World Backup Day - 3/31/18

Avoid being an April fool this year, and take the time to back up your important data like old tax files and documentation, art projects, family photos,etc. Anything you wouldn't want to lose deserves to be backed up regularly!

- **Local Backup** - Use a USB thumb drive or external hard drive to make copies of your important files\folders. Simple sync programs can be set up to back up the most critical things. Programs like Time Machine for Mac and Acronis for Windows will back up your entire computer to a large enough USB external drive (and keep versions every time they back up).
- **Cloud Backup** - Services like CrashPlan, Carbonite, Mozy will regularly upload changed and new files from monitored folders on your computer to their backup servers via the Internet. Cloud backups are great in case of flood, fire, power surge, etc. that could take out a computer and a USB drive plugged in to the computer or in the same house.
- **File Sync and Share** - A similar hybrid local\cloud option is apps like Dropbox, OneDrive, iCloud, etc. that will work with your local documents, back up versions to their cloud and let you store copies on multiple PCs.
- **Cloud Photos** - Google Drive, iCloud, OneDrive, and even Amazon Photos let you back up photo collections to the web and between devices. Certain options are unlimited\free depending on photo resolutions and what devices you're backing up from.

- **Storing Files on USB Only Is Not a Backup!** You want to keep multiple copies of the files in case something happens to one of the drives or devices. Just moving 20GB of photos to a USB drive might free up space on your laptop, but it doesn't count as a backup. If you're USB drive fails, the photos are lost forever. Use a cloud option too if storing on USB is your only option.

- **RAID is Not a Backup!** This is more for power users, but having redundancy in an array of hard drives is not a backup. It can lower the chances of losing data in the event of a drive failure, but data corruption could still happen on a healthy RAID array.
- **All Media Fails!** Every hard drive will fail eventually, CD\DVD disks too easily scratch and corrupt. Anything you still have backed up to floppy or zip disk is probably no longer readable. Backups need to be maintained and you need to have multiple copies if you want a foolproof backup.
- **Plan for the Worst! -** Assume you could lose all your local data to a disaster and keep a cloud copy of the most important data. Assume that your cloud service could suffer a catastrophic data loss and make sure to have a local copy as well.
- **Test Your Backups! -** If you've made it this far, you should have a pretty good idea how to keep your data backed up. Remember that it's worthless if you don't test it regularly. A hard drive in a closet for a year may problems from sitting unused that you're unaware of. Your backup software may look like it's completing but not actually be copying your data. It's critical to test your ability to restore the files you're backing up.

HP Compaq Elite 8300 SFF
Refurbished

Intel Core i5 3.2Ghz
8GB RAM
500GB SATA Hard Drive
DVD-RW
Windows 10 Professional

Work horse desktop computer with a small footprint! Great for

Tech Tip:
Read Before Clicking!

One of the best things you can do to prevent computer problems is to take a moment to read any messages that come up on your computer before saying "yes" or "allow." Also be sure to not say "yes" or "allow" to any pop ups or changes unless you are currently trying to install a program or make a change.

Although it's easy to feel bombarded by the various messages, alerts, etc. that pop up from time to time, taking a few seconds to read the messages and decide if they seem legit will end up saving time, headaches and a trip to your local computer shop.

It's also a good idea when setting up a new

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computer, installing any updates, etc. to read through the options. Programs may want more permission, change settings around, install additional software, etc. If there's something you're not sure about, we recommend looking up on another device what the message or feature or warning means. Try to find out as much as you can about the messages your computer is showing, and when in doubt ask an expert.

Product Spotlight: Malwarebytes Premium

We get asked often, what's the best way to protect your computer from malware. For the last few years our answer has been, without hesitation, Malwarebytes Premium.

There are a few reasons why it has remained our choice. It has consistently been rated in the top 3 of anti-malware software (currently #1). If your computer is going to get "infected", 90% of the time it's going to be malware. Malwarebytes has a free version that is nearly as full featured as it's premium version.

We recommend the premium version as it is "set it & forget it." It will run in the background without greatly affecting computer resources, and it updates automatically.

From the Blog!

Previously on the Blog:
Are Smartphones & Tablets Computers?
"Smartphones and tablets have gotten more powerful and capable over the last 5 years. Many people rely on them as their primary device to access the Internet or to consume media (stream video, listen to music). But are they really ready to replace a computer? In this article we'll clarify the differences between computers & mobile devices, and hopefully answer any questions."

Next on the Blog:
Linux - Demystified!