

Rich's Ramblings for December 2008

Well, It is about time for me to document the trials and tribulations that I have been going thru for the past couple of months of not writing my Ramblings'.

Oh, remember! ***BACKUP BACKUP BACKUP***

This advice has been my motto or warning for the past 20 or so years. Never is it more needed than today. Remember, if you will wring your hands or cry if you lost some pictures or files that you really wanted to keep for posterity or your descendents, Please make cd/dvds of your important data so that when the inevitable happens, you will not cry.. <G>

With the Trojan and Virus people getting smarter and bolder, be careful when you either click on an attachment in a message or visit questionable web sites. Just remember that if one of your good friends, who might not be as computer savvy as you, could have inadvertently gotten a Trojan or Virus which then sends itself to everyone on their email address list. And they never knew that it was being done. SO, if you receive an unexpected attachment from one of your friends or relatives, do not open it, always as them if they sent you the file.

While I am on a rant, Remember that if you are the computer person in your household and your significant other is not a computer person and you are the financial guru, please write down all your userid's and passwords so that they can access what they need regarding your financial matters on the Internet. Banks and other financial institutions will not allow them access to your accounts if you end up deceased, and that has happened lots of times. Banking by internet is very easy and many credit cards, banks and others would like to stop the paper statements as that will be very cheap for them. But, if your SO can't access your accounts, it will take a lot of detective work and aggravation to pay the bills and such.

I have a small business client that failed to remember about clicking on an attachment and was rewarded with the dreaded "XP Anti-Virus 2009" What a pain in the rear to clean up. I was very fortunate in that I was able to save all of his data and get his computer back up in a short time. There is a program called Malwarebytes that really took care of this nasty virus. I also took his hard disk out of his computer and attached it to a clean computer running an Anti-Virus called Vipre. It was able to clean all the bad guys off of my client's hard disk and all was then well.

Available at <http://www.malwarebytes.org/>

Speaking of Vipre, I used to use Sunbelt software's program called Counterspy. I was very satisfied with its firewall capability in that it stopped any strange program from going out of my machine without my permission. And of course it stopped anyone from coming into my computer. I received a notice from them about a new program they were offering called Vipre anti-virus and anti-spyware. I tried it out after using AVG professional for a couple of years being satisfied with it's intercepting the bad guys. I felt that Vipre was easy to install and configure for the techi and the defaults for the novice were good. For less than \$30, I feel it is a

good value and according to the computer rags, highly rated for its low footprint and reliability. They have a version for unlimited home use for all your computers for \$49.95. To access this option, you have to select Vipre and Add-to-Cart, the next screen will give you the special option for home computers at the low price. Their prices are very reasonable and if you are a consultant, they have a partner option to buy multiple copies of Vipre for a discount. But for one computer the prices start at \$29.95 for one year of updates, which is cheap for such a good product.

Disclaimer, I am a Sunbelt software partner, although I don't make any money from them as I get paid for my time and don't sell software or hardware for a profit. I charge my clients exactly what I pay for software and hardware.



<http://sunbeltsoftware.com> is their web page.

Moving right along and preparing to catch some flack.

Based on a conversation with a friend's son who is a Linux Guru, I downloaded the 4.3gig of Open Suse. I am sure glad that I have FIOS for my internet service as it did not take long at all to download. Creating the DVD from the .ISO (that's an image of the DVD that your DVD writer will then create a bootable disk) was pretty easy. I took it to a machine I had spare and after about ½ hour, I was able to boot into a desktop. Because I started on the internet back in the command line days using Telnet, I was able to install Pine, the email program I got familiar with back in the late 80's. But the desktop (KDE) is a bit sparse and difficult to maneuver around. I think that Ubuntu Linux is more novice friendly but neither are still there Yet. Linux will never be mainstream until they take drastic changes in the user interface (i.e.. desktop) and make it easier to install printers, map drives to other computers and such. I have been testing different flavors of Linux for a long time and I think it is for the techi, not the general use public who buy a computer at local stores, take it home and plug it in and it works.

Rich Schinnell is a semi-retired OF that has several small business clients who depend on him to keep them out of trouble. He has been a volunteer for Capital PC User group for over 20 years and served as president for 3 years. Retired from the USN too many years ago and Vitro Corporation a while ago. He volunteers each week at CHI (Centers for the Handicapped) and enjoys it. They have their web page at <http://www.chicenters.org> if you're interested in what they do. He has written his Rich's Ramblings for over 20 years. Contact him at schinnell@cpcug.org or if you wish (during reasonable hours only) at (301) 949-9292