

February 2010

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*"As a business owner myself, I know you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. **That's where we shine!** Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"*

~ David Snell
ACTSmart, Inc

Volume 5, Issue 2

Client Spotlight

Loss Control Services, Inc

Loss Control Services, Inc. provides specialized loss control services to insurance carriers, brokers and agencies. It evolved from their experience working for a major insurance carrier in their HPR (Highly Protected Risk) and LCE (Loss Control Engineering) departments. The opportunity arose to provide loss control to a major insurance broker on the South Shore, and the time was right to leave the corporate world and start their own business! At first, it was operated from their home office, with Steve completing the inspections and Missy running the office operations. After moving into office space in downtown Marshfield for a few years, they eventually settled at 541 Plain St. in Marshfield.



Steve Mannai, Missy Mannai, Michael Sullivan

Steve and Missy Mannai reside here in Marshfield, Missy being a lifelong resident, and Steve since 1988. They have two daughters, Allie in 7th grade and Carlie in 5th grade. They all enjoy the beach, boating, skiing and vacationing in Florida. Mike Sullivan resides in Sagamore Beach with his wife Tracy and their daughters Kylee (7th grade) and Casey (5th grade), who can regularly be found on the beach or at a soccer or lacrosse field.

"The best part about our business is that it is always changing, depending on the risk (insured) we are evaluating and the needs that arise from each specific inspection. This makes each day different, bringing new challenges!" says Missy Mannai.

"Computers have enabled us to electronically file our completed inspections for easy access. This speeds-up our due-date reaction time significantly, and puts the completed inspections at our client's fingertips. Adding the dual-monitor functionality to our desks has definitely increased workflow within our company – no more moving between programs and web pages! Computers, along with our web-based system, have increased productivity greatly – it's hard to imagine being in the business without them!"

"ACT has always responded rapidly to our issues as they arise. When we moved to our newest office space, an upgraded server and UPS were going to be mandatory, and ACT knew exactly what we needed, when we needed it, and ensured that we were up and running, without the fear of losing data AGAIN when the power went out. The remote monitoring service that ACT provides is also essential, ensuring that our nightly backup goes off without a hitch – and informing us when there are issues. Business owners wear 'many hats', and having a dedicated IT company to handle that aspect of any small business is essential. Specialize in what you specialize in, and leave the IT to ACT!"

"After working with ACT for eight years, the ACT technicians are like co-workers. They know what we do, what we need, and what we are usually looking for, even if we don't. They are friendly, and it's nice to know them on a personal level, not just a professional one."

We asked, "What could we do to provide better service?" Missy answered, "Service has never been an issue for us. Continue to market yourselves as you do, and maintain the customers you have while expanding your existing customer base. **And bring back the M&Ms – our candy dish is empty!**"

Thanks, Missy—we'll bring them over right away!

We're ALWAYS here for you!

Have an **EMERGENCY** and need to reach us outside of our normal business hours?

Technical Support:

David—781-838-0556
Devin—339-793-3754
Henri—339-793-3755

Web Design

Pam—781-838-0557
George—339-793-3756

Emergencies Only Please

For regular support and web design questions call 781-834-9208
M-F 8:30—5:00

January

Trivia Winner:

Nancy Anderson
Cloud Ten Photography
Answer—A – 4 million



We LOVE Our Clients!!

When did Valentine's Day become associated with romantic love?

- A) Victorian Era
- B) Middle Ages
- C) Nineteenth Century
- D) The 1950's

Go to GoAmerican.com/contest for a chance to win

Wordcamp Boston Opens New Opportunities For Our Clients!

By Pam Snell



George and I attended Wordcamp Boston, the Wordpress Convention on Saturday, January 23rd. After a difficult start (trying to actually find One Memorial Drive and Microsoft's headquarters by GPS was a challenge!) we signed in and made our way to the opening remarks given by web developer Amanda Blum.

"I tell my clients to think of Wordpress as a picture in a picture frame. They can change the picture; I can change the frame." Amanda told newbies in the Wordpress 101 seminar.



There were almost 500 participants at the sold out event and they were from all walks of life and levels of proficiency in Wordpress. George and I met many of them throughout the day including an author who was just starting to blog about writing her second book to programmers and developers who were writing plug-ins for Wordpress.

Two of the most informative seminars for us were SEO 101 by Casie Gillette and Wordpress Security by Brad Williams.

Casie's information about Search Engine Optimization "Best Practices" was invaluable and we will be advising our web clients as we develop their Wordpress technology websites. Since Wordpress is so search engine friendly, many of his suggestions are easy to fulfill.

Brad's presentation on Wordpress Security gave us confidence that we will be able to keep this open source technology safe from being hacked by malicious sources. We will be making some of his suggested changes immediately to our current Wordpress websites and use his guidelines in the future.

Wordpress' versatility and continual improvement makes it a logical and cost effective addition to our web department's services. Our clients will be joining CNN, Ford, the US Post Office and EBay. We are so excited to be able to bring this service to you!



WordPress is an open source publishing application powered by PHP and MySQL which can also be used for blogging and for basic content management. It has many features including a user-friendly workflow, a rich plugin architecture, and an advanced templating system.

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It was first released in May 2003 by Matt Mullenweg as a fork of b2/cafelog. As of September 2009, it is being used by 202 **million** websites worldwide.

If Disaster Strikes, How Fast Could Your Company Be Back Up And Running?

You hear it all the time from us—back up your data, keep your virus protection current, and install and maintain a firewall to protect yourself from hackers and other online threats.

However, while these precautions will certainly help you avoid problems, they CAN'T do anything if you don't have a good backup and disaster recovery plan in place.

Are You A Sitting Duck?

We all know that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure; yet, disaster recovery planning often takes a distant second to the daily deadlines and pressures of running a business. That means that most businesses, including your own, may end up off-line and without your data after a simple lightening storm.

Don't think that could ever happen to you? Consider this: "data-erasing disasters" can also take the form of office fires and broken water pipes, not just earthquakes, floods and tornadoes. If a fire started in your building, the parts that weren't burned beyond recovery would probably be destroyed by the firemen's efforts. But even more common is software corruption, hardware failures and human error!

Disaster Recovery Questions You Need To Answer

A disaster recovery plan doesn't have to be complicated, time-consuming or expensive. Start by asking yourself the following questions...

1. Do you back up your company's data daily to both an onsite and offsite location?
2. Are you absolutely certain that your backup copy is valid, complete and not corrupt? How do you know for sure?
3. If disaster strikes, HOW would you get your data back, and how what would you do during that period of time?
4. Do you have copies of all the software licenses and discs in a safe location that could be accessed in the event of having to rebuild your server?
5. Would you and your employees have a way to access your network remotely if you couldn't get to the office?
6. Do you store important passwords in a secure place that company officers can access if you are unavailable?
7. Do you have a UPS (uninterruptible power supply) device in place to keep your network and other critical data operations running during a power outage?
8. If your phones are down, where will you forward your business calls so you don't lose that business?
9. If a more common "disaster" occurs, such as server hardware failure, do you have an onsite way to get back up and running the same day?

This is NOT a complete list, but it is a good start to get you thinking in the right direction.

Our FREE Disaster Recovery Plan Helps You Prepare

Since Valentine's Day is this month, we've decided to show our clients how much we love them by giving away a FREE Backup and Disaster Recovery Audit. At no charge or obligation, we'll come to your office, review your plan (or lack of one) and provide a simple action plan on what you need to do to make sure your business can always be up and running.

But take note! I can only make this available to our clients and friends during the month of February; after that, the fee for this consultation will be \$395 again. For more information and to schedule your FREE consultation, please contact our office at 781-834-9208 or e-mail us at support@goamerican.com

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At ActSmart, American Computer Technologies, we work to help people and businesses throughout New England eliminate their technology challenges and attain their business goals.

This is our mission. Everything we do reflects this mission and the values that make it possible.

Our values:

As a company, and as individuals, we value:

- Integrity and honesty
- Passion for our customers, our partners and for technology
- Openness and respectfulness
- Taking on challenges and seeing them through
- Constructive self criticism, self improvement and personal excellence
- Accountability and commitment to customers, team members and technology partners for exceptional results and quality



Addresses on the Fly are SO FLY!

By George Whitcher

I recently attended a seminar for our **Total Control** spam filtering service. I learned some things that I think would benefit our current clients with Total Control as well as people who currently don't have a spam solution. The coolest and most constructive thing I learned is "**Addresses on the Fly**". My interest was at its peak when they started talking about the functionality and how well this could work for our clients.

How "**Addresses on the Fly**" works is you setup an alternative address to receive specific mail to that address. Just for a random, fictional scenario take my email address **George@GoAmerican.com**. Now, if I were to buy something from Amazon which requires that you have an account with a valid email address, I could setup an address for example **George.Amazon@GoAmerican.com**. All mail sent to **George.Amazon@GoAmerican.com** will be received at my **George@GoAmerican.com** address separating my main email address from the Amazon account email address.

Now the coolest feature of doing this is you can actually see like in the above scenario if Amazon were to share your email address with anyone and who exactly they share it with. If I were to get a lot of spam to this address, I could just delete the address and no more spam! Lots of people wonder how they get spam when all their information is hidden. Your information is never hidden unless you take proactive steps to make it hidden. "**Addresses on the Fly**" with Total Control is the best proactive step you can take to keep a clean, functional, spam-proof email address. For more info or help, call me at 781-834-9208 Ext 207.