
- **Wikipedia:** Great for checking a quick fact, but oh so easy to get sidetracked and suddenly your reading about the latest UFO sighting
- **Forums:** This could be a movie forum, a television show, dating, technology or even a newspaper forum. These can be very addictive. I personally had to block dating sites from one staff member as he was spending hours each day on them.
- **Minesweeper and other built in Games.** One can while away hours of time playing these until knock off time.
- **YouTube :** TV shows, skateboard accidents, idol replays, and more. Whilst each video lasts about 5 minutes, suddenly your staff have watched 6-7 videos – so there goes half an hour per staff member.
- **Twitter :** have your staff subscribed to Twitter, they might be receiving and responding to Twits every 5-10 minutes. This could be a huge time waster.
- **Facebook :** Everyone has a facebook profile. Bet they do the quizzes, or play Drug wars, make the longest word in scrabble, determine what their new career should be. Face book is the biggest time waster with statistics indicating that perhaps some staff spend over one third of their day on facebook.

What to do?

Put in place an internet usage policy. Activate Reporting on your firewall and generate daily, weekly, monthly reports. Block sites you definitely do not want staff to access. Give our support team a call if you need help with any of this.

Windows 7 – Is it Business Ready?

There has been a lot of press about the upcoming release of Windows 7. I will look at it purely from a business perspective.

Microsoft has learnt a lot from Vista, and has pretty much got it right this time around. They have improved compatibility



with Windows XP, and for those really quirky programs included a Virtual Copy of Windows XP bundled with Vista.

More importantly rather than rename the version number to “7” they kept it at Version “6” (the same as Vista). This means that all programs designed to run on Vista, will check the version number and will see Windows 7 as Vista and will continue to run.

What this means is pretty much every program that ran on Windows XP or Vista will run on Windows 7.

32bit V 64bit Windows 7

The next question is should you run Windows 7 in 32bit or 64bit mode.

The good

- 64bit mode give you access to more memory, 17.2 billion gigabytes to be precise. Compare this with the 4GB RAM for 32 bit systems.
- 64 bit Windows can effectively run optimised software 3-5 times faster
- 64 bit windows will run most 32bit software in a seamless emulator mode.

The Bad

- Older peripherals device drivers. All new items such as scanners and printers come with 64 bit drivers. But older devices do not have downloadable 64 bit drivers. You may have to invest in a new scanner or printer.

Overall the general move is to 64bit, servers have been 64 bit for some years. I have been running 64bit Windows 7 for some months now. (As a Gold Partner – we have had early access to it). It has been stable, significantly faster then Vista and dare I say XP. Shut down and startup times are vary between 30-60 seconds. All the programs I have thrown at it have worked.

But yes my old workhorse Canon scanner does not support 64 bit drivers – so I’m yet to invest in a new one.

Interesting Links

HP Warranty Checker

This allows you to determine what the remaining warranty period is on any HP product.

Click [here](#)

XOBNI

This is a fantastic add on for Outlook it allows you to quickly search email content, far more efficiently then outlook. The real bonus though is that when you receive an email – it will do a facebook or linked in search and show you a picture of the person, even if their profile is protected.

Click [here](#)

Nortec IT - New Services

“Hassle Free IT” **finally** it’s here...Announcing Nortec IT’s new managed Services Plan – *Hassle Free IT*.

This way of IT support and servicing will assist in faster response times, budgeting IT costs and help eliminate expensive repairs and data recovery costs, trip fees to your premises to just name a few. This method is a way of implementing those preventative measures in place and having someone monitoring your business systems real-time.

Here’s what one customer had to say:

“Your **‘Hassle Free IT’** is the best thing you folks have going. I’ve already seen a measurable decline in the number of computer problems and the server hasn’t gone down in months. I know this has saved me at least \$3,000 in IT support costs alone and I love the fact that I don’t have to worry about security issues anymore. Thanks!”

[Ross Haywood – CFO, Northerncrest](#)

As an introductory offer to the **first 7 respondents**, Nortec is offering their “Gold Level” program which



includes unlimited Helpdesk *FREE for 1 month only. To secure yours, email your interest to sales@nortec.com.au or call 02 9894 9514 today!

Note: Staff and time limitations will only allow us to give 7 free network Audits.

* a minimum of 1 server and 5 pc's in the business network required to be eligible.

Tech Tips – Back Ups & Security

5 tips that may keep you out of those hairy situations and that Nortec IT highly recommend that you keep in consideration:

1. Make sure you are backing up your files everyday and check your backups on a regular basis that it is working properly.
2. Keep an offsite copy of your backups. What happens if a fire or floods destroys your server and the backups or drives? Oops!!!
3. Ensure that your Virus Protection is always on and up to date.
4. Set up a firewall. Small business owners tend to think that because they're just a "small business", no one would waste their time trying to hack into their network, when nothing could be further from the truth.
5. Update your system with Critical Security Patches as they become available.

If you are unsure about the 5 tips mentioned or wish to know more about backup procedures, gives us a call on 02 9894 9514.

In The Media

This is an article about Microsoft authenticity when it comes to downloads. Just because it mentions Microsoft and secure in one name, it does not necessarily mean that it is. As part of Nortec's "Hassle Free IT", all this is managed by our team of experts. Click [here](#) for full details on this article.

HP has released their new laptop range, the HP Mini 110. Similar to the HP Mini 1000 but the most obvious difference is the cost – it's a lot less expensive. Click [here](#) for a further detailed review on this product



ATTENTION - CLEARANCE SALE!!!

Unbelievable prices - check this out for a deal:

HP Business Inkjet 1000 – \$1,700 Inc GST



HP Officejet Pro k5300 – \$75.00 Inc GST



Click [here](#) for further details.

HP Officejet 5610 (MFP All in 1) – \$99.00 Inc GST



Click [here](#) for further details.



HP Deskjet D2360 – \$55 Inc GST



Click [here](#) for further details.

HP Photosmart c4385 - \$150 Inc GST



Click [here](#) for further details.

Belkin 1200VA Universal UPS – \$320.00 Inc GST



Click [here](#) for further details.

Other accessories for the office:

- Multimedia Keyboard USB.2 - \$15.00 Inc GST
- Laptop Combo Lock - \$10.00 Inc GST
- DLink Bluetooth Adaptor USB.2 - \$25.00 Inc GST
- Norton Anti-Virus w/ Anti-Spyware 2008 - \$18.00 Inc GST

Nortec IT supplies a wide variety of hardware and software solutions. Configuration, install and support is also available and can be [art of a package deal.

Call now on 02 9894 9514 or email us – sales@nortec.com.au You may be surprised on what deals we can offer you.

NOTE: *These offers only while stocks last.*

That's All Folks...

Well that's it for this edition. Keep an eye out for the next Nortec News in the coming months.

If there is anything in particular you would like us to cover or have any enquires on what has been published in this newsletter, drop us a line on sales@nortec.com.au or simply give us a call for a chat.

Thanks again and we look forward to being of service to you soon.

Happy Networking.

Kind Regards,
The Nortec Team

Reminder – Nortec IT is here to assist, support and consult on all your business IT related functions. Your IT support Partner.

“Let Us Help You Kiss Your Computer Headaches Away”