

Strobe IT – Ongoing Evolution

It has been a tremendously hectic and exhilarating first 4 months. However, whilst maintaining systems, we have been able to continue implementing our own systems to improve the efficiency of how we take care of our clients.

HELPDESK – In our previous newsletter, we informed that we were looking into this. We have finally decided to use SysAid. We found that this gave us the best solution for monitoring the problems that we had to resolve and offer superb functionality in a number of other areas. We will be tying this into our ‘support@strobe-it.co.uk’ e-mail system. Therefore, if for any reason you cannot speak to us, or if it is not a level of urgency to necessitate a call, you can simply e-mail and it will be uploaded into our helpdesk system. It will then be assigned from there.

WEBSITE – The Strobe IT website is going live and will be our web based portal. There will be a few tools and tips on it but, from a maintenance client point of view, will have a section where you can log into the helpdesk and view current issues to look at progress and also, add a new request or raise a problem.

SMARTBOARDS – Both, Robin and Steve, attended and successfully passed an Installation Training session for installing SMARTBoards, the interactive whiteboard solution. If anyone is interested in knowing about the capability of an interactive whiteboard, please feel free to ask.

Many thanks

Steve & Robin

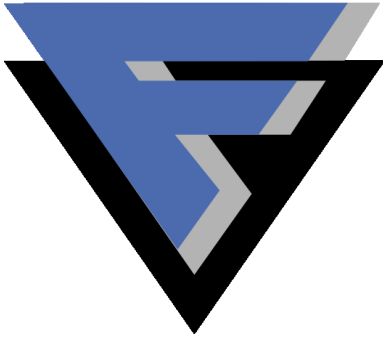
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F-SECURE[®]

F-Secure News

April 8th

Worming away on Facebook

Worms have also started using social networking. The latest variant of the Koobface worm spreading on Facebook steals your logon credentials for Facebook. It logs in, steals your picture and friends' e-mail addresses, creates a fake YouTube page with your Facebook photo and then sends an e-mail to your friends saying they've been tagged in a video on YouTube.

"When you get a message in Facebook from a friend, you tend to trust the message to be real. And when people follow a "funny link" to a video and are prompted to "update" their player, they easily fall for these attacks," Hypponen explains

"The authors behind Conficker are professionals. They have infected millions of computers, and could have done anything they wanted with them. The mystery is why they haven't done that. Not yet anyway." – Mikko Hypponen, F-Secure's Chief Research Officer

Apr 08, 2009:

Conficker story continues...

During the first three months of 2009, the F-Secure Security Labs have been dealing with worms, worms and more worms. We've seen the Conficker worm still digging away, social worms on Facebook and the first mobile phone worm.

Helsinki, Finland – April 8, 2009: The biggest malware story of 2009 so far has been the Conficker (aka Downadup) worm. However, Conficker has advanced features such as heavy encryption, a peer-to-peer functionality meaning that infected computers can communicate with each other without the need for a server, and the ability to convert and update itself.

Mikko Hypponen, F-Secure's Chief Research Officer says: "The authors behind Conficker are professionals. They have infected millions of computers, and could do anything they wanted with them. The mystery is why they haven't done that. Not yet, anyway."

Worms, worms and more worms

2009 has seen a lot of Worm activity. So what is a Worm?

A worm is similar to a virus by design and is considered to be a sub-class of a virus. Worms spread from computer to computer, but unlike a virus, it has the capability to travel without any human action. A worm takes advantage of file or information transport features on your system, which is what allows it to travel unaided.

The biggest danger with a worm is its capability to replicate itself on your system, so rather than your computer sending out a single worm, it could send out hundreds or thousands of copies of itself, creating a huge devastating effect. One example would be for a worm to send a copy of itself to everyone listed in your e-mail address book. Then, the worm replicates and sends itself out to everyone listed in each of the receiver's address book, and the manifest continues on down the line.

Due to the copying nature of a worm and its capability to travel across networks the end result in most cases is that the worm consumes too much system memory (or network bandwidth), causing Web servers, network servers and individual computers to stop responding. In recent worm attacks such as the much-talked-about Blaster Worm, the worm has been designed to tunnel into your system and allow malicious users to control your computer remotely. (www.webopedia.com)

If you would like more technical information, visit our Anti-Virus Partner on their home page:

www.f-secure.com or www.f-secure.co.uk



What you do not always see – Back-up?

Back-ups and changing tapes always seem to be a mystery to most people so they are generally scared of it and terrified if it ever goes wrong, but don't fear in this month's issue we shall give you an overview how most back-ups run and what they do.

Back-ups run to a set of rules and selections called a "job"; this job basically takes a snapshot of all your businesses data, and copies them to your backup media for safe keeping.

Back-up drives / media come in two main flavors which can be described as cartridges or tapes. The smaller one of these tapes is called a "DAT72 tape" which is the size of a cassette tape, while the other cartridge the size of your hand called "LTO Tape".

Most IT companies / specialists configure their back-up jobs to eject the tape after it has run (whether successful or not) making it easy for changing the next morning. Because of this most companies just change the ejected tape for the next one and all is complete unless your device is asking for a clean.

Strobe IT take care of all the technical stuff remotely like: -

- Checking the data fits on the back-up tape
- Alterations for bank holidays

Robin Toy

Business Networking

NETGEAR's range of secure wired and wireless business networking products are designed for businesses with up to 250 employees. Products include: VPN firewall routers for secure access to the Internet and corporate resources, managed and unmanaged switches and a range of network cards to connect any laptop or desktop PC to the LAN and Internet. All business products carry the ProSafe Lifetime Warranty.



Local Company – Global Partners

Strobe IT is pleased to announce partnering with Netgear, global supplier of networking and network attached storage equipment. Strobe IT are familiar with the reliability and functionality of Netgear products and are pleased to reaffirm this link.

- Microsoft
- Dell
- F-Secure
- Draytek
- **Netgear – NEW!!!**



News & Information

Internet Explorer 8

Microsoft has launched Internet Explorer 8, describing the new version of the browser as offering enhanced security and usability.

Enhancements over earlier versions of Internet Explorer include a privacy mode, added safeguards against malware and phishing attacks, and grouped tabbing.

Testing had shown IE8 was technically faster than rival browsers including Firefox and Google's Chrome.

However, the browsers all "rendered at about parity", and any differences were only measurable in "fractions of seconds".

Many of the new features in IE8 are already available in rival browsers. One example is the InPrivate browsing mode, which opens up a fresh window that does not store the user's browsing history. This feature already exists in Chrome and Safari.

If one tab in the browser crashes, it now no longer takes down the whole application.

A major new feature of IE8 is what Microsoft calls "tab groups". Related tabs, for example where one tab has been opened from another or both tabs are from the same site, are colour-coded to make their relationship immediately apparent.

So-called "accelerators" are also new to IE8. This feature allows users to select text on a webpage and then click on the selected text to bring up a list of possible actions, such as translating the text, using the text as a search string for Live Search, or looking for a selected post code on Live Search Maps.

A "compatibility view" mode has also been added. This mode can be activated for websites designed for older browsers, which may cause them to render badly in more modern browsers. (Source: ZDnet.co.uk)

Opensource / Freeware – What is available?

The simple answer to this is, 'pretty much everything'.

Opensource or Freeware software is a piece of software or an application that has been developed for **free** use. You do not need to pay for it. Some of this software is specifically based for only home use, and some products have been categorized that there is a cost for commercial use.

I personally currently use GIMP. This is an image manipulation program. A comparable alternative to Adobe Photoshop. Which is currently over £50.00 for the most basic of editions. GIMP may not have all of the functionality of the Adobe package but, it comes pretty close.

Cute PDF offers you the functionality to take any text or images, from any interface, whether it be your own documentation or to take it from a website, and convert it to an PDF document. This makes it much smaller for e-mailing.

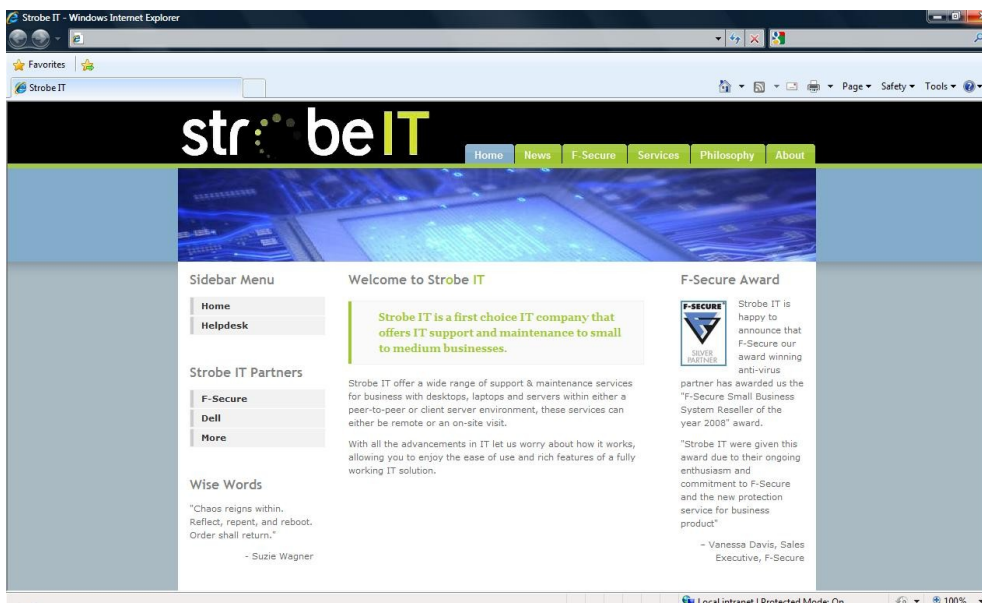
There are documentation packages out there which offer a free alternative to the Microsoft Office applications.

So the next time you want to perform a task on your PC and you do not have the software, it may be worth taking a moment to surf and seeing what free versions are out there.

They may not offer quite as rich features as the paid for versions but, if you only want to perform a one-off task, do you always want to part with your money?

Steve Welsh

PICTURE OF NEW STROBE WEBSITE ON IE8



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Future Support Improvements

SKYPE

We are now both using Skype as an instant messaging tool. If you have speakers and a microphone, you can also initiate a free telephone call to us. Taking that one step further, if you also have a web camera, we can hold a video call with you if that is necessary.

We can be contacted on:

steve.strobe-it

robin.strobe-it



If anyone is interested in using Skype within their infrastructure, please do not hesitate to contact us.

AFFILIATION WITH BESPOKE INSTALLATIONS

Strobe IT have known Michael Blake, Bespoke Installations for some time, and compliment each other with our skills. It was about time other people knew of his capabilities.



Bespoke Installations were formed in 2001 by Michael Blake of Tiverton in Devon. Michael had a passion for home entertainment and hi-fi from a young age. He took this passion and used it to build on his already accomplished reputation as an electrical contractor and found his niche as a specifier and installer of bespoke installations.

Bespoke Installations have relationships with the industry's leading manufacturers and are constantly reviewing the market to ensure that this remains the case for the future.

2005 sees Bespoke Installations join CEDIA as a full member, further reinforcing their credentials as a professional custom installer.

We deal with 'lifestyle technologies - that's technology designed to make your life easier . So let us make the technology do the work, leaving you to relax and enjoy it - wherever and whenever you like.

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