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News & Info from ...



Newsletter: Vol. 10, Issue 3 - June 2010

Quote: "You are receiving this automatic notification because I am out of the office. If I was in, chances are you wouldn't have received anything at all. "

- Best 'out of office' automatic email replies #2

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WELCOME!

Dear [subscriber-firstname],

Welcome to our new subscribers!

I can't believe the incredibly busy first half to 2010! Our 10th year in business has really gotten off to a frenzied start signing two new clients and negotiating with another two. I've completed three speaking engagements (The Australian VA Convention in March, the 5th OIVAC in May and The Brew MicroBiz Webinar in June), and launched Australia's first internet radio show/podcast for VAs and small businesses (see later in the newsletter for links!). Phew!

This newsletter we look at tightening up your Facebook security/privacy settings and cloud computing.

Don't forget, end of this month is end of financial year. If you need a VA to help you with getting your books sorted for the end of financial year be sure to [contact us](#).

Virtually yours

Lyn PB

*PS: Don't forget: **Click here to be unsubscribed immediately** if you have received our newsletter in error. 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**. You can also [click here to view this email online](#).*



Speaking Engagements Aplenty!

It's been a massive first half of the year! I was asked to speak first at the [Australian VA Convention](#) in Melbourne in March - and enjoyed presenting on *Saying No to Clients and Setting Boundaries*.

May 21-23 saw the [5th Online International VA Convention](#) and I was involved in a VA Hot Seats Panel, a VA Industry Leaders Panel and also presented on *How to Get - and Keep - Clients*.

June 1 I was asked to present as part of the [NSW Department of Innovation MicroBiz Week's The Brew Webinar series](#) on *Virtual Assistants - Your Invisible Right Hand*.

Presenting virtually is my favourite way to present - no costs of travel, accommodation and F&B! If you know of any organisations who need a speaker on any of the topics I've covered in the past please feel

free to pass on my details - you can see a list of past presentations on my [Media Page](#).

I'm also happy to present on other topics in my area of specialty - just ask.

Tighten Your Facebook Privacy Settings

Facebook is getting bigger and bigger and there's lots in the news about privacy being exploited in the social media network. This article from Scott Mace of Windows Secrets has some great tips.

In their hunt for market dominance, social networks Facebook, Google Buzz, and Microsoft Live are redefining what *social* means ___ and in the process, straining the bounds of personal privacy.



Facebook, the big daddy of these three, has made quiet changes to its privacy settings, ones that members need to understand if they are going to manage the distribution of their personal information.

I find Facebook useful, mostly as a way to stay in touch with a select set of my friends and former co-workers. It's not my public soapbox nor a window into my personal life, left open to the world ___ for that, I have blogs and Twitter.

As much as I like Facebook, it has a flaw that I'll never see in my blogs and hopefully never see with Twitter. It seems the proprietors of Facebook find it necessary, desirable, or profitable to change member privacy settings, usually with little notice to members.

In every case I can think of, privacy settings have become more relaxed ___ more open, if you will.

What's beneficial for Facebook, however, is not necessarily good for members ___ their personal information might end up in places they never intended. The world is filled with marketers who would love to know increasingly more about you. And if that doesn't concern you, the world also contains stalkers and hackers who might use that personal information toward evil ends.

You should take your Facebook (or any other social network) privacy as seriously as you do protection from malware on your PC.

Keep in mind that all the big social networks continually tweak privacy settings. This is not just a Facebook problem.

[Read more](#)

The Virtual Business Show Launched

In an effort to continue to provide new and innovative opportunities for virtual assistants and business owners to access information and learning opportunities, I'm announcing the launch of Australia's first podcast/internet radio show: ***The Virtual Business Show: What You Need to Know***.

The show is hosted on TalkShoe and you can subscribe to the show via iTunes, email or RSS feed.

The show can be accessed via the [TalkShoe site](#) or alternatively from my [Home Page](#) where the player is embedded and you can listen to past episodes right there.



The first two episodes have been uploaded now and are on the importance of continuing education. Please have a listen, and submit any comments on my [Show Comments page](#). If there's a topic you'd like to see covered let me know via that page and I'll be sure to source the appropriate experts to meet your needs.

New Cafe Press Store



Okay - so just as a bit of fun we've [opened a store](#) at CafePress where you can purchase eSOS items! T-shirts, coffee mugs, coasters, bags and notebooks! If you like the support we give and want to spread the word, this is a unique way to do so!

If you want your own CafePress store [click here to set one up](#) - or we can do it for you. [Just ask.](#)

Cloud Computing

You may have heard of the latest term - cloud computing or cloud storage. Basically this just means internet-based computing where access to documents, resources, software etc is shared and provided on demand. Your software and data are stored on servers away from your office and you access these from any internet-connected computer or PDA. Whilst 'computing in the clouds' has some advantages there are some inherent security risks. Recently OfficeWatch posted this [article](#) about cloud storage being a hacker's dream come true.

For a more in-depth definition of Cloud Computing see the [Wikipedia article here](#).

A recent article in the New York Times '[I was hacked in Beijing](#)' highlights some of the problems with storing your email or documents in the much-promoted cloud. In this case it seems the journalist was using a Yahoo online mail account which was hacked, most likely by the Chinese government or someone acting 'patriotically' on their behalf.

It highlights the downside of most 'cloud' storage - even in its simple form of a webmail account. Sure, webmail is cheap and easy to access, but it's also a security risk. You might not be 'of interest' to the CIA, MI6, FSB or Chinese MSS, but everyone has details online that they don't want others to see.

Cloud storage, is a stationary target for hackers that they can try to crack 24/7. That includes webmail and online document editing.



The makers of cloud storage have generally focused on accessibility and functionality , not security - much in the same way that Microsoft Office used to.

We now know that Google 'single password login' system was [hacked](#) back in January so that the attackers could have accessed any data in Google's cloud. That's not to single out Google - the same thing could have happened to another cloud system like Windows Live login.

Office Web Applications - the 'Office in a browser' coming from Microsoft falls into this trap. Once someone has hacked your Windows Live account they can view all your Skydrive/OWA documents. Microsoft does not allow password protected documents to be used on their new online service. That's a pity because password locked docs could be another level of protection against prying eyes.

Webmail and cloud storage is convenient but it's also accessible to others. Data stored on your computer isn't as available to outsiders, especially if you use the tools available to you in Windows like Encrypted File System, BitLocker, password login. If used correctly, your data is secure even if someone steals the entire computer.

What can you do?

What should they do?

[Read More](#)

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