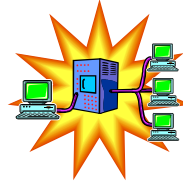


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Time for a Server?

When a business consists of more than one person, questions arise about how to share critical business information and technology resources such as printers. Most small businesses start to link computers together with a network and are unaware that the benefits of a 'server' computer may actually be within their budget.

Servers are specifically designed to provide file storage, file sharing, resource sharing (like printers) and other services, to multiple computers. They can also help you:

- better find and manage business-critical information in one consolidated location;
- store large chunks of information, enabling individual PCs to perform better;
- access up-to-date customer information quickly;
- share email and calendaring details between your team;
- protect your information by making back-ups easier;
- provide secure access to email & calendars, other files or to your entire office PC, from another internet-connected computer;
- better manage security features and monitor threats to your computer systems.

Does that all sound like it's going to be expensive? Well, servers are no longer confined to dedicated rooms, serving large corporations with large I.T. departments. Many of the major manufacturers promote 'Small Business Server' bundles, with the hardware and software needed for a business with as little as 5 staff.

Here are some factors that indicate your business may be ready for a server:

- You need to consolidate & arrange your files (you can't always find what you need when you need it).
- You are worried about whether all of your important files are secure and are being backed up.
- You need to share hardware such as printers and fax machines for two or more PCs.
- You have employees who travel, frequently telecommute, or work off-site, and would benefit from accessing what's back in the office.
- You keep adding more files onto your PCs and running out of disk space.
- You'd like to run accounting software or other line-of-business applications on more than one PC.
- Your business is growing and plans to add new computers and employees or even a second location.

As with any technology purchasing decision, you need to discuss your business needs and plans with your trusted I.T. advisor to see if it's the right time for a server. You may be looking for aggressive growth, stability or even expense reduction this year, so you'll want to focus first on the server features that will support your goals. You also need to ensure that you're not expecting technology to solve a problem that could be resolved with a change in your business processes.

Talk to your local Computer Troubleshooter about whether now is the time to make the move and experience the benefits of a server computer in your business.



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