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## Monroe Area Federal Credit Union Says: “Tech Experts, You’re Our Guardian Angels!”

Monroe Area Federal Credit Union (MAFCU) has been a part of the Monroe community since 1948. The Credit Union was originally organized to service Kelsey Hayes employees, then the Ford Motor Company plant, and now services the entire Monroe Community. MAFCU is a non-profit, federally insured financial institution, owned by its members. Susan Bayer is the Credit Union’s very busy General Manager.

“In our business, we couldn’t operate without computers and the Internet,” said Sue. “We depend on them daily. There’s so much now that we have to do over the Internet, and through e-mails, that our systems have to be up and running all the time.”

The Credit Union uses ten workstation computers on a Microsoft Windows 2003 network. There are two servers that handle financial transactions and file storage for information the Credit Union employees work on day to day. “We use Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook every day,” explained Sue. “We have 10 PCs in our office, and whether it’s to type letters, send e-mails, or attend

training webinars, our PCs have to be able to perform at top speed.”

Sue said that one of the key advantages MAFCU has experienced since working with Tech Experts is super fast response time. “We had a crisis come up during the holiday season,” Sue explained, “and without any hesitation, in the blink of an eye, I had a tech listening to my concerns and calming down the staff.”

Sue explained: “I live by my PDA and my Outlook. On December 30, my Outlook file crashed. This was year-end for the Credit Union, and my Outlook is my personal secretary. My appointments, my contacts, and my daily work tasks along with personal appointments are stored in my Outlook. I gave Tech Experts a call, and explained the situation. They had a tech follow up with us, and sent a technician to our rescue – on New Year’s Eve Day! Tech Experts has become our ‘Guardian Angels!’”

“We like that the onsite technicians aren’t afraid to share their



*Cassandra Velasquez, Accounting Supervisor assists a member using her Lenovo workstation computer. The credit union processes hundreds of transactions a day, and counts on Tech Experts to keep their network up and running.*

knowledge, and that they take the time to explain what they’re doing to each PC in layman’s terms,” Sue continued. “Working with Tech Experts has given the Credit Union staff peace of mind. Our computers are one less thing we have to worry about, because we know Tech Experts will be there if we need help.”

For more information about MAFCU, call (734) 243-5700, or visit them on the web at: [www.MonroeAreaFCU.com](http://www.MonroeAreaFCU.com).

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**-Susan Bayer,  
General Manager,  
MAFCU**



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**Need help? Call the Tech Experts 24 hour computer emergency hotline at (734) 240-0200.**



## What Should You Blog About?

What is going on in your industry right now? Look for interviews given by industry leaders, tips, opinion pieces, research, news, and posts from other bloggers. Find out who are the main bloggers in your field, and then determine what new or alternative context you can provide.

These all can give you ideas for your posts. While you might not be uncovering big news, you should concentrate on generating thought leadership by stating your own view of what's going on in your industry.

**Be Alert:** Actively monitor your industry with Google Alerts, Technorati, and Blog-pulse.

**Get a Nose for News:** Keep on top of big issues with news aggregators like Google News, Techmeme, and Topix.

Then, go beyond the news and try to describe your own experiences, interests, expertise, case studies, etc. Personal stories can often resonate with your readers.

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## Should Your Small Business Have A Blog?



*Thomas Fox is president of Tech Experts, south-east Michigan's leading small business computer support company.*

By now, everyone is familiar with social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Businesses and business owners are flocking to these sites to promote their companies and their brands. And with social networking all the rage, blogging has become the forgotten stepchild of web marketing for small business. But this doesn't make sense.

Blogging can be one of the most effective marketing tools for the small business owner because it's easy to start, it's easy to maintain, and it's easy to leverage in enhancing your marketing mix. Here are some reasons why you should consider a blog for your company.

### Improve Search Engine Rankings

Google, Yahoo and Bing LOVE blogs. They're indexed almost overnight, and usually rank high in the search engine results. This helps you drive more qualified traffic to your website.

### Engage with Prospective Customers

Blogging presents a unique opportunity to engage in dialog with your prospective customers on a continual basis. Anytime a new prospect visits your blog, you immediately leverage the vast arsenal of posts, comments and writing to help sell your products or services.

### Dig Deeper

The pace of business is fast. Blogging is an opportunity to dig into a particular subject a little deeper without slowing down. You can write an extended blog post, or you can break up your thoughts into a dozen posts related to a particular topic.

### Improve Your Writing Skills

One of the biggest benefits to blogging is the opportunity to improve your writing skills. Ideally, you're going to post several times a week - frequent writing and editing means your writing skills will improve - which helps the rest of your marketing efforts, too.

### Be Unique

Let's face it - most business marketing materials like company brochures are incredibly boring. Blogging lets you put a little personality into your marketing. Customers and prospects get to see the real you, and

your uniqueness could be the difference between you winning the business, and your competitor winning.

### Listen and Learn

Read all the blog comments and email you receive, and read the comments on other blogs about your writings. Learn what your customers and prospects are thinking.

### Test Ideas

Innovation is the engine that drives business growth. A blog is an excellent platform to test thoughts and ideas in a risk-free environment.

### Become An Expert

Prove your expertise to new prospective customers with your knowledge and insights.

### Supplement Your Other Marketing

Support your other marketing investments by leveraging your blog for promotion, marketing and feedback.

### Get Subscribers

Many readers who like what you write will subscribe to your blog, providing you with a direct, ongoing communications channel with your target audience.

### Uncover New Opportunities

The more you blog, the more opportunities will present themselves to you. You'll gain a reputation as an expert in your field, which means clients and prospects are already sold on your ability to deliver results.

Tech Experts maintains two blog sites for our clients. The first, [www.ExpertsGuys.com](http://www.ExpertsGuys.com), is a blog written and maintained by our technical staff. It offers interesting ideas and timely technical advice based on our daily service work.

My blog at [www.ExpertTechTips.com](http://www.ExpertTechTips.com) offers some of my insights on small business computing with an eye toward growing your company.

We offer a blog hosting package, that will work alongside your existing website. For example, if your website was at [www.MyTechExperts.com](http://www.MyTechExperts.com), we could set up a blog site for you at [blog.MyTechExperts.com](http://blog.MyTechExperts.com) (or at any domain name you'd like).

If you're interested in learning more about blogging, or would like to set up a blog site for your business, please give us a call at (734) 457-5000.

**Need help? Call the Tech Experts 24 hour computer emergency hotline at (734) 240-0200.**



## Cautionary Tale About A PC And A Child's Imagination



*Robert Saylor is senior network technician and a hardware specialist with Tech Experts.*

Let's face it - computers can be downright aggravating at times. There is an old saying that they're "dumb boxes" that only do what

they're told and not what you want them to do. But some of the aggravations can be prevented.

I had a client a few years ago bring his system in because it was occasionally making strange noises. I started the computer up numerous times and it always sounded fine.

As a troubleshooting measure, I opened up the case to check inside for any obvious signs of trouble. What I found was obviously the problem. The inside of the case was absolutely filled with CDROM disks. It was stuffed full!

I removed the 20 or so music and video game disks and returned them to the client when he picked his station up. Was he surprised!

"There are all the CDs I have been missing."

My curiosity got the best of me and I asked him how they got in there. He had no idea at the time. When he asked his 2 year old son that was with him, "Have you been putting disks in the computer?" the boy demonstrated how he put the disk in the little slot between the CDROM player and the case cover. This sent the CD right into the case. His father explained his old computer had a slot you would slide the disks in and the boy thought this computer worked the same way.

Although this may seem like the strangest thing that could happen with kids and computers, my favorite happened shortly after this episode. It has been said the kid's say the darndest things, but they can also **do** the strangest things.

This client brought in her station because the CD player wouldn't open. I created the service ticket and placed it on the service bench. When the time came to repair the problem, I started the computer up and pushed the eject button on the player. The door tried to open but just wouldn't go all the way. I tried

to manually open the door and it felt like something was stuck in the player and perhaps preventing the door from properly operating.

This can commonly be caused by a disk becoming dislodged and jamming in the tray. I removed the player and shook it upside down to try and reseal the disk. Nothing that I tried seemed to help.

I then pressed the manual release and pried the door open and the tray came out - along with a whole bunch of animal crackers. It seems her little one had a new game he was playing.

He would open the CD, lay an animal cracker in the tray and press the close button and send the animal for a ride. After having done this to the point of filling the player, his game was over, the tray was stuck.

Needless to say she was not thrilled with having to buy another player, and I'm afraid her son may have gotten into some hot water.

If you're having any computer problems bring it to Tech Experts where our certified techs can get you back up and running quickly.

*"He would open the CD, lay an animal cracker in the tray and press the close button and send the animal for a ride."*

## Do You Keep Critical Passwords On A Sticky Note Next To Your PC?

We constantly struggle to get our clients to stop writing down their passwords on sticky notes by the computers. Obviously this is a security risk. Another bad habit is choosing really easy-to-remember passwords such as "password."

But admittedly, it CAN be hard remembering all of those passwords that are always changing. To solve this little dilemma, we're suggesting to our clients to stop using passwords and use "pass-phrases."

What is a "pass-phrase" you ask? They are letters and numbers put together in an easy-to-remember phrase such as "!YEAHGoBlue!"

These are MUCH easier to remember than a random cluster of letters and numbers, which means you won't have to write them down on a post-it note anymore! Plus, they're much more secure than using a birthday or child's name.

Pass-phrases can be built from anything, such as favorite quotes, lines from movies, sports team names, a favorite athlete's name and jersey number, kids' names and birthdates, pets, and so on.

Here's some other examples that would be easy for you to remember, but hard for a hacker or criminal to guess:

ILike!ceTea  
d3tro1tHockey  
Git-r-don3!!

T&lkingOnTh3Phone  
goneWithth3w!nd  
Detroit-R3D-Wings

All you need to do is be a little creative to get numbers, letters and punctuation into the phrase. All of the normal suggestions remain the same - don't make a password exclusively a birthday or child's name, and always include special letters and punctuation.

Since introducing this to our clients, we've found (believe it or not) they actually have fun doing this, and at the same time, are making their networks more secure.!

**Need help? Call the Tech Experts 24 hour computer emergency hotline at (734) 240-0200.**



## Contact Information

24 Hour Computer  
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## Bing, Bing, Bing! Microsoft's Search Engine A Hit!



*Ryan Seymour is a PC hardware specialist and the Tech Experts client service coordinator.*

If you haven't heard, Microsoft has released their own search engine in an effort to compete with Google in the search

engine market. Originally the search engine that was going to be called "Kumo" has been released and the name is "Bing."

Microsoft is off to a pretty good start according to the marketing research company that provides marketing data and services to many of the Internet's largest businesses, comScore Inc. Microsoft has improved their search market share by 1.7 points to 15.5% in the week following the release of Bing.

So what is causing all these improvements, and catching the eyes of the public? What does Bing have to offer that Google hasn't already thought of?

Here are a few of the features Bing has integrated into the search engine. Interface features, multimedia features, instant answers, product search, webmaster services, mobile services, toolbars, gadgets, advertising, and many more.

So let's talk about some of these features and what they mean to us - the end user.

The interface feature is one of my favorites, probably because it's so appealing to the eye, and got my attention right from the very first visit to Bing. The background image changes each and every day, taking you to the most remarkable places in the world, with vivid colors, and great angles.

You can even view the information about the subject of the image by hovering over the image.

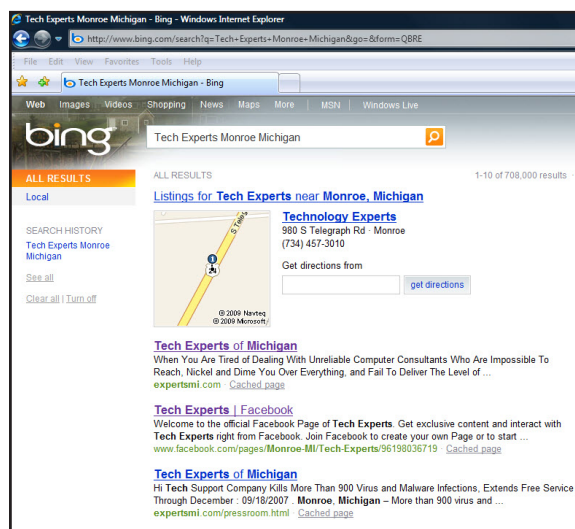
Video previewing has never been so cool. By hovering over a video thumbnail, the video actually will automatically start playing, and give you a taste of what the site offers, before you actually click on the result.

The image search is very impressive as well, allowing image searching with continuous scrolling images, with adjustable settings for size, layout, color, and style.

In addition to its tool(s) for searching WebPages, Bing also provides search offerings for health, images, local, maps, news, shopping, trans-

lator, travel, videos, and xRank. Most of those are pretty self explanatory, but what about xRank?

xRank is a feature that actually allows users to search for celebrities, musicians, politicians, and bloggers. You can read short biographies and news about them, and track their own personal trends and/or popularity rankings.



All in all, it sounds like a pretty good engine Microsoft has put together, but will it be enough to compete with the market dominator Google?

Google is the king of search, of course, but the problem with Google's results is that they're based solely on mathematical calculations, whereas Bing employs some artificial intelligence. Only time will tell. In the meantime, go check Bing out first hand via [www.bing.com](http://www.bing.com) and decide for yourself.

**Create new service requests, check ticket status  
and review invoices in our client portal:  
<http://connect.expertsmi.com/support>**