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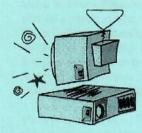
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Y2K Compliance - A Moving Target

Many business people are concerned about Y2K compliance and what it means to their business. While Y2K issues may affect many things in your office, we will look at two areas specifically - your business system server(s) and your desktop PC's.

Business system: Whether this is a UNIX based server or Windows NT, the issues are pretty much the same. In some cases, Operating System patches can be applied to your server that will manage the Y2K compliance. If you are within the current revision of the Operating System, the patches to manage Y2K are usually distributed free of charge. In many cases, however, an Operating System upgrade will have to be purchased to manage Y2K compliance.

Desktop PC's: Like business system software, some desktop software will allow you to apply updates for Y2K compliance of the software free of charge. In many cases you will have to purchase upgraded products to be guaranteed Y2K compliance. Many software vendors have Web sites available that discuss Y2K compliance within their product line. If you feel that you may need help in determining your desktop Y2K status, Copeland Data Systems can help you manage Y2K compliance on the desktop for a time and materials rate.

While this may seem pretty clear cut - there are some troubling issues. For many software companies, Y2K compliance is a moving target. Potential Y2K problems and new patches are surfacing weekly. Even products that were once defined as Y2K compliant earlier in the year are now only compliant with the latest update released last week. It is for this reason that many of your vendors may be somewhat vague on their declaration of Y2K compliance.

Making sure that your environment is Y2K compliant does come with a cost. You may need to buy software upgrades or spend time and money on investigating your Y2K situation. Don't be too surprised if you need to upgrade some of your desktop software or have to purchase the latest Operating System revision for your business system. Please budget accordingly.

In summary, prepare your company for the issues surrounding Y2K. Pay attention to your business system as well as your desktops. Time, money and effort will need to be spent to ensure that your business will be running relatively problem free on January 3, 2000. If you have any questions or concerns about your environment, please do not hesitate to give us a call.

Do I need Virus Protection?

The issue of the existence of computer based viruses is not a new one. These viruses have been around for many years now and many of you have some understanding of what they are and the damage that can be caused. While virus protection has also been around for some time, the need for virus protection has certainly escalated over time.

Previous to our society's recent use of the Internet, viruses have typically been contracted either through the downloading of files from a bulletin board service or through the use of an infected floppy diskette. Many of the users that managed information in this way were very well aware of viruses, and they protected themselves accordingly with whatever virus protection they deemed necessary. Many users who did not spend much time downloading files or moved files back and forth from a floppy drive never felt they had the need for virus protection. While these more casual users of a PC certainly may have acknowledged the possibility of getting infected by a virus, they often opted to "risk" the possibility of getting infected by not having any virus protection at all. The casual user, in the past, may not have felt they needed virus protection.

With the use of the Internet as a standard way of doing business in the office of today, times have certainly changed. With the marked use of Internet Mail and Web browsing to every desktop in the business, even the casual user has a clear need for virus protection today. A virus can be found in any downloaded file retrieved from the Internet. Likewise, a virus can be a sent to any user of your organization via e-mail. Most of these viruses are not initially suspicious. The user typically has no idea that they have been infected until it is too late and some damage has already been done. Even the most casual user of your organization can get infected easily.

In today's world, it is becoming more and more critical that every desktop user should be running some type of virus protection software. In addition, many servers should be running with virus protection as well. While there are many manufacturers of virus protection software, we do recommend Norton AntiVirus as a solid product. Norton AntiVirus is available in both desktop and server versions.

Buying virus protection software is the first step in ensuring yourself a virus free environment. You will also need to manage the update of your virus protection software routinely to make sure that your desktop has the latest virus protection. Please remember that new viruses are written everyday, so you will need