

Kaizen—Good Change

Small Changes to Your Data Management Could Save You BIG!

Most businesses are experiencing an explosion of data growth and managing all the information has become a real challenge. While some sort of document management system may ultimately become the norm, until then perhaps *kaizen* or small good changes can help.

I believe that the Pareto principle (aka the 80/20 rule) definitely applies to data—only 20% of an organization's data is actively needed and valuable. The remaining 80% of the data or information is just "legacy" stuff that no one knows what it is or what to do with it. The "5S" workplace organization method may be able to help. The five "S's" come from the Japanese words: *seiri*, *selton*, *selso*, *seiketsu*, and *shitsuke*. Translated into English, these words mean: *sort*, *straighten*, *shine*, *standardize*, and *sustain*.

If applied to data management, the first step would be to sort your data. We often see clients with large shared network drives where they literally "dump" all kinds of information without any thought to sorting the data. If an organization were to sort this data into meaningful filing structures it would allow for the removal of unnecessary data and ultimately make work easier. Some ideas on how to organize your data include filing by year, by project, or other similar standard. Alternatively, many organize data by client, vendors or other similar structure. The problem with the latter approach is that all new data is mixed together with old data and it becomes more difficult to identify what is actually active. Whenever possible, consider using a filing structure that has a finite time span so that you can easily archive older data. Here's where the savings come in.

Let's say for example that you have 100 MB of client data, and per the 80/20 rule, only 20 MB of this data is active, changing and ultimately valuable. If it's all mixed together with the remaining 80% of the data that is really just historical data, your business must back all of the data up every day to ensure that nothing gets lost. I would propose creating a separate archival storage location that is online and available to your team but set to "Read Only", meaning they can reference the information and read it as much as they like. If they need to make changes to the information or file, then at that point it gets saved to the active data storage area. Data should be moved to the archive storage area on a schedule that makes sense for your organization. We find most prefer annually or perhaps quarterly if something more frequent is required. How does this save you? By segregating your data using the 5S method, you can backup locally and offsite the active, critical data more efficiently and cost effectively. The remaining 80% of your data that is for reference and archived only needs to be backed up whenever the archive is updated—annually or quarterly. And quite often, the method we would recommend for backing up this data is less expensive.

This particularly works great if your team understands the standards established and all work together to sustain the standard. By following the 5S methodology and practicing *kaizen* (good changes) in your data management, you can save BIG. Need help getting started? Give IT Radix a call. Our staff is here to help your business get on the road to savings.



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Is it Time to Change Your Internet?



Is it time to change your Internet? Seems like a simple enough question. Now for some answers **Mike Oster**, Senior IT Consultant, has heard:

*"DSL is all we need."
"We don't really use the Internet much."
"Faster Internet would cost too much."
"Only big companies need a quality Internet connection."*

No one ever thinks they need to worry about their Internet connection. You know who I would really like to ask about changing their Internet connection? The 2.4 million subscribers that are still paying AOL \$20 per month for dial-up. Yep, that's right, dial-up. And you know what? I think if I asked them if it's time to change their Internet they would tell me something like, "dial-up is all I need."

Many companies underestimate their reliance on the Internet. Think about ALL of the things you need the Internet for to do your job every day—email, research, ordering, cloud-based applications. Your backup very likely relies on the Internet as well. As you go through your daily routine today, take note of how much of that routine requires you to be connected to the Internet. What would you not be able to get done if the Internet were down? In today's age of Internet dependence, I strongly encourage all of our clients to review their current Internet service periodically. If you have employees that are waiting and waiting for email or webpages to load, it might be time for a change. There may be better options out there. So don't settle for dial-up quality Internet when there is a possibility you could be getting so much more for your money.

I also advise businesses to consider a redundant Internet connection. With the increase in the number of low cost high speed "fiber and cable" Internet services you may be able to get two Internet connections for less money than it used to cost to have one. This will greatly reduce your exposure to an Internet outage. You could even keep that old DSL connection around as your backup if two high speed options are not available in your area. In some cases you can even use cellular Internet as a backup. If you have a fairly modern business class router or firewall, then you may already have all the equipment you need to make this change. Most of today's firewalls come out of the box with the ability to connect to two Internet services.

Now that you've taken my advice and ordered some shiny new Internet, what now? Too many businesses just allow the new provider to come on out and hook it up. It's only then they realize the error of their ways. The installer comes out, "hooks it up" and the Internet works just fine, but many of your key systems are not functioning. Don't get me wrong... Internet providers and their installers are great. But they don't know your business or your network. They don't know about your VPN, your mail server or any of the other systems that might be affected by a change of Internet. So, when you do decide it's time for a change, make sure you contact **IT Radix** and let us know as well. We will guide you through all of the things that may need "adjusting" when you change your Internet. So, who's ready for a change?

Less Distractions Mean More Time

Our fearless leader, **Cathy Coloff**, shares some tips learned over the years that have helped her to lessen distractions and become more productive.



One of the most effective time management tips I've learned is to manage distractions, particularly email. The flow of email is constant but getting "into the flow" is not so easy. To minimize the email distraction, many suggest reading email no more than three times a day. Personally, I like to respond to email at the end of day when my energy levels are dipping and I don't need to focus as much on my work. In addition, for myself, I had to turn off all the notifications that Outlook generates when a new email is received because I simply found it too distracting, too tempting to quickly go and check out what had just come in. It's a small change, but a good one (go *kaizen!*). Need help figuring out how to do the same, feel free to give us a call.

At IT Radix, we use instant messaging internally to announce phone calls and the like. I've learned that if I really need to concentrate on a task, meeting or phone call, the best technique is to turn it off or alternatively to change my status to say "Emergency Interruptions Only" or something similar. Again, a simple change, but people notice and respect the status change.

(Continued on page 3)

**OUR CLIENTS
SPEAK OUT:**

THE BUZZ

IT Radix helped me with transitioning our phone system over to a Voice-Over IP System. The transition was seamless, the implementation was flawless, and the training was excellent. Thank you IT Radix!

Michelle Cicchini - Cicchini & Associates

Less Distractions Mean More Time

(Continued from page 2)

While I enjoy social media, I haven't found it too distracting during the day; however, studies show that this is not the case with many people. Studies show that as much as 12% of the working day is spent on social media sites. That's almost 1 hour per day! We've found that limiting these types of sites completely can create bad will but letting your team know that you're monitoring usage can have the desired effect—they may check something out for a quick break, but that's it.

Small changes for the better—*kaizen* strikes again! I encourage you to look for ways to manage the distractions in your workplace and regain productivity and time.



SPECIAL OFFER

IT Radix Cloud Reflection

No time like the present to take advantage of cloud file synchronization and sharing! Purchase a 1-year subscription to ITR Cloud Reflection during the months of **October, November** and **December**, and get the 1st month free!

Call **IT Radix** today to learn how you can sync, protect and share. Everywhere!



How the Cloud Saves You Money

IT Services Consultant, **Ken Toumey**, has his head in the clouds...and you should too!

Surely you've heard a lot about the benefits of cloud-based technology solutions for business; the improvements in collaboration and file sharing, the easy scalability, reliability and redundancy built into using cloud servers. All these benefits provide strong rationale to consider moving to the cloud. But for the right organizations ready to make a full leap to the cloud, there are other benefits as well and these benefits focus on dollars and sense. There are lots of ways the cloud can reduce expenses.

The first thing to realize when considering how the cloud can save you money is that going to the cloud is really all about sharing: sharing servers, sharing data centers, sharing management staff time, sharing resources, sharing power, sharing time, etc. Remember in kindergarten when they taught you that sharing is good? Well they were right! Saving money on the cloud starts and ends with the fact that sharing resources brings economies of scale that result in lower costs for your business. Here are just a few cost-saving examples:

- **Less Power** – Cloud computing means less electricity. Cloud providers maximize their utility efficiency in order to drive their margins and your business enjoys some of that cost reduction. When you move your server and other hardware and software to the cloud, you are not paying for that electricity on site; you are not paying for that extra air conditioning, nor for energy spent powering idle server capacity.
- **Less People** – Cloud computing means less direct IT management staff on premise. Cloud providers take on the management expertise, time, knowledge that your organization might be already paying for in house. Staffing is often a large expense in most organizations, pushing those costs offsite to a cloud provider means that those costs are lower for you.
- **Less Capital** – Cloud computing means you are renting or leasing, not buying hardware and other equipment necessary to house, control and service your IT architecture. Cloud providers put up the capital to purchase the servers, etc. that drive your chosen cloud solution. You are merely renting or subscribing to that service which means you have zero capital outlay. That allows you to direct your capital budget toward more direct business building activities.
- **Less Redundancy** – Cloud computing means that in most cases your organization does not have to pay extra for the cardinal rule of technology which is—*Have a Backup*. Cloud providers have built redundancy into their offerings. They have your data in at least two geographically dispersed data centers, so you have no reason to have that first server on hand, let alone that backup server!



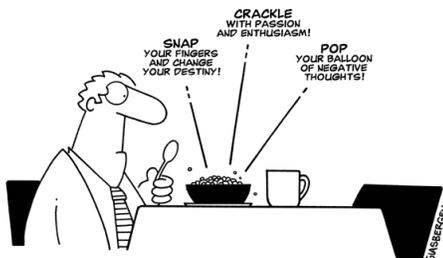
Any change in business strategy, including where to house your technology, should involve a great deal of analysis and consultation with experts. If you would like to learn more about saving money with the cloud and see if your organization can reduce expenses and improve productivity with such a move, the professionals at **IT Radix** are ready to help.

house your technology which geographically have that first and consultation saving money with

“To improve is to change;
to be perfect is to
change often.”
—Winston Churchill

Just for Laughs!

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Breakfast at a Tony Robbins seminar.

From the desk of: Cathy Coloff
Subject: Krazy for Kaizen!



As a business owner, it's always challenging to get everyone on the same page and "rowing in the same direction." I rely heavily on our Core Values to ensure that this happens. Consistent with the concept of *kaizen* over the past few years, we have made minor changes to how we express and actually live our Core Values.

Our Core Values include "giving back" and "making a difference." This is why we're pleased to have participants of the Park Lake School proudly folding and stuffing our newsletters. They also come to our office to assist with light office work. It makes a positive difference for us all. They are making valuable contributions to our business while at the same time learning and growing as individuals.

It may seem small, but we intentionally print everything possible double-sided by default. All paper at the office is recycled in special recycling cans. My team thinks I'm crazy because every scrap of paper ends up in the recycling bin if I see it. We have special electronic recycling drives, such as our RED Month. RED stands for Recycle, Energize and Donate. See how you can give back both to our environment, Green Vision, and to the Park Lake School by recycling your electronics at IT Radix throughout the month of November. More info at www.it-radix.com/red/.

And while it's touchy-feely and, perhaps, not hardcore-business, I believe that if everyone made small good changes for the better (*kaizen*), BIG good things can happen. With that, I hope you and your families have a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

Just Plain Punny



- **Confucius say:** Many men bite, but Fu Man Chu.
- Two anglers were having a discussion and opened quite a can of worms.
- **Confucius say:** Man who want pretty nurse must be patient.
- If we don't conserve water, we could go from one extreme to another.
- **Confucius say:** Man who keep feet firmly on the ground have trouble putting on pants.
- War doesn't determine who is right, it determines who is left.

Movies Every Entrepreneur Must See

It's time for a movie night! Mike Michalowicz, author of the cult classic book, *The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur*, recently shared some of his all-time favorite movies that every entrepreneur should watch. Here are IT Radix's top 3 from his list:

- 1) **Miracle On 34th Street**
What You'll Learn: The greatest lesson in salesmanship that no one follows.
The Entrepreneur's Lesson: Santa Claus, working at Macy's, goes out of his way to help customers, often encouraging them to shop elsewhere for the best deals. Instead of losing customers, Macy's becomes overwhelmed with customers seeking Santa's help. Macy's sales increase simply by doing what's best for the customer—too bad they don't do this in the real world, but *you* should.
- 2) **Office Space**
What You'll Learn: If you don't like what you are doing, change.
The Entrepreneur's Lesson: Follow your gut. If you hate what you do, change. Just don't steal—that never works. Instead, find your passion and pursue it. And, if you already own a business you love, don't mess with Melvin. He might just burn down your entire building.
- 3) **Jerry Maguire**
What You'll Learn: What you expect when launching your business never comes true.
The Entrepreneur's Lesson: Hands down, the best movie of all time for entrepreneurs. Jerry leaves his big-money agency position to go out and start his own shop. Just like any entrepreneur who leaves to start their own business, he suspects every client will leave with him. There is no easier way to start a business, right? This movie shows the real deal. Nothing ever goes as planned.

Curl up with **IT Radix** and sit back and relax on your favorite, comfy chair with a bowl of freshly popped popcorn and enjoy the show!