



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



From

JAG Computer Service

2005, where did it go? It's been a fast and furious 2005, and it looks like we'll be revving into 2006 at the same speed! I've enjoyed working alongside my customers this year, and thanks to all of you for the referrals that have helped me grow my business.

Middle of the road would be a good term for computer technology in 2005. Operating systems, both server and desktops, matured and stabilized, making it easy for companies to implement new hardware and software alongside existing systems. Virus writers took a back seat to new terms in our computer dictionary, Phishing, Spyware and Malware. A day, maybe even an hour, doesn't go by that I don't get an e-mail telling me my PayPal account has been compromised, that my bank needs me to update my information on file with them, or someone from e-Bay is threatening to give me a bad feedback unless I log on and respond to their questions. Unfortunately, the major security companies have been slow to respond to these threats leaving room for too many people to fall victim to the hoaxes.

Linux continues to make headlines and inroads, still mostly in the server arena. Being a Microsoft only shop I am somewhat biased towards their offerings, but a recent study by Security Innovation found that Microsoft technology was cheaper and easier to maintain on the server side than Linux. They did a year-long simulated study, including starting on Windows 2000 and Suse Linux 8, then upgraded to Windows Server 2003 and Suse Linux 9. Windows Servers came away as easier to maintain, upgrade and manage when compared to the Linux boxes. The big news from this is that Microsoft has not taken the threat of Linux lying down, and has actually put the code to the road to make this happen.

Windows?!? To keep your employees productive and working, you should be on Windows XP with Service Pack 2. The next version of Windows, Vista, is due out in 2006, but we'll probably see it late in the year, August-September time frame, if not just under the wire!

What's ahead? Dual core processors are now a reality and will become the next productivity leap for desktops and servers. Prices were somewhat stable throughout 2005, and that likely won't be changing in 2006. The big push for most companies is to court the small and medium size business group as corporations continue to maintain or downsize, meaning growth will no longer come from the big boys, but from the rubber meeting the road guys!

The JAG Computer Service Mantra: Backup, Antivirus Software, Firewalls, Malware Protection, Spam filtering, Web Content Filtering, and now, Business Continuation! Have it and maintain your business and sleep at night. Without it, roll the dice and hope for the best!

Backup – Have it, use it, test it, secure it. Tape, external USB drives, backup over the web to a secure location. It's your data, protect it!

Anti-virus. Not an option anymore, a must have! Installed, working, and up to date. I used to be a Symantec supporter, but have recently begun working with Trend Micro and their server-client offerings. Very affordable, even for the small environment. There are still free versions of AVG and a new one, aVast! that work well and protect your system!

Firewalls. Hardware, software. For stand-alone workstations look at the firewall that comes with Windows XP Service Pack 2, or Zone Alarm's Free version (which is the last remaining free firewall, the others have discontinued their free offerings!). For a small or medium size business, SonicWall hardware firewalls are quite capable and can do virus and spam filtering on top of being a firewall!

Malware-Adware-Spyware. You still can't beat Adaware by Lavasoft for helping find and remove these programs from your computer. Use it alongside Microsoft's free Anti-Spyware program to keep your system protected. Don't forget a pop-up stopper!

Spam! It's becoming overwhelming. Cloudmark's Anti-Spam filter works great in a small to medium size business with their own mail server. They even make a nicely priced desktop version for end user clients! Get it installed today and get some of your day back!

Web content filtering. It's not just for keeping your kids safe on the net anymore. The web is an important business tool without question. So much information and contact at our fingertips. So much distraction and temptation as well. With content filtering firewalls and dedicated devices you can limit what your employees are doing on the web to what they *need* to be doing on the web.

Business Continuation. Backup is not enough anymore. You need to keep your business up and running, every hour of downtime on your server, critical workstation, or infrastructure is an hour you can't gain back. It's time to evaluate your business and infrastructure, look at critical points of failure, and eliminate or minimize them.

JAG Computer Service can help you with all of the above items in a cost-effective manner that works for your business. Make it your business New Year's resolution!

My annual letter to you my business partners and friends was harder this year than it has been in the past, mostly because I've been keeping you up to date via my website and my monthly postings! If you haven't done so, check it out at www.jagcs.com/um.html. There's lot's of cool stuff up there if I do say so myself!

Find time to give this holiday season, and then carry it on all through the year. We each have the power to make the world a better place, it all starts with a little bit from each of us, and before you know it, it's an overwhelming force!

My wish for you is peace and contentment this holiday season with much promise for the new year!

John Grein

Owner, JAG Computer Service

www.jagcs.com

jagcs@jagcs.com

303-637-9770

