

Radio Days – 2009-07-11

Tip of the Week – Check Your Backups 1

As usual this has been a busy week and, at the end of a long day, I decided to do a backup for my client. They had just updated to the latest version of MYOB so I updated all their data files. With all their MYOB data files and history files updated so that the latest version of the program, the final act was to do a backup. This backup used the old settings so it wanted to collect the old MYOB data and history files. I updated the backup settings and started again.

Still the wrong files were being collected so off to the drawing board. Their existing USB drive is too small for all their data uncompressed so, when they have some larger USB drives, I will create a working backup for them. Meanwhile they are saving the old versions of their files as this is better than nothing.

After doing every backup you should check that all your files have been written correctly and that they are readable. The best program that I know which does this is CDCheck: download, install and pay for this essential program. Run it on your backup medium (USB or external hard disc) after every backup and it may just save your bacon.

Securing Wireless Internet Connections

Wireless internet connections are just the thing for many families. They provide many access points to a single ADSL connection: one wire in and many computers can connect without wires. A potential problem is that many unwanted computers can also connect without your knowledge and completely wreck your budget with excess downloads.

The opposite can occur if you connect to somebody else's unsecured wireless network: they can discover your login name and password to all those sites which you need to keep hidden!

To ensure that you have the maximum protection available over wireless please have some encryption. The available encryption methods depend on both your wireless router and your computer, and include:

1. None: this is what many people have, and allows anybody with reach to use your internet connection.
2. WEP: this was the earliest protection, but is easily broken. If this is all the protection that your router and computer have in common then use it but change your password frequently (at least once a month).
3. WPA: this is an updated version of WEP and is much harder to crack. This is the one to use if it is available on both your router and all your computers..

For WPA to work it must be available on both your router and your computer. Please remember that everything you do will be an improvement over the previous level, but do not expect perfection as there is no perfectly secure network. For more information about wireless networking please see the website below as it has much valuable information.

Please remember that when an attacker has access to your network through your wireless router it is much easier to access all your computers. They can then use this access both to launch attacks, which appear to come from you, on other computers and to store unwanted material on your computers. You have been warned!

Websites

Comodo Backup	backup.comodo.com
CDCheck	www.kvipu.com
Wireless networking primer	compnetworking.about.com