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News & Info from ...



Newsletter: Vol. 13, Issue 4 - August 2013

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QUOTE

"If it's complicated it's from ego. Spirit is simple."

- Anon

WHAT'S APP?

Weeds of Southern Queensland - The Weed Society of Queensland has turned their useful book into an app. The app contains photos and information on 132 weeds in Southern Queensland, and includes information on a range of effective techniques for weed control. Available for [Android](#) and [iDevice](#).

iMagnifier - I LOVE this magnifier! Magnify from 1x to 10x. Magnifies text - or anything else! - and the image is incredibly clear! There are a range of magnifiers for [Android](#) devices too.

EVENTS

Check here for upcoming online events, webinars and other interesting happenings!

Webinars/Events:

[Cert 1 Virtual Business Admin](#)
Sept 5/6 - Melbourne
Sept 28/29 and Sept 30/Oct 1 - Sydney
Oct 12/13 and 14/15 - Newcastle
Oct 19/20 and 21/21 - Sydney
Nov 2/3 - Melbourne
Nov 16/17 and 18/19 - Newcastle
Nov 23/24 and 25/26 - Sydney

6 Aug - SmartCompany Webinar - [Building a Powerful and Practical Strategy for Growth](#)

Ongoing Trainings/Workshops:

[Jump Start Workshop](#) - A whole day

WELCOME!

Welcome to our new subscribers.

Boy does this newsletter's quote ring true for me! What a shocking couple of months we've had dealing with personalities and egos - when really it should have all been about our collective goals. Don't you hate when that happens and everyone is taken off track and off task? Frustrating and emotionally draining for everyone!

If you feel like you're being followed on the internet ... that's because you are! Our **Tech Talk** article is reprinted from *Windows Secrets* and gives you tips for blocking tracking of your online activities. We also revisit the importance of customer service and include links to upcoming trainings and webinars. Plus the usual links to blog articles, podcasts and our **What's App** section.

Till next time have a great couple of months!

Virtually yours

Lyn PB

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Tech Talk - C is for Cookie!

(from Windows Secrets)

You're being followed! How to Block Web Tracking by Patrick Marshall

When you're on the Internet, there are good reasons to have that eerie sense of being followed.

By now, most of us know that websites can gather a surprising amount of information about your computer. For example, the page request you send to a site's server includes detailed information about your browser - not just which browser you're using, but the exact version, its configuration, and even the screen resolution the browser is running in. Other gathered data includes the page you came from, what document you're requesting, and - yes, your IP address.

And don't think you have anonymity just because your service provider gives you a dynamic IP address. At a minimum, visited websites can tell what service provider you're with and what city or region you are in.

Typically, the information gleaned by trackers doesn't include your name and street address. But by putting together all the collected data from page requests and cookies, Web servers can effectively **fingerprint** individual computers and thus track users across the Internet.

What many users don't know is the extent of the information now collected.

Good intelligence analysts might be able to figure out who's behind a computer by analyzing online activities, but for most users, the real danger comes from joining social-networking sites such as Facebook or Google+. By their nature, social sites encourage you to feed them lots of personal information - including your name and address. The social site, and any organizations with which it shares data, can connect the dots back to a specific individual - as opposed to a specific computer.

dedicated to setting up your VA business.

(Be sure to let them know you heard about the courses through eSOS when enrolling!)

So what can you do to manage or reduce tracking? In this article, we'll start by looking at the built-in controls available in the three most popular browsers. Unfortunately, though these user-configurable tools provide some protection, you can't rely on them to fully protect your online identity.

[Read more here](#)

BLOG

What's been happening at the blog? Latest articles:

- [Outsourcing 'bad' for business?](#)
- [The 'truth' about the Internet](#)
- [Tips for Staying Motivated](#)
- [Seth's Blog - Reality is not a show](#)
- [Putting the 'Social' Back into Social Media](#)

PODCAST

Prefer to get your info via podcasts in the car or while walking/working out? Then check out the Virtual Business Show!

- [Knowing When to Leave](#)
- [What do I Charge?](#)
- [A Question of Ethics](#)
- [Carbon Tax - Small Business Has a Voice](#)
- [Multi-VA Practices](#)

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Is Your Customer Service Letting You Down?

I know, I always seem to be harping on about customer service but seriously, it is **imperative** you get this right if you want to stay in business - particularly with the increase in the number of customers now heading online for their needs. It has been reported Queensland has some of the worst customer service in the country, despite it being touted as THE tourist destination.

It doesn't take much to treat your customers/clients with respect - and dare I say it ... gratitude. And as a business you *should* be grateful for them - without them you'd have no business. Your staff should be grateful for them - without them they'd be unemployed.

And don't forget your regular clients/customers. One bad experience and they'll be off like a shot. Even if you have a long-term, excellent relationship you cannot afford to become complacent. Treat every customer like they're coming to you for the first time. The better your service the more your customers will expect and the greater the disappointment if you let them down ... just once. You must be consistent - and your staff must consistently provide top notch customer service if you want to keep ahead of the competition.

It doesn't have to be hard - or expensive! A simple, warm *and genuine* greeting to EVERY customer from your staff may be all that differentiates you from the competition but will get customers coming back to you because they've been made *feel special*.

It could be more tangible - like offering after-sales service, an extended warranty or discounts for cash purchases. For service-based businesses how about a card on your client's birthday, or the anniversary of the day they commenced business with you?

'Thank you' is something we don't seem to hear much of these days - but as a business owner, failing to say it - regularly and consistently - to your clients and customers could be the difference between maintaining your market share and losing it to your competition.

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What Does Your Brand Stand For?

(by Seth Godin)

If you tell me about service and quality and customer focus, you haven't answered my question, because a hundred other brands stand for that. If you are what others are, then there's nothing here to own or protect or build upon.

Compared to what? Compared to all those that you compete with for attention, for commerce, for donations and for employees, what do you stand for? Are you one of a kind or even one in a million?

Hyatt, Marriott, Hilton... they don't actually stand for anything, do they? They can't, because they stand for precisely the same thing. Puma vs. Adidas vs. Nike... They all want to stand for winning. How substantial are the differences?

Make a list of the differences and the extremes and start with that. A brand that stands for what all brands stand for stands for nothing much.

From the Archives

In August 2008 we were talking about [surviving a recession](#) and [selecting a VA](#).

In August 2009 I shared some [dictation tips](#).

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