

Advice on Taming Your Unruly Computer and Learning More About Your Computer - by Allen Stein

Do I need a server?

Many business owners and key-managers read my monthly column. How do I know? - They tell me and they often ask this question: Do I need a server in my business? Eastern Connecticut has many small to medium businesses and some are operated from the owner's home. These businesses form a significant part of the backbone of our local economy. This column is directed toward those hard working people who often are neglected when it comes to technology information.

Actually running a small business is tough enough without having to make critical technology decisions without a technical background. Having a dedicated server usually marks the beginning of many productivity gains as well as better security for a business' valuable information and data. We Computer Tamers put together a list of ways to identify if your small business could benefit from a dedicated server:

1. You are running from PC to PC to share information.
2. You are sharing a printer that is connected to someone's PC.
3. Each PC has to be backed-up on a regular basis. (*Backing up business data is important and should be done often. Let me repeat this –business data must be backed up on a regular basis and that backup medium should also be taken off site to protect this asset. I've seen grown men and women breakdown and cry when their vital data has been lost.*)
4. You are using a router to share an Internet connection.
5. You are paying someone to host and manage your companies email.
6. You are emailing files to another person in your office so that they can view or use them.
7. Everyone is running antivirus and anti-spyware on their own machines, and they are each responsible for updating those programs.
8. You use a special application such as QuickBooks that has to be hosted on one computer and everyone accesses that PC.

If you can identify with one or more of these situations, you will likely benefit from centralizing all activity to a dedicated server. Remember, a server is a PC that is designed and configured to manage other PC's and share information quickly and reliably. A server can reduce computer problems while saving hardware and software costs overall.

Learn more about dedicated Windows server software at the Microsoft website or contact the Computer Tamers to schedule one of our free *Technology Assessments* and see if a dedicated server is what you need in order to improve productivity and reduce technology expenses. You are under no obligation having an assessment. [If you don't have a Computer Tamers Sales and Service Center near you, (of course you are missing out on the best service in the world) be sure to go to a local *computer service center* and don't go to one of those big-box stores that offer poor customer service and "pseudo-

value.” What is “pseudo-value”? That’s what you get when a store sells stuff that looks inexpensive, but overall and after everything is “said and done” you’ve paid a lot more for what you get in money and your valuable time.] The Computer Tamers have years of experience installing and maintaining server installations from the most complex and demanding to the most basic. A business without technology expertise is at a disadvantage today. That’s why there’s the Computer Tamers of Lebanon!

You don’t have to own a business to get help from the Computer Tamers. We Computer Tamers can diagnose your computer in most cases while you wait and we don’t charge for our rigorous diagnosis. If you bring in a laptop, be sure to bring your power supply/cord along with it. If you bring in a desktop or tower to be diagnosed, only bring in the tower; we don’t need the power cord nor do we need the monitor, keyboard or mouse. A free diagnosis is our way of helping our customers determine whether it is best to fix their old computer or buy a new one. For those computers that qualify, our *Complete Computer Care Program* is always the best and most economical option. Complete Computer Care is only available from the Computer Tamers.

Allen is one of the Computer Tamers who host The Computer Club heard every Wednesday after the 5 o’clock news on WILI AM 14. You can learn more about getting your unruly computer under control by visiting TheComputerTamers.com and explore the free information compiled there for you. Earlier columns are also available at the website. Be sure to visit the Computer Tamers Sales and Service Center at River Plaza, 75 Bridge Street Willimantic. The phone number is 860-456-1310. You can call us toll-free 1-877-456-1310.