ReadyNetGo .... News

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TIP OF THE MONTH

Giving Away Your Computer?

If you have an old computer just lying around, you might be thinking about donating it to a local charity or even selling it on Ebay. Before you give it away, though, make sure that your information on the computer is completely erased. Simply deleting files won't make your data unrecoverable – you have to overwrite your data to make it completely safe.

There are many products on the market, called Disk Erase utilities, which will overwrite your hard drive so that any previous data you had will be erased and unrecoverable. The cost of these programs, less than $100, is nominal when you think about the potential cost if someone unscrupulous recovered your financial, legal, or personal information. Check www.pcworld.com or another computer review site for reviews of the best products.

Tips on Saving Files

To help your computer retrieve data faster, remember to:

• Save documents with short filenames.

• Do not include spaces in the filenames

Enhance Your Online Time with Web Filtering Software

Internet blocking tools are becoming more popular as parents struggle to keep their children's learning safe and business managers struggle to keep their workers productive and their networks functioning.

The advantage of web filtering software is that it allows you to block access to objectionable sites while surfing the web, engaging in an online chat or reading your email. If you have children, filtering software is especially useful since you can also program time limits and set up logs for quick reference to sites visited. For network managers, filtering software enables you to block websites, monitor individual users and either block or delay large downloads to off peak hours.

With over 2 billion web pages, it's no wonder that people are looking for a way to weed out some of the questionable and/or objectionable sites. From violence and racism to adult products and porn, there are many sites on the web that have offensive content. Fortunately, filtering software is getting better and better and there are many choices from which to choose. Keep in mind though, that creators of offensive sites are working just as hard to skirt the web filtering industry's progress, so don't expect a complete elimination every time you log on.

WWW (Websites Worth Watching)

1. www.5aday.com - Eat your colors every day!

2. www.americanheart.org - American Heart Association; Recipes, Health Tools, Resources

3. www.biography.com/features/father/ - To all the fathers out there!

4. www.spacecamp.com - A great place for the kids this summer!

Web or Internet filtering software works on many different levels but accomplishes the same thing - it blocks what you don't want to see.

Overview of Benefits

On a personal computer with this software installed, you can:

- list individual sites that you want to block access to
- enter keywords that you think might be included in a questionable sites address
- set up time limits to prevent overuse
- set up logs to monitor all sites visited

On a network level (in addition to the features listed above), you can:

- block certain sites
- monitor individual users, groups or specific times
- track internet traffic to your website
- monitor large volumes of traffic even with multiple gateways
- monitor email & control spam with email filters

Installing Filtering Software on a Network

   If you install web filtering software in a business environment, the best place to store it is on the proxy server. The proxy server is the bridge between the Net and your network. When you request a website, the proxy server makes the request and retrieves the results. If the results pass a series of tests set up by the filters, then the information is allowed to pass through to individual computers. This ensures that only trusted information passes into the network. (Keep in mind that nothing is 100% secure but with the right software and hardware, breaches can be kept to a minimum.)
   A major benefit of proxy servers is that they temporarily store or cache webpages, so that the next time you visit the site, the pages will load faster. If you set up a system like the one below, where you have web filtering and anti-virus software installed along with the firewall, you will help ensure that your network functions at the optimal performance level.

We are currenlty reviewing several software and hardware products for use on small to mid-size net-works. Stay tuned...and look for product recommendations in future issues.

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