

RB Balch PC Tips Newsletter, JANUARY 2008 – Ready for a server - new or replacement?

Reflections of **Better Business**

Your guide to technology and an error-free computer environment

By: **RB Balch & Associates, Inc.** Full service, award winning computer consulting firm. Serving AZ since 93. "**Providing easy technology answers to confusing technology issues**". tm

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SPECIALS THIS MONTH

JANUARY – NEW YEARS Special. A very happy new year to you and your family. We're excited that we're approaching our 15th year – FEB 1st. Bring in the new year with new computers. As you know, we sell Dell computers - and January is Dell's year-end....so best possible deals are in generally in January. Mention this newsletter for \$50 OFF your invoice for each new computer setup (estimate 2 to 3 hrs). AND, never before....\$200 OFF for new server setup (estimate 2 techs, one full day). Actual setup time varies based on individual requirements.

REMINDER: we can help you "build" a new computer online with Dell – we do not markup – same pricing ordering with us or from Dell. We can order for you (no fee to order when we bring and setup for you).

GENERAL INFORMATION

Contact us at 623-561-9366 OR at help@rbbalch.com OR online from our website www.rbbalch.com to schedule online. **If you schedule online, you'll save an additional \$5 off your next appointment.**

REMOTE TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Contact us for remote technical support - it's easy, fast, less interruptions at the office and less expensive for you! (1/2 hour minimum)

Our motto: "you don't have a problem until you have a problem". Think about it. Contact Rochelle at rb@rbbalch.com.

FREE GIFT: at your next appointment, ask your technology consultant for one our new handy memo pads and pens.

2 TECHNOLOGY/COMPUTER TIP

THIS MONTH: Are you ready for a server - 1st time or replacement?

Originally prepared by Andrew Sheldahl, RB Balch Sr. Consultant

It's easy to get caught up in running your business - going about day to day chores, marketing, keeping the office running smoothly, payroll, product development, and more. But....what about your computer needs? Do you have a server - that you've outgrown? Do you think you've reached the point of needing a server - but not sure. As your business grows and changes, so will your technology needs. See below for a few tips and guidelines.

BENEFITS OF A SERVER:

Centralized storage. Store files in one place; keep better, tighter control of access to critical and confidential files. Servers offer redundant hard drive structures to better protect you in the event of a hard drive "crash".

Centralized backup. Most servers are configured with a backup device of some sort, typically to tapes. The centralized storage can be setup to automatically backup files on a scheduled basis to keep your data safe.

Centralized resource management. Windows-based servers offer a "domain model" that controls all your network users and devices (computers and printers.) The main benefit is better security by using passwords (see our NOV07 newsletter on "strong" passwords) that have to be authenticated by the server. You also have the ability to set "permissions" on your folders and files to control who has access to network resources. (you can block access to certain folders for specific users).

Flexibility. Adding a server to your network can allow you to do more with your systems. A server can allow you to host your own email or website, setup a centralized antivirus package to protect all of your computers, setup centralized internet and spam filter devices, allow users to connect remotely to network resources and much more.

Considerations:

Cost. The cost for a typical small business server for hardware and setup can run in excess of \$5000 (for equipment and setup). Cost depends on data storage requirements, number of users, types of programs

and databases running, and more. Over the long term, this can be a small price to pay if the alternative is loss of your business data due to a system crash or disaster. Typical life span of a server is around 5 years.

Physical location. The server needs a location that is cool, secure, has good power and network hookups, and is out of the way of users. This is so users don't "accidentally" do anything to the server; also servers can run louder than a typical desktop which some people may find annoying if it is too close to their work area.

Maintenance. Your investment in your server may not pay off if the server is not properly maintained to make sure all functions and systems are updated and secure, the data is being backed up correctly and completely, and any problems are dealt with before they grow into major problems that can cause downtime or loss of your data. Whether you have someone inside your company that can properly maintain the server, or bring in an outside specialist (yes, like RB Balch), these costs should be factored into your server budget. A server will need someone to spend roughly one hour per month onsite or remotely doing proper maintenance.

Growth. If you buy the cheapest server you can find, you will likely need to replace it sooner than a more expensive server either because you've outgrown it or because it can't perform some new function or tasks you need it to do. Try to make a purchase that has room for growth or changing server roles and you'll save yourself added expense and headaches later.

Replacement? Do you have a server but may be in need of a replacement? Is it more than 4 years old? Have you had "issues"? Do you have enough room to save your data? OR, are you saving to external USB hard drives? Is the backup media still large enough to handle your needs? Plan for server replacement on your terms...not when the server decides to finally crash and die. If you think you may be in that "we're getting close" mode, contact someone to check it out for you (for your convenience, our number is 623.561.9366.....).

When is "big enough" for a server? Depends on your needs....but generally if you're running 4 or 5 workstations, consider a server.

Any questions on software options? Contact us at help@rbbalch.com 623-561-9366 or Rochelle directly at rb@rbbalch.com OR schedule on-line at www.rbbalch.com

Have an idea for a topic? Just let us know – or send in your questions to help@rbbalch.com. Was this article helpful? Please let us know.

3 Andy's Did You Know?

By Andy Karpel, the "A lot about nothing" expert

MONTH: JANUARY

Birthstone: Garnet Meaning: Constancy

Color: Indigo, Green, greenish-blue

Garnet, the birthstone for January, signifies eternal friendship and trust and is the perfect gift for a friend. *Garnet*, derived from the word *granatum*, means seed, and is called so because of the gemstone's resemblance to a pomegranate seed. References to the gemstone dates back to 3100 B.C., when the Egyptians used garnets as inlays jewelry. *Garnet* is the name of a group of minerals that comes in a rainbow of colors, from the deep red of the pyrope garnet to the vibrant green of tsavorite. Today, the most important sources for garnet are Africa, Sri Lanka, and India.

Flower: Carnation, Snowdrop

Astrological Sign(s): Capricorn (The Goat) Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

 Aquarius (The Water Carrier) Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Moon Phases: Jan 8 New – Jan 15 1st Qtr – Jan 22 Full – Jan 30 Last

Tuesday, Jan 1 New Year's Day – Happy New Years!!!

Sunday, Jan 6 Feast of the Epiphany- Three Kings Day

Monday, Jan 21 Martin Luther King's Birthday

Thursday, Jan 24 Beer Can Appreciation Day (a day off?? You CAN ask!!)

Friday, Jan 25 1st Winter Olympics begin in Chamonix, France. (1924)

Sunday, Jan 27 Apollo fire in module kills Lt. Col. Virgil "Gus" Grissom, Lt. Col. Edward H. White, and Lt. Cdr. Roger Chafee.(1967)

Monday, Jan 28 U.S. space shuttle Challenger explodes 72 seconds after liftoff, killing the seven crew members. (1986)

Andy's "I didn't know that" Beer Can Appreciation Day is January 24th it celebrates that great day in 1935 when beer was first sold in cans. A lot of people do not know that there's a huge number of beer can collectors out there. Collectors meticulously open a beer can from the bottom, empty it (and drink the beer, of course), then wash and dry it. For beer can collectors, there is no shortage of types of beer, cans and bottles, and sizes. A beer can collector may have hundreds of cans and bottles. There's a market for beer cans. If you come across an old can, do not throw it out. Rather, check out the prices in a collector's catalog, or on an online auction site. Origin of Beer Can Appreciation Day: is the first time beer as available in cans. But not quite sure who discovered and created Beer Can Appreciation Day.

.....**And now you have the FACTS**

Andy's second hand "tidbits" Whats UP?? There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meanings than any other two-letter word, and that is "**UP**". It's easy to understand **UP**, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake **UP**? At a meeting, why does a topic come **UP**? Why do we speak **UP** and why are the officers **UP** for election and why is it **UP** to the secretary to write **UP** a report? We call **UP** our friends. And we use it to brighten **UP** a room, polish **UP** the silver; warm **UP** the leftovers and clean **UP** the kitchen.

We lock **UP** the house and some guys fix **UP** the old car. At other times the little word has real special meaning. People stir **UP** trouble, line **UP** for tickets, work **UP** an appetite, and think **UP** excuses. To be dressed is one thing but to be dressed **UP** is special. And this **UP** is confusing: A drain must be opened **UP** because it is stopped **UP**. We open **UP** a store in the morning but we close it **UP** at night.

We seem to be pretty mixed **UP** about **UP**! To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of **UP**, look the word **UP** in the dictionary. In a desk-sized dictionary, it takes **UP** almost 1/4th of the page and can add **UP** to about thirty definitions.

If you are **UP** to it, you might try building **UP** a list of the many ways **UP** is used. It will take **UP** a lot of your time, but if you don't give **UP**, you may wind **UP** with a hundred or more. When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding **UP**. When the sun comes out we say it is clearing **UP**. When it rains, it wets the earth and often messes things **UP**. When it doesn't rain for awhile, things dry **UP**. We could go on, but I'll wrap it **UP**, for now my time is **UP**, so. Time to shut **UP**! Oh Yea one more thing: What is usually the 1st thing you do in the morning & the last thing you do at night? **U-P!**

YET MORE important useless information

When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.

Never take life seriously. Nobody gets out alive anyway.

How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?

Who was the first person to look at a cow and say, "I think I'll squeeze these dangly things here and drink whatever comes out?"

And who was the first person to say, "See that chicken there? I'm gonna eat the next thing that comes outta its butt."

If Jimmy cracks corn and no one cares, why is there a song about him?

Whenever you have a "I HATE MY JOB DAY," try this: On your way home from work, stop at your pharmacy and purchase a rectal thermometer made by Johnson & Johnson. Be very sure you get this brand. When you get home change into very comfortable clothing, and sit in your favorite chair. Open the package and remove the thermometer. Now, carefully place it on a table or a surface so that it will not become chipped or broken.

Take out the literature from the box and read it carefully. You will notice that in small print there is a statement: "Every Rectal Thermometer made by Johnson & Johnson is personally tested and then sanitized." Now, close your eyes and repeat out loud five times, "I am so glad I do not work in the thermometer quality control department at Johnson & Johnson! And I love my job"

Quotes

Happiness is a Swedish sunset; it is there for all, but most of us look the other way and lose it.....Mark Twain

Happiness consists more in small conveniences or pleasures that occur every day, than in great pieces of good fortune that happen but seldom to a man in the course of his life.....Benjamin Franklin

Happiness is like peeing your pants: Everyone can see it, but only you can feel it's warmth.....Unknown

4 Community Update

RB Balch is proud member of:

Arizona Small Business Association (ASBA) - Chamber of Commerce - National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) - Better Business Bureau (BBB).

5 RB Balch. WHY do we issue this and WHO are we?

WHY: Purpose of this newsletter?

To help you learn more about technology and computers

To be informal and informative

To answer specific questions asked by readers

....To continue our commitment of keeping you informed

Reflections of **Better Business** (published since 1994) is for employees, clients, friends and associates of **RB Balch**.

WHO ARE WE: RB Balch. IT Computer Consulting firm. Established 02/93. Experienced. Reliable. Ethical. Good. Revenues since 1993 are over \$23 million. Our mission is to be your one source solution for all of your computer needs. Consider us your "computer guy", your IT department. We're only an email or phone call away.

SERVICES: PC Field Support - IT Consulting, Software Development Projects, Business/Marketing Consulting, Seminars & Keynotes.

PC Field Support – IT Consulting: PC troubleshooting, network installation and maintenance, server and workstation setup/support, hardware and software upgrades, virus and spyware detection & repair, data recovery, backup/restore, programming, web design, web and email hosting, more. Troubleshooting is our specialty. Contact us as needed, or set-up recurring GOLD maintenance appointments (discounted, no contracts, no pre-paid bundle of hours required). We come to you.

Software Development Projects: PC development, no job too small. We specialize in projects 1 to 500 hours (longer projects also accepted). New or maintenance. Simple changes or complex systems. Programming, Databases, Web design, Contingency plans/strategy plans, etc. Available nationally.

Business Consulting: Utilize technology to help you grow your business - we're here to help. IT strategies, Disaster/recovery planning, IT security audits. Marketing and promotional plans.

Seminars, Keynotes: Technology and Motivational workshops, keynotes and lunch programs for your staff or association. As a successful entrepreneur and award winning business owner, Rochelle Balch, president RB Balch and international professional speaker (member of the National Speakers Association), is available for programs for technology, team building, marketing and business, and personal development. Get everyone on the same page to understand technology in your company. Mention this newsletter for discount off speaking fees. For sample topics see <http://www.rochellebalch.com>

Appointments: We offer, and highly recommend, regularly scheduled GOLD maintenance appointments. We offer on call/as needed service and emergency service. We are available weekends/evenings/holidays, and on special retainer, if required. No pre-pays, change frequency or cancel maintenance appointments at any time. Contact us at help@rbbalch.com, at 623-561-9366, or visit our web site at www.rbbalch.com for on-line scheduling. Contact Rochelle Balch directly at rb@rbbalch.com or contact Andy Karpel directly at andy@rbbalch.com if you like.

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Your email address is absolutely only used by us at RB Balch.

RB Balch Computer Consultants

PO BOX 10007

Glendale, AZ 85318

<mailto:help@rbbalch.com>

623-561-9366

1-800-922-5249 (1-800-9-BALCH-9)

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