The Confident SMB
IT as Your Business Enabler

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Roaming in the Stars
With 178 operators—and counting—in 118 countries in its connected network, 30-plus solutions, and 900 live services, Starhome is a leading player in the roaming mobile services market. Learn how IT and Infrastructure Manager Yaniv Dinar is using Symantec technologies and relying Symantec Partner Spider Solutions to help make all of the right connections.
By Patrick E. Spencer

Business Perspectives
Website Security Drives Business Success
Protecting confidential information during the transaction experience is critical to your success.
By Carine S. Clark

ThinkTank
Emerging technologies such as social network, mobile apps, and more are helping SMBs to remake conventional business models.
By Courtenay Troxel

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For a moment, consider our connected world and the ease by which we do business. Thanks to today’s technology, we access, process, and move thousands—even millions—of pieces of confidential information and dollars in a matter of seconds every day. But like anything that can make your business function more efficiently, from protecting your business’ critical data and your customers’ confidential information during a transaction, you require a secure transaction experience.

With Symantec’s recent acquisition of the VeriSign identity and authentication business, I am excited about what this means to your business. Our new capabilities around identity and authentication provide your customers with the assurance that your website is authentic and secure. In addition, your customers can have confidence knowing that they can interact because their information is safe.

I’m sure all of you have seen the VeriSign seal. It is viewed up to 250 million times a day on more than 90,000 websites in 160 countries. In addition and more importantly, businesses that include the VeriSign seal on their websites see an average increase in transactions of 24 percent. To learn more about Symantec acquiring VeriSign’s identity and authentication security business, click here.

Real growth only comes from new customers, more sales, and increased revenue. And because cybercrime and other malicious online activity will continue to proliferate and require more sophisticated approaches to thwart attacks, security should always be a priority for your business, regardless of its size. While you can’t be sure of the next cyberattack, you can take a confident approach to protecting your business transactions and ensuring a positive customer experience. And it doesn’t have to be complicated or cost-prohibitive. Now more than ever, the tools are available to secure your business and your interaction with your customers. It’s about simple and secure access—and confidence from anywhere and at anytime.

Regards,

Carine S. Clark
Chief Marketing Officer, Symantec
Head in the Cloud

*SMBs ease into cloud computing for low-cost solutions*

As cloud computing grows in popularity and sophistication, SMBs are gradually adopting it as an integral part of their IT infrastructure. But while SMBs share similarities in size, there are a wide variety of industries that fit under the SMB banner, and each with its own needs and relationship to technology.

According to results from Spiceworks’ Voice of IT Market Research Program, 14 percent of SMBs are currently using cloud computing, with another 10 percent planning to deploy cloud services over the next six months. A closer look at the research shows that smaller SMBs are more aggressive in adopting cloud services—33 percent of SMBs with less than 20 employees currently use cloud computing or plan to do so in the next six months. Smaller companies are typically more flexible, with less infrastructure and fewer bureaucracy barriers.

Despite early success, 32 percent of SMBs remain skeptical of what they view as an unproven technology strategy. And security concerns remain high as well, with 28 percent of respondents citing security issues as a barrier to cloud adoption, especially among healthcare providers and government organizations with highly sensitive data. Still, cloud computing remains a cloudy option even for adopters: 27 percent said they were hosting IT services in the cloud but weren’t fully knowledgeable on how it functioned. Check out full details on the research report here.

**Internet Makeover**

*Domain name requests get a security upgrade*

As the Internet continues to grow, so do an increasing number of new and inventive online security threats to SMBs. One Internet vulnerability exploited by scammers is a flaw in the security of the domain name system, discovered several years ago by online security specialist Dan Kaminsky. The flaw essentially allows a scammer to hijack a page request and redirect it to a fake website that contains malicious code.

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the organization that oversees the Internet, has teamed with the U.S. Department of Commerce and domain name specialist VeriSign to announce a solution to the flaw. They recently deployed a security extension to the domain name system that is designed to prevent scammers from hijacking website address requests.

The new Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) employs sophisticated public key cryptography to protect users from two types of online attacks: cache poisoning and man-in-the-middle attacks. In cache poisoning, when the domain name system locally saves details of your web request for future efficiency, the fake website instead stores malicious code. In a man-in-the-middle attack, a cyber-criminal intercepts one-to-one communication, such as bank login data, then later masquerades as the customer and attempts to sign on to the bank website. Learn more about the security upgrade here.
Building Better Budgets

Learning from 2010 IT budget trends

It's never too soon to look at IT budget issues for the coming year, especially with the end of 2010 on the horizon. As IT departments plan spending for 2011, CIO Insight's 2010 IT Investment Patterns survey reviews trends from the previous year’s expenditures to help map the road ahead.

For SMBs, virtualization remains a priority—49 percent of respondents increased their spending on virtualization software from 2009 to 2010. Next in line were servers, with 39 percent of SMBs increasing their expenditures, followed by backup hardware at 35 percent. Not surprisingly, the study found that 34 percent of SMBs expanded their infrastructure virtualization in 2010, with another 34 percent consolidating their infrastructure for the year.

Hitting budget numbers proved to be a challenge for some SMBs, with 42 percent spending more on backup hardware than planned, and another 35 percent going over budget on servers. SMBs spent more than budgeted in a number of security areas in 2009, going over budget on data loss prevention by 5.5 percent, and 4.1 percent more than planned on email/web gateways. Overall, the study concludes that SMBs saw faster returns on operational investments than their larger counterparts, while overspending more on security solutions. Read the full survey here.

Spammers Make Up Ground

Spammers made up for lost time this summer after several zombie networks that forwarded their messages were shut down following legal action. Symantec’s “State of Spam and Phishing Report” for July 2010 showed a spike in malware levels to nearly 12 percent of all spam in June, a contrast to levels that had not surpassed three percent for the year. Spam accounted for 88.32 percent of all messages in June and 89.81 percent for May. Phishing attempts also increased to 25 percent of all spam in June, and the number of phishing websites created by automated toolkits doubled. Spammers also took advantage of the FIFA World Cup tournament in June to spoof gaming sites for online soccer, while the volume of messages with World Cup keywords was nine times higher in 2010 than during the 2006 World Cup. Read more here.

Symantec Solutions Recognized as Best Channel Products

Symantec Backup Exec and Enterprise Vault were recently recognized...
Tech Trends to Watch
Emerging technologies remake conventional business models

The technology landscape continues to change and evolve in dynamic ways that few could have predicted even five years ago. Facebook, Twitter, and other social media portals have taken the Internet world by storm, while the number of cell phone users around the globe has reached nearly 4 billion. The shifting technology environment presents significant opportunities for SMBs. According to a survey from the McKinsey Quarterly, participating in Web 2.0 technologies has a high correlation to market share gains.

McKinsey offers 10 technology trends that businesses can take advantage of. It starts with distributed cocreation: using social media strategies to organize communities of Web participants to help develop, market and support a company’s products and services. A similar strategy harnesses the expertise of non-employees by building and managing Web-based user groups. Other emerging technologies of interest to SMBs: sensor and locations devices, such as RFID (radio-frequency identification), which are currently used by automakers for inventory control. For more information on technology trends, click here.

as 2010 Best Channel Products by Business Solutions magazine and Penn State University, based on a survey of the VAR community. The categories included Best Backup and Recovery and Best Data Management products. More than 1,400 survey respondents were asked to rate solutions in five categories: reliability, richness of features, ease of upgrade, ease of configurability, and opportunities available for VARs. SMBs typically have rapidly growing volumes of data and are increasingly in need of management solutions that keep this growth in check. Both Backup Exec 2010 and Enterprise Vault offer data deduplication technology that allow SMBs to lower their storage costs. Read more here.

Smartphone Apps Access Sensitive Data
While smartphones might have an app to find the nearest potential customer for your business, and give directions on how to get there, they may also be secretly collecting and transmitting vital personal information. Research conducted by mobile security firm Lookout in its App Genome Project looked at more than 300 mobile applications and found that many developers do not disclose an app’s data harvesting activities. For example, a third of free iPhone apps that were reviewed attempt to access a user’s geographic location. Similarly, 14 percent of iPhone apps and 8 percent of Android apps tried to access the user’s list of contacts. While the iPhone OS and Android warn users when an app attempts to access sensitive information, the warnings don’t detail what data the app is trying to collect, or where it might send it. Read more here.

Backup Solution Upgraded
Symantec recently announced new product updates to its Backup Exec 2010. The latest version of the industry leading
data protection solution enables users to shorten backup times while providing up to 20 percent faster installs. Backup Exec 2010 also improves on recovery times for business critical data, and alerts users to gaps in their backup procedure with the Product Recommendation Engine. The latest release provides additional platform support, including Microsoft SharePoint 2010, VMware vSphere 4.1, and SQL 2008 R2. Overall, the new features are designed to simplify the Backup Exec management process, saving both IT time and resources. Read more here.

Boosting Online Revenue
Symantec revealed that its VeriSign Trust Seal—which certifies websites as authentic and malware-free—helped MyEnergySolutions.com increase registrations on its Website by 137 percent, a 75 percent jump in revenue. The site deployed the VeriSign Trust Seal to give visitors confidence in sharing contact information for free services, such as home energy audits and solar consultations. VeriSign Trust Seal provides global recognition across the Internet, daily website malware scans, and the VeriSign Seal-in-Search, which displays the VeriSign Trust Seal next to MyEnergySolution.com’s link on participating search engines. Symantec recently acquired VeriSign’s identity and authentication business, which includes the VeriSign Trust Seal. Read more here.

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Symantec Small Business Check-up
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10 Things Small Businesses Must do to Protect & Secure Data
The Confident SMB is looking for IT professionals to share their expertise on how they're using Symantec technology to address small and midsize business challenges today and into the future. Submit your thoughts and analysis on lessons learned, tips and tricks, and best practices!

Send in your contributed article submissions to theconfidentsmb_editor@symantec.com for an opportunity to be featured in the next issue of The Confident SMB. To view the contributed article submission guidelines, click here.

Building Connections

Symantec Connect is your peer-to-peer technical community of more than 190,000 registered users to ask questions, get answers, and access articles, videos and blogs to learn about upcoming product releases, tips on best practices, and more. It's your perfect first line of support.

Feature Highlights

- Does Workspace Streaming Load Balancer Impact the Architecture?
- Tips for Incident Contact Management in the Servicedesk Portal
- Ten Backup Mistakes in a Virtual Environment—Part 5
- Symantec Workspace Streaming—Using the Log Files
- Steps to Configure Workstations with SWC Client and Sagem Biometric Devices
- Virtualized Internet Explorer 6 for Windows 7
- Deployment Server 6.9—A Quick-Start Course: Imaging with PXE
- Software Component Management Best Practices
- Using Wisescript and NS to Cleanup OLK files

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October 22–23, 2010

2010 NMSDC Conference and Business Opportunity Fair
Miami Beach, Florida
October 24–27, 2010

Entrepreneur Magazine Business Success Secrets Seminar
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October 28, 2010

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In the late 1990s and early part of the 2000s when I was working on my dissertation at the University of Durham, I would fly over to the United Kingdom from my home in Northern California and spend a week meeting with my advisor and compiling additional research each year. During one of my initial trips my wife returned to Taiwan to visit her parents. As I did not own a mobile phone at the time and was staying at an inexpensive inn without a phone, the only means for me to communicate the date of my planned return to my wife was with a handful of sterling in a classic red telephone booth on the corner of the town square in Durham.

Fast forward less than 10 years. It is almost unfathomable to travel internationally—let alone regionally—without mobile phone service and, for many of us, email and Internet services. Telephone booths are an extremely rare sighting, and even then most have been simply retained as a tourist attraction or historical artifact.
Mobile devices were a key enabler of this rapid transformation. And the underlying telecommunications infrastructure was just as critical. But none of this would have been possible without the ability to roam outside of your home network—regionally and internationally—and know that your mobile services would remain uninterrupted.

The behind-the-scenes enablement of roaming services and billing is taken for granted by many today, even though the technologies are often pioneering and quite sophisticated. And with 178 operators—and counting—in 118 countries in its connected network, 30-plus solutions, and 900 live services, Starhome is a leading player in the roaming mobile services market.

Run Fast: Yaniv Dinar

When Yaniv Dinar joined Starhome in 2000 as a security analyst, the company had approximately 10 mobile operators in its network and a handful of solutions. “Security has evolved as much as the company has during this timeframe,” Dinar notes. “I was convinced 10 years ago that a security firewall was the first line of defense against malware, viruses, and intruders. Security has transformed into something much broader and encompassing in scope in the past few years.”

Y2K was the “rage” of IT when Dinar joined Starhome. “IT staff were worried about keeping their jobs,” he says. “I was unmarried at the time, and I decided to run fast and to work on innovative projects. I was promoted to team leader of the Security and Networking team after two years.” He also had a very supportive management team that empowered him to make decisions and execute on them. He initially studied pre-engineering in school and then went on to complete his undergraduate degree in executive business management from Ruppin Academic Career Center. “This provided me with a broad background that has helped me bridge the gap between the engineering team and IT,” he explains.

In 2007, Dinar was promoted again to IT and infrastructure manager and given the charge to lead a combined IT and engineering group reporting to the vice president of Customer Service and Support. During this time frame, he led efforts to integrate virtualization, next-generation storage, and various other technology solutions. When asked to comment on the reasons for his success, he cites two intertwined factors. “Early on, I had a chance to be quite innovative and to run fast; not being afraid to use new technologies and try new things is important,” he explains. “It is also important to accept responsibility for your mistakes and to learn from them. This is something I learned from my manager, who has been a great mentor.”
Technology is a central lynchpin for a company like Starhome. A midsize business with approximately 200 employees, Starhome holds 16 patents. Until about two years ago, Starhome’s internal IT operations were outsourced to its parent company, Converse Technology, Inc. Seeking to lower costs and, more importantly, to leverage cross-development opportunities between IT and engineering initiatives, Starhome and Converse Technology made a decision to bring IT operations in-house. Overseeing this entire process was IT and Infrastructure Manager Yaniv Dinar, who joined the company in 2000 and served as infrastructure manager previous to this appointment, and his team of six IT and engineering professionals.

Much of the technology infrastructure was simply transferred from Converse Technology to Starhome, including a set of security solutions based on a number of different point-product solutions. Endpoint security was based on Symantec AntiVirus for clients and Trend Micro Endpoint Security for data center servers, messaging security on Pinapp Mail-Secure, and Web gateway security on Aladdin Secure Web Gateway.

“Having three separate security solutions for endpoints, messaging, and the Web gateway was like learning and maintaining three different languages.”

– Yaniv Dinar, IT and Infrastructure Manager, Starhome

Wanting to drive IT operational efficiencies while improving the company’s overall IT risk posture, Dinar consulted with Symantec Partner Spider Solutions Ltd. about potential solutions. “We initially looked to Symantec for just endpoint security,” he recalls. “We decided to upgrade and migrate to Symantec Endpoint Protection from Symantec AntiVirus and Trend Micro Endpoint Security about 18 months ago.”

However, the need for interoperability between each of the different security components remained in the background of Dinar’s discussions with Spider Solutions. “Starhome kept pressing the issue that they wanted a solution that not only included endpoint security but Web gateway and messaging security,” says Diego Schaiquevich, vice president of sales and marketing at Spider Solutions. “Symantec had recently acquired the Symantec Web Gateway technology, and we asked for a two-month proof of concept. We will not go to a client with a new solution unless we’re confident it will...
Don’t Leave Home Without Roaming

In wireless telecommunications, roaming refers to the capability of mobile devices to remain connected to the network even though the connectivity service is different from the home network. In particular, mobile users are able to make and receive calls and voice mails, send and receive data, and access other services when traveling—or roaming—outside of their geographical area. Roaming is technically supported by mobility management services such as authentication, authorization, and billing.

There are many types of roaming, including: (1) regional, (2) national, (3) international, (4) inter-standards (the ability to move between mobile networks of different technologies), (5) mobile signature (access point obtaining a mobile signature from any end user), (6) inter MSC (network elements belonging to the same operator but located in different areas), (7) permanent (contract that assumes constant roaming), and (8) trombone (roaming outside of a local tariff area).

Roaming activation typically maps to the following process: (1) a differentiation between the home network and visited network is registered, (2) the visited network requests authentication and authorization from the home network, and (3) entry into the user database of the visited network is granted and authorized network services are enabled. Global Service Roaming Capability refers to the ability of subscribers to use their personal service profile from their home network.

Roaming agreements are negotiated between the home network, visited network, and roaming provider such as Starhome. The Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA) broadly outlines legal aspects involving issues such as billing, authentication, and authorization for such roaming agreements.

meet their requirements and prove to be robust. We were very satisfied with Symantec’s engineering support and the product development roadmap we received.”

Dinar adds: “Spider Solutions worked with us to verify that the technology met our requirement. It was an important decision; one that we wanted to ensure was the correct choice.”

Putting together a suite

It was at this stage that Dinar began thinking about moving to Symantec Protection Suite instead of purchasing each solution area separately. Messaging security was something they also wanted to address. “The Gartner Magic Quadrant ranks Symantec Brightmail Gateway in the upper right-hand quadrant,” Dinar notes. “Contrary to what we normally do with nearly every other technology solution, we decided we didn’t need to push Brightmail Gateway through any proof-of-concept testing. Its reputation precedes it, and we were willing to go direct to production.”

In addition to the security components that comprise Symantec Protection Suite, Dinar and his team have used Symantec Backup Exec System Recovery since the beginning of 2009, leveraging it for rapid recovery of clients and data center servers.

With all of these issues as factors for consideration, Dinar and his team chose to acquire Symantec Protection Suite at the end of 2009 and commenced work with the consulting team from Spider Solutions to design and implement—or
the upgrade—each of the different solution pieces. Throughout the deployment of Symantec Endpoint Protection, Symantec Web Gateway, and Symantec Brightmail Gateway, Spider Solutions provided a turnkey solution for Starhome. “We are pleased with the support we received from Spider Solutions,” Dinar says. “They have a deep understanding of Symantec technology solutions and have helped guide us through a phased implementation. In addition, their team has provided excellent ongoing support after the solutions were implemented.”

**Security for the cloud**

Security is critical for Starhome. Its cloud-based offerings are configured as a star topology running from its Global Services Operations Centers. “Our hosted services provide interconnectivity between each of our customers,” Dinar says. “As a result, whenever we attend a sales convention, we are asked by potential customers if a hacker or malicious code entering at one point in the star topology could access other points.” The architecture of the solution is configured, however, to prevent this from occurring, Dinar emphasizes. “While the services are located on the customer’s premises, they reside logically in our network.”

This is where Symantec Endpoint Protection comes into play. “We manage endpoint security on our services that reside on the physical premises of the customer from our network,” Dinar says. He and his team opted to deploy most of the functionality in Symantec Endpoint Protection, starting with antivirus, antispyware, and intrusion prevention.

“Installing a personal firewall for all of our clients was critical for us,” he adds. “We needed to lock down every endpoint, and ensure that
it was integrated within the larger endpoint security console. This integrated endpoint security portfolio provides us with operational efficiency gains, as well as a more secure IT environment.” With the previous endpoint security infrastructure, users could securely access the Internet through wireless connections; however, there was a potential backdoor threat that Dinar sought to correct. “Earlier, I couldn’t sleep at night because I knew this threat existed,” he says. With personal firewall in Endpoint Protection, he is able to block backdoor access and eliminated this threat.

Dinar and Starhome are quite pleased with the results of the endpoint security deployment. Daily status reports provide them with a consolidated view of all threat vectors—both current and potential. The smaller footprint of Endpoint Protection is also proving beneficial. “The IT help desk received calls every day from end users who complained about the performance of their clients during patch updates,” Dinar notes. “When we uninstalled the prior solution and rolled out Endpoint Protection, end users were in shock.” Each employee has gained another 15 or 20 minutes of time per day because security updates and scans run in the background and don’t overwhelm system resources. “We run very fast as an organization,” he reports. “We did not want to take any chances with endpoint security, and this is why we selected Symantec, a technology provider that we can count on.”

Proactive security at the Web gateway
Dinar had aggressive requirements in place when he selected Symantec Web Gateway. “We wanted to implement policies and rules and not simply filter content,” he explains. “We stipulated inbound and outbound security management at the Web gateway.” One of the outbound activities he sought to block was gaming, which was impacting employee productivity, as well as presenting a security risk. “FarmVille on Facebook, a real-time online farm simulation game, was one of the applications in question,” he relates. “We also block access to personal email; the possibility

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**Starhome: Shooting for the Stars!**

*Founded: 1999*  
*Employees: 200 plus*  
*Headquarters: Zurich, Switzerland*  
*Mobile Operators Served: 178 in 118 countries*  
*Services: Roaming services for mobile network operators*  
**Business Units:** (1) Retail—seamless solutions to stimulate and increase roaming traffic and usability; (2) wholesale—powerful solutions to meet wholesale targets and IOT discount agreements; and (3) operation—mission-critical solutions to optimize network efficiency and reduce cost of ownership  
**Company Facts:** 16 registered patents, a 95% customer renewal rate, and 25% customer growth in 2009  
*Website: [www.starhome.com](http://www.starhome.com)*
of malware or malicious code infiltrating into our environment through this backdoor is something we wanted to eliminate.”

One of the key pieces of functionality in Web Gateway that Starhome is finding beneficial is the option for users to request the unblocking of a legitimate website that has been blocked. In the past, users had to call the IT help desk, a time-consuming process that wasted valuable IT staff time and prompted users to wait between 10 minutes and sometimes a full business day before getting access. “Now, they simply click a button that sends an alert to the IT team, we check the website, and then release access if it is legitimate,” Dinar explains. Previously, one full-time employee from Dinar’s team spent an average of 30 minutes each day reviewing report logs; now it is one minute each day. The benefits extend beyond the productivity gains around the task of reviewing reports and granting access to legitimate websites. In the case of the IT help desk, “it is a matter of opening a ticket, assigning it to a help desk representative, notifying the end user, and closing the ticket,” says Dinar. “This is a substantial time saver.”

Two-way messaging security
The prior messaging security solution only provided Starhome with inbound security. Because of the need to protect the company’s Internet Protocol (IP) reputation, and thus prevent emails from being blocked by recipients as potential spam, Dinar and Schaiquevich determined they needed a solution with both inbound and outbound filtering—and Symantec Brightmail Gateway 8300 provided both. In addition, seeking ease of deployment and use, Dinar opted for an appliance rather than a software-based solution.

“We were very satisfied with Symantec’s engineering support and the product development roadmap we received [for Symantec Web Gateway].”

– Diego Schaiquevich, VP of Sales and Marketing, Spider Solutions Ltd.
they were right. We have not had one false positive.”

Protecting data—efficiently and with confidence

At the beginning of 2009, Dinar made a decision to upgrade the storage environment by moving to a next-generation data protection solution from Symantec. He and his team deployed Symantec Backup Exec System Recovery for backing up images on clients and data center servers that can be recovered in a matter of minutes. For backup and recovery for data center servers, they rolled out Symantec Backup Exec, which integrates with their existing NetApp storage systems and virtualized server environment using VMware. With the migration to Backup Exec, Dinar and his team were able to move from tape- to disk-based backups, performing incremental backups every night and a full backup on the weekend.

The results over the prior backup-and-recovery environment have been significant in the data center environment alone, which includes nearly 50 virtualized servers and approximately 10 terabytes of data. “We have a more than 95 percent backup success ratio, and we have been able to maintain a 12-hour weekly backup window despite a 15 percent annual backup volume growth rate,” Dinar says. Of course, archived data is only as good as recovery capabilities, and Dinar reports that in the few instances he and his team have had to perform recoveries, the process has been seamless and fast.

In the case of backup and recovery for the company’s approximately 200 clients, Dinar and his team are able to perform recoveries for individual files to full systems. Before the deployment of Backup Exec System Recovery, they had to perform a full system recovery, an activity that required four hours or more. Now it takes less than 45 minutes. In addition, beyond the inefficiencies, the team wasn’t able to perform recoveries from one hardware platform to another.
The integration points between Backup Exec System Recovery and the different security components comprising Protection Suite are an additional value for Dinar. “We’re able to automatically back up client and server images when the security threat increases,” he says. “Having a suite of products that talk the same language is a big plus, particularly for a small IT team like ours.”

In August 2010, Dinar and his team upgraded both solutions to Symantec Backup Exec 2010 and Backup Exec System Recovery 2010. The additional virtualization support provides enhanced functionality and integration, and the Starhome team can now seamlessly upgrade to Microsoft Exchange 2010, as they plan to do so later in the year. “Backup Exec 2010 is more robust and performs faster backups than the prior versions,” Dinar says. The unified archiving capabilities in Backup Exec 2010 are also something Dinar anticipates leveraging. “We plan to use Backup Exec Archive Option to move all of our data archiving to our NetApp file systems,” Dinar adds. “The ability to leverage this more affordable storage while defining retention policies is something we believe will deliver substantial value for us.”

It’s in the stars…
This summer my wife, daughter, and I went on vacation in the United Kingdom, and our visit included a trip to Durham for a meeting with my former advisor who retired in August. Curiously, as we were walking past the town square on the way to meet him, I noticed the classic red telephone box was gone. Relegated to the scrap heap of technology that is as foreign to my 11-year-old daughter as the telegraph is to me, the red telephone box lives on in the stars—and in the case of Starhome, is roaming in the stars.

Patrick E. Spencer (Ph.D.) is the editor in chief and publisher for CIO Digest and The Confident SMB and the author of a book and various articles and reviews published by Continuum Books and Sage Publications, among others.
IT Is No Luxury
From Business Encumbrance to Enabler at Cambridgeshire Bathrooms

Cambridgeshire Bathrooms was established by three partners in 2003 with the objective of offering customers high-quality European bathroom fixtures accompanied with a superior level of service. Though the business has grown dramatically over the past eight years, including the recent addition of luxury kitchen fixtures, the mission and vision of the business haven’t changed. Indeed, the company’s unwavering focus on its original charter is evident in everything—from the more than 50 years of combined industry experience of its 11 staff to the customized services it delivers to its customers.
The customized services include a free 3D design service running on five PCs located at the front desk of the retailer’s showroom in Cambridgeshire, United Kingdom. “These systems also have our quoting, invoicing, accounting, and other business-critical applications on them,” says James Cardwell, director and co-founder, Cambridgeshire Bathrooms.

IT is a key enabler to Cambridgeshire Bathrooms. “We need to show customers different design configurations using our 3D design service, provide quotes in real time against those designs, and then retrieve that information when the customer returns to the store, sends us an email, or calls in three or four weeks,” Cardwell says. “The data we collect from and serve up to our customers is core to our business. System and data availability are non-negotiable requirements for us.”

Email communications are also integral to Cambridgeshire Bathrooms. “We often exchange hundreds of emails with customers and suppliers each day,” Cardwell says. “It is important that we are focused on responding to customer inquiries rather than clean-

“Small businesses must think about their business requirements and how the technology solution addresses those.”

– James Cardwell, Director and Co-founder, Cambridgeshire Bathrooms Ltd.
Vital IT Services for the SMB

Vitality Consulting Services is a Symantec Certified SMB Partner, and the firm possesses a deep understanding of its clients’ business requirements and technology challenges. “Vitality Consulting Services are the experts in the field,” says Cambridgeshire Bathrooms’ James Cardwell. “If you’re a small or midsize business and want to focus on running your business and not worry about managing your IT environment, I recommend that you engage them. They will work with you to pinpoint the right technology solutions that fit your budget.”

The IT consulting services firm offers its customers a service level agreement that includes four-hour response times. Its managed IT services are underpinned with a help desk ticketing system that was developed in-house. “Having the right IT systems in place helps facilitate our ongoing growth while enabling us to meet our service level agreements with our clients,” notes Vitality Consulting Services’ George Ilko. “The industry-leading service level agreements that come with Symantec Hosted Services augments and corroborates our services’ offerings.”

Referral leads to Vitality Consulting Services
Cambridgeshire Bathrooms was introduced to Symantec Silver Partner Vitality Consulting Services Ltd. by its accounting firm Sandcroft Accounting Services, which had earlier engaged Vitality Consulting Services to overhaul its IT systems and then provide ongoing IT managed services (see the article “No More ‘Red Panic Button’”). “We were spending way too much time managing IT issues in an ad hoc manner; it was becoming a real inhibiter to our business,” Cardwell relates.

As the business grew, the time Cardwell and his staff spent on IT-related issues burgeoned. “Between 20 percent and 30 percent of our six-day working week was being spent on IT-related issues,” he says. “We wanted to focus on running the business and not managing our IT systems.”

In addition, despite the amount of time they were spending, IT systems were becoming a real drag on the business—frustrating customers and even impeding revenue. “We had reached a point where we had about...
10 hours of downtime each month, in some cases an entire day at a time,” Cardwell recalls. “We were losing revenue opportunities and had frustrated customers. Managing IT in house was simply no longer an option for us.”

“What we really liked about the value proposition from Vitality Consulting Services is that we could concentrate on our business.”

– James Cardwell, Director and Co-founder, Cambridgeshire Bathrooms Ltd.
Baths: A Hot Spot in Ancient Rome

When one thinks of ancient Rome, the ornate public baths (thermae) quickly come to mind. They were central to Roman culture, serving as hubs of socialization—even commerce and politics. Romans usually attended the baths daily and spent several hours at them. Before bathing, they normally exercised, partaking in activities such as running, weight lifting, wrestling, and swimming. Slaves would accompany their masters to the baths, where they would serve them drinks and food then apply oil and scrape it and the sweat off their masters with a strigil (scraper made of wood or bone). Roman baths were typically supplied with water from an adjacent river, stream, or aqueduct, though some resided on top of thermal springs (e.g., the baths at Bath in the United Kingdom).

The public bath was constructed around three principal rooms: the frigidarium (cold bath), the tepidarium (warm bath), and the caldarium (hot bath). After exercising and stimulating circulation, bathers would enter the tepidarium, then the caldarium, followed by a vigorous massage and scraping off of dead skin, and finally the frigidarium.

The first Roman bath was constructed in 25 BCE by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, a Roman statesman and general who served as defense minister and public works administrator for Rome’s first emperor, Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus (Octavius). The Baths of Agrippa (or Thermae Agrippae) were constructed at the same time as the Pantheon and were supplied with water from the Aqua Virgo, an aqueduct also built by Marcus Agrippa. Opening in 19 BCE, the baths were donated to the citizens of Rome upon Marcus Agrippa’s death in 12 BCE.

Many of the Roman emperors built baths to curry favor with the masses, and each attempted to outdo their predecessors. The most elaborate and largest of the baths was the one built by Emperor Diocletian in 306 CE. The public baths in Rome remained in operation until the Goths sacked the city and cut the aqueducts in 537 CE. A number of Roman baths survive, some as ruins and others in various states of conservation. Those in Bath in the United Kingdom are perhaps the most recognized and preserved, receiving over one million visitors a year.
“We were spending way too much time managing IT issues in an ad hoc manner.”  
– James Cardwell, Director and Co-founder, Cambridgeshire Bathrooms Ltd.

Server running on an HP ProLiant server. “We could run all databases and applications from a centralized location,” Ilko says. The prior environment was quite antiquated, and thus stability and reliability were pressing issues. In particular, because Cambridgeshire Bathrooms is located in an old agricultural building, the power grid is unreliable, with sporadic outages a regular occurrence. As a result, Vitality Consulting Services added an APC Uninterrupted Power Supply to help ensure that IT systems continue running, even during power interruptions.

Along with Microsoft Small Business Server, Ilko and his team worked with Cambridgeshire Bathrooms to introduce additional technologies, beginning with the selection of Symantec Protection Suite in early 2010. The reduced pricing model and integrated product portfolio were compelling factors for Cardwell. “Cost cannot be the only consideration,” Cardwell adds. “This was all too often our approach with IT in the past; however, small businesses must think about their business requirements and how the technology solution addresses those.”

Opening the ports
Except for inbound and outbound email, which was hosted by an external provider, the prior IT environment at Cambridgeshire Bathrooms was largely closed. But with the move to Microsoft Small Business Server, all of the different Web and email ports were opened—and the need for an endpoint security solution became critical. Vitality Consulting Services replaced the company’s previous endpoint security solution with Symantec Endpoint Protection, which is part of Symantec Protection Suite. “We have antivirus, antispyware, and intrusion prevention turned on now,” Ilko says. “We plan to turn on the firewall to enhance the security of mobile access later in the year.”

The results were evident overnight. Specifically, over 10,000 threats were identified across the IT environment, according to Ilko. “It was much broader than just malware,” he relates. “We uncovered botnets and other malicious code that were broadcasting outside of the network. There were some serious IT risks that were eliminated.”
Data protection: fixture of success

Data was a growing problem for Cambridgeshire Bathrooms. The Virtual Worlds 3D CAD system was resource intensive. Cardwell and other members of the Cambridgeshire Bathrooms’ staff were copying select files from certain applications over to a USB drive on a weekly basis. Incomplete and unreliable, this solution was not only inefficient but put critical data at risk.

Vitality Consulting Services implemented Symantec Backup Exec and Symantec Backup Exec System Recovery to protect Cambridgeshire Bathrooms’ data. A new NAS storage device was added at the same time. An incremental backup is run automatically at 10 p.m., with a full backup performed weekly using Backup Exec System Recovery. Vitality Consulting Services also implemented an off-site USB backup strategy for disaster recovery; a member of the Cambridgeshire Bathrooms’ staff simply activates an off-site image to a USB drive using Backup Exec System Recovery.

Backup Exec System Recovery earned its worth right out of the box. The hard drives on the prior server had several bad sectors and blocks. “A forensic recovery would have taken many, many hours and would have been way out of scope for Cambridgeshire Bathrooms’ budget,” Ilko observes. “Because Backup Exec System Recovery works with the hardware extraction layer and is hardware independent, we were able to move the data from the old, non-HP hardware to the new HP ProLiant server in a matter of 20 minutes.”

Storage requirements more than doubled when the previously outsourced email environment was moved to Microsoft Exchange 2008—going from 200 gigabytes to approximately 400 gigabytes over night. However, with the new NAS storage device that will accommodate one terabyte of data and the deduplication capabilities of Backup Exec 2010, Cambridgeshire Bathrooms has an information management solution that will scale with its business. “We previously could retain most data for about one month, which simply isn’t long enough,” Cardwell says. “Sales cycles are often much longer, and we’re able to provide...
customers with a better experience because the data from their earlier sales interactions can be retrieved."

As Vitality Consulting Services recently upgraded the environment to Backup Exec System Recovery 2010, additional benefits are being realized. For example, deduplication reduced the Cambridgeshire Bathrooms’ data store by approximately 50 percent—from over 310 gigabytes to about 160 gigabytes. In addition, incremental daily backup windows have been reduced to 15 minutes from 30 minutes, and weekly full backup windows to one hour from four hours.

“We used Backup Exec System Recovery to collapse partitions in hard drives and increase storage capacity,” Ilko reports. “And because the rendering volumes, which are done frame-by-frame, of Virtual Worlds 3D CAD, we would be looking at multiple terabytes of data very soon without the deduplication feature set in Backup Exec.” In addition, as email communications are critical to Cambridgeshire Bathrooms’ interactions with customers and suppliers, Ilko and Cardwell are exploring the possibility of using the Backup Exec Archiving Option to enable a more seamless archiving and retrieval of email.

Messaging security: reduced bandwidth, IT risks
Messaging security was a real issue with the prior email solution. “We were getting 60, 70, 80, 90, 100 spam messages every day!” Cardwell complains. “Each member of the staff was spending up to 30 minutes daily sifting through email and deleting these unwanted messages. This is time we needed for interacting with customers.” And this didn’t include the incoming malware and other security threats that had infected IT systems.

Incoming messaging security was one requirement; outbound filtering was also a concern. “We provide the Internet connectivity for Cambridgeshire Bathrooms, and it is in our interest to maintain optimal network performance,” Ilko says. “Plus, it is important to monitor outgoing messages to prevent possible blacklisting, something that is critical to a retailer like Cambridgeshire Bathrooms.”

With this in the foreground, Vitality Consulting Services implemented a layered messaging security approach for Cambridgeshire Bathrooms. Ilko installed Symantec Mail Security for Microsoft Exchange, part of Symantec Protection Suite, on the HP ProLiant server. Ilko and the Cambridgeshire Bathrooms’ team also added MessageLabs Hosted Email Security from Symantec, which provides inbound and outbound message filtering.

“MessageLabs Hosted Email Security allows us to avoid having any malware, spam, or other unwanted messages.
come into our network,” Cardwell says. In addition to an improved IT risk posture, Cambridgeshire Bathrooms was able to reduce network bandwidth consumption by 50 percent. “This improves system performance and enables us to deliver better services to our customers,” Cardwell explains. “Further, we would be close to network bandwidth capacity without Message-Labs Hosted Email Security, and would likely be faced with the prospect of adding more network capacity.”

**Maintaining an ancient lineage...**

A couple hundred kilometers to the southwest of Cambridgeshire is the famous city of Bath. With the only natural hot springs in the United Kingdom, Bath was established as a spa resort in 43 CE by the Romans, who constructed a temple on the surrounding hills during the years 66–70 CE and then built up the baths over the next 300 years. Until Bath was abandoned by the Romans in the fifth century CE, its baths served as a center of recreation and socialization for hundreds of thousands of patrons.

This lineage transcends time in the form of Cambridgeshire Bathrooms and its mission to offer the residents of Cambridgeshire (Mid Anglia) with an unparalleled experience in designing and purchasing luxury bathrooms. Bathrooms are much more than washrooms; something that was proven 2,000 years ago in ancient Rome and demonstrated six days a week in Cambridgeshire Bathrooms’ showroom, with IT serving as an enabler versus encumbrance.

*Patrick E. Spencer (Ph.D.) is the editor in chief and publisher for CIO Digest and The Confident SMB and the author of a book and various articles and reviews published by Continuum Books and Sage Publications, among others.*

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**Symantec Showroom**

- Symantec Protection Suite Small Business Edition
- Symantec Endpoint Protection
- Symantec Backup Exec System Recovery
- Symantec Mail Security for Exchange
- Symantec Backup Exec
- MessageLabs Hosted Email Security from Symantec
- Symantec Partner: Vitality Consulting Services Ltd.
Run Lean, Run Safe

Making Your Information Protection as Tough as the Times

When business conditions are difficult, it’s easy to put off a review of information protection. Issues such as improving sales and meeting payroll seem much more important.

But an industry analyst who specializes in small and mid-size businesses poses an interesting question:

“If something happens to your data, how long can your business survive?” says Anil Miglani, a senior vice president at Access Markets International (AMI) Partners, Inc. “And how much damage would it do your business?”

By Alan Drummer
Most people think about the cost of lost data in terms of disruption to sales and the time and expense to recover the information, Miglani observes. But there’s another factor: “How is the confidence of your customers and business partners affected by the downtime you experience?” he asks.

In an electronically connected age, he notes, confidence is critical. “It’s easy for customers to switch to a competitor,” he says. “And once they’re gone, it takes a lot of effort to bring them back.”

**Orgill Singer & Associates, Inc.**

Founded: 1986  
Location: Las Vegas, Nevada  
Employees: 67  
Symantec Partner: Integrita Systems LLC  
Website: orgillsinger.com

Each business has a strong focus on protecting information. And their confidence in that area, along with their customers’ confidence, has been important in their success. Interestingly enough, each business also uses technology—and information—to deliver exceptional customer value and a competitive edge. The following seven strategies help protect the information they count on.

1. **Think of security and data protection together**

   Risks to your data can come from anywhere, Miglani notes. “Your own employees, natural disasters, electronic threats, hard drive failure—there are a wide variety of sources of risk.” The focus of security is on stopping malware and cybercrime. The focus of data protection is on backup and recovery. But both are about minimizing risks, and there are gains from thinking about them together.

   **Downsize your risk**

   Especially in tough times, there are some key strategies that make information protection easier, and more effective. Once in place, they let you concentrate on projects that make a bigger difference to your success.

   These strategies emerged in discussions with three small businesses that have managed to double or triple their size in recent years, despite difficulties in the economy.
“If something happens to your data, **how long can your business survive?**”

– Anil Miglani, Senior Vice President, Access Markets International Partners, Inc.

**2. Streamline your security and data protection solutions**

One gain is the opportunity to simplify. As the security and data protection fields have matured, Miglani observes, many providers have entered each category to offer point solutions. “Larger providers like Symantec have an advantage in that they can combine and integrate point solutions in both categories, and bring that advantage to SMBs,” he notes. “They also have the capability to deliver cloud-based solutions with more functionality and on a much more cost-effective basis than the smaller providers can.”

Integrated solutions, such as Symantec Protection Suite Small Business Edition, combine endpoint security, messaging security, and Web security, as well as desktop and laptop backup and recovery. “An integrated solution saves a business from evaluating five different products to get the comprehensive protection that’s needed,” Miglani says. “And it saves time on installation, maintenance, and upgrades—a significant advantage for SMBs which are resource constrained as it is.”

Another advantage of having backup and IT security components from the same vendor is that they can work together to enhance protection value. For instance, Symantec Endpoint Protection can be configured to trigger an automatic backup by Symantec Backup Exec when the Symantec ThreatCon level escalates. This helps ensure that vital data is safely backed up as soon as global threats are detected.

“Something that Symantec has in its favor compared to many competitors is a large network and global presence,” notes Miglani. “This gives

**Information Protection is Highest Priority for SMBs***

- **$51,000** is average SMB spend on data protection
- 74% of the SMBs are somewhat/extremely concerned about losing data
- 42% lost confidential or proprietary information in the past
- 100% who lost data also lost revenue or had direct financial costs
- 73% were victims of cyber attacks in the past year
- 100% of cyber attack victims had expensive downtime or loss of sensitive data

*“SMB Information Protection Survey,” Symantec Corporation, June 2010. Survey results include 2,152 SMB executives and IT decision makers in 28 countries.

Source: SMB Info Protection survey referenced*
them the ability to detect threats from all parts of the world.”

One company that counts on Symantec is Orgill Singer & Associates, Inc., a leading Nevada-based insurance agency. The company is using Symantec Endpoint Protection, Symantec Mail Security, and Symantec Backup Exec. “Having one vendor for security and data protection solutions is easier to manage, and we can build up some buying power on our end,” says Robert Church, project specialist. “A common interface means cross-training is easier, too, so we can back each other up.”

Adds Craig Huck, senior technical consultant at Orgill Singer’s IT Partner, Integrita Systems LLC: “One vendor also means there’s less finger pointing—many software vendors will blame issues with their product on the antivirus or backup products.”

Up in Portland, Oregon, Quality Health Solutions, Inc. is a wellness company that coaches people on how to mitigate their health risks. Its IT provider, On Line Support, Inc., has deployed Symantec Endpoint Protection and Symantec Backup Exec to protect the company’s information. Eric Olmsted, On Line Support’s president and owner, chose to use these solutions because of his long experience with their reliability. “I’ve been using Backup Exec since it was Seagate Backup Exec in the late 1990s, well before Symantec acquired it,”

“Outcomes are king, and if our data wasn’t protected, and we couldn’t show the efficacy of our programs, we couldn’t stay in business.”

– Brian Thomas, Founder, President and CEO, Quality Health Solutions, Inc.
Olmsted explains. “And we’ve standardized on Symantec Endpoint Protection for almost as long, the past 12 years. The more solutions we have under support with one vendor, the easier it is for us to get help.”

3. Heal IT issues yourself
A key reason why Julian Cooper, a senior IT administrator at Integrated Control Corporation (ICC) in Huntington, New York, uses Symantec Endpoint Protection and Symantec Backup Exec 2010 is because they make it easier for him not to get help. “Symantec stuff just works; that’s what I like,” Cooper says. “When I do have an issue, Symantec has substantial documentation on its website in Symantec Connect. I don’t feel that calling tech support and having them fix things is helping me out. So I don’t like to call; I prefer to fix things myself and become more knowledgeable. And that’s why I love Backup Exec 2010. It has even more self-healing features and debugging utilities. I’d say that 95 percent of the time that I might have had to call tech support, I’ve been able to fix the issue on my own.”

Cooper and one other colleague at ICC provide IT services to 55 employees. The company has more than tripled in size in the past several years, due to innovative controls that it has developed. These make it easy for restaurants to keep food safety and quality standards consistent at multiple locations.

4. Proactively reduce your risk exposure
Almost no one knows the value of prevention like Quality Health Solutions. As a wellness company, it helps employers and insurers save money by conducting health risk appraisals and on-site health screenings for employees. It runs programs that help employees fight depression, obesity, and smoking. And it offers telephone-based coaching for those with the greatest health risks.
Quality Health Solutions, like ICC, has more than tripled its size in the past several years. One reason is its ability to measure and demonstrate positive health changes. “Data is the underpinning of our company,” says Brian Thomas, founder, president and CEO. “It’s how we interact with our end users, identify health risk within a population, and report our outcomes. Outcomes are king, and if our data wasn’t protected, and we couldn’t show the efficacy of our programs, we couldn’t stay in business.”

The company locks its data down proactively, Thomas says. “We don’t let any data go out in the field with our laptops,” he notes. “They’re shells.” Data stays at headquarters, where the device control feature of Symantec Endpoint Protection prevents the use of USB drives to copy it.

Quality Health Solutions does enable employees to access email from the field using their BlackBerry phones. “We teach people how to lock their cell phones, and they are locked all the time,” says On Line Support’s Olmsted. “If a smartphone were to become lost, we can send a code and it will erase itself.”

5. Centralize and standardize your processes

Having solutions in place is not enough. They need to be deployed correctly.

Orgill Singer had third-party anti-virus protection when Jason Milligan joined as systems administrator in 2002—but it was deployed only on some endpoints, and because administration was left to users, settings were inconsistent. As a result, the company was just recovering from a major infection of malware.

As his first project, Milligan insisted on installing Symantec Endpoint Protection from a central server and pushing it to every endpoint. “There has been no significant disruption from malicious code since then,” he observes.

Meanwhile, the company has doubled in size. “The complexity of our environment has also increased significantly,” asserts Robert Church, IT project specialist at Orgill Singer. “Back then we weren’t using hosted applications or the Internet.”

“Having one vendor for security and data protection solutions is easier to manage, and we can build up some buying power on our end.”

– Robert Church, Project Specialist, Orgill Singer & Associates, Inc.
much, and now we are, with a bigger exposure to risk. So when Jason got centralized protection going, it played right into our needs.”

When Julian Cooper joined ICC three years ago, only 25 percent of backup jobs and 10 percent of needed recoveries were successful. “It was terrible,” he says. “They had Symantec Backup Exec, but it wasn’t set up right. There were no processes in place.”

Cooper had worked with Backup Exec for seven years in prior jobs. He quickly set up appropriate policies. “Backup-and-recovery success rates are virtually 100 percent,” he says. “The integrity’s now there.”

6. Squeeze more from existing resources

Good information protection solutions, deployed right, not only enhance a business’s resilience, they reclaim time, money, and resources that can be redirected to other IT projects.

This is the case at ICC. When Cooper joined the company, it was also using Symantec Endpoint Protection, “but like Backup Exec at that point, it wasn’t deployed right,” Cooper recalls. “When I first joined, I had to spend about eight hours a week on security administration and remediation. I set up the right centralized policies. And since then, we’ve had no significant problems, and I need to spend only 15 minutes to a half hour a week on security administration.”

With more time for other projects, he’s been able to test the deduplication option of Symantec Backup Exec 2010. “I’ve seen a minimum disk space reduction of 50 percent,” he reports. “I expect it will enable us to avoid purchase of another storage system, and that will save about $5,000.”

At Orgill Singer, the granular recovery capability in Symantec Backup Exec means “we no longer need to do a second brick-level backup of Microsoft Exchange to be able to recover individual messages,” notes Integrita Systems’ Huck. “That’s reduced the backup window by 10 to 20 percent and enabled us to grab some other kinds of data on tape.”

7. Protect productivity by securing Web and email assets

Productivity at Orgill Singer, as at most businesses, depends on email, “and we are bombarded by spam,” Milligan reports. “Symantec Mail Security has helped us alleviate that problem. As an insurance agency, we have producers in the field talking with clients most of the day. And if their smart phones were continually going off with mail notifications, and...
“The more solutions we have under support with one vendor, the easier it is for us to get help.”

– Eric Olmsted, President and Owner, On Line Support, Inc

it turned out to be junk mail, it not only would be disruptive to their clients, they’d start ignoring legitimate messages.”

Symantec Mail Security is blocking thousands of spam messages a month at Orgill Singer, many of which contain malicious code.

Remember what customers want
“Data protection and security intersect,” sums up On Line Support’s Olmsted. “Both are about protection, just from different kinds of threats. You’re protecting the endpoints from intrusion, inboxes from spam, or data from hackers or accidental deletion.”

Protection is fundamental to customer value, ICC’s Cooper points out. “At ICC, we store other companies’ data that comes from our monitoring devices, and we have to show our customers that we are capable of storing it securely,” he notes. “What our customers buy from us, besides monitoring and control solutions, is confidence.”

Alan Drummer is Creative Director for Content at NAVAJO Company. His work has appeared in CIO Digest, Los Angeles Times, Create Magazine, and on The History Channel.

SMB Information Protection from Symantec

- Symantec Backup Exec
- Symantec Backup Exec System Recovery
- Symantec Endpoint Protection
- Symantec Mail Security
- Symantec Web Gateway
- Symantec Brightmail Gateway
- Symantec Protection Suite Small Business Edition

IT systems weighting you down?
CONTROL YOUR DATA.

Learn about Hosted Services
Computing on Cloud Nine

Tips to Fly Smoothly Through the Cloud

The cloud protects the earth from the sun’s rays, makes life’s precious rain, and regulates the weather. Now that’s pretty powerful. But is the cloud as nurturing for business?

Many of us already rely heavily on the cloud—leveraging the Internet to access applications. We host our email using Yahoo! and Google mail. We buy everything from books, shoes to electronics on Amazon.com. And the small and midsize businesses (SMBs) selling on Amazon or eBay have figured out how to take advantage of these e-commerce solutions to drive increased revenue.

SMBs are not only leveraging e-commerce services but cloud-based business processes—from Salesforce.com for customer relationship management to GoToMeeting for Web conferencing to ADP for payroll infor-
Enabling technologies have evolved so rapidly that it’s finally fulfilling the promise of the web as a tool to allow companies to better operate and compete.”

– Jeffrey Kaplan, Managing Director, THINKstrategies

ination. In fact, SMBs are expected to spend over $95 billion for cloud services by 2014, according to the latest research released by AMI Partners. Increased cost savings and greater flexibility of doing business make for compelling reasons.

Despite the forecast of increasing clouds, many SMBs are still trying to understand what cloud computing is and why they should care.

Why head into the cloud?
Cloud computing is much broader in scope than what many believe. “What we’re seeing is a total transformation of the technology industry from a product-centric to a service driven-model,” explains Jeffrey Kaplan, managing director of THINKstrategies. “The cloud has helped popularize this movement and is simply the delivery of business-based applications hosted through the Web.”

Traditionally, businesses have the responsibility of acquiring and managing their IT environments. In a cloud services scenario, however, the SMB shifts the burden of processing and storing data to the cloud provider, leveraging a pay-as-you-grow subscription model and benefiting from faster time to services.

“Enabling technologies have evolved so rapidly that it’s finally fulfilling the promise of the Web as a tool to allow companies to better operate and compete,” says Kaplan. “What began as an application service delivery framework has evolved to anything being delivered as a service—software, platforms, and IT management solutions.”

Navigating through the cloud
While there are many cloud services from which to choose, the question is how to successfully navigate through the cloud. The following five recommendations from Kaplan detail what SMBs should consider when implementing cloud services. The Confident SMB also spoke with several SMBs about how they are achieving business goals by taking advantage of the cloud.

1. How do you determine if the cloud makes sense for your business?
“First, take a close look at the long-term IT requirements and put them in context of the broader business,” Kaplan emphasizes. “This will enable SMBs to plan the best option, select a vendor that meets their business needs, and do so in a cost-effective manner.”
“Symantec Hosted Endpoint Protection provides multiple levels of security protocols to block more than viruses.”

– Sumeet Lakhaney, Director of IT, Fourth Wall Restaurants

Design Ink, a screen printing and embroidery manufacturer that designs around-the-clock, built its reputation on the quality of its products and commitment to meeting customer expectations. IT plays a central role in helping the company to innovate and remain competitive, and the cloud certainly is a major part of this process.

Increased global competition and lowered margins were key business issues for Design Ink. The need to provide faster, on-time service delivery, and streamline operations was critical to remain competitive. “Cash flow is a huge issue for us,” says Shaun McCardell, president of Design Ink. “We look for solutions that allow us to avoid up-front capital expenditures, and the advantages of hosted services fit the bill to lower our cost of doing business.”

2. How do you identify a cloud service provider that works best for you?

“Don’t only look for the best-of-breed vendor in a specific area but seek a strategic provider that, over time, may be able to address a series of interrelated requirements,” Kaplan recommends. “In addition to the functional capabilities of the vendor, it is important to look at their long-term financial viability.” (See the article “Two Heads Are Better Than One.”)

Bell Mortgage LLC, one of the oldest independent mortgage banking companies, is an example of a small business that has successfully embraced the cloud. In its mission to be progressive and service-oriented, Bell Mortgage took advantage of innovative hosted services.

For Casey Kirt, director of technology at Bell Mortgage, selecting a reliable hosted services provider was vital. Key factors to consider, according to Kirt: “Look at their track record, can they provide strong references, do their performance capabilities meet your needs, does their service level agreement include compliance reporting, and do they have an exit strategy plan?”

3. Does the cloud offer your business more security?

“Security demands more regular updates than any other software to address escalating security threats,” Kaplan says. “No matter how good
To keep things moving, Design Ink counts on Symantec Silver Partner Wasatch Software. “Wasatch Software and Network Systems Engineer Paul Despain are the elite IT task force. Like in the television show White Collar, where a criminal helps the FBI nab other criminals, I have a tracking device on Paul’s ankle. He cannot get very far because I own the wallet,” quips Shaun McCardell, president of Design Ink. “Together with Paul, who at the time was our IT consultant, we developed a Web-based software to manage, forecast, and schedule production so our customers know when to expect their project,” notes McCardell. Adopting cloud services soon expanded to email security.

To eliminate the hundreds of incoming spam, reduce network bandwidth, and lower costs, with a minimum amount of management, Despain recommended MessageLabs Hosted Email Security. “With MessageLabs configuration, only certain mail servers deliver and receive mail messages which cut costs down,” Despain says. “In addition, network performance improved as bandwidth dropped from 60 percent to 20 percent.” With Symantec Hosted Services, Wasatch Software is focused on what’s important to grow the business rather than on managing messaging security, according to McCardell.

Despain also remotely manages Symantec Endpoint Protection to eliminate spam messages from reaching the perimeter and plans to move to Symantec Hosted Endpoint Protection in the future.

**McCardell’s and Despain’s Tips:** To stay ahead of the game and save on the bottom line, move to the cloud. Go with Symantec Hosted Services. It’s quick, more secure, and powerful, yet requires less management time and money.
Secure Cloud Cover: **Bell Mortgage**

To meet the needs of its clients, Bell Mortgage, LLC focuses its efforts on being a progressive, service-oriented lender. Casey Kirt, the director of technology at Bell Mortgage, runs his IT shop with the same forward-thinking, customer-focused approach. “Like most small businesses, I have very limited budget,” Kirt says. “By leveraging Symantec Hosted Services, I have access to a more secure and robust data center than I could ever dream of and can deliver higher levels of service to my end users.”

Prior to consolidating Bell Mortgage’s email and Web security with Symantec, Kirt had a dedicated server and ran weekly updates to download new virus and antispam filter definitions that resulted in a lot of overhead.

Kirt deployed MessageLabs Hosted Email Security and Hosted Web Security from Symantec and Symantec Endpoint Protection to minimize threats and risks from the Web. “With Symantec Hosted Services, I have been able to remove the overhead, keep my budget under control, reduce staff, and streamline operations,” Kirt notes. “And right or wrong, since email outages due to spam have gone away, we’ve forgotten about spam filtering altogether.”

Symantec Hosted Services also enhances my disaster recovery plan contends Kirt. “If my primary server goes down, I bring up my disaster recovery site,” Kirt explains. “I go to MessageLabs and point to my new host, and boom, my email is flowing again.” As Kirt deploys new systems, he is also looking to roll out Symantec’s Hosted Endpoint Protection by end of year.

**Kirt’s Tip:** Just try Symantec Hosted Services. Take advantage of the free 30-day trial. It takes minutes to set up. And once it’s up, you’re never going to undo it because it’s an ironclad security guarantee.

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**Bell Mortgage LLC**

**Founded:** 1880
**Location:** Minneapolis, MN
**Employees:** 186
**IT Staff:** 6
**Website:** www.bellmortgage.com

— Casey Kirt, Director of Technology, Bell Mortgage LLC
Model of Efficiency: Fourth Wall Restaurants

Running the IT backbone of Fourth Wall Restaurants complex businesses is Director of IT, Sumeet Lakhaney. His recipe for IT success: drive extreme efficiencies. Keeping in line with this principle, Lakhaney used hosted applications to run point-of-sale, financial, collaboration tools, and quickly added hosted security services to the lineup.

To protect the complexity of Fourth Wall Restaurants’ hundreds of endpoints, Lakhaney standardized on Symantec Hosted Endpoint Protection to deliver antivirus, antispyware, firewall, and host intrusion prevention.

“Symantec Hosted Endpoint Protection provides multiple levels of security protocols to block more than just viruses,” Lakhaney explains. With a single view of all of Fourth Wall Restaurants’ endpoints, Lakhaney can centrally manage the software to deliver updates transparently and automatically, rather than updating the clients manually.

“By hosting security in the cloud, I don’t have to purchase and maintain a physical server environment,” Lakhaney says. “This has reduced my energy and maintenance costs, increased staff productivity, and improved operational efficiencies.”

Lakhaney’s Tips: Research the cost benefits of hosted services. Understand what other businesses are sharing the data center. What are the provider’s security protocols both from a firewall level and physical server hosting standpoint? Does their reliability, uptime, and data integrity meet your requirements? And make sure to have a backup plan if the unthinkable happens and you need to transition your resources.

4. What about cost and complexity?

“SMBs can avoid the need to build and maintain a costly IT environment,” Kaplain explains. “Instead, they can rely on the cloud provider to deliver the service, ensure its availability, reliability, and scalability, and simply pay for what they need to grow their business.”
“[With MessageLabs...] network performance improved as bandwidth dropped from 60 percent to 20 percent.”

– Paul Despain, Network Systems Engineer, Wasatch Software

From attracting the veritable Who’s Who to brokering power lunches, Fourth Wall Restaurants—The Hurricane Club, Maloney & Porcelli, Park Avenue, The Post House, Quality Meats, and Smith & Wollensky New York—are the epicenter of Manhattan dining. Devoted to providing its patrons an award-winning culinary experience, Fourth Wall has taken to the cloud.

Fourth Wall Restaurants’ director of IT is Sumeet Lakhaney; reducing cost and complexity is a key objective for him. “By using IT services from the cloud, you’re basically keeping your infrastructure down to a minimum, streamlining operations, and reducing costs,” he says. “I saw the value of hosted services because we’re leaving the maintenance and responsibility to the pros so I could focus on business critical projects.”

5. What’s the best way to embrace the cloud while mitigating risks?
“The cloud should be viewed as an out-tasking opportunity,” Kaplan says. “Think of it as parceling off IT tasks one at a time, which can mitigate the risk associated with making major changes. Start small, test to see how it meets business needs, and then incrementally expand.”

Lakhaney conducted a beta trial of Symantec Hosted Services, deployed it on one third of his computers, and ran tests. “Symantec Hosted Services was great in terms of being able to centrally manage and provide comprehensive protection,” Lakhaney says. “I quickly discovered hosted security works, it is safe, and presents compelling cost savings.”

Just like a force in nature, the cloud benefits are clear for SMBs. Adopting cloud computing breaks down the cost barriers for the delivery of new technology innovations, triggers much more efficient computing, and steers the focus on driving revenue.

1 AMI Partners,’ World Wide Cloud Services Study, August 2010.

Courtenay Troxel is managing editor for The Confident SMB and manager of online content and newsletters at Symantec.