



BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY QUARTERLY

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Computer & Internet Use Policy



by Mark R. Torello, CPA, CFE, CISA

It's 2007. You've undoubtedly read, heard and discussed at least one of the many cases of information and identify theft that have inundated the news. Laptops being lost on commuter trains, CDs full of personal or proprietary information left on planes, backup tapes lost, PCs left in rental cars and stolen, the list goes on and on...

These stories leave me amazed and disheartened. A little due diligence can prevent the vast majority of information leakage you hear about every day. One of the most important safeguards for your company is one that is often overlooked - a

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Vista? Don't Be a Guinea Pig



by Ian Cranston, MCSE, CCNA

On January 30, 2007, Microsoft released Windows Vista; developed to replace Windows XP. Vista promises to be graphically impressive, easier to use and more secure than previous Windows operating systems. This article will detail some of

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Join Us! SAGE FUNDRAISING 50 USER GROUP!

If you are using Sage Fundraising 50 and are interested in participating in our User Group, please send your contact information to Camille Livsey clivsey@ttgct.com, with USER GROUP in the subject line. We look forward to your participation!

Just for Non-Profits

Why Should a Nonprofit Purchase Nonprofit Accounting Software?

By Camille Livsey, MBA

Nonprofits are facing constantly changing reporting requirements. Many funding sources change the required reporting criteria on a frequent, even annual, basis.

Since funding sources keep nonprofits in business, their demands must be addressed in a timely manner. If your current accounting system does not produce revised reports simply and effectively, you are wasting valuable resources transferring financial information back and forth between software programs and spreadsheets. You are also making your organization vulnerable to errors or omissions and potentially eliminating your audit trail.

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Wipe Your PC Clean

By: Eric Stoltz



Thinking about upgrading your PC to a newer, faster model? Did you splurge on a loaded new laptop over the holidays? It is exciting to upgrade to a new PC, but what do you do with the old model?

There are lots of choices: you can donate it to your favorite charity, give it to your kids (although they might be better with new technology than you are), offer it to the local schools or simply put it out for trash pickup.

Any of these options are viable and reasonable – as long as you clean up your hard drive. It is often easier (and less expensive) to buy new than to upgrade an old system, but make sure you know exactly what you need to do to completely erase your personal information, or it could end up in the wrong hands.

You may be surprised to learn that deleting files from Windows and then emptying your Recycle Bin does not completely remove your files from an old computer. There are many “undelete” programs out there that can

recover these files with a few simple clicks of the mouse. These programs can be very useful if you accidentally delete a file, but can be very dangerous when used on a PC in the wrong hands.

“...completely erase your personal information, or it could end up in the wrong hands.”

The best thing you can do with an old machine is to run a “wipe program” on the hard drive before handing it off to someone else.

These programs fill the hard drive with zeros and random patterns, effectively overwriting any information left on the PC.

To be truly certain that all your information is erased, the Department of Defense’s 5220.22-M standard calls for overwriting the drive by running a “wipe program” three times. While this may not ensure that everything is irretrievably overwritten, it does ensure that it would take expensive hardware and software and quite a bit of knowledge to recover any remaining data.

The next time you upgrade to a new PC or laptop, make sure that you take the time to “wipe” your old machine clean. If you have questions about how to wipe your machine, or what software to use, contact The Technology Group, LLC for answers.

Tips & Tricks

Sage MIP Fund Accounting Ver. 8.1 Upgrade May Change Custom Formats Made With Forms Designer

By Camille Livsey

With the upgrade to Version 8.1, MIP Users who own the Forms Designer module may notice changes to custom formats they have created with that module. These changes may result in the appearance of zeros in fields that previously displayed other numbers, or changes in the way certain fields are displayed.

Each new version of Sage MIP Fund Accounting has some format changes, and each default format is changed accordingly. However the formats that are created by individual users using the Forms Designer module cannot be automatically updated.

There is an easy fix, however. Simply open up the custom format in Forms Designer and recreate the section that is appearing incorrectly. Once the section is recreated, the format will function correctly - exactly as it did in the previous version of Sage MIP Fund Accounting.



Vista - Don't be a Guinea Pig

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the exciting new features of Vista – and explain why you want to wait to implement it.

Of the hundreds of new features in Vista, the most striking is the “Aero” user interface. Microsoft has replaced the gray bars and boxy windows of the past with a new interface to create a sleek desktop. Several changes have been made to make common functions easier to use. “Search” bars have been added to several popular applications and search results appear significantly faster than in older versions. Vista ships with “Windows Sidebar” software which offers small, graphical, specialized objects on your desktop to display information like stock quotes, weather and news headlines.

In response to the discovery of security holes in Windows XP, Microsoft claims to have designed Vista with security in mind. Users can be given defined access to their PCs, allowing them to be functional and productive without the capability to accidentally corrupt their machine. Vista includes integrated Windows updates and Windows Defender, an anti-spyware solution. Also included is the recently released Internet Explorer 7, which claims to prevent the

security and spyware issues that have repeatedly plagued previous versions of XP. Vista was released in four major versions:

• **Home Basic \$199**

Intended for home users without the need for advanced media support;

• **Home Premium \$239**

Contains all the features from the Home Basic version, with added features like HDTV support and scheduled backups;

• **Business \$299**

Contains all the features from the Home Premium version and is comparable to XP Professional. IIS web server, file encryption, and remote desktop are included;

• **Ultimate \$399**

Contains all the features from the Business version, with access to “Ultimate Extras,” such as Texas Hold ‘em, Desktop Background and Hard Drive Encryption.

With all the great new features included in Vista, you may want to upgrade immediately. However, since Vista is a major upgrade, some older (but critical) software will be entirely incompatible. Major compatibility issues have already been found with the recently released Internet Explorer 7 (which is included in all versions of Vista).

If the release of Vista is anything like other Microsoft software, early adopters will not only have to deal with incompatibility problems, but also a slew of bugs and security vulnerabilities. We recommend that business users wait at least a year before migrating to Vista. This will allow time for software developers to release Vista-compatible versions of their software and will give Microsoft adequate time to fix the major glitches that will be revealed as users implement Vista. ■

In-House News



The Technology Group, LLC Recognized by Microsoft

The Technology Group, LLC has been awarded **Network Infrastructure Solutions Competency** under the Microsoft Partner program. Microsoft awards this recognition only to firms that have proven expertise in the design, deployment, and customization of networking infrastructure solutions using Windows Server 2003 and Windows Small Business Server (SBS) 2003 technologies.

We also welcome some new client additions including:

- EMC2 of New York City
- Hartford Federal Credit Union
- Frank Fiore, CPA
- Regional School District 17
- Fair Haven Community Health Clinic
- Mental Health Assoc. of CT
- The Dodson Boat Yard, LLC

Computer & Internet Use Policy

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comprehensive Computer and Internet Use Policy. I would bet my laptop that one out of every two readers of this article do not have a formal policy - or they are working off an old policy that provides little protection from the risks and issues that have evolved and flourished over the last five years.

An effective Computer & Internet Use Policy includes:

- Prohibition of non-corporate Internet-based email accounts (like Hotmail or Yahoo mail) for company related subject matters;
- Prohibition of wireless enabled laptops without prior IT & Security department approval;
- Prohibition of Personal Computer equipment at the company without IT & Security department approval (this includes iPODS);
- Requirements for encrypting data on portable devices (laptops, memory cards, USB drives, etc.);
- No storage of company files on personal hard drives unless encrypted and synchronized with network;

- Requirement for prior approval of the installation of any software on any company-owned computing device;
- Description of permissible and unacceptable web sites and email content;
- Expectation of privacy statement (employees cannot expect privacy)
- Clear identification of the process for enforcement and repercussions to those employees who violate the policy.
- Signed acknowledgement and acceptance from each employee kept on file.

The above list contains only a few of the safeguards that should be included in an effective plan. It is not meant to address all the items needed. The list will differ with the size and type of organization implementing the policy. It should be "fluid," as new risks bring new requirements. This policy should be reviewed frequently for exposure and weaknesses.

With the right knowledge and experience, this is an easy and powerful document to execute. Set-up your policy today, and call Mark Torello at 860-524-4433 for help if you need it. Every day you wait is a day too long.



How to Avoid Technology Problems



Arising from the Daylight Savings Time Change

Mark R. Torello, CPA, CFE, CISA

The U.S. Energy Policy Act of 2005 extends Daylight Saving Time (DST) in the U.S. by approximately four weeks. DST will start three weeks earlier and end one week later (a four week longer period for DST)

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME CHANGES

Old DST started on:

Sun 04/01/07

New DST will start on:

Sun 03/11/07

Old DST ended on:

Sun 10/28/07

New DST ends on:

Sun 11/04/07

Unless certain updates are applied to your computer, it is possible that settings for your computer's system clock may be incorrect during this four week period. When those settings are incorrect, applications running on your Windows based computer may not display the correct time.

Several Microsoft products are affected by DST. Some

updates are currently available, with the remainder scheduled to be released through early March 2007.

Affected products include:

- Microsoft Windows
- Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services
- Microsoft Exchange Server
- Microsoft Office Outlook
- Microsoft Office Live Meeting
- Microsoft Dynamics CRM
- Microsoft SQL Server Notification Services
- Microsoft Entourage

Even with patches and fixes, Microsoft is warning people to be wary and suspect of meetings and appointments scheduled between March 11 through April 1 and October 28th through November 4th. They even recommend that users print out copies of their schedules before the computer fixes are applied. Then verify them after.

For additional information and specific product information you can go to

<http://www.ftgct.com/DST>

for the latest do-it-yourself information and up to date information on patches and hotfixes.

If you need assistance The Technology Group LLC can help. Please give us a call at 860-524-4400.



Nonprofit Accounting Software

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Software such as Peachtree and QuickBooks provide the capacity to report on only one class segment or cost center. In today's world, that is not enough. Nonprofits are likely to have to report on several segments or cost centers at once.

For example, you may need to report on Funding Source, GL Account, Program, Department, Location, FASB, Grant and Client. Within Peachtree and QuickBooks that is not possible, as you have only one segment with which to filter your reports. With QuickBooks you are unable to produce a balance sheet by class, and sub-accounts can only be used to a limited degree.

As a result of this limitation, your chart of accounts grows exponentially with every criterion you add. Since you cannot filter by reporting entities or segments, you must keep creating new accounts, and the chart of accounts in Peachtree and QuickBooks is linear. Therefore, if there was no room left for growth between account numbers when the chart of accounts was first configured, your account numbers could be quite sporadic.

True nonprofit accounting software such as Sage MIP

Fund Accounting provides nonprofits with the ability to report on an unlimited number of segments. Because the system uses a table-driven chart of accounts, codes are set up independently for each segment in your account structure. As a result, your chart of accounts is much smaller, and relevant entities are grouped together. Segments can also be designated as "balancing" to allow organizations the flexibility to produce separate balance sheets by cost centers if they choose to do so.

If you are finding that report generation is time-consuming and unwieldy, new programs, grants and cost centers cannot be tracked appropriately or you are spending more time customizing reports in Excel than in your current accounting software, it is time to consider making a change.

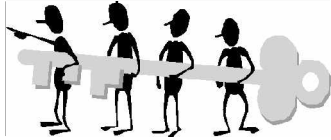
For more information about your options, and how we can help, please call Camille Livsey at 860-524-4465 or send her email at clivsey@ftgct.com.



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SECURITY CENTER

This column is dedicated to IT security and protection of information assets

Phishers Target UK & US Taxpayers

(Sans, January 2007)

Phishers have targeted UK taxpayers, sending phony email messages that appear to come from HM Revenue and Customs claiming the recipients are entitled to a refund. The email includes a link to what is supposed to be a form to fill out to get the refund. In a separate story, the US Computer Emergency Response Team (US-CERT) has warned that phishers are targeting US taxpayers. See information about protecting yourself produced by US-Cert, part of the Department of Homeland Security below:

IRS Phishing Scam and Identity Theft (and how to protect yourself)

(Produced by US-Cert - Dept. of Homeland Security - January 2007)

US-CERT continues to receive reports of phishing scams that target online users. Most recently, users have reported receiving emails that appear to be from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The phishing email claims to offer a tax refund and requests

users to click on a link to provide personal and possibly sensitive information. Identity thieves could use this information to further compromise unsuspecting victims.

A spokesperson for the IRS has confirmed that they do not solicit anything by email.

US-CERT reminds users to remain cautious when receiving unsolicited email that could be a potential phishing email. US-CERT reminds users to remain cautious when receiving unsolicited email. US-CERT encourages users to report phishing incidents based on the following guidelines:

- **Federal agencies** should report phishing incidents to US-CERT.
- **Non-federal agencies and other users** should refer to OnGuard Online, a consortium of federal agencies, for information on reporting phishing incidents.

Additionally, users are encouraged to take the following measures to prevent phishing attacks from occurring:

1. Do not follow unsolicited web links received in email messages.
2. Contact your financial institution and file a complaint with the Federal

Trade Commission (FTC) immediately if you believe your account or financial information has been compromised.

3. Review FTC's web site on how to protect yourself from identity theft.
4. Review the OnGuard Online practical tips to guard against Internet fraud, secure your computer and protect your personal information.
5. Refer to the US-CERT Cyber Security Tip on Avoiding Social Engineering and Phishing Attacks.
6. Refer to the CERT Coordination Center document on understanding Spoofed/Forged Email.

Hackers await iPhone

Robert McMillan (Courtesy of ComputerWorld and IDG News Service January 13, 2007)

Within hours of Apple's iPhone unveiling on Tuesday, the iPhone was a hot topic on the Dailydave discussion list, a widely read forum on security research.

One of the hackers behind the "Month of Apple Bugs" project, which is disclosing new Apple security vulnerabilities every day for the month of January, said he "would love to mess with" the iPhone.

Stay tuned as we keep an eye on these developments.



Portable Data Storage Trends



By Gregory Robinson, MBA

These days there are a myriad of options available to help you save and transport your data. As we have evolved into a "24/7" accessible society, so too do we need 24/7 accessibility to electronic information. Clients expect us to be able to address their needs, no matter where we are. Enter the age of Portable Data Storage.

There are several portable storage devices available; Floppy Disks, Zip Disks, CD-R/CD-RW and DVD-R/DVD-RW drives and the USB Flash Drive being the most popular. So, how do you decide which tool is best for your company?

Of the data storage methods still in regular use, Floppy Disks are probably the most well-known. We all remember the very large, floppy disks that evolved into the smaller, plastic encased "diskettes" used today. Floppy's have nostalgia value, perhaps, but it is time to move toward modern technology. Floppy Disks are slow, unreliable and out-dated. They are likely to be phased out over the next few years, so it makes sense to start moving to a more modern solution.

The Zip Disk looks similar to the Floppy Disk, but holds a much larger amount of data. While it gained some limited popularity when launched, it was surpassed by other options and never became a standard.

Therefore, it is unlikely that you will find a Zip Drive whenever you need one. In order to successfully utilize a Zip Disk, you will need to carry your Zip Drive along with all your other equipment. If that isn't enough to convince you that Zip Drives are not the best solution, be advised that they are also expensive to use.

In contrast to the aforementioned Zip Disks and Floppy Disks, CD-R (CD-recordable) and CD-RW (Rewriteable) drives are common in most computer systems. However, CD-R's can only be written to once, and CD-RWs are expensive, with a limited write/rewrite capacity. They are slower than the typical USB Flash storage device, and rather large, making them less convenient than other alternatives. There is a high probability that a CD you burn may be unreadable on another PC, they scratch easily, and they are not efficient when you are attempting to make small changes to large amounts of data.

Our recommendation? The best portable storage device for your data is a USB (Universal Serial Bus) Flash storage device. A USB Flash drive works off of the USB port, which makes it universal to almost all computers. These devices, about the size of an adult's thumb, can be plugged into any computer with a USB port. Almost every computer made today has at least one USB port – and some have several – making it easy for even the

least "tech savvy" user in your organization to save important information successfully.

For most businesses, the USB Flash Drive is the premium portable storage solution available. They are small, portable and hold a lot of information. The memory capacity ranges from 16 MB to 4GB – or larger! Factor in the size, versatility and reliability of these drives, and their price is more than reasonable. A 1GB USB Flash Drive (the equivalent of approximately 700 floppy disks) will cost only about \$45. Our recommendation is simple: if you don't have a USB flash drive, then purchase one today. Don't go another day without one!

If you need any assistance deciding which storage option is right for you, or determining the size of the USB Flash Drive you need, please call The Technology Group at 860-524-4400.

Revised Civil Procedure Rules Mean Companies Need to Retain More Digital Data



(Sans, January 4, 2007)

The revised Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, which took effect on December 1, 2006, broaden the types of electronic information that organizations may be asked to produce in court during the discovery phase of a trial. The new types of digital information include voice mail


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Companies Must Retain More Data

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systems, flash drives and IM archives. This will place a burden on organizations to retain the data in the event it is needed in a legal case. Section V, Depositions and Discovery, Rule 34 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure reads, in part, "Any party may serve on any other party a request to

produce and permit the party making the request, or someone acting on the requestor's behalf, to inspect, copy, test or sample any designated documents or electronically stored information - including writings, drawings, graphs, charts, photographs, sound recordings, images, and other data or data compilations stored in any medium from which information can be obtained ..."

For more information on this subject call 860-524-4400. 

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