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GhostNet, Inc. Featured in Cherokee Living's Business Spotlight!



As they say, "It's nice to be noticed." The entire team at GhostNet, Inc. is proud to be noticed so favorably in the January / February 2005 edition of Cherokee Living Magazine, published by Connect Marketing Publications. Connect Marketing Publications of Woodstock, Georgia is the parent company of seven community lifestyle magazines in the Atlanta area: Cherokee Living Magazine, North Fulton Living Magazine, Cobb

Living Magazine, Forsyth Living, Paulding Living, Pickens Living and Coosa Valley Living.

Excerpts from the article:

In the scenic hills of Pickens County, a plain brown building is home to GhostNet, Inc.; a team of savvy and highly skilled computer experts who take care of the computer needs of numerous large corporations, small businesses and individuals across North Georgia....

.... A member of the Pickens County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and an advisory board member at Appalachian Tech, Kelley says he makes every effort to hire employees who live in Pickens County. GhostNet Inc. works with Appalachian Tech to provide work experience to co-op students. "We have the flexibility to work around students' class schedules and we feel lucky to be a part of this program," Kelley says. A large part of GhostNet's profits go back into community programs....

Please visit <http://www.CherokeeLiving.com> and click on Business Spotlight see the entire article.

Thank you Cherokee Living.

From the Front Lines

We take delight in announcing that, with Shane Brooks and Brandon Cumming's passing of their exams, all of our technicians are A+ certified.



We at GhostNet, Inc. take pride in our commitment to our community, customer service and the quality of our service. But underlying all of that, we are also committed to our professional education and to being students, as well as practitioners, of our craft. We have and will continue to develop our knowledge as well as our skills in order to bring you, our clients and customers, the very best our industry has to offer.

CompTIA A+® Certification

CompTIA A+ certification is an international industry credential that validates the knowledge of computer service technicians with the equivalent of 500 hours of hands-on experience. Major hardware and software vendors, distributors and resellers accept CompTIA A+ as the standard in foundation-level, vendor-neutral certification for service technicians. The exams cover a broad range of hardware and software technologies, but are not bound to any vendor-specific products. The skills and knowledge measured by the CompTIA A+ exams were derived from an industry-wide and worldwide job task analysis. To date, more than 500,000 individuals have obtained CompTIA A+ certification.

Earning CompTIA A+ certification proves that a candidate has a broad base of knowledge and competency in core hardware and operating system technologies including installation, configuration, diagnosing, preventive maintenance and basic networking.

With Mixed Emotions....

one of our employees this month. Professional loss because



we'll miss his abilities; personal loss because we will miss him. Matt Hardeman's willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty here at **GhostNet** is one of the very reasons we are losing him. We will miss his quiet, caring nature, his concern for others and his sly Leprechaun smile as well as his sense of humor and his occasional zaniness.



Why then are we proud? Because our loss will be the gain of our community, our state and our country as Matt joins thousands of other young men and women in the service of our country. Our employee, fellow worker and friend, Matt Hardeman's last day at **GhostNet** is Friday, February 4 as he prepares to enter the United States Air Force.

When asked why he was joining up Matt said, "I felt that I needed to put in my two-cents worth for our country's defense. Besides, since I was little, I've always wanted to join the Air Force." To our Consultant Kel, Matt confided, "I'm grateful to Patrick, Krista and the gang for the time I've spent here. I couldn't have qualified for the slot I'll be entering without the training and experience I've received from **GhostNet**."

Matt resides in Ellijay and will be tying up loose ends and spending time with family and friends before he reports for duty March 15. If you happen to see him around during the next few weeks please make sure to give him a smile. Tip your hat and thank him for serving.

We close by saying, "Matt, thank you for being our friend and **THANK YOU FOR SERVING.**"

Insights

Cyber Shopping (click and save OR click and pray...)

The Internet offers just about every viable option to spend money legitimately. Any time, any place and in any amount you want to spend. However, one needs to be "cyber" smart in order to enjoy the full benefits of online commerce. In order to ensure you have a safe shopping time online, please heed the following guidelines:



Always make payment for online purchases with a credit card. Most e-commerce sites don't take any other type of payment, and with a credit card, the Fair Credit Billing Act protects you. This law states that you have rights to dispute charges and temporarily pause funds transfer during investigation of the dispute. With credit cards, even if stolen, you likely will not be charged for any fraudulent purchases to exceed the first \$50.00. Some credit card companies offer an online shopping guarantee ensuring that you, the cardholder will not be held responsible for any unauthorized charges made online, and some cards may provide additional warranty, return and/or purchase protection benefits. Make sure every time you purchase anything online that you are using a secure browser that complies with industry SSL standards. My favorite browser, Firefox, includes this standard of encryption that is used widely to scramble your information as it's transferred to its destination.

Only deal with reputable companies that want to make your buying experience as safe as you do. Check return and refund policies. Return

and refund policies should be available on the website. When creating accounts and passwords, use numbers, letters and symbols if available. This makes your combination possibilities infinitely greater than just letters or numbers, therefore making it much more difficult to break into your account. Remember that anyone can pretend they are anyone else online. Only shop where you feel comfortable. Look for a physical location, phone number and other contact information for a company before you shop.

Keep your computer clean. A spyware and virus-infested computer may reveal information to others that's a little more personal than you might want or need to have floating around cyberspace. Always, always, always use a credit card as a method of having backup records of your purchase. And last but not least, use your Online Banking resources through your bank. Online banking service often offers instant verification of purchases, amounts and payee. This type of purchase verification may alert you early to fraud and save you time and money.

The skinny is this; the FCRA protects you while shopping online with a credit card. Also credit card companies want you to charge and most have activated numerous security features to make your online shopping attractive, comfortable and safe as well as to protect them.

To start online shopping bliss, you might want to turn to one of my favorite websites to online shop, www.ebay.com <<http://www.ebay.com>> or you might try www.overstock.com <<http://www.overstock.com>>, Both are reputable e-stores that will help you find just about anything imaginable. And as always, Use Spybot Search & Destroy from <http://www.safer-networking.org/en/horne/index.html> to keep spyware at bay, and AVG Anti-Virus from <http://www.grisoft.com> to keep pesky viruses off your computer.

Kel's Point of View

Settle Down. Settle In. Saddle Up!

(Although this column was written almost a month ago, its message is still timely, even more so if you are still working out 2004 in February of 2005.)



Been watching or reading the news lately? One last piece of good news is that a fourteen-year old boy in Little Rock has just become the first child to receive a new heart after relying on a newly developed miniature heart pump.

On the other hand, I saw last evening on CNN that the expected death toll from a tsunami in Asia is over 60,000 with a projected like number to die from injuries and disease.

Various events, some positive, some negative, from the hurricanes in Florida to the Martha Stewart trial and verdict to the opening of an ice skating rink at the top of the Eiffel Tower, all of which added to uncertainty and opportunity, happened in 2004. Each and every year brings happiness and sadness, laughter and tears.

"Settle Down," you say? Absolutely! Those things have already happened. We can't erase them... they happened. Some are resolved, others may continue to be resolved; but the event, the trauma, the underlying change of circumstance is over and done with.

Settle In. It may be true that some of the stuff that happened in 2004, whether a global, national or personal situation, will continue to bloom and blossom or fester and die. Boy! That sure was positive! Well... some of it is positive and the rest...just the truth. As it is written in Job 5:7, "For man is born to trouble as sparks fly upward." The question here is, what are you going to do about it?

Some people will slough off the positive and primarily concentrate on the negative. These are not the "bloom and blossom" folks. These are the unhappy ones we see every day in traffic, in lines at the grocery store, at the mall and in our own businesses who are complain and worry, fester and die people.

Now the good part! The Chinese character for the word "crisis" is actually two words, one above the other in mirror image. One of the words is "danger," the other is "opportunity." As so artfully expressed it simply means that crisis is a turning point or more graphically speaking, the chance to decide whether to be the windshield or the bug. We, who fully, or even partially, understand this concept, are the bloom and blossom people. Not to say that all good things come as a result of bad things, though many do, it is rather that; regardless of the circumstances, bloom and blossom people see not only the danger; but also the positive impact in even the direst situations. They see the bad thing; see it for what it is and then determine a course of action to either eliminate the negative or capitalize on it. Sometimes the best possibility is to just deal with it, accept it and learn to live with it; but I'd rather do that than to just wish it would go away.

Saddle Up. Well it's time to wrap up the verbosity and get on with the program. Try your best to be a bloom and blossom person and be thankful for the fester and die people. The "F and D" folks are the many and we are the few. They will be your competition for a while and then fade away, go to work for you or someone else and become your customers. Even though their future has a much lower ceiling than yours they still have needs and still will be consumers. You, the "B and B" person and your company will be there to satisfy their needs and receive the rewards. You "B and Bs" will be doing business with each other as well. You, the risk-takers, the rise-abovers are destined to walk above the circumstances, not below them.

Whether yesterday's news was good or bad, whether today started off bright and cheery or with an argument at home or with an irate customer at work.... that has already happened. It may not be over... but it's done. The next move is up to you. As John Wayne would have said, "Saddle Up!" Or as a more recent real-life hero said simply, "Let's Roll!"

Whether you are a "B and B" or an "F and D," or more likely a combination of the two we at GhostNet thank you for helping us to have a great year in 2004 and sincerely wish you the very best in 2005.

CREDITS: I must give credit and thanks to my wife Joanne Kelley (I affectionately call her Jobee) for her invaluable assistance in writing this article in particular, and her professional opinion in all my writings. I especially thank her for her input and encouragement in all my endeavors.

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New Client Announcement!

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

- Blackwell Agency - Web Development

- The Beechler Group - Web Development
- Trevi Pizzeria - Network Support
- Quick Burger - Network Support
- Shelby Collins - Web Development
- Dr. John Azar-Dickens - Network Support
- Outdoor Adventures - Web Services
- Hooligan Embroidery - Web Development
- Sharp Mountain Graphics - Web Development
- Boggs Law Office - Network Support
- Daystar Apparel, Inc. - Web Development
- Autumn Hill Nursery - Web Services

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