

Tech Under the MoonLite

newsletter for MoonLite Techs

www.mltechs.com, 619-749-0688

On The Radar

It's Baaack..., and like scary movies its not good. *Ransomware is the name given to a category of software that maliciously attempts to hold your data hostage and will give you access to it... for a price of course.* Imagine leaving your house one morning and thieves come by and break in, but instead of taking your possessions they pack all of your valuables into containers with strong locks and leave a note for you that they will sell you the combination to unlock the containers. That is what this piece of malicious software attempts to do. **By encrypting your data files and holding the keys (the password) for payment they are demanding ransom and hope you feel compelled to pay to recover YOUR data.**

The name of this ransomware virus is called "**Cryptowall 3.0**" (and yes there was a Cryptowall 1.0 and a few years ago version 2.0) and it is usually delivered via an email attachment. Once the attachment is opened a program starts that begins to encrypt (scramble) popular data files on the computer it was started from and **any other location that it has access to**. When every location that it can find has been encrypted it will leave messages letting you know that everything has been encrypted and how you can **pay to retrieve the password** used to encrypt the files.

Since the password is 2048 characters long it is not likely guessable by a human or easily by a computer. If you don't have current backups you will be hard pressed to find unencrypted usable versions of your files. **Call today and ask for David and Let's discuss & implement steps to protect your documents, photos and other important data files NOW!**

Good to Know

Did you know that your computer's hard drive is like carpeting in your house and it gets wear patterns? Your programs sit like the furniture in the house covering the carpet and it rarely gets moved and the carpet underneath is good. **However your data are like people, they track back and forth every time you work on a file.** Just like the rug wears out from the front door to the living room. This is different than optimizing. Optimizing is like moving the furniture to vacuum thoroughly. **Refreshing your hard drive is like shampooing the carpet and it cleans and extends the life of it. The older your drive, the more benefit you get from this service.**

Portable Batteries, these are a road warrior's (frequent traveler) best friend they also have become quite useful for the everyday user. These essentially can charge your devices anywhere as you only need the charge cable of your device and plug it into the battery to charge on the spot, and because they come in many form factors generally the deciding factor is how much to spend and how much charge they hold (measured in mAh "milli amps"). **They generally range from a typical 1800mAh to 4400mAh or larger.**

These are great for charging those large-screen cell phones and even topping off tablets and other devices. I've even seen a few that have multiple ports so you can charge multiple devices at the same time. Having one of these in your bag will mean that you can be anywhere and top off or charge up your cell phone if you have to go for an extended day or can't find a wall plug to use.

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Cables. Although we are all looking for ways to eliminate cables you still need cables to charge and sync most electronic devices. I like to carry "multipurpose cables" meaning they have ends that connect to one or more different types of devices (smartphones, tablets). That way you carry one cable and a portable battery and you're good wherever you are.

Call me and we can setup you mobile "goto" items. So whether you're occasionally at the edge of the urban jungle or a true "road warrior" we can make sure you have the essentials for "long day" or "all day" computing survival.

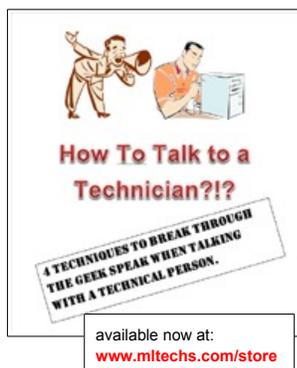
Good to Do

Identify your regularly used software packages. Create a file that has your registration information for each one of those programs. It's definitely better to spend some time doing that, then trying to find it in a crisis when you can't find a phone number, your computer doesn't work and you don't know the website of who makes that software.

Take a picture of your Windows license and your serial number and information on your computer, laptop or other device. Over time that information gets worn and unreadable. Good to have a readable copy now. I like the 1 gallon Ziploc bags as they hold a sheet of paper and all of the computer paperwork that came with your computer just fine and it helps preserve that information (I learned this from one of my long-term clients he is very organized and I loved it when I saw that).

Have a couple spare thumb drives or USB drives available. Previously it was always good to have some blank CDs or DVDs available but now a couple good thumb drives of at least 8 GB or larger is good for ad hoc use. Especially when you goto a print center like Staples or FedEx.

Every 3-5 years replace the power-strips that everything is plugged into. You do have to untangle that snake behind the computer by then, but it's a peace of mind item knowing that you don't have a problem with shorted extensions. I bit the bullet and bought one of those long strips that have 12 (yes 12!!) plugs on it. Its also about 4ft long though. LOL!!



Q&A - Why does my computer / phone / tablet get slower is that a built in obsolescence feature?

Any device that gets updates will get slower over time. When you bought it, lets assume that you bought a current device. All programs were designed to run on it and it handled those programs well. Over time the programs you use are updated to add new features and security protections as well as the operating system (OS) that it was shipped with. When it was designed to handle 20 things security updates might have it handling 30 new things and the same goes for each program. **Over time it's doing more than the hardware was designed for, thus it's slower.**

Give me a call right now at 619-749-0688, and let's work on YOUR issues. If your talking tech you should be talking to me!! I wrote the book on it.