

March 2010

Volume 5, Issue 3

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 please call us:

781-834-9208
M-F 8:30—5:00



"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 all your computer problems finally and forever!"

~ David Snell
ACTSmart, Inc

What Kind Of A Day Would You Prefer?

The office staff arrived for work at 8:00am Monday morning ready to start their week. Everyone chatted about how they spent their weekend as a pot of coffee was brewed.

By 8:15 all were at their individual computers, coffee in hand and ready to go. Suddenly, Mary groaned as she saw a mysterious message on their computer – "Hard Drive Not Found" – press F1 to continue or F2 for setup. "What does that mean???"

After attempting to restart her computer several times, she realized it might be time to call for technical support. After checking all the computers connections and getting the opinion of everyone in the office, she picked up the phone.

The call went something like this.

Mary: Hello, my name is Mary from XYZ Accounting and my computer won't start.

Tech Support: Hi Mary, sorry to hear that, do you see anything at all on your screen?

Mary: Yes, she replied – it says Hard Drive Not Found – is that bad?

Tech Support: Well, it certainly doesn't sound good. Seems like we'll need to replace your hard drive disk. Do you have a current backup of your workstation ?

Mary: No – I didn't know I needed one.

Tech Support: Alright – do you know where the original system CD's are stored and can you get your hands on them?

Mary: I'm not sure, but let me check.

Tech Support: Great – You'll need all the Restore CD's for your computer as well as the CD's for each accounting program you use, all the Microsoft Office applications as well as the installation CD's for your printer and scanner. Also, can you give me the system service tag number so I can open a Dell service request.

Mary: Here it is, Service Tag: XYZ123YP

24 hours later, the Dell technician arrived at Mary's office with a replacement Hard Drive. He removed the bad drive, installed the new drive in the system and told Mary to put the restore CD in the CD Rom drive and follow along on the screen.

Mary: Will this take long? I have to process payroll for my clients today as well as submit their state and federal tax payments.

Dell Tech: It should only take a couple of hours to restore the operating system, then you'll need to install all the operating system updates, your business programs, your email, your printers, scanner and restore any data that was on the bad hard drive from your backup.

Needless to say – this could take many hours or even days depending upon the complexity of the original system configuration and availability of the original installation CD's.

OR... How About This....

Mary's computer is on our **ProWatch** management system. Our team monitors **ProWatch** systems 24/7 for pending failures and alerts. Our engineers were alerted that a "smart drive" error had occurred on her hard disk and failure was imminent. Our team immediately called Dell and had a replacement hard drive shipped via overnight shipping. We then met Mary at her office @ 8:00am Monday morning as the office staff arrived to work.

Mary was told of the alert and that we already had the replacement component in hand. So, she went to the break room with her co-workers, started the coffee and discussed their weekend activities as they did every Monday morning.

At 8:15 our ACTSmart technician came and found Mary, explained that he had replaced her hard drive and copied all of her programs, critical data and client files as well as all her printer and scanner configurations from the failing drive to the replacement. Everything is all set.

Too Important To Leave To Chance!

Here are 3 important bits of information from our Web Department about your domain name:

1. We automatically renew all domain names unless notified by the client. This is because once a domain is not renewed, it goes into limbo for *at least* 6 months. In limbo, it is not available to anyone and your website will go down and be unavailable. Then, you may or may not be able to get it back— there are many companies that reserve un-renewed websites with good domain names. Your website is the cornerstone of your market and you don't want to ever lose it! If you are unsure that you will want your domain name in the future, send us a note and we will take you off automatic renewal and email you when it is about to expire. Caution: If you do this, we are not responsible for the safety of your domain.
2. **Be careful of registration impostures!**
Domains of America *LIES* and tells you that your domain is due to expire and gets you to renew with them. Then, you are at their mercy!
3. If you'd like to save money and have peace of mind, renew with us for 5 years for \$100— saving \$75! Just let us know—it's GREAT for SEO, too. The Search Engines feel that you aren't "Fly By Night."

Client Of The Month—Mass Lobstermen's Association



Since its beginnings, the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association Inc. has always worked to help this state's lobstermen meet the challenges they face. It has worked to conserve the resource on which the lobstermen depend. Today, it is the major voice of the Massachusetts lobster industry.

Part of that voice is their newly redesigned Wordpress® powered website. The MLA decided to have their website updated to bring it up with the mainstream of websites. The old website was just that—old, outdated and not very user friendly.

Wordpress® technology allows Beth Casoni, Executive Assistant to MLA's Executive Director Bill Adler to update the website herself. Lobstermen.com includes information needed by their members such as a price report, changes in legislature that effects the industry, a calendar of upcoming events and photos from past events.

Beth says, "From my first meeting with ActSmart (Pam Snell) until the websites completion (George Whitcher) everything I was told from beginning to end happened and on time. The website was developed and tweaked between George and myself over the phone and via email with no problems. This whole process has been painless."

"The website is making a difference for us – its user friendly, provides information for the public to access, is visually pleasing and easier for us to maintain. There's more information for the Public, too, including delicious recipes featuring lobster. Soon, there'll be a shopping cart to buy clothing and a cookbook online. Good news— The website is already paying for itself with the adverting spots!"

"The Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association, as you know, is by the fishermen and for the fishermen and I have gotten great responses from within the industry on our new website www.lobstermen.com. The lobster industry in the past few years has been hit hard and our new website is a new beacon of light and exposure for the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association on the worldwide web. "

We have just one regret here at ACTSmart—they didn't offer to pay us in lobsters!!



ACTSmart announces the End of Life and active Technical Support for Microsoft Internet Explorer v6

There are several reasons we are ending regular maintenance and technical support for IE6:

- * **IE6 is less secure.** Multiple security vulnerabilities in IE6 have been exploited over the years. The most recent attacks against Google, Yahoo, and other companies specifically targeted vulnerabilities easily accessible in IE6 but much more difficult to exploit in IE7 and IE8—leading the Microsoft Security Response Center to recommend that users of IE6 upgrade to a newer version of Internet Explorer.
- * **IE6 is slow.** Of all of our supported browsers, IE6 provides the slowest and least rewarding user experience for our customers.
- * **IE6 is a "last generation" browser.** IE6 was first released in August 2001. As an obsolete, non-standard platform, IE6 is a difficult browser on which to develop and support the rich internet applications and websites our customers have come to expect from us.

What action do you need to take?

You should plan and/or upgrade your users to IE7, IE8, or another supported browser immediately. It's important to verify which version your critical web-based applications are compatible with prior to upgrading.

What If One Of The WORST Things That Could Happen To A Business Happened To Yours?

By Devin Spencer, MSP, ACTSmart Lead Technician

Most people change their backup tapes on a daily basis and check the backup log to make sure the backup software says that they have had a successful backup—that's the full extent of their backup knowledge.

In reviewing clients tape backup systems, we found that almost no one has ever run a test restore of their data... have you? Just because the software says the tape has been written to, does not mean the tape can also be used to successfully write the data back to the Server, the only way to be absolutely sure is to perform a test restore.

If you're part of our **ProWatch** system you don't have to worry, our expert technicians perform test restores on a regular basis to make sure that there are no false positives and your data is reliably backed up.

- What would happen if your Server died?
- What are the steps involved in restoring all your data from a tape drive?
- Could your business survive the extended downtime necessary to rebuild/replace your Server?

OK, so let's say it's Monday morning, you've arrived at your office and found that your Server is off and

won't start. We come in and find the server is beyond repair and needs to be replaced. The first step is to get you a new server (have to have someplace to restore your data to!) Even if we can have it shipped overnight, it still takes 3-5 days for the Server to be built, that's a full week of productivity lost with your office being out of commission. How much would that cost you in business?

Now let's say your old server was 4 years old, that means that your tape drive is also 4 years old, and any new server will have a totally different type of tape drive (Think of technology in Dog Years where every 1 year equals 7 years) so we then have to find a way to get your data off of your old tapes and restored to the new server.

Once the data has been restored, it's time to configure your new Server, install any applications necessary to protect and run your business and get all of your workstations disconnected from the old Server and reconnected to the new one. As you can see this is not a simple or quick process – and the success of this restoration rests on the fact that the critical data backed up on your tapes is actually viable. Tape drives are valuable for restoring individual files if they get corrupted or deleted but are no longer adequate for full system restoration.

So if tape drives are a thing of the past, what is the device of the future? The buzz word is NAS, short for Network Attached Storage. Our ACTSmart Data Guardian is a full Backup and Business Continuity Device that is 100% Money Back Guaranteed. If your Server dies, we flip a few software switches and our Data Guardian becomes your server, with all your critical data from up to 15 minutes before the failure. This virtualized system is seamless to you and your employees allowing you to stay in business until a new Server can be ordered, delivered, configured and installed.

Call me if you'd like more information—781-834-9208 Ext 205

February's Trivia Quiz

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

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

Congratulations To This Month's Winner

Cheryl Brady
RBC Wealth Management

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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

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