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Wireless Technology: Is your workplace visitor-friendly?

Wow! You see them everywhere these days. People with open laptops in airports, restaurants, bookstores and coffee shops. Seems that the business world is totally attached to its laptops and NIRTSInf.*

Have you ever sat in an auto dealership's service department lounge, a doctor's office waiting room or another company's lobby and had to wait for the appointment or meeting to begin or for your oil change to be completed for sometimes what seemed to be hours with nothing to do but review paperwork or calendar entries in your PDA, thumb through a two-year-old Reader's Digest or People Magazine or, worse, watch Jerry Springer or The Young and the Restless trying to fill lost time? In this day and age, every minute counts...right!?

Many businesses around the country are beginning to offer their customers a welcome alternative to the waiting room blahs; a wireless connection that opens their Internet service to their clients. Wouldn't a wireless solution provide a little something that your clients will remember about your location in a positive way? Simply providing a way for your clients to stay "connected" to their email and corporate VPNs will provide them with an experience that shows them that you appreciate them and value their time.

GhostNet, Inc. offers several valuable wireless solutions that allow you to share your Internet connection with your clients without jeopardizing your corporate-sensitive data. Most solutions start well below \$200 for equipment and installation.

Isn't it time you gave something back, how about some of their lost time?

* Need-It-Right-This-Second-Information.

Recordable DVD's and the mystery behind their formats

by Shane Brooks

Foreword and editorial comments by Kel Kelley

Foreword: I am constantly amazed at the younger generation and their ability to assimilate information and jargon without having a nervous breakdown. Computer-Speak and Geekinese are the languages of not the future but the present.

DVD-ROM, DVD-R, DVD-RW, DVD-RAM, , DVD+R, and DVD+RW, What does all of that mean?

Well... although there is no standard to what the letters mean, the most popular technical assumption is that DVD stands for digital versatile disc. Digital being the nature of the information stored within, versatile meaning for a wide variety of uses, and disc being the disc shape that of the DVD itself. DVD Discs are the same size (12 cm in diameter) as the traditional CD-ROM disc. DVDs however store information at a very high density giving them a greater capacity (ranging from 2.6GB to 9.4GB) or over ten times the storage space of a CD-ROM (usually between 650mb and 800mb). Now let's break down the differences in DVD formats themselves.

DVD-ROM, the format typically used for DVD movies, ROM stands for "Read Only Memory," meaning that you can not record to these DVD discs and generally provide a much greater range of compatibility with set-top (box on top of TV) DVD players, and computer DVD drives. DVD-ROM discs come in four different formats; DVD-5, DVD-9, DVD-10 and DVD-18. Both DVD-5 and DVD-9 are one-sided discs, with a storage capacity of 4.7 GB. The DVD-5 stores information a single layer on one side of the disc only. The DVD-9 also stores information on one side of the disc, but in two layers. The DVD-10 and DVD-18 are dual sided discs, simply doubling the capacity of the "-5 and -9" to 9.4GB. Generally the differences in the four formats are irrelevant to the home user, because as all four formats are playable in both set-top and computer DVD players.

DVD-R discs are writable (think of the old tape recorder) discs; but can only be written (recorded) once, the R stands for writable, whereas RW stands for re-writable (which will be discussed more later on). Personal note: It seems that when the writable format came about some computer geek got cutesy and called it "R" instead of "W" Then, when the ability to re-write came about everybody was stuck and had to name the new format "RW." Now that one makes sense... "RW" Re-Writable. While we're at it, we will later get to DVD+R and DVD+RW. The "+" sign is read "plus;" but the "-" sign is not a "minus" but a "dash" and the "dash" is silent as is "p" in "pneumonia." Like the DVD-ROM the DVD-R disc can also be used in set-top boxes, as well as the personal computer. The two types of DVD-R discs are available in two sizes, the one-sided, holding 4.7GB and the two-sided, holding 9.4GB. There are two media formats that are currently used on DVD-R discs. One format is called the "general" format and is the type of disc used by the home user. These discs do not support region codes nor do they use any kind of copy protection. The other format, not generally used by the home user, is the CMF (Cutting Master Format). This is the type of format that duplication houses use as a "master" copy.

The next format is the DVD-RAM format (RAM stands for random access memory). Vendors and users alike wanted a disc that was capable of re-writable functionality to meet the storage demands that the industry had acquired ; t hus the DVD - RAM d is c . T his was the very first disc that supported the ability to be written by the user making DVD-RAM technology old and almost obsolete to both the home and professional user . These discs are available in two capacities, 2.6GB and 4.7GB for the single sided version, and 5.2GB or 9.4GB for the two-sided discs. This kind of disk can not be accessed by a set-top box or a home computer. Only a DVD-RAM drive can be used with the DVD-RAM disc.

Finally, the DVD-RW and the DVD+RW (re-writable) discs are principally the same as the DVD-R and DVD+R discs but can be written to approximately 1,000 times. All of these discs can be used in set-top boxes, as well as DVD-ROM drives. The major difference in the "+" versus "-" is in quality of "real-time" and "random data" recording and the difference is not readily apparent to the average hobbyist.

Its imperative to the function of not only the disc, but the media on the disc, that you use the correct type of media for the right application. If DVD discs are not used in accordance with their retrospective drives, the media will be unreadable. Although unreadable in the wrong type drive, this will not damage the drive, the disc or the media on the disc. Using the wrong disc drive will merely render the information on the disc inaccessible.

Oh yes. I was glad to learn in simple language from Shane what a CD is. A CD is a Compact Disc, a digital medium formed of a 12cm polycarbonate substrate, a reflective metal layer and a protective lacquer coating The physical format of the CD is described by the ISO9660 industry standard. And CD-Recordable discs have an organic dye data layer between the substrate and the metal reflective layer.

Finally, the working definition is... a DVD is a SUPER CD.

Kel's Point of View
How Tight Is My Weave?

That doesn't sound right. Maybe if I put the emphasis on a different word? How about if I accent the word "my" instead of the word "is?" I'll say it out loud, first accenting one word, then the next. Still doesn't make much sense. Matter of fact it sounds kinda dirty. Hmmm?

Let me tell you a story.

Once upon a time a big circus came to town. It was a REALLY BIG circus. There were lions and tigers and elephants and clowns and acrobats and jugglers and snow cones and cotton candy. There were trapeze artists and tightrope walkers. And they had a parade right down Main Street and it was grand. The band played and the bears growled and pretty ladies on horses threw hard candy. And a man in a red coat and a top hat handed

out free tickets to some of the townspeople. And he handed one to me. The circus marched right through town and out to the fairgrounds where we had a County Fair in the fall and teams played baseball all summer. And handbills said that the circus would start tomorrow afternoon. I couldn't wait.

My Uncle Barney took me out to watch the roustabouts spread out the tents and the elephants would pull them way up high and stretch them real tight and then the men, with their great big muscles would pound huge tent pegs into the ground and tie the tent ropes so the tents would stand as high as castles. "What about the tight weave," you ask? Well, if you aren't enjoying the story you can skip on down to the end; but I thought it might be more fun to read a little story and take a break from the everyday grind. So...to continue....

Uncle Barney is a really neat guy and fun to be with and he has all kinds of neat ideas. So he asked if I would like to come back tomorrow morning when the circus folks would be practicing their acts. "I sure would," I exclaimed. So the next morning, bright and early, Uncle Barney came to our house and drove me over to the fairgrounds in "Ole Lizzy," his '41 Ford coupe.

First we saw the animals getting fed and washed and saw some men applying fresh coats of paint to the concession booths and others setting up kiddy rides for while people waited for the circus to start and some ladies were blowing up balloons and mixing up the ingredients for cotton candy and lemonade. Mmmmm. I could almost taste it.

Then we went inside the tent and watched the trapeze bars and the high wires being set up and some people jumping on trampolines. After the wires and trapeze bars were in place, then the performers worked with roustabouts to place and stretch the netting underneath. The nets were sorta like trampolines, but not quite the same. The weaving of the nets left big holes in between the cords, several inches wide. I asked Uncle Barney why this was and he took me right over to the man who yesterday was wearing the red coat and the top hat. He was called the ringmaster and had a big swirly black mustache. Uncle Barney told the ringmaster the question I asked and he took me over to the trampoline and let me bounce on it. After a few tries I bounced really high. It was fun. Then the ringmaster took me to the netting and let me climb around on it. He told me to try to bounce but I couldn't do it. My feet slipped between the cords. Not all of me...just my feet.

The ringmaster called a very beautiful lady to come to us and told her the question too. The beautiful lady explained that, if the net's holes were as small as the trampoline's, the trapeze artists and she, a tightrope walker, would bounce too high when they jumped down from the wires and bars and they would be thrown off to the ground and get hurt very badly. And if the trampoline's holes were as large as the net's, the jumpers would have their feet and legs slip through and get broken. And if the net's holes were too large the acrobats would fall right through and hit the ground really, really hard.

That's how it is with disability insurance, you want enough so that, if you can't work, you won't slip through the coverage and hit the ground really, really hard. At the same time, the weave doesn't need to be too tight either. When you get sick or hurt and can't work, you want to have enough insurance to keep paying the main bills so you won't lose your house, your car, your business and so you can afford food and electricity and clothes for you and your family. Not so much that you can't afford it...just enough. Lucy once explained to Charlie Brown that, "disability insurance is the kind of insurance so that, if you fall off your bicycle, you still get your allowance." So next time you talk to your human resources manager or your insurance agent ask them, "How tight is my weave?"

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New Client Announcement!

GhostNet welcomes our newest Web Design/Hosting/Networking Clients:

- Raven's Elite Training - Network Support/Web Development
- United Blower's Inc. - Network Support
- Paradise Dragstrip - Desktop Support/Web Development
- Rock Solid Trailers - Web Development
- Cagle's Dairy - Internet Marketing
- Double A Graphics - Web Development
- Bargain Barn - Network Support
- Starr Appraisals - Desktop Support
- Mt. Zion Baptist - Desktop Support
- Southern Appalachian Soaps - Web Support
- Blue Star Groceries - Desktop Support