

MC Connect

“Insider Tips to Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, and More Profitably”

The Phone Company Hates Me!

Why? Because I can show you how to cut them out of the equation, buy a brand new phone system, and still have money left over.



About 7 years ago I was discussing the rise of cell phones with my wife. I love to pretend I have a crystal ball in my head, so I said something like, “Soon, regular phones will go away. Everyone will have a cell phone, and home phones will be a thing of the past.” I was wrong, at least about my own household.

I still have a landline at my house. I’ve tried to get rid of it. I call the phone company, tell them to cancel the service, and they say something like, “Well, Mr. Shelley, if we cancel your phone service, you will lose the bundle pricing.” The end result? My price goes up. The phone company will actually charge me money to turn off my home phone. I don’t know for a fact that this is still the case; I stopped asking a while back. Besides, the home phone is a great “spam” filter. I give out that number to people I don’t want to talk to. I can’t remember the last time I checked voice mail on that thing.

So why does the phone company insist that I keep my phone? I don’t know for sure. My personal theory is that they know they are fighting a losing battle and just can’t bring themselves to face reality.

What’s the point? I think the phone companies know they are facing another losing battle with business phone services. PRIs and POTS lines are a thing of the past. Maybe not yet, but they



“As a business owner, you don’t have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That’s where we shine! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!”

- Justin Shelley, Master Computing

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“JUST THINK OF IT AS IF YOU’RE READING A LONG TEXT-MESSAGE.”

are fading fast. There is one major difference: they haven't started giving them away for free yet. POTs lines run in the neighborhood of \$50/month *each* and PRI lines can cost between \$500 and \$1,000/month.

Now for the fun part — let me show you how to get a brand new phone system with full computer integration and more features than you know what to do with (but still very simple to use) without paying a penny out of pocket. I'll work with a sample setup of 20 users and 8 POTS lines. With taxes and long distance charges, the monthly cost for the POTS lines will be around \$500. The cost for SIP trunks (the replacement to the old-fashioned POTS lines) is around \$150/month (including long-distance). So that's an immediate savings of \$350. A new phone system with 20 handsets comes in under \$10,000 including installation and setup. Put that on a 60-month lease and you'll end up with a payment of \$241. Subtract that amount from your savings of \$350 and you end up pocketing \$110/month. Just for fun, add that savings up over the course of your 5-year lease and you will make \$6,600 for your "troubles".

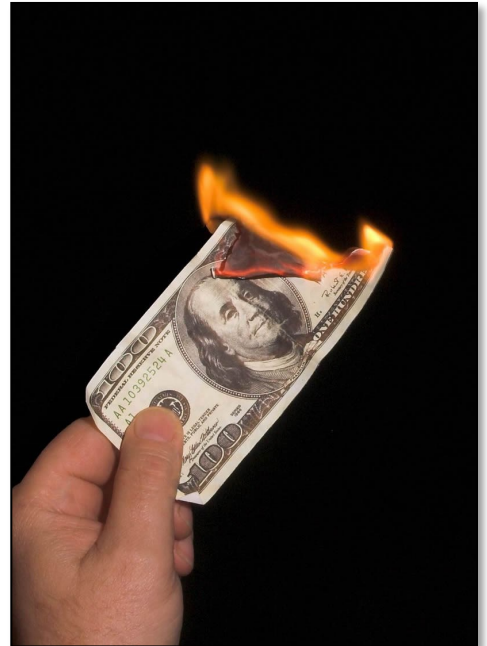
One word of caution: these phone systems are *not* for everyone. I have prepared a very simple test to see if they are a good fit for you. Pull a \$100 bill out of your wallet. You do have a \$100 bill in your wallet, right? Good. Hold it in your left hand. With your right hand, strike a match and hold it right next to Benjamin's face. With your money going up in smoke, see if you can stand there calmly, with a smile on your face. If you flinch, or say one swear word, you need a new phone system. Otherwise, you're probably fine right where you are.

So assuming you failed the Benjamin test, here are a few of the features and benefits that will accompany the extra cash in your pocket.

- **Computer Integration** Voice mail sent to email; dial phone numbers directly from websites, documents, or applications; incoming calls can automatically pop up client information; transfer calls using your computer with drag-and-drop feature; record phone calls and save them to your hard drive.
- **Easy to Scale/Grow** Adding lines involves a quick license upgrade and can be handled in minutes. New handsets do not require additional licensing. Simply plug them in, configure the user account, and you're ready to go.
- **Mobile Friendly** Work from anywhere. I have a handset at the office, another (with the same extension number) at my home office, and the mobile app on my smartphone. I can answer calls from anywhere, and the caller never knows the difference.
- **Multiple Locations** Connect multiple offices together as one unit. Transfer calls back and forth, reroute calls if one location goes offline, let your staff work from home, etc.

There's more, but I seem to be running out of room. Let me end with an offer for you to call my bluff. Let me take a look at your phone bill. Assuming you are using traditional POTS or PRI lines, I will show you how we can save you enough money to pay for the phone system. If I'm wrong, I'll buy you a steak dinner. Deal? Good. Now put out that fire, put the rest of your money back in your wallet, and pick up the phone. Talk to you soon!

Justin Shelley



This Month in Technology History

This month in This Month in Technology shoots us back to 1983 – September 13, to be exact, when the Osborne Computer Corporation declared bankruptcy and began to lay off most of their staff. The company would hang around for another two years before finally closing its doors in mid-1985. It was a shocking end to a company that had seen great success in the pre MS-DOS computing market but was unable to translate that success into long-term viability.

In 1979, Adam Osborne, a prominent figure in the homebrew computing market who wrote pioneering books on processor architectures and software, sold his publishing company to industry giant McGraw-Hill. Suddenly burdened with a mass of free time, Osborne decided to bring a low-cost, portable computer to market. He reached out to Lee Felsenstein, another veteran of the homebrew movement, to design and develop the machine. Felsenstein's final design paired a 5 inch monochrome display with two 5.25 inch floppy disk drives, a Z80 processor, and 64K of memory. Key to the design was that it could survive being accidentally dropped (from only a few inches, albeit) and that it could squeeze underneath an airplane seat. Osborne also wanted to bundle key software with the computer – a word processor, spreadsheet program, a BASIC compiler, and the CP/M operating system – but continue to keep the price of the machine low. The compromise he worked out with these vendors was to obtain the software at a low cost in exchange for significant amounts of Osborne stock.

This machine, named the Osborne 1, hit the market in July 1981 at a price of \$1795 – significantly lower than comparable offerings from Apple and even lower than the soon to be released IBM PC. Demand for the product was significantly higher than Osborne's company anticipated – they sold 11,000 computers in the first eight months after the Osborne 1's release, and had another 50,000 on backorder. Osborne seemed to be on track to become one of the industry's leaders.

But a long series of bad business decisions ultimately doomed the company in just a few years. The failure rate on early Osborne 1's was as high as 15%, and as production ramped up to meet the exorbitant demand, quality control dipped even further. The company was unable to grow relative to its growing demand – Osborne jumped from a company of two employees (Osborne and Felsenstein) to an organization of almost 3,000 between the end of 1980 and 1981. Osborne also began to face competition from new competitors like Kaypro, who offered a portable with a larger screen, and Compaq, who offered the first IBM compatible portable.

During this time, Osborne began designing the successor to the Osborne 1, the Osborne Executive. This new system was designed to improve upon the design problems and high failure rate of the Osborne 1 while providing more power and a larger screen. Enthused about the potential of the new machine, and hoping to recoup some business lost because of the questionable quality of the Osborne 1, Adam Osborne began demonstrating prototypes of the Executive to journalists at the beginning of 1983 – even though the computer was not expected to be ready to enter production until October. When word got back to dealers about the new machine, they began to cancel orders for the Osborne 1 *en masse*. Osborne tried to compensate by lowering the price of the Osborne 1 – to a price as low as \$995 by August 1983 - but Osborne could not move the massive quantities of machines that dealers no longer wanted. This would be the final nail in the coffin for Osborne – they declared bankruptcy on September 13 and laid off most of their staff. The company would emerge from bankruptcy and release the Executive, but it was too little, too late as the personal computer market had come to be dominated by Apple, IBM, and the slew of IBM compatibles that had come onto the market. Osborne developed two more machines – the Vixen, which was released in 1984, and a portable IBM compatible that was never commercially released – but could not drum up the cash or excitement necessary to make these products a success. In 1985, Osborne closed its doors and sold its name to the Finnish PC maker Mikrolog, which continues to market some servers and workstations under the Osborne name.

Although it was one of the early pioneers of the personal computer revolution and brought to market one of the first portable computers – that shipped with an unheard of compendium of software and at an incredibly low price – Osborne could not keep pace with demand and eventually crumbled under a series of bad business decisions. However, Osborne is best remembered today in business circles for the Osborne Effect, in which a company previews a new product well before it is ready and demand for the product debilitates demand for existing inventory. This legacy has unfortunately overshadowed the importance of the Osborne 1 - the machine that kick-started the portable computer revolution, set the precedent in the industry for bundling important software with computers, and began the trend of offering feature complete computers at affordable prices.

Jay Hathi

Urgent Message For Anyone Who Has Not Yet Switched to our New Backup System

How To Ensure The Heat Doesn't Fry Your Server (And Your Profits!)

If you are not on our #1 preferred backup solution, please take 2 minutes to read this article as it contains a very important message regarding your company's backup and your ability to be up and running fast in the event of a data-erasing natural disaster, server failure, virus attack or other "digital crisis"; and, since September is National Disaster Preparedness Month, I felt this was an appropriate time to remind you about this.

A little less than a year ago, we discovered a tremendous backup and disaster recovery system. When we first found this solution, I was skeptical that it could deliver the protection and security that they advertised. But after doing a ton of research and testing, we found that this is by far an absolute necessity for all companies concerned at all about securing their computer data.

While many backup systems are "good," there are a lot of problems with many older, inferior systems. Problems such as:

- Not backing up ALL of your critical data off-site.
- If a problem were to disable your server(s), it could cost thousands to restore and would take a few days (minimum) to get you back up and running.
- It may not do open files or continuous backups; that means you could lose an entire day's worth of work if something goes wrong.
- You have to do something manually in the process, leaving room for human error.

That's why I want to make the switchover a no-brainer for you. **When you replace your old backup system with this one by October 15, 2014**, we will waive the setup fee (normally \$400 - \$1,000, depending on how many servers you have).

This is not about us making money - it's about YOU having the right backup in place to make sure you never have to deal with the costs and devastation of being "out of business" and without your data.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Jawbone UP

UP is a system, wristband + mobile app that tracks how you sleep, move, and eat so you can know yourself better, make smarter choices and feel your best.

The new app displays movement and sleep details and delivers insights, celebrates milestones and challenges you to make each day better. You can even team up with your friends in the UP app and share your accomplishments!

Because you can achieve anything when you take it one day at a time, the UP Insight Engine suggests daily goals based on your unique patterns. Go further, stay hydrated and sleep better for a sense of accomplishment each and every day. Get your Jawbone UP at www.jawbone.com/up for \$129.99.

Are You Using Videos To Onboard New Employees?

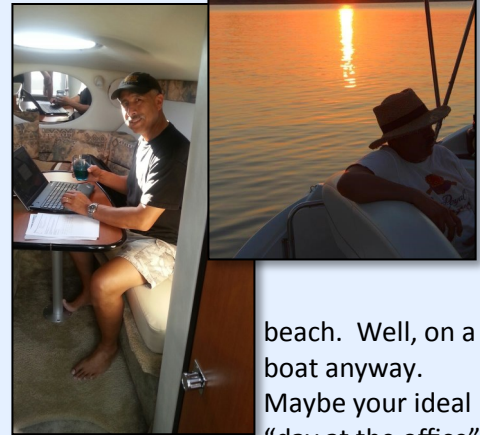
Most small businesses give new team members an Employee Handbook that outlines (in approximately 43 mind-numbing pages) everything anyone needs to know about the company. We expect our new hires to read this brick and be ready to pick an insurance plan, a 401K choice, know the company dress code, code of conduct and even what they can and cannot do online. We often include a boring video for safety or sensitivity training.

Many companies are now fast-tracking onboarding into a series of short videos that go through everything they need to know. It's revolutionizing the new-hire onboarding process, and here's why it's such a great idea:

1. **Your employees are already watching videos:** Many spend 95% of their time at work in front of a computer, and even outside work, they're still staring at their smartphone or watching YouTube videos. People are used to getting information in this format, so why not use it?
2. **It works for employees of all trades:** Even if your employees aren't at a computer all day, videos are still a viable solution. You can e-mail the video to them so they can watch it on their smartphones or at home. Companies like GuideSpark, who create training videos for employees, let you know that the videos were opened. You can't guarantee that your 43-page booklet has ever been cracked, much less read.
3. **It makes participation easier:** Training videos should be short... 3-5 minutes at the most. You probably have more than 5 minutes of content, so break it up into chunks. It's a lot easier for someone to read 2 pages and watch a 5-minute video than to read 43 pages, attend a class and watch a 30-minute 1970s training video.
4. **It makes delivery of information easier:** Companies that are changing their insurance coverage, adding a rule, or changing their dress codes may want to think about sending out a video e-mail with the explanations. Recent studies suggest two-thirds of employees would prefer to watch a video rather than go to a live meeting explaining the change.
5. **It cuts your orientation time:** By cutting the time of your orientation with short videos that they can watch on their phone or laptop, you could save yourself some money and have the new employees you just hired out and doing their jobs much faster.

Client Spotlight

I would like to introduce you to a client of ours. His name is Norm Gussman of Orozco Spanish Services. Norm has figured out how to make a day at the office feel like a day at the beach. Strike that, his day at the office is a day at the



beach. Well, on a boat anyway. Maybe your ideal "day at the office"

isn't on a boat. Maybe it's being pampered at a 5-star hotel. Or maybe you just want to stay in your pajamas all day and camp out on the couch.

Many of us simply cannot get away from our responsibilities for any length of time. But that doesn't mean we can't still *get away*. If we can't change the situation, we can at least change the venue.

That's what I love about Norm. Look at that view! That gorgeous sunset is shining through Norm's office window. That laptop is sitting on Norm's office desk. Shouldn't that be you? Give us a call, and we can "hook you up". Ditch the four walls and start really enjoying your work!

Dress For Success

Among the first things people notice about you is the way you dress and groom yourself. Many highly creative people effect a casual indifference toward their personal appearance, but in reality, they are making a purposeful statement. They are saying, in effect, "I'm so good at what I do that I don't have to dress for success."

Henry David Thoreau was such a person. "Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes," he wrote.

If you plan to spend your life in the seclusion of a place like Walden Pond, follow Thoreau's advice. If you want to make it on Wall Street or Main Street, pay careful attention to the clothes you wear and the visual impact you have on others.

When dressing for the business world, follow the standard advice: Dress for inclusion. Look at what the people one or two steps up the corporate ladder from you are wearing and be guided by their tastes.

That's about the closest thing to universal advice that can be given in the realm of dress. Fads and fashions come and go, and what's in today may be passé tomorrow. And the fabric of American culture is quite varied. String ties and cowboy boots for men may be perfectly acceptable business attire in Fort Worth, but they would mark you as eccentric in Boston. Three-piece pinstripes may be the uniform of the day on Wall Street, but may be considered a bit stuffy on Hollywood Boulevard. And if that's true of America, it's even more true of other parts of the world. Wherever you are — in London or Sydney, in Singapore or Luxembourg — follow the fashion lead of the successful people in your business.

The perennial choice for the businessman in the industrialized nations is the gray or blue suit, with lighter shades in warm weather, darker ones in cool weather. Muted pinstripes seem never to go out of style. Brown suits are generally regarded as less authoritative than blue or gray ones.

Women have greater latitude for individuality in fashions, but the general rule still applies. In most businesses, it's best to avoid extremes. Seductive or coquettish outfits may draw admiring stares, but they won't enhance your reputation as a businesswoman.

Solid colors in women's clothing convey a message of seriousness and character. Plaids and prints are more whimsical. In the business office, successful women may be seen wearing suits, dresses, coordinates and skirts with blazers. Different colors flatter different women. Find your best colors and stick with them.

Shoes should always be shined and in good repair. Adlai Stevenson, the American statesman, may be remembered for the famous photograph showing the hole in the sole of his shoe. But he is also remembered as the loser of two presidential elections.

For men, beards are a matter of taste. Make up your mind whether you want one. Don't go around looking as if you've forgotten to shave for the past couple of days. It may work for a Hollywood actor or the leader of a stateless people, but not for a sales and marketing professional. If you choose to wear a beard, keep it neatly trimmed.

Both men and women should avoid extremes of hairstyle. Again, use the look cultivated by the most successful people in your field as a guide, and adapt it to your own physical features.



Dr. Nido Qubein is president of High Point University, an undergraduate and graduate institution with 4,300 students from 40 countries. He has authored two dozen books and audio programs distributed worldwide. As a business leader, he is chairman of the Great Harvest Bread Company, with 220 stores in 43 states. He serves on the boards of several national organizations, including BB&T (a Fortune 500 company with \$185 billion in assets), the La-Z-Boy Corporation (one of the largest and most recognized furniture brands worldwide) and Dots Stores (a chain of fashion boutiques with more than 400 locations across the country). As a professional speaker, Dr. Qubein has received many distinctions, including the Golden Gavel Medal, induction into the International Speaker Hall of Fame and as the founder of the NSA Foundation in Arizona.

If you are still relying on tape drives, external hard drives or USB devices to back up your data, then it's critical for you to get and read this informative business advisory guide.

PROTECT YOUR DATA

"12 Little-Known Facts Every Business Owner Must Know About Data Backup, Security And Disaster Recovery"



Discover What Most IT Consultants Don't Know Or Won't Tell You About Backing Up Your Data And Recovering It After A Disaster

You will learn:

- 1) The only way to know for SURE your data can be recovered if lost, corrupted or deleted — yet fewer than 10% of businesses have this in place.
- 2) 7 critical characteristics you should absolutely demand from any off-site backup service.
- 3) Where many backups fail and give you a false sense of security.
- 4) The #1 cause of data loss that businesses don't even think about until their data is erased.

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Don't Just Sit There!



Many people who work in corporate America sit for at least eight hours a day. When the workday is over, many people go home to do even more sitting. The average American sits for up to 10 hours a day. That's almost half our days spent sitting. Even with regular exercise, sitting for prolonged periods of time is deadly. A survey of over 220,000 adults published in the Archives of International Medicine stated that people who sit for over eight hours a day have a 15% greater risk of dying within three years than those who sit for less than four hours. Those adults who sit for more than eight hours every day also have twice the risk of cardiovascular disease than those who sit for less than four hours. As with anything, correlation does not prove causation. It may just be that people who sit all day tend to be less healthy than those who don't. Whatever the cause, sitting for long hours on end is undoubtedly unhealthy for us.

So are those of us with office jobs just doomed to die sooner than our blue collar counterparts? Luckily for us there are a few, simple, easy ways to counteract the effects that sitting has on our bodies:

- **Move:** moving for at least a couple minutes every hour helps to get muscles active that are otherwise dormant when sitting. A good way to do this is to walk to the water cooler to get water, go talk to a coworker instead of e-mailing them and anything else you can think of to get you moving.
- **Stand as often as you can:** A good way to do this is to set a timer on your computer to remind you to get up and stretch. If you're a little more adventurous you can even invest in a treadmill desk which allows walking and doing your work at the same time. Another option is the standing desk which is also better than sitting all day.
- **Take the stairs:** Go to the bathroom on a different level of the building and use that as an excuse to use the stairs multiple times a day.
- **Sit on an exercise ball:** Even just sitting stationary on an exercise ball uses your core muscles and improves your posture.
- **Do housework:** If you work at home (all of the time or just occasionally) you can take just ten minutes out of every hour to do housework. This helps your health and helps your house stay clean.

Sitting is becoming an epidemic among Americans. Taking these easy steps everyday can lead to a happier, healthier life in the long term.

Jessica Shelley

How To Stop Cyberbullying

When I went to school, the biggest threat on the playground was getting roughed up by the class bully who was twice as big and twice as hairy as every other kid on the block. (What WERE his parents feeding him?) But cyberbullying is something very different.

Cyberbullying is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. It has to have a minor on both sides because once adults become involved, it is plain and simple cyber-harassment or cyber-stalking.

Turns out digital devices and the web make it much easier for a bully to harass someone; the anonymity and use of social-media sites often make them bolder than they would be in a face-to-face confrontation, and give them more opportunities to badger their target. As a parent, this is just another good reason why you should be monitoring your child's PC and cell phone, as well as their Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat and other social-media site usage. Most social-media sites have a way for you to report this type of abuse and get violators and hateful commentary taken down from their sites.

If your child becomes the target, you can try to get your school involved, but many schools have been shot down, even sued, for trying to interfere. If the abuse becomes physical, sexual or threatens physical or sexual harm, call the police.

Who Else Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card?

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is Rachel Smith of Kuehne+Nagel Inc. in Lewisville! She was the first person to correctly answer my quiz question from last month: **Which of these celebrities was NOT born in August?**



The correct answer was d) Taylor Swift. **Now, here's this month's trivia question. The winner will receive a gift card to Chili's!**

The length of time between the March equinox and the September equinox is the same as the time from the September equinox to the next March equinox. True or false?

E-mail Us Right Now With Your Answer!
trivia@master-computing.com

The Lighter Side: These Are Just Plain Punny



- Two anglers were having a discussion and opened quite a can of worms.
- Confucius say: Many men bite, but Fu Man Chu.
- If we don't conserve water, we could go from one ex-treme to another.
- Confucius say: Man who want pretty nurse must be patient.
- War doesn't determine who is right, it determines who is left.
- Confucius say: Man who keep feet firmly on the ground have trouble putting on pants.
- Men who leap off cliffs often jump to conclusions.
- Confucius say: Man who run in front of car get tired.
- The general started bowling before his aide had entered his name on the score sheet. He had launched a preemptive strike.
- Confucius say: He who sneezes without a handkerchief takes matters into his own hands.
- A library should have several floors because it is a multi-story building.