THE END OF AN ERA

take action by new year’s eve 2013!

SCHEDULE YOUR MICROSOFT XP RISK ASSESSMENT AND MIGRATION PLANNING CONSULTATION TODAY BY CALLING PACT-ONE

866-722-8663

As you may have heard, Microsoft has long ago announced the retirement of its most successful software platform of all time, Windows XP. Effective April 8, 2014, Microsoft will no longer support the Windows XP platform in any way, shape or form.

WHAT THIS MEANS IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY RUNNING XP. This means any computer or server with Windows XP installed will be completely exposed to serious hacker attacks aimed at taking control of your network, stealing data, crashing your system and inflicting a host of other practice-crippling problems you do NOT want to have to deal with.

This is such a serious threat that all companies housing financial, dental and medical information are being required by law to upgrade any and all computer systems running XP because firewalls and antivirus software will NOT be sufficient to completely protect them (or you).

Workstations and laptops that run Windows XP will become non-compliant with HIPAA as of the retirement date. HIPAA Security Rule section 164.308(a)(5)(ii)(B) states that you must implement "procedures for guarding against, detecting, and reporting malicious software." Obviously if you cannot update your software to protect your systems against malicious software, it is impossible for you to comply with this HIPAA Security Rule specification.

Unless you don’t care about cyber-criminals running rampant in your practice’s server, you MUST upgrade any servers or workstations running this operating system no later than April 8, 2014.

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW. As Windows XP comes to its retirement, practices with software applications dependent on XP will feel the effects. Not only will Microsoft stop supporting XP, so can any practice management or imaging software that has versions still built for XP that they are currently supporting. The writing is on the wall and these companies will follow. Companies producing antivirus and firewall software will also have no reason to continue releasing updates for something considered to be dead.

Don’t wait until the last minute to plan for an XP-free practice existence. We fully expect to be extremely busy now through April 8.
This book is a MUST-READ!

If you want to prevent your personal or business identity from being stolen by a cyber-criminal, or to be caught in a HIPAA data breach, read this book! You will learn:

1) The top 3 ploys used by online identity thieves to easily gain access to your business and personal information and how to avoid them.
2) 10 sneaky e-mails used to steal your identity that you should IMMEDIATELY delete if they land in your in-box.
3) One easy, surefire way to keep your network and computers safe and secure from online thieves.
4) Best practices to prevent your employees from inadvertently giving away passwords and other “keys to the castle” to Internet criminals.

To get your free book, go to pact-one.com/identity or call 866-722-8663

Who wants to win a $25 Starbucks Card?

Here’s this month’s trivia question. The fifth person to respond with the correct answer will receive a $25 Starbucks card!!

The average human does this 15 times per minute:
   a) breathes in and out
   b) blinks their eyes
   c) swallows
   d) all of the above

Call now with your answer! 866-722-8663

What are you talking about?

The dental office and the interworking associated with this type of team environment are complex at best and indecipherable at worst. We, doctor and dental team, are challenged every day to do our best in an environment that is efficient, effective and stress free. As impossible as this may seem, I’ve actually seen it work and work quite well. Those dental teams who are the most successful in achieving excellence have 3 things in common:

1) Excellent communication skills.
2) Excellent communication skills, and last but not least,
3) Excellent communication skills. Just as software and technology must communicate flawlessly to prevent errors, the human counterpart in the dental office, the team, must communicate honestly and effectively to prevent errors.

Here’s an example: A patient presents to the practice complaining of pain on the upper left side, pointing to #2. The patient shares that the pain was first noticed 2 weeks ago and it has been getting progressively worse over the last 3 days. The doctor evaluates the area and tooth #2 does appear the source of the discomfort when a chilled cotton tip applicator is applied buccally. The doctor instructs the assistant to take a PA of tooth #2. The PA is taken and the doctor evaluates the image. The first PA taken is not of diagnostic quality. The doctor requests the assistant take another image. This second image is reviewed by the doctor and is found to be of diagnostic quality. The tooth appears in the image to have a very large interproximal carious lesion near the pulp.

What is the doctor’s diagnostic impression of this situation?... Pulpitis with hyperemia, caused by a deep carious lesion in close proximity to the pulp. So how is this situation communicated? The clinical record should include the history shared by the patient, the need for the film, that the films were taken (2 of them), that one of the pa’s was of diagnostic quality and therefore only 1 PA submitted to the insurance carrier for reimbursement, the doctors evaluation of the image, and the diagnosis. The fact that 2 PAs were taken should be recorded in the clinical record to track the patient’s radiation exposure but that only one was diagnostic and that only one PA should be submitted to the insurance carrier for reimbursement. The doctor or trained team member communicates this information to the patient (as limited by your specific state’s Dental Practice Act). The doctor shares the treatment recommendations and plan of action to the patient. The staff may provide the appropriate informed consents for treatment recommended for signature, with time allotted for the doctor to answer any questions the patient may have. A team member makes financial arrangements and schedules the treatment appointment.

The scenario described is truly a dance between doctor, staff and patient with communication being the choreography that holds the dance together.

Finally, all this information should be completely and accurately recorded in the clinical record to document what occurred and to set the foundation for the correct claims submission, and continued care of the patient. Doing so will help the doctor and team establish and maintain an environment that runs effectively, efficiently, and will reduce stress that accompanies a failure to communicate properly. It just may eliminate the question, “what are you talking about” in your practice.

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866-722-8663
WORKPLACE LEMONS
(and how not to be one)

According to Wikipedia “lemon laws are American state laws that provide a remedy for purchasers of cars in order to compensate for cars that repeatedly fail to meet standards of quality and performance.” No one wants to spend money for a car or other product that is defective or doesn’t meet expected standards. And no one likes to be disappointed by what they get for the money they spend. What if there were lemon laws for disappointing workplace performance?

As an employee who is paid by an employer to perform, what might get you disqualified as a “lemon”? In the workplace, they’re not called “lemon laws.” They are called dismissal and termination. And they’re bad for both the employer and the employee.

If you like your job, you don’t want to be replaced for being defective in the results you deliver. Here are four ways to make sure your work won’t invoke the spirit of the lemon law:

1) KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED. Every employer has expectations when they do business with you. Unfortunately, some employees don’t find out what those expectations are until after they’re not met. Meet with your manager to clarify your own job expectations. That includes where you should focus your attention, what gets priority and what skills you need to develop or improve. Priorities change, so regularly schedule a brief meeting for feedback on your performance to make sure you’re focused on doing the right things.

2) MEET STANDARDS AND, IF POSSIBLE, EXCEED THEM. The most valued employees are those who know how to add value to their work. To earn more, contribute more. The worst thing you can do, for an employer or a customer, is to over-promise and under-deliver. That’s a guaranteed strategy for disappointment. Consider these questions: What are you doing to exceed expectations? Are you willing and able to do a little more than expected? Are you unique in a way that your company values, or are you interchangeable with anyone else who could do the job?

3) COMMIT TO EXCELLENCE. Excellence begins with a mind-set. It is the commitment to focus your attention and skills to create something worthy of you, valued by your employer and worthwhile to your customer. Those who do only “just enough” often get by but they never get ahead. Employers appreciate not just the work that is done, but the attitude of the person doing the work. There is an old and familiar saying: “If life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” That’s great advice for dealing with adversity and setbacks. But if you want to be a valued employee and move ahead in your career, make sure your work doesn’t qualify for any lemon laws of low performance. Instead, strive to be a positive example of superior performance.

4) SEEK FEEDBACK. One way to assure that your performance is as expected or better is to ask for ongoing feedback. Don’t just inquire about how you’re doing; specifically ask about what you could do differently or better to improve your work. A rational employer will appreciate your efforts to assure quality and get better at what you do.

If there were lemon laws for workplace performance, neither you nor I would want to invoke them with substandard work. Aim to meet expectations, continually improve performance and become an encore performer in your organization.

Mark Sanborn, CSP, CPAE, is president of Sanborn & Associates, Inc. and idea studio dedicated to developing leaders in business and in life. Mark is an international bestselling author and noted authority on leadership, team building, customer service and change. Mark is the author of eight books, including the bestseller The Fred Factor: How Passion In Your Work and Life Can Turn the Ordinary Into the Extraordinary which has sold more than 1.6 million copies internationally.
4 HIDDEN DANGERS ELECTRICITY POSES TO YOUR COMPUTER NETWORK…
and one simple, inexpensive solution that will prevent them all from doing damage.

Is your computer plugged in? Do you use a power strip with a surge protector? If so, you are a heartbeat away from disaster and don’t even realize it. The same electricity you depend on to run your computer and network is also trying to destroy your data. Believe it or not, electricity is one of the biggest threats to your computer network, practice management data, imaging and the other data it contains. Here are four computer power problems you must know about and how to prevent them.

1) TRANSIENTS – Commonly known as surges and spikes, these are caused by lightning storms, wind, squirrels shorting out power lines, auto accidents, etc. Several times each week these spikes can travel up the power cord into your computer damaging everything from power supplies to motherboards. Conventional wisdom says use a power strip with a surge protector and you are safe. As usual, conventional wisdom is dead wrong. After several months, these surge protectors become useless having been zapped by the surges they were designed to protect against.

2) BLACKOUTS – Whether momentary or prolonged, the sudden loss of power can corrupt your PC to the point of not being able to start up again when the lights come back on.

3) SAGS – This is when the power drops below normal. Have you ever seen the fluorescent lights flicker for a moment? Then you have witnessed sag. Sags are more common than surges and are caused when equipment like air conditioners, blow dryers, water heaters, laser printers, copy machines and other electrical equipment are turned on or come out of sleep mode. A typical small office will experience 30 or more sags each day. Sags cause many of the weird and unexplained problems computer users complain about every day.

4) NOISE – Ever been watching TV and seen fuzzy pictures and/or white lines or dots when you turn on a blender or vacuum cleaner? This is the result of electrical noise. While a fuzzy TV picture is an annoyance, this electrical noise causes many computer problems including loss of data.

So how do you protect yourself from electrical problems? The most simple and inexpensive solution to all four of these hazards is a battery backup. The battery backup (also known as a UPS or Uninterruptible Power Supply) senses when there are problems with the power and automatically switches to the battery protecting you from computer damage and data loss.

Choosing the correct battery backup for your computer or server can be tricky. Having one with a battery too small is the same as having none at all. For most desktop computers, a battery backup with a 500VA or larger rating should be sufficient to keep you going through momentary power problems. Protecting your server requires detailed knowledge of the server functions and power consumption in order to pick the right battery backup solution.

IF YOU WANT HELP IN DETERMINING THE RIGHT PROTECTION FOR YOUR SPECIFIC NETWORK, GIVE US A CALL 866-722-8663

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