

newZletter

Ziptech Services December 2011 News

All I want for Christmas... is a shiny new gadget



We know it's been a tough and uncertain year but this hasn't stopped the team at Ziptech making a list and checking it twice before sending it off to the Big Man himself. We're all hoping that the economy at the North Pole is nothing like that of Iceland - because there are some big asks here:

Jim – I would like a Porsche 356 please. It's 50 years old, so not exactly a new gadget! I was silly enough to sell mine 20 years ago when they were much cheaper and I'm living to regret it now ...



Al - Audi S5 Coupe or a MacBook Pro. I need a new car and this A5 is elegant, pretty powerful and very reasonably priced. I think the MacBook Pro might be easier to post down the chimney though ...

Rad – If money is no object!!!! Then a cool electric super car!!! Any one will do!!!! But my favourites are the Tesla Roadster or even better... the Tesla Sedan priced at \$50,000.



Ammo – On my Christmas, cool gadget list is a revolutionary new wristband that helps track my food and fitness. It's called a Jawbone and there's been plenty of hype about it so I think it's one of those 'Christmas 2011 Must Haves' ... <http://jawbone.com/up>



Daniel Y - Some new Pioneer decks and mixer! Chuck some speakers and head phones in there and this gadget is complete! Well what did you expect me to say? This is the ultimate uber-party present...

Amit - My Top Gadget wish for this Xmas is a Pie Maker. I really like pie and I saw this on The Apprentice. Looks just the thing and it's only £14.99!



Chris - My gadget is this amazing espresso machine <http://www.keesvanderwesten.com/mirage-duette-classic.html>



just because I like espresso. (Maybe we can get one for the office if we ask Rad nicely enough?)

Gill – iPhone 4s – I've been suffering from phone love confusion all year – do I stay with my beloved Blackberry or do I join the 21st Century? I think it's time to take the plunge ...

Whatever your plans this Christmas, rest assured we will be here to provide you with all the support you need to keep your IT operations running smoothly.

Our Christmas office hours are:
Friday 23rd Dec 2011 - normal office hours
Monday 26th (Boxing Day) and Tuesday 27th (Bank Holiday) - the office will be closed
Wednesday 28th to Friday 30th - normal office hours
Monday 2nd Jan 2012 (Bank Holiday) - the office will be closed.
Tuesday 3rd Jan 2012 – normal office hours

Outside of these times we will of course be providing our Out of Hours support service for registered customers. If you would like to find out more about Out of Hours support please call Jim on **019 32 23 39 62**.

On behalf of everyone here at Ziptech we wish you a peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

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Jim Simpson, CEO

Jim's Journal December 2011

2011 – What a Year!

It's been a big year for all of us running a business – particularly a small business. Although 2011 has been hard work I'm pleased to say the results have come. Our client base has continued to increase in size and many of our clients have expanded steadily through the year. As a consequence Ziptech has grown.

We have increased the size of our support team and used the additional resource to improve the level of service that we provide you with – I hope you've benefited. The engineers that support you are now better qualified and more experienced than they ever have been – and there are more of them. Our support systems and our processes are slicker. Our Support Team now answers 96% of your calls within 60 seconds, we solve 30% of your problems within 1 hour and over 75% on the same day you log an issue. But of course there are problems that don't get solved that quickly.

And Your Top 3 "Big" Support Problems of 2011 Are...

- 1. The internet** – BT is rolling out its faster high speed broadband service. Unfortunately the work seems to have the same effect as roadwork's on the M25! Many clients have had their broadband cut off or it's been slow for an extended period of time. Working with BT to fix it is slow and time consuming.
- 2. Printer compatibility with Windows 7** – many printers will not work with the new faster 64 bit version of Windows 7. It means downloading drivers and setting them up again or even replacing the printer if it's too old.
- 3. Viruses** – This isn't new, but the bar keeps rising. We have started the process of rolling out the next wave of improved protection – you may be next for the security upgrade. We'll keep you informed.

Our plans for 2012 are to continue to work hard to outpace a possible recession. And if there is a no recession we should have a good foundation for brisk growth.

Jim Simpson



Radwan Khader,
operations director

Rad's Tech Tips

Creating a secure password

You've got one for every site and every application you use – email, banking, social media sites, CRM system. With so many password protected sites to keep track of it's tempting to use the same password for all of them or to make it so easy you can't forget

it (like using Password123). Unfortunately this compromises all of your data and makes it easy for cyber-attackers to steal sensitive, confidential information. Studies have shown that password security is still the weakest link in keeping data safe. There are some simple things you can remember when creating a password that can help protect your information.

Top 7 tips to consider:

1. Use special characters and numbers.
2. Mix up upper case and lower case letters.
3. Make sure your password is a minimum of 10 characters.
4. Be sure it's not something that can be guessed easily (postcode, phone number,

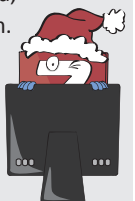
birthdate, your name, your kid's names).

5. Randomly replace letters with numbers or symbols e.g. 'shake' becomes \$h@k3
6. Pick a sentence or phrase and reduce it to first letters of each word only. E.g. 'A Golden Key Can Open Any Door' becomes AGKCOAD.
7. Reverse the spelling of a word, e.g. partnership becomes pihrsentrap.

Not all cyber-attacks can be avoided, but don't make it too easy for them.

Be proactive and update all of your passwords so they meet the above criteria.

Thanks, Rad!



The 60 Second Interview



Dan Lubbock
Systems Engineer

How are you spending Christmas this year?

Along with half the country we will be taking to the road and covering a lot of miles this Christmas – we have four consecutive days of full on celebrations with various relatives before me and Mrs L can return to Crawley for a rest! Unfortunately I've just written off my car so it's going to be interesting ...

Early planner or last minute shopper? I hate to sound smug but it's all done – admittedly not wrapped up but certainly all is safely gathered in.

What is the best present you've ever received? It has to be a bike that I was given as a child of 4 or 5 – I remember going out on it on Christmas Day in the cold and seeing all these other kids on their shiny new bikes too.

Earliest Christmas memory? It would be staying at my Nan's house when we all still lived in Norwich. I think I got a Karate Kid tape pack that year – but I just remember waking up to the smell of burnt toast – which is how my Grandpa always liked it.

What are your Christmas family traditions? Well we always put mince pies and carrots out for the reindeer and we have all our presents wrapped up in a pillow case – so when you wake up they are all there ready to be unwrapped. We never did much like the idea of stockings – can't get much in them ...

What does your ideal Christmas Day look like? Loads of food, presents, booze and sleep. Perfect!

Favourite Christmas film? It's just not Christmas until I've seen Elf. (Also quite partial to National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation).

What are you hoping will be in your Christmas stocking (or pillow case) this year? New car would come in handy? Failing that ... some DJ software for iPad would be great – my DJing days are behind me and have sadly sold my decks and vinyl but this software lets me have a tinker with minimum kit needed.

Christmas wish for 2012? That all people should leave 2 car lengths between them and the car in front (writing my car off is still very fresh in my mind). But on a more festive note...LET IT SNOW!



Top IT issues of 2011



IT Support Issue #1 - Broadband

BT broadband hit by power failure

BT is rolling out its faster high speed broadband service but unwittingly this work has caused huge problems with clients reporting that their Broadband has been cut off or has slowed right down. These types of problem can cause small businesses to experience revenue losses and reduced productivity. We now advise that businesses invest in two broadband lines.



In October a "power failure" at a major exchange in Birmingham saw huge numbers of BT Broadband customers across the UK cut off. BT estimated that those affected numbered into the hundreds of thousands - about 5% of its total customers.

One customer reported that the "best thing was the BT helpline advising customers to logon to BT.com if they can't get through on the phone - not easy logging in without internet!!"

IT Support issue #2 - Malware

We have reported on the rise of Malware a couple of times through our newsletter this year. It has certainly kept us busy with the rise in sophistication of some of the scams in circulation. In response to growing problem we made a decision to broadcast an email to all our clients every time we were made aware of a serious threat. Over the

past 8 weeks we've heard about the bogus Microsoft caller, the System Restore virus and most recently the PayPal account scam.



Malware, short for malicious software, is software written specifically to infect computer systems and cause some form of harm, or execute unauthorised tasks. It can include; computer viruses, worms, trojan horses, spyware, dishonest adware, scareware, and crimeware amongst others. Some Malware may just cause you inconvenience, but all too often causes prolonged computer downtime, or worse, financial loss.

In response to the heightened threat of Malware, Ziptech is rolling out the new wave of protection to clients which should be completed in early 2012.

IT Support Issue #3 - The Bitter Taste of Apple

With many people converting from Microsoft Windows to Apple Macs we've seen first-hand that these same new, Apple customers are also frustrated, disappointed and surprised by the experience. Making the transition from familiar PC to new Mac can be an unexpected nightmare.



Migrating From Microsoft Windows To Apple Mac OSX

The first challenge is making the Apple work on the company network as it's invariably a

Microsoft Windows network. The next challenge is taking all the applications and data across to the new operating system. Users are often surprised to find that their Windows applications will not run on an Apple.

Then there are the settings. Settings can't be taken across from Microsoft Windows to Apple OSX. Instead they need to be replicated as well as they can be. Our advice when making the transition is to over-estimate the time it will take to become acquainted with your shiny new Mac, understand that the move will require user compromises, a surprising amount of work for you, a clear diary and potentially some training.

And finally ... IT Support issue #4 - Printer problems



To sign off here's our favourite support problem fix of the year ... wish they were all as simple and straightforward as this one:

Caller: I'm having problems printing
Support engineer: Is the printer turned on?
Caller checks printer: Yep the printer is ... not turned on
Support engineer: Could you now retry printing your document?

Thereafter all printing problems were solved.



Mini News ++ Mini News ++ Mini News

Mini, one of the office dogs

No 4G until 2013: Is Britain in the internet slow lane?

4G is seen as the future of the mobile phone offering faster and cheaper downloads and now two trials are taking place in London and Cornwall.

However it will not be widely available in the UK until 2013 at the earliest and some of the web's biggest names say Britain cannot afford to fall behind.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-15863948>



Big rise in cloud by public sector underpins steady overall increase

Cloud is beginning to make headway within the public sector, while its rise within other organisations is continuing apace. Figures show that more than half of all organisations use cloud computing in one form or another. According to new research from the Cloud Industry Forum, take-up of cloud within the public sector has jumped 11 percent in the last nine months (since the last survey) and is rapidly approaching the halfway point where most public sector bodies have signed up for some sort of cloud offering. <http://www.cloudpro.co.uk/cloud-essentials/public-cloud/2247/big-rise-cloud-public-sector-underpins-steady-overall-increase>

Firms 'ill prepared for IT failure'

Almost three-quarters of firms and public sector organisations across nine European countries may not fully recover their computer systems or data after an IT failure, a survey suggests.

The report by IT group EMC said 74% were "not very confident" they could fully restore their networks. It also found that 54% admitted they had lost data or suffered systems downtime in the past 12 months.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12779201>

New Client News

We are delighted to announce that our latest client is The Stables which is a world-class theatrical and music venue based in Milton Keynes.

The Stables was originally set up in the 1970s by the world-renowned jazz musicians, Sir John Dankworth and Dame Cleo Lane with the vision to 'engage the widest range of people with music in all its diversity.' The Stables site now houses The Stables Theatre which includes The Jim Marshall Auditorium (with a seating capacity of 448) and Stage 2 (seating capacity 80 and 20 standing). Around 350 concerts and 250 education sessions are delivered at the venue each year.

Ziptech has been called in to manage a major technical refresh of their IT infrastructure and servers being used across hospitality, box office and the administrative functions of the business. We will also be providing on going IT Support.



InfusionSoft – new email carrier for Ziptech

Over the past few months we have been trialling a new way of distributing our email communications with you. We have chosen a package called InfusionSoft (you may have noticed the InfusionSoft logo at the base of some of these latest emails). InfusionSoft is a powerful marketing tool designed for small businesses that not only acts as a third party email delivery mechanism that boasts 99% deliverability due to its Spam scoring filters, it also helps lead generation by partially automating marketing campaign work and processes. We've found that it is a convenient and fast way to communicate with you and our prospects. Its reporting capabilities show us open rates and link click throughs so that we can gauge your level of interest in the items we're sending out and with this knowledge to hand we can improve levels of relevancy and quality.

If you would like to know more about InfusionSoft visit <http://www.infusionsoft.com/>



To talk to us about any topics in this issue of newz please call us on 0845 1233 942 or visit us on the web at ziptechservices.co.uk

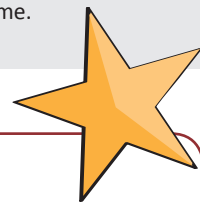


Client Anniversaries

December sees anniversaries for the following clients:

Hother Associates	5th anniversary
Prism	4th anniversary
Grosvenor Clive and Stokes	4th anniversary
Syntech	3rd anniversary
5 Essex Court	1st anniversary

Thank you to all of you for your continued business we look forward to working with you for many years to come.



And Finally ...

Toilet gaming technology targets urinal boredom

There is not much choice: stare blankly at the wall tiles, focus on shoes with face set in a grimace, or maybe whistle. When men use a public urinal they are cruelly left in full view, with nothing to do as they answer nature's call. Until now. British company Captive Media thinks it has developed a product that fills a gap in the market - a urinal mounted, urine-controlled games console for men. It calls it the first "hands-free" video gaming console of its kind. The sturdy device sits above the normal oval ceramic urinal bowl, opening up a whole new world of entertainment. The user is presented with three generous targets to aim for in the urinal: stickers in the unit that read "Start", "Left" and "Right".

The console is able to detect where the urine is falling by means of an infra-red device. And so a rudimentary "joystick" is set up. Read the full story...

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-15923438>

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P.S: We hope you like the changes we've made to the newsletter over the past few months. Please note that we are committed to using recycled stock for printing and mailing.

The newsletter will become one of our main vehicles for communicating changes and improvements to our services as we strive to increase the value we provide. As always if you have any comments or suggestions for content please email gill.frood@ziptechservices.co.uk