

Solutions

DSL vs. Cable Internet

We have been recommending DSL and Cable High Speed Internet Access for our small to medium size business clients for several years. Many clients ask us what the Advantages and Disadvantages are to both. The following is an unbiased analysis for both options.

To provide an explanation of the two services, DSL Internet Access stands for digital subscriber line. It is a technology that transforms your home or office phone line into a high speed digital link. Cable high speed internet access technology provides a broadband, always on connection to the Internet over the same line as your cable TV service.

Advantages of DSL Connections:

- Always on and you can use your phone line for voice services at the same time.
- Far Higher speed then dialup connections (3MB vs. 56K)
- More secure than cable
- Modem and install is usually waived
- No wiring necessary as DSL uses an existing phone line

Disadvantages of DSL Connections:

- The DSL connection is faster when you are located closer to the providers central office
- The service is not available in many locations
- Download speeds are not as high as cable but more guaranteed
- Initial installation can take between 2-3 weeks

Advantages of Cable Internet Access

- Available on a wider scale than DSL
- Higher download speeds than DSL
- Install can be done in days vs. weeks with DSL

DSL vs. Cable – Continued on Page 2

Protection for Your PC from Spyware

'Spyware', 'adware', 'malware', 'scumware' – no matter what term you use to call it; this is an escalating problem affecting almost everyone who uses a computer. In the past, a good anti-virus software program would have been enough to keep the 'bad guys' out while allowing you to go about your normal daily computing tasks. While anti-virus programs have evolved over time to include scanning for spyware, we have been pretty disappointed by their spyware and adware detection and removal rates. Spyware removal is not their main focus and it shows.

Due to the lack of focus on spyware and adware removal by the anti-virus companies, we have seen programs like AdAware, SpyBot Search and Destroy and others burst into the PC protection arena. At first they performed rather valiantly. Unfortunately, many of these programs have lost their effectiveness at completely protecting and cleaning PCs from the spyware that builds up as a result of web surfing and internet activity.

A rising star from Sunbelt Software has entered the spyware/adware detection department. This star-studded product, CounterSpy, has been garnering rave reviews from the likes of CNET.com and PCWorld magazine. Its effectiveness at not only cleaning existing spyware/adware infections but also in detecting and protecting against new infestations has been nothing short of spectacular. CounterSpy routinely finds and eliminates over 90% of the spyware and adware infecting the test PCs that these reviewers use, and it has proven to be as effective in the field as well.

CounterSpy achieves its staggering detection and removal rates by its focus on a single purpose, and it is constantly updated by a team of dedicated experts at **Spyware** – Continued on Page 2

Disadvantages of Cable Connections

- Less secure than DSL service
- Connection is shared with others therefore speeds can vary accordingly

As you can see, both options do a good job at providing cost effective High Speed Internet access for your business.

Plummer Slade, Inc. is a certified **VAD** (Value Added Distributor) for Penn Telecom, Naticom, Covad and Comcast Internet Service. Let us perform a comprehensive analysis of your current Local and Long Distance calling plan as well as your Internet Service. Typically, a 30 to 40% average monthly savings is uncovered for our clients. In other words, an office with 5 to 10 phone lines typically saves \$100 to \$200 per month in unnecessary communication costs. Please contact us if you would like us to perform this no obligation analysis of your current communication services. ☺

For more information contact Doug Morgan at ext 227

A Mobile PC for Those On-The-Go!

If you are an On-The-Go professional who needs a notebook PC that provides mobility, connectivity, & affordability, look no further than the HP NC6120. The NC6120 is an ultra-portable thin & light business notebook that has the advantages of a full-size notebook, a full-size keyboard and bright 15" LCD display. It ships with a Windows XP Pro Operating System and an HP 3-Yr. Limited World-wide warranty that ensures the ease-of-use and reliability you expect from HP. With its' enhanced battery life, multiple ports & wireless options, the NC6120 enables you to work efficiently from anywhere that offers wireless access. For only \$1100-\$1600, you can enjoy all of the following features that come standard:



- Up to 2.13GHz Pentium Mobile processor, with Intel Centrino Mobile technology
- 512MB+ RAM, standard
- 40GB-80GB Hard Drive Space, standard
- DVD-ROM, DVD-RW, or Combo DVD/CD-RW Drive, standard
- 1.2" x 12.9" x 10.5"; 6.06 lbs.

For more information contact Dave Roberts at ext 225

Sunbelt Software. This team knows spyware and studies the tactics of these rogue programs which tend to use every trick in the book to keep themselves on your PC once installed. Using this knowledge, the program is constantly updated to keep ahead of the bad guys to keep you and your PC happily working together.

CounterSpy comes in two forms, single or enterprise version. A single user copy retails for around \$20 and can be installed on a single PC. The price includes updates for a full year. The enterprise version varies in price depending on the number of licenses purchased. Generally, the cost rounds out to about \$15 or less per workstation. The enterprise version consists of a 'server' component and an 'agent' which gets installed on the individual workstations. This allows an administrator to easily control the frequency of updates, as well as the types of detections and removals that are done periodically across the entire organization. This can be a real time saver when you consider the number of PCs you have.

One of the nicest features of CounterSpy is the 'real time' scanning and protection. The program keeps a running process in the background which constantly monitors for signs of infection much like an anti-virus program does. It blocks and eliminates the spyware before it can be installed, causing numerous problems on your PC and inviting more of their 'partners' into your system. Along with the regularly scheduled 'spyware sweeps' and constantly updating signature files, your system should remain clean and productive allowing you and your employees to focus on the normal tasks of achieving your business goals. ☺

For more information contact Jeff Smereczniak at ext 214

Calling All Timeslips Users!

Meet us for lunch on Thursday, May 18th! The Timeslips Users Group is a great opportunity to meet other Timeslips users to compare notes and ideas. We will discuss how to utilize scanning technology to reduce the amount of paper created by the billing process.

Lunch will be served and the cost is \$15. For more information on the location and time or to RSVP please contact Danielle Bartkus at 412.261-5600 x210. ☺

For more information contact Danielle Bartkus at ext 210

Outlook or Outlook Express: Which Version Would Work Best for Your Email Needs?

Many clients question the difference between Outlook and Outlook Express. Perhaps the biggest variation lies in the cost. Outlook Express is a feature of Internet Explorer that comes free with a PC while Outlook needs to be purchased separately. Outlook Express is a good email client for those who are looking to simply read and send email as it does not have the standard features included in Outlook such as calendaring, task lists, junk mail filtering, and email archiving.

If you are currently using Outlook Express, these are some of the features that you would have access to if you were using Outlook. Outlook includes junk mail filtering which reduces the amount of spam being delivered to your inbox. The calendar feature allows you to schedule appointments. As the time of your appointment draws near, Outlook will remind you of the appointment. The scheduling feature can also assist you in managing your daily activities. Additionally, if you use a PDA, your calendar and contact lists can be synched. Do you find that old emails that you do not want to delete are taking up space in your inbox? If so, the email archiving feature will archive the emails in a folder on your PC. This feature reduces the number of messages in your inbox as well as makes it easier to search through the current messages without having to sort through or permanently delete your email messages.

Do you find yourself out of the office with the need to locate an email address, phone number, modify your calendar or check email? If CommuniGate is used for your e-mail server then the web interface feature will allow you to have access to all of these tasks. The CommuniGate IMAP feature allows Outlook to share calendars and contacts among the different users on a network. Essentially, others in your office will be able to see your calendar and you can view theirs as well as add appointments to calendars.

The table in the next column was originally published by the Crabby Office Lady on February 19, 2004 on Microsoft Office online website. It illustrates the many similarities between Outlook Express and Outlook.

Outlook vs. Outlook Express – Continued from previous column

Feature	Outlook Express	Outlook 2002 & 2003
Ability to send and receive email	X	X
Support for IMAP, HTTP, and POP Internet email servers	X	X
Support for Microsoft Exchange Server <i>Makes online forms, scheduling, and collaboration possible</i>		X
Address book and contacts folder <i>Stores and retrieve email addresses</i>	X	X
Support for multiple address books		X
Support for a fully-integrated calendar <i>Includes meeting and event scheduling, appointments and group calendars</i>		X
Tasks folder <i>A list of personal or work-related errands that you want to track through completion</i>		X
Junk mail filter		X
Notes folder <i>(The electronic equivalent of paper sticky notes)</i>		X
Support for newsgroups <i>(A collection of messages posted by individuals to a news server or a computer that can host thousands of newsgroups)</i>	X	
Signatures and stationery	X	X
Auto backup (archive) functionality	X	X
Secure email messaging	X	X

For more information contact Dean Kenley at ext 215

P L U M M E R S L A D E
Solutions
N E W S L E T T E R

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
DSL vs. Cable Internet	1
Protection for Your PC From Spyware	1
A Mobile PC for Those On-The-Go.....	2
Calling All Timeslips Users!	2
Outlook or Outlook Express: What Version Would Work Best for Your Email Needs?.....	3

- | WHAT'S HAPPENING... |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read inside for more information about the latest Timeslips User Group luncheon.• Did you know that Plummer Slade has Training Manuals available for all versions of Time Matters, Billing Matters and Timeslips? Check out the Plummer Slade web site for more information on prices.• Make sure to check your UPS battery so that you are prepared for any power outages caused by seasonal thunderstorms. |