

# Medical Office Systems, LLC

## January 2010 Newsletter

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### Ten Resolutions for 2010

Here are my Top Ten computer-related resolutions for 2010, in order of importance. If you need more details or wish to discuss options for your office, please call me 630-852-1736. I hope everyone has a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

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### Ten Resolutions for 2010

#### #1 – An Offsite Backup Strategy

If your home or office was destroyed in a disaster, or if your computers were stolen or a hard drive crashes, would you have a copy of your computer data? If your answer is anything but “yes”, you need an offsite backup strategy. Going beyond critical business data, with the advent of iTunes, digital cameras and movies, you have a lot of time and money invested in digital content that is **not replaceable** if lost. Offsite backup can take many forms, but regardless whether it’s online or local, make sure you have a regular backup strategy in place.

#### #2 – Battery Backup Protection

Along with protecting your data from loss by disaster, you also need to protect it from loss due to power outage. An Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) protects your computer and network equipment from both power surge and power loss. Either can be devastating to your computer’s hard drive, as any fluctuation in voltage could cause the hard disk to fail. Every PC and network device should be power-protected, including routers, switches, and modems. If this sounds expensive, see resolution # 6 for a simple way to save money...

#### “Triple Play” #1 - Reduce Virus, Spyware, and Malware threats

Viruses... Not one of my favorite topics, although I must admit when I remove an infection, I do get a sense of fulfillment and victory over the forces of evil, so to speak. Here’s a “triple play” of steps to prevent infections:

#### #3 – Make sure your version of Windows or Mac OS-X is up to date

All anti-Virus products have one weakness: if the underlying operating system has a security hole or vulnerability, your Anti-Virus program cannot fix it. The operating system needs to be patched regularly. Fortunately this is easy to do, just set your computer’s update mechanism to auto-update.

#### #4 – Make sure your Anti-Virus is up to date

Most anti-virus products have an auto-update mechanism to stay current. However, if your subscription has expired or your computer is offline, you will not get updates. Check your Anti-Virus products monthly to be safe.

#### #5 – Filter your web traffic

Recent viruses and malware can come in even through legitimate, otherwise respectable web sites, much less the usual suspects like Facebook, MySpace, gambling, email, gaming, or music sharing. Why risk an entire network of computers when you can upgrade your basic router/firewall to a more sophisticated **traffic-filtering** firewall. Traffic-filtering firewalls inspect the web traffic and prevent threats before they hit any of your PCs.

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## "Triple Play" #2 - Reduce the need for Power and UPSs

Recognizing that Resolution #2 of a UPS on every device is pricey, logic says to reduce the need for them. The next "triple play" of resolutions will describe how to do it.

## #6 – Replace desktop PC's with units that have integrated UPSs.

Sorry, that's a trick - I'm really talking about Laptop computers. Indeed, laptops come with their own built-in batteries, so by default you have a UPS built-in and ready to go. Fortunately, laptop prices are dropping, and the speeds and capabilities approach or equal that of most desktops.

## #7 – Reduce "Phantom Power"

If you don't need your printers to be on overnight, put them on a timer to shut off at night / start up in the morning. If you don't need your PC to be powered up overnight or weekends, you can set a scheduler task to shut down your computer on a regular schedule.

## #8 – Replace traditional network switches with POE switches

Power-Over-Ethernet (POE) network devices reduce the need for multiple UPS units. The network cable carries the low-power voltage to remote network devices from a master unit, so you only need one UPS for all devices.

## #9 – Upgrade to Windows 7

Windows XP is approaching the nine-year-old mark. If your computer is 3 or fewer years old, it's a great candidate for upgrading to Windows 7. Microsoft has a free Windows7 compatibility checker that will tell you if your computer hardware and software is Windows 7 compatible. Find it at at: [www.microsoft.com/downloads/](http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/). Scroll down the page to find the "Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor" link.

## #10 – Upgrade your old application software

Are you still using software with "\_\_\_98" or "\_\_\_2000" in the title? If you are, it's also time to upgrade your software. Yes, there may be some learning curve to adapt to new menus, but the new features in the latest software version are truly amazing, and incorporate more web-enabled functions that make life easier.

## Bonus Resolution: A new Internet Service

By now you should have seen the new television ads for Clear Wire. I have mentioned it before, but with the Chicago rollout complete, the service is now fully operational. Clear Wire is an all-wireless, high-speed internet service that reaches many areas that DSL and even Cable do not, and at a lower price per month. If you have been dissatisfied with your internet provider, you now have an alternative!

Hopefully, these resolutions will inspire you to fill in some gaps in your computers or network. If you need more information or help implementing any of these resolutions, please call me at 630-852-1736 for more details.