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### Welcome to our 6th edition of Bits & Bytes!

After a long hiatus, a company name change, a rebranding of our business and the addition of new services, we have relented to the many requests to bring back our popular bi-weekly newsletter.

As a previous customer, associate or perhaps someone we've met at a networking event, we wanted to provide you with a short summary of technology news and events that may be of interest to you.

### WHY SERVER 2003 IN 2009?

Recently, we did an install of a Windows Home Server for a client, a scaled down version of a Windows Server that uses Server 2003 for a lot of its background technology. When told this the client rightfully questioned, why use technology from 2003 in 2009?

The answer for this can be a bit confusing given Microsoft's terrible system of naming server operating systems by the year they were in released. Server 2003 has seen many versions over the years, with improvements in technology and changes to its software coming regularly. While Server 2008 was released last year, the 2003 platform is still considered the most stable and successful platform for businesses of any size to choose for the networking needs.

Microsoft Server 2003 can handle moving files, databases and emails to a central location for businesses of all sizes, whether 3 workstation in a home office, or multiple server environments with hundreds of traditional workstations. It is tried and tested in thousands of installs and does not have any worries about being "too new" or "not really out of

### Boom! Crash and Fizzle!

The reliability of technology versus the sturdiness and stability of technology is widely misunderstood.

Ever wonder why your brand new cell phone drops a phone call?

Does your computer suddenly drop a wireless connection for no reason?

Does your MP3 player skip through a song once in a while?

These are all symptoms of glitches that are inherent to the advancement of technology.

By "glitches", I refer to the those unexplained seemingly random events that happen to knock our technology at the most inopportune moments.

The truth is that our technology is by no means the highest in quality. The affordable technology of today which includes mp3 players, digital cameras, micro or mini laptops, flat screen monitors, gps and smartphones all are built in mass quantities with a minimum quality standard applied because should HIGH quality be introduced, the costs of these technologies would surpass the average consumer's budget.

A good example of this is the mp3 phenomenon. Years ago when mp3 technology was only known to the "geeks" of the world, portable players were several hundreds of dollars up to the thousands. Today, with improvements and a whole market of

testing".



The Server 2003 system is also actually made up of several variations that are designed to handle different needs and environments depending on how it is going to be used. For most small businesses, the version of choice is Windows Small Business Server 2003 R2, which contains almost all functions any small business could need from hosted email, to user controls, remote access control, fax services, security and much more.

Of course one of the main advantages of Server 2003, is that with how many thousands of installs exist, Microsoft is making sure that there desktop operating systems of the future can integrate with it seamlessly and with no issues on configuration, or worries about legacy software. Windows XP Professional, Vista Business or Ultimate and the new version of Windows 7 will all work in this environment and take full advantage of what it can offer a business.



Similar marketing issues exist with the popular Microsoft Office suite which is now also "updating" its date. The most popular version still operating is Office 2003. Many people were hesitant to move to 2007 with the newer interface because of the timing of the release with Vista which made users skeptical as to its operation.

manufacturers in competition, the ability to make the units quickly and cheaply supercedes thoughtful and planned quality.

I am referring to the following specific circumstances that can make our technology quirky on occasion: **Solar Flares** - Yes, as in from the sun. Huge electro-magnetic waves bigger than our planet blanket the earth on occasion and throw our satellite and wireless technologies awry. Some days are worse than others but believe it or not, solar flares are monitored by the military and larger science organizations in order to assess their affect on technology.

**UV Radiation** - Another baddy from the sun, UV radiation that we protect our eyes from can also in the long term affect electronics by means of affecting the materials and microscopic optical connections that makes our equipment so small and portable.

**Electrical Failure** - Probably the most common glitch, is unreliable or failing power. Cell phones, mp3 players and handheld devices run on microvolts and microamps. It makes for small and convenient design but also means that a 0.01 volt difference in a failing battery can cause all kinds of issues on your handheld that a regular computer or tv wouldn't even notice.

**Dirt, Dust, Debris** - The 3 evil D's of technology. For items that are in constant physical contact with your skin, or have unsealed edges, seams, cracks or ports, over time filth from your environment can make things stop working correctly. In computers, its the fans that stop working that cause overheating, but in small devices, think about how many times you press your ear against the speaker of a cell phone, or whether your hands are sweaty during a workout while you scroll your mp3 player to the next track.

**Static Discharge** - Have you ever walked on carpet then touched somebody and the arc of electricity makes them jump? That little discharge can wipe your equipment out. With larger computers and electronics, there is sufficient grounding and buffering by way of physical bulk to absorb static discharge easily, but with small handheld device, the slightest discharge, even the smallest ones that you can't feel or see, can make your device "hiccup" when zapped.

**Manufacturer Defect** - Even though the brand new phone or mp3 player you bought is sealed, looking all perfect and shiny, has a sticker that guarantees a quality test and is in a shock proof, static proof, water proof plastic container, you have to ask yourself... if its perfect why does it

The truth is that 2007 works just fine and does have some features that did not exist in the previous version. Similar to their server packages, a new office is due to take advantage of the Vista/Windows 7 operating systems which will, no doubt, have even more features beyond the traditional word processing and spreadsheet applications.

If you have questions about how Fixmycomputernow.com can help your business with a small business server, feel free to contact us.

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come with a warranty? All products have warranties because the manufacturer's cannot guarantee that something, somehow, someday won't go wrong or is already vulnerable to defect.

**Wireless is affected by all of the above -** Wireless technology is SO cool! When it works. Many people believe that wireless technologies are the wave of the future, which is true but with wireless technologies that rely on radio waves which are affected by all of the things listed above to some degree, the truth is that wireless will never be 100% guaranteed to be stable.

Today's push for technology in higher level circles where uptime and reliability are paramount, redundancy is the key. All technology has inherent flaws and vulnerabilities, therefore having redundant backup systems in place that can kick in when the primary source goes down becomes the policy.

In fact, when planning for disaster recovery and continuity of a business, we definitively work on the premise that all the technology will and can fail regardless of what is guaranteed, warranted or historically experienced.

Sometimes technology stops. In most cases there is a clear cut answer as to why. In rare cases, the answer is so subtle that the effort in finding out why outweighs the cost of replacing the broken element. Our suggestion for those who will rely more and more on technology is to understand the risk of potential failures and be prepared as much as possible for those contingencies.

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## SOUNDBYTES!

In today's edition, I talk about: **Skype On the Road!**



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