



## The Three Scariest Threats To Small Business Networks



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

While spam, pop-ups, and hackers are a real threat to any small business network, there are three security measures that you should be focusing on

first before you do anything else.

### Worry About E-mail Attachments, Not Spam

Sure, spam is annoying and wastes your time, but the real danger with spam is in the attachments.

Viruses and worms spread primarily through cleverly disguised attachments to messages that trick you or your employees into opening them.

Another threat is phishing e-mails that trick you by appearing to be legitimate e-mails from your bank, eBay, or other financial accounts.

Here are three things you must have in place to avoid this nightmare. First, keep your anti-virus up to date and enabled. This sounds like a no-brainer, but it's not uncommon

for an employee to disable their anti-virus software "because it bothers them."

Second, educate your employees on what is and isn't allowed on company computers, e-mail, Internet access, etc. One thing that should be on the list is that they should never open suspicious attachments or respond to phishing e-mails. We highly recommend creating an acceptable use policy (AUP) to teach your staff what NOT to do.

Third, put monitoring software in place to maintain the health of employees' desktops and automatically "police" employees from accidentally visiting a phishing web site, downloading a virus, or visiting questionable web sites.

### Fear Downloads Before Pop-Ups

Did you know that most computers and networks get infected with viruses because the user actually invited the threat in by downloading a file (screen saver, music file, PDF document, pictures, etc.)?

Again, this comes down to training your staff on what they can and cannot do with your company's network. Again, the best way to avoid

trouble is to remove temptation by installing monitoring software that will prevent employees from downloading or opening dangerous items.

We also recommend installing and maintaining a good firewall, which will block Internet traffic to and from dangerous sites.

### Lose Sleep Over Backups, Not Hackers

You are more likely to lose data from hardware failure, accidental deletion, human error, flood, fire, natural disaster or software corruption than a hacker.

Sure, you should do everything to keep hackers out of your network, but not backing up your data to a remote location is incredibly dangerous. At a minimum, you should have an onsite and offsite copy of your data, and you should be testing your data backups regularly to make sure your data can be restored in the event of an emergency.

So, here's the scary Halloween question for you: If you came into your office tomorrow morning, and your computers and server were destroyed or missing, could you recover your data, and how long would it take?

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## Common Problems With Printers And How To Solve Them



*Corey Bogedain is a network technician and web developer with Tech Experts.*

If you have to print on any kind of regular basis, you know how frustrating printers can be. Fortunately, most printer problems are a lot simpler than they appear and are relatively easy to resolve. Here are a few tips:

First, think about what has changed on your computer and printer since the last time you were able to use the printer. If nothing has changed, the problem should be easy to solve.

Check to see if the printer is on, you never know if someone during the day might have unplugged the printer or just turned it off.

Next, check the display on the printer if it has one. If it does not have one, then check for a status light. Usually if there is an issue, it will be blinking.

If it is blinking or there is an error code, then look in the owner's manual which should give you a list of all the errors that occur with the printer. Most manuals will also give

you a way to diagnose the problem.

A lot of printer issues are related to toner or paper and can usually be resolved very easily.

Check for obvious paper jams. There are usually a few covers that can be removed to help try to get the jam undone.

Most printer jams can be avoided if you flip through the paper before you put it in the printer. This eliminates static and clears any paper dust that might be on the paper.

If there is a toner issue, then it might be because either the cartridge is bad, low, or completely empty.

Almost all printers will give the computer user some sort of error message by either the display on the printer, status light, or the actual computer itself.

If the printer is a laser printer, then there is a toner drum that should be replaced about once a year depending on how much it is being used.

If your printout is fuzzy or faded, then this is a sure sign the drum needs replaced.

If there are no signs of issues with the printer then check the USB

cable connected to the printer. Most cable problems will say the printer is offline due to connectivity issues.

Printers can be connected to a computer via USB or parallel port. Check both ends to make sure the cable is completely connected. If you have another cable, it never hurts just to swap them out to test the cable.

If you have an ink jet printer and you get smudged or blurry images, you might want to look up the utility on the printer that cleans and or aligns the print heads.

Most ink jet printers either have software that can start this process or have a setting on the printer itself that can kick start it.

If your printer produces strange characters, it's likely that you have a printer driver problem. When a printer acts up and there are no hardware problem, the solution is often a driver issue.

A driver is a piece of software that helps the computer communicate with the printer. Drivers are updated constantly - be sure to check yours.

These are just a few problems that can happen. These should help a novice user start to troubleshoot typical problems with a printer.

### Did You Know?

**If you don't know how to open a certain file type,** go to [www.openwith.org](http://www.openwith.org). There you can search by the extension (.doc, .mp4, .zip, etc.) or by the type of file (video, document, etc.), and the site will tell you which programs will open that file.

**To delete multiple files,** click the first file...press and hold the Shift key...then click on the last file. All the files from the first to the last clicked will be selected. Then drag to the recycle bin. To select files that are not next to each other, keep the Control key pressed as you click on

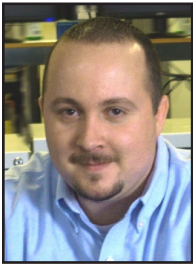
the files, and every file you click on will be selected.

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## Desktop or Laptop? What To Consider When Choosing



*Will Alston is a PC hardware technician with Tech Experts.*

Are you out shopping for a new computer, but are unsure of what to buy as far as a laptop or a desktop?

If so, here are some simple factors to keep in mind to make that decision.

### Price

Because of the higher cost of computer components and assembling them, a laptop computer will be more expensive than a desktop model with the same specifications.

If you are only going to be using the computer for basic tasks such as word processing and surfing the Internet, a laptop would be perfect for you.

If you are more into playing video games or running video editing software, a desktop computer would be suited more towards your needs.

It will have the memory to run those programs and the hard drive space to store everything.

### Space

It may seem like a contradiction, but while desktop computers are getting smaller, laptops are going in the other direction because of the greater number of functions they are being asked to perform.

A laptop is still more easily stored out of the way than a desktop. The laptop is the obvious choice if space is an issue.

The real question to ask is whether the space which the computer will

be occupied can be permanently sacrificed for housing information.

### Portability

If you are looking for portability then there is only one obvious winner here. However, it should be asked whether a computer is likely to get the most use out of it being placed in one spot or when it is moved around for use in different rooms.

If you are going to use your PC at

desktop model. Their very lightness and portability work against people adopting a suitable posture when using a laptop.

The name suggests they are more suited to being used sitting anywhere other than at a desk, which is not true.

A bad case of hand, wrist, back, neck, or eye strain is too high a price to pay for portability and style.



home, at work, and on business trips, then a laptop would definitely be the better value.

### Ergonomics

The most important thing is being comfortable while using your computer; especially if you are going to be using it for long periods at a time.

So a big question that you must ask yourself is "Can the existing area where my laptop will be used be made comfortable if I'm going to be using it for long periods of time?"

This can be a vital consideration in the choice between a laptop and

### Upgrade/Repair Cost

Laptops are less robust and more difficult to upgrade than their desktop equivalents. In general, your upgrade options for a laptop are limited to increasing the memory or replacing the hard drive for more storage.

Desktop computers, on the other hand, offer almost unlimited upgrade options.

An important thing to remember is damage to a laptop keyboard or screen will be much more serious than to a desktop because the vital working and moving parts have far less protection.



### Contact Information

24 Hour Computer  
Emergency Hotline  
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## Wireless Fidelity Expands Its Broadcast



*Ryan Seymour is a PC hardware specialist and the Tech Experts Service Manager.*

Every day, technology advancements are changing the way we live our lives.

From the way we communicate with family, friends and co-workers to the way we shop, provide healthcare, and even land that dream job.

Now, thanks to advancements in the standard known as “WiFi” or wireless fidelity, we can now add the way we watch television to that list.

A recent study shows that by the end of 2011, more than 20 million television sets equipped with WiFi connectivity will have been shipped worldwide to mainly North America, Western Europe, and a handful of selected Asian countries.

So you might ask yourself, “What is WiFi equipped television?” To better understand this new rising technology, we need to take a look at what WiFi is.

WiFi, which stands for wireless fidelity, is a communications standard that allows WiFi enabled devices such as laptop computers, MP3 players, smart phones, and soon televisions to connect to an access point (a wireless router or hotspot) which then connects your device to the Internet.

From there, the possibilities are almost endless as to what you can access.

TV industry producers now understand the power of this technology. They are also realizing how many people would love to be able to stream their favorite media websites such as YouTube, Metcalfe, CNN, Facebook, and MySpace directly to their television sets.

One of the big trends this year has been the rise of Netflix, (which seems to be why we’ve seen the fall of Blockbuster and any other video/media rental business).

Why would you ever leave your home if you could simply connect to a site like Netflix, or any of the other super popular media sites, and browse their thousands of movie titles right from the comfort of your own home, without having to leave the couch? You probably wouldn’t.

This is why giants like Sony, Samsung, and Toshiba are working closely with technology gurus to make what could be the next big thing in television. As of right now, the people who already have this technology in their homes are pretty limited to what content they can stream to their sets.

However, as this begins to boom in the marketplace, the evolution of full web browsing on your TV is something I’m sure we can look forward to seeing in the future.

## What To Do When You Drop Your Cell Phone In Water

If you’ve ever been unlucky enough to drop your cell phone into water, take some solace in knowing you’re not alone.

Dropping a cell phone into the swimming pool, bathtub or toilet is such a common occurrence that some cell phone manufacturers include a sensor that will detect if it’s been submerged in water, so users can’t return them saying they are defective.

If it happens to you, it’s important to act quickly. First, don’t turn the phone on until it has been completely dried out or you’ll probably

end up shorting out some circuits. Cell phone repair services recommend taking out the battery right away and wiping it off.

Shake out any excess moisture from the phone. Unfasten the screws and open up the device. Then use an electrical-contact cleaning spray or rubbing alcohol to remove corrosive moisture. When you think it’s completely dry, wait another day before turning it on.

There are a number of recommended drying techniques, but the key to all of them is to dry the phone as soon as possible.

One proven phone-drying method is to use a hair dryer set on cool. You don’t want to use high heat - that could cause even more damage to the phone.

Another method is to seal the phone in a jar with uncooked rice. The rice absorbs the moisture, but it does take a few days.

Most important: Make sure you always back up your smart phone! Most cell phone providers offer this service, and many phones come with software you can load on your computer to perform a backup using a USB cable.