



aspadvisor

Welcome to the February edition of the **aspadvisor**.

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Cyber-Safety may affect Internet Speed

Last year, 16 year old Melbourne schoolboy, Tom Wood, cracked the Governments \$84Million NetAlert filter, which was designed to be installed on the PC to protect children online by preventing access to chat rooms and blacklisted websites. He managed to bypass the filter in such a way that it would appear to be working to anybody who looked at the computer it was installed on.

This first feat took him just over 30 minutes. The government acted quickly, and had a second, more secure filter available only 4 days after the release of the original filter. Tom cracked that within 40 minutes.

During the election campaign, the Labor party presented their own Cyber-Safety plan, which centred around providing a "clean feed" by having the internet filtered by the ISP to ensure that children could not access websites featuring child pornography, excessive violence etc. This filtering would be compulsory, although rumours are circulating about the ability to 'opt out', and the scrutiny that may accompany the option.

The speed of Australia's broadband network was also a hot topic during the election, but the concern

is that the Cyber-Safety filter may slow our internet connections because all data would have to be examined before being forwarded to your computer. The Australian Communications and Media Authority conducted three trials—in 2001, 2003 and 2005—and discovered that it

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NEWSFLASH - CommBank suffers Australia-wide outage

Commonwealth Bank Tellers across Australia were unable to access any account information or make transactions through their terminals when the bank suffered a countrywide systems outage on January 17th. The outage, which lasted from 11:30am to 12:30pm also affected online banking facilities. One Commonwealth Teller commented that she couldn't even tell customers to try another branch, because they were all down.

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asp tests - Wireless vs Wired Keyboards & Mice

Wireless keyboards and mice are more convenient than wired models - after all, who doesn't want to get rid of a couple of cords from their desk? Yet there are many people who prefer the wired versions: and for a variety of reasons. Even within the **asp** office, there are differing opinions & preferences.

The contentious issues are power vs. batteries and signal. A wired keyboard and/or mouse draws its power from the computer it's attached to, ergo—never goes flat (DUH), whereas the wireless versions do. Rechargeable mice have been on the market for some time, and are very reliable - if you charge them every night, and you still have to replace the rechargeable batteries from time to time. Microsoft have recently released a rechargeable keyboard/mouse combo, so batteries are becoming even less of a problem—woo hoo.

Now for the signal. Occasionally, keystrokes & mouse movements won't make it to the receiver, so don't register—bloody frustrating, and this can be caused by flat batteries, objects between the units and the receiver or just not having the receiver in the right position. And if you use two computers that are really close together, the wireless signals can overlap, preventing both mice being used successfully at the same time. There have even been instances of keystrokes being logged by specially developed receivers in order to capture passwords etc., however this is not a likely scenario.

As for the **asp** team, there's only one wireless keyboard in use, as the rest prefer a wired unit, & wireless mice are the norm, with rechargeable being the preferred fare. In the end, it comes down to personal preference—and your self control in not pummelling the periphery!

asp takes it all off again!

asp are again participating in the Worlds Greatest Shave to raise money for the Leukaemia Foundation, and we'll be holding a quiz night on Saturday 5th April at Glandore Community Centre from 7pm. Cost is \$10 a head. If you'd like to book a table of 10, please contact Shane on 08 291 5000, or email shane@apps.com.au

I want it - how can I get it?

asp can help you choose the best keyboard and mouse for your needs, or discuss how Watchguard might work for you.

Six Word Story

To save humankind he died again.

- Ben Bova

Follow Up Story - Blackberry Outage

RIM, the company behind the BlackBerry smartphones said a three-hour email outage Monday 11th February was caused by an upgrade designed to increase capacity. It was the second major outage for the service in less than a year. In April, a minor software upgrade crashed the system for all users. Experts said RIM's system is relatively reliable, but its centralised structure means that when there are problems, they can affect millions of users.



asp recommends - Watchguard Firebox

Watchguard Firebox is a powerful & manageable (when correctly configured) network Firewall. The UTM (Unified Threat Management) model integrates an effective combination of firewall, VPN, intrusion prevention, gateway anti-virus/Spyware/spam & URL filtering into a single appliance for comprehensive defences, thus facilitating security to your network at the point of entry – the Internet link.

The Web is one of your most valuable business tools & it can also be a serious threat to your network. Unmanaged web users can inadvertently or deliberately create weaknesses that can put sensitive corporate data in jeopardy. Vulnerable networks are susceptible to Domain Name Service (DNS) cache poisoning, buffer overflows, and Denial of Service (DoS) attacks. With the Watchguard Firebox X Core UTM these are weaknesses no more as they are controlled & secure. Having AntiVirus/Spam on the Watchguard reduces your risk of attack; keeping your network running smoothly and efficiently. Most models are upgradeable via available software and firmware enhancements, thus keeping you up to date with the latest security for your network.

asp 2008 Information Management Seminar Series

The December 2007 edition of the **aspadvisor** featured the Redmap document management solution. On the 18th & 19th of March, **asp** will be holding a series of free 1 hour seminars at Microsoft's rooms in Adelaide, which will feature the Redmap solution. If you are interested in coming along, please contact us 08 8291 5000.

Cyber-Safety may affect Internet Speed

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was unable to establish "clean feeds", that legitimate content was wrongly blocked and that network speeds were drastically slashed, in some cases by as much as 78 percent. Experts also claim that it is all but impossible to block child pornography and X-rated violence because of the massive scale of such content.

Tom Wood believes that the filters aren't addressing the bigger issues anyway.

"Cyber bullying, educating children on how to protect themselves and their privacy are the first problems I'd fix" Tom said.

The ACMA published a report in 2005 called kidsonline@home, which looked at use of internet in Australian homes, and found that nearly 50% of parents did not have internet filters installed because they trusted their children, they had other measures in place or because it had been too restrictive. 35% of parents used filters, and only 12% didn't use filters because they were unaware how to install or obtain them or didn't know what they did.

The study also stated that 92% of parents were involved in their child's Internet use, and 67% supervise their children online to some degree.



Vaguely Interesting

4 Things Hollywood Thinks Computers Can Do

To some people, a computer is still a terrifying box of mysteries and Hollywood writers have those people in mind when they portray laptop computers doing everything short of blowing up the moon. After all, according to the movies...

1. You can blow things up at will by hacking

In Live Free or Die Hard, the bad guys are able to hack into gas lines, and somehow make them explode.

2. Hacking will let you steal anything you want

John Travolta's character in Swordfish attempts to steal \$9.5billion, unnoticed, by hacking. We assure you, wherever there's \$9.5billion, there's somebody there to notice it missing.

3. Your entire life can be permanently dismantled by people who know stuff about computers

Hackers were able to change Sandra Bullock's entire identity in The Net, and somehow affect the memory of people she knew.

4. Computers can talk to UFO's

The Earth is under attack by advanced aliens in Independence Day, so Jeff Goldblum fights back by creating a virus on his PowerBook that disables the entire fleet of apparently Mac-compatible spaceships.

Partner Profile



MYOB is an international provider of solutions that liberate business owners and accountants from the burden of day to day administration, empowering them to achieve business success. MYOB develops and delivers award-winning software, services and support for more than 700,000 businesses and over 10,000 accounting practices worldwide.

Owner-operated businesses are the most dynamic force in the world economy and yet they are universally challenged by limited resources. MYOB uses its knowledge, expertise and scale to help them build better businesses.

MYOB also works directly with accounting practices to streamline their processes and maximise their productivity. MYOB solutions are used by leading accounting practices from tax agents and sole practitioners to the Big 4 firms.

Through its understanding and partnership with both business owners and accountants, MYOB strives to further enhance the links between them for their mutual benefit.

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