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News & Info from ...



**Newsletter: Vol. 9, Issue 4 - December 2009**

**Quote: "This is my simple religion. There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple; the philosophy is kindness. "**

**- Dalai Lama**

#### **In this Issue**

- WELCOME!
- Sending Files To eSOS
- New Blog
- Last Minute Gift Ideas
- Make a Difference This Xmas
- 2008/2009 AVBN Webinar Recordings
- Preventing Keyloggers from Grabbing Passwords
- Final Thought for 2009 ... the mousetrap
- CONTACT US

#### **WELCOME!**



Dear [subscriber-firstname],

The 'silly season' is upon us and we're about to wrap another year. Doesn't time fly? As you read this I'll be lying on a beach on Moreton Island feeding wild dolphins and generally taking my first 4 days off since 2006.

If you didn't follow our advice in the last newsletter about getting your mailing lists sorted out and your client gifts purchased, we've included a list here of great places to get last minute gifts.

We have a new way for clients to send us files securely from our website - see the short article later in this issue. There is also an article on keyloggers accessing passcodes - so if you're travelling over the holidays be sure to check that article out.

It's been a busy quarter with my sign up for the Virtual Author's Assistant course and learning how to use WordPress. Make sure you check out [our blog](#) for the new design!

From next year the newsletter may move to bimonthly to keep it a bit shorter and punchier. There seems to be so much to include each quarter that it may be best to bring it down to a more manageable size. Remember you can always view the newsletters online by following the link at the top of the newsletter!

Whilst the office won't be officially closed for any period of the holidays we won't be open on the public holidays and given the slow down over that time we're **unofficially** closed 24 December to 4 January. Clients are advised to check in for urgent work during that period.

If you are travelling over the holiday period, please stay safe and enjoy the break!

Blessed Yule/Litha, Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Posadas Navidenas and Eid al-Fitr. Enjoy time with loved ones no matter which holiday celebration you observe!

Virtually yours

Lyn PB

*PS: Don't forget: [click here](#) if you want to be unsubscribed. If you have a friend/colleague who may be interested in the content of our newsletter pay it forward and forward the newsletter to them.*

## Sending Files To eSOS

In addition to our FTP server for file transfer, we've now made sending of large files even easier. There's a secure file sending box now incorporated on our website. Just enter your email address, short message, and upload the file then click SendThisFile. We'll be notified the file is waiting for us in our secure Inbox.

You'll find the file upload box on our [Services page](#) under **File Upload**.

If you'd like to use this method for transferring audio and other large files just contact us for the password.

## New Blog

I've spent the last couple of weeks teaching myself WordPress in an attempt to make my blog more streamlined and fit with my corporate colours and image. I'm now ready to unveil it so .... introducing the new eSOS Blog which you'll find at the following link: [eSOS Blog](#)

All the content from our original blog has been brought across to this new one so none of the posts have been lost. You can subscribe using the new subscription buttons.

Let me know what you think!



## Last Minute Gift Ideas

If you didn't get around to arranging client gifts - or didn't follow our advice and have your VA do it! - then here are some great gift idea places to check out:

[Red Balloon Days](#) - You can either choose the gift or send a gift voucher directly to your client either by courier or email and they can choose their own gift. They are Australia-wide.

[Spirit of Giving](#) - Here you can shop by personality, occasion, or contact them and they'll put something together for you.



**Edible Blooms**

- Awesome edible arrangements - fruit, cookies and chocolates. Any occasion and delivery Australia-wide.



**MorishKitchens** - And they truly are! Great range of gift packs of nuts, nougats and hampers.

**Gifts Direct** - For great seasonal hampers and corporate gifts.

**Tassie Devil Diner** - for gifts that give twice! 100% of proceeds from purchases from this Cafe Press store go to the University of Tasmania Save the Tasmanian Devil program.

**Make a Difference This Xmas**

It's been all over the news so unlikely you've missed it, but the Japanese whaling fleet are on their annual whale hunt in our waters. Greenpeace have this novel way of sending a message to the Japanese Government - send an origami whale carrying your message.



[Send your virtual origami whale online now!](#)

**2008/2009 AVBN Webinar Recordings**

Just a reminder that the 2008 and 2009 AVBN webinar series is available now from the AVBN website. Topics covered to date (2008 and 2009) are:

Business Plans	Insurance Guide for the VA
IP/Trademarks	Dare to Do It (motivational session)
Search Engine Optimisation	Social Media/Community Networking
Year End Tax Planning	Time/Energy Management
Writing Press Releases	Blogging for Business
Responding to RFPs	Saying No To Clients/Setting Boundaries
Subcontracting Made Simple	PR/Media Relations
Scams	Website Usability
Goal Setting for the New Year	Step Into the Spotlight - A Guide to Getting Noticed
	Author's Assistants - an Overview

There has been an awesome response to the webinars with overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees - and from those who have listened to the recordings. You can check the feedback on the [AVBN Facebook Fan Page](#).

Recordings will be available on the website for just \$5 forever so if you are interested in any of the topics drop by and [complete the registration form](#) answering 'Yes' to the "Recording Only" question.

**Preventing Keyloggers from Grabbing Passwords**

(adapted from Windows Secrets Issues 213, 214 and 215)

Following on from last quarter's article on keeping your passwords safe, this quarter's article looks at keeping your passwords safe from keyloggers. Keyloggers are hardware and software designed to secretly record your keystrokes. According to Scott Dunn of Windows Secrets:

Even the strongest passwords can be recorded by keyloggers. These are software and hardware products designed to capture computer events and store them in a log file.

Keyloggers can have legitimate uses in business, or they can be perverted into collecting passwords for identity theft.

If you're using a computer you aren't sure is keylogger-free, how do you protect any passwords to sensitive Web accounts you may need to access? One option is using Windows On-Screen Keyboard app - an existing tool in Windows which lives in the C:\WINDOWS\system32 directory called osk.exe. It's accessible by entering osk in the Run command from the Start button or Start, All Programs, Accessories, Accessibility, On-Screen Keyboard.



This might be useful for preventing some types of hardware keyloggers from detecting signals from the physical keyboard. Unfortunately, the program provides no defense



against software keyloggers. Windows' On-Screen Keyboard sends information to applications as keystrokes, just as though you'd pressed the keys on a keyboard.

Another option is to use anti-keylogging software. However, anti-keylogging software - even if it were effective in its stated mission - wouldn't prevent your password from being intercepted by a *hardware* keylogger. The sad fact is, if a keylogger is deployed effectively, you can't detect whether a public or unsecured computer has a hardware or software keylogger - or any keylogger at all, for that matter.

Your best defense is not to use any untrusted computer to sign in to any site that contains banking or sensitive personal information. When you simply **must** take a chance on using a random PC, however, you can minimize the risk - if not eliminate it. It's a rather complex process of entering random numbers, upper and lowercase letters, removing some, replacing them and continuing this process till you end up with your password.

This procedure - called the revised Vesik method on Defending the Kingdom (see link below) - clutters the keylogger's log file with a series of click events and characters. There's no easy way for the intruder to know which characters are your password and which are random.

The key is to select and gradually overwrite gibberish characters with your actual password characters. Don't simply type some garbage, backspace over it, and then enter your real password. Most keyloggers compensate for backspacing but can't keep track of characters you select and overwrite. But as you can see it's a time-consuming trick and prone to error.

[Find the full procedure here](#)

It relies on the statistic that most hackers will concentrate on the 99% of users who type their passwords into computers at internet cafes in the usual way. Note that keyloggers can also capture text you paste from the clipboard - so no cutting and pasting your password from say a text file or a USB you carry around containing your passwords - and some can actually detect choices made from drop-down menus.

One freeware option that successfully evaded the All In One Keylogger product was Neo's SafeKeys 2008 available for free from [Alpin Software](#). According to the Alpin Software site, however, the utility's drag-and-drop methods don't work with all products -including the Opera browser.

No product will ever be able to guarantee your safety from snoops when you use a public computer.

Bottom line: accessing the Internet using your own laptop - on which you run up-to-date antivirus software - protects your passwords better than using a public Internet terminal or a friend's PC.

### **Final Thought for 2009 ... the mousetrap**

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. "What food might this contain?" The mouse wondered. He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed this warning : "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it."

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The pig sympathized, but said, "I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers."

The mouse turned to the cow and said, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The cow said, "Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap . . . Alone. . .

That very night a sound was heard throughout the house - the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey. The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it.

It was a venomous snake whose tail was caught in the trap.

The snake bit the farmer's wife.

The farmer rushed her to the hospital.

When she returned home she still had a fever.

Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup.

So the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient.

But his wife's sickness continued.

Friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig.

But, alas, the farmer's wife did not get well...

She died.

So many people came for her funeral that the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them for the funeral luncheon.

And the mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and you think it doesn't concern you, remember ---

When one of us is threatened, we are all at risk.

We are all involved in this journey called life.

We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another.



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