

The KCS Enquirer

Information about the Computer Revolution

Volume 10 Issue 2

Second & Third Quarters 2005

*Looking for Trouble
Tough Customer*

*Cut the Cord
Boost Your Production*

KCS News

Monitoring Service

KCS is exploring the idea of offering remote monitoring services to our clients. A program would watch your network 24/7 and alert us if anything out of the ordinary occurs. This would enable us to take corrective action immediately before the situation became more serious or interfered with your workday. The cost would be a nominal monthly fee. Your KCS technician will be discussing it with you or you can call our office for more information.

It's Becoming a Wireless World

Wireless technology is improving by leaps and bounds. Speed, security and range are greatly improved. Component prices are falling rapidly and wireless technology is being integrated into more items. Network wireless hotspots (access points) are more common. One of the biggest technological improvements is in the ability to allow divergent technologies to communicate and exchange data. Your cellular phones can communicate with your network, the Internet, your notebook, your home computer, your work computer etc. You can walk into your office and log

KCS Computer Technology Inc.

Novell Authorized Partner
Authorized Hewlett Packard Dealer
Microsoft Certified Professional on Staff
Certified Novell Administrator on Staff
Phone: **847-288-9820** Fax: **847-288-9822**
Web Page: www.kcstech.com
E-mail: sales@kcstech.com

Network Installations

Custom Programming

Custom Configured PCs

Digital Surveillance Systems

Phone Systems & Upgrades

SEE OUR WEB PAGE FOR QUOTES & ON-LINE ORDERING

into your network with your notebook computer without connecting any wires. Wireless peripherals like keyboards, mice and headsets work as well as their wired counterparts.

Because of this emerging technology it is important that your business plan considers the advantages of wireless technology. While we still recommend cabling for your main network due to speed and security issues we highly recommend wireless technology for portable devices and road use. When you purchase devices that have wireless capability make sure they are compatible with your

current equipment. Contact us if you need advise.

Tough Laptops

Did you know that 18% of notebook computers are damaged and returned for repair in the first year of ownership according to an independent study? About 60% of this damage is due to dropping and 30% due to spills.

We are now marketing a line of hardened laptops that are designed to address this problem. The model N4015 notebook features shock mounted components (including the LCD screen), a spill proof and weather resistant keyboard and touch pad, and a magnesium alloy

shell that is 20 times stronger than a plastic case. It also incorporates enhanced structural protection for critical components such as the CPU, hard drive and memory. It meets the Military 810F ruggedized specification which involves 26 drops of from up to 36 inches onto a plywood over concrete surface along with a vibration test. The best part is the prices start at under \$1,400.00 with Windows XP Professional and 512MB memory.

Big Screen Notebook

The just released N5011 notebook computer from Equus has an ultra-

bright 17" screen. This is a top of the line notebook computer with a standard DVD-RW, built-in wired and wireless network connections, a 4 in 1 media card reader, high speed SATA (Serial ATA) drives, and an **option for second dual hard drive**. All in a unit that weighs less than 9 pounds (with battery) and is only 1.3 inches thick.

New Treo Phone coming

The new Treo phones scheduled for release in 2006 will use the Microsoft Windows Mobil 2005 operating system. This should result in a performance boost and better integration with the Internet and Windows based networks. These smart phones will have office applications built-in and be capable of sending and receiving e-mail and communicating directly with a Microsoft Exchange 2003 Server. Additional programs can be added but some companies like Verizon block some specific programs.

Productivity Rocks

One of the items people tend to overlook when making decisions on computers or other technology items is productivity. Productivity is a measure of how much work is done per time input - efficiency. If your staff is being slowed down because your computers are slow or your network is slow or frequently down you are not only probably missing target dates but your employees are getting frustrated and are taking shortcuts. Money spent on better and faster equipment and software pays off big in increased productivity and a better working environment.

Fingerprint Logins

We have been using a couple of fingerprint reading keyboards from Microsoft for a few months now and we like them. They are working very well and definitely speed up logging into Web pages and applications. The Microsoft system works better than the Sony system we tried. The software is not very intuitive and has some bugs but overall it works well.

The "Quick Link" feature that can log you into a web site with a touch of a finger and a click of the wireless mouse is very nice. On the downside you cannot normally use it to log into your workstation/network and if you don't record and store your passwords in a secure location you are in a fix if it quits working and you can't remember them. You would be surprised how fast you forget your passwords when you are not typing them in constantly.

High Speed Switches

A network is like a chain - it is only as good as its weakest link. In a lot of cases that weak link can be your network hub or switch. The hub or switch is the device that connects all your network equipment together. All data has to pass through it. In most networks there is more than one hub/switch. In the last few years the performance of network hubs and switches has improved geometrically. Switches, which give full bandwidth to all data passing through them from different devices, are a great improvement over hubs which share one bandwidth amongst all connected devices. We do not recommend using hubs anymore because of the performance advantage switches offer at a small increase in price over a hub. The second major improvement is in speed which has grown one-hundred fold, from 10 to 1000Mbps (Megabits Per Second) per port. Prices for these high speed switches are a fraction of what they were just a few months ago.

In addition to getting obsolete, hubs and switches tend to lose performance over time. If you have not upgraded your hubs/switches for some time, changing them could be an inexpensive way to boost network performance. See your KCS technician or give us a call.

MS News

New OS

Microsoft has renamed its latest workstation operating system (OS)

version now being developed from Longhorn to Vista. This should be the name that will be used when it is released for general use in mid-2006. Everything we have heard so far indicates that this will be an important upgrade with much improved security. If you are running Windows 2000 on your computers you can elect to wait for Vista to upgrade but an interim upgrade to XP is still worthwhile, especially if the Vista release date is moved back as is normally the case. If you are running an earlier version an interim upgrade to Windows XP is strongly advised.

The development name for the server Network Operating System (NOS) will remain Longhorn for now and is targeted for a 2007 release.

Service Pack 2 Released for Exchange 2003

Service Package 2 (SP2) for Exchange 2003 has been released. It promises better ActiveSync technology, improved security, a simpler interface and increased mailbox size limits along with other enhancements. It looks to be a worthwhile upgrade. Talk to your KCS technician if you have any questions. They will be updating Exchange 2003 installations.

& Office 2003

SP2 for Office 2003 has also been released. Several bug fixes and performance improvements are touted. Improved security features are also included.