What Construction Company CFOs and COOs MUST Know About Protecting Data

If You **Depend On Your Computer Network** To Run Your Business, This Is One Report You **DON'T** Want To **Overlook**!

2014 Edition

RAJ GOEL, CISSP
Owner

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"What Construction Company CFOs and COOs Must Know About Protecting And Preserving Their Company's Critical Data And Computer Systems"

If You Depend On Your Computer Network To Run Your Business, This Is One Report You DON'T Want To Overlook!

This report will outline in plain, non-technical English common mistakes that many construction companies make with their computer network that cost them thousands in lost sales, productivity, and computer repair bills, as well as providing an easy, proven way to reduce or completely eliminate the financial expense and frustration of these oversights.

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You run your business, and leave the IT to us.

January 21st, 2014
From the Desk of: Raj Goel
Owner, Brainlink International, Inc.

Have you ever lost an hour of work on your computer?

Now imagine if you lost days or weeks of work – or imagine losing your client database, TimberLine, CAD Files, financial records, and all of the work files your company has ever produced or compiled.

Imagine what would happen if your network went down for days, where you couldn't access email or the information on your PC. How frustrating would that be?

Or, what if a major storm, flood, or fire destroyed your office and all of your files? Or if a virus wiped out your server…do you have an emergency recovery plan in place that you feel confident in?

How quickly do you think you could recover, if at all?

Many CFOs and COOs tend to ignore or forget about taking steps to secure their company's network from these types of catastrophes until disaster strikes. By then it's too late and the damage is done.

But That Could Never Happen To Me! *(And Other Misconceptions CFOs and COOs Like To Believe About Their Businesses…)*

After working with dozens of mid-size construction firms, architects and contractors in the New York City area, we found that 6 out of 10 businesses will experience some type of major network or technology disaster that will end up costing them between $9,000 and $60,000 in repairs and restoration costs ***on average***.

You'll Discover:

- The single most expensive mistake most construction companies make when it comes to protecting their company data.
- The universal misconception CFOs and COOs have about their computer networks, and how it can end up costing between $9,000 to as much as $60,000 in damages.
- 6 Critical security measures every construction company and contractor should have in place.
- How to greatly reduce – or even completely eliminate – frustrating crashes, slow performance, and other annoying computer problems.
- How to avoid expensive computer repair bills and get all the computer support you need for a low, fixed monthly rate.

That doesn't even include lost productivity, sales, and client goodwill that can be damaged when a company can't operate or fulfill on its promises due to technical problems.

While it may be difficult to determine the actual financial impact computer problems have on your business, you can't deny the fact that they do have a negative effect. If you've ever had your business grind to a screeching halt because your server crashed, you must have some idea of the frustration and financial loss to your business even if you haven't put a pencil to figuring out the exact cost.

Most Computer Problems Are Hidden, Strike Without Warning, And At The Most Inconvenient Times

Hardware failure, viruses, spyware, and other problems usually aren't detectable until they strike by causing a server to go down, data to be lost, or some other catastrophe. Viruses and spyware are particularly sneaky because they are designed to hide themselves while they do their damage. For example, spyware can secretly transmit information about you and your company to an outsider without being visible to you.

Even if your network was recently audited by a computer consultant, viruses, spyware, and hackers are constantly attacking your network, we constantly monitor our clients' networks because you never know when a new virus is going to strike.

Unfortunately, most computer consultants only offer "break-fix" services. That basically means when something breaks or stops working, they come in and fix it. While this may seem like a good setup for you, it actually leaves you wide open to a number of threats, problems, and other disasters because it is ***reactive*** rather than ***proactive*** maintenance.

Take a look at these statistics:

- **Companies experience an average of 501 hours of network downtime every year, and the overall downtime costs an average of 3.6% of annual revenue.** (Source: The Costs of Enterprise Downtime, Infonetics Research)

- **93% of companies that lost their data center for 10 days or more due to a disaster filed for bankruptcy within one year of the disaster, and 50% filed for bankruptcy immediately.** (Source: National Archives & Records Administration in Washington)

- **20% of small to medium businesses will suffer a major disaster causing loss of critical data every 5 years.** (Source: Richmond House Group)

- **This year, 40% of small to medium businesses that manage their own network and use the Internet for more than e-mail will have their network accessed by a hacker, and more than 50% won't even know they were attacked.** (Source: Gartner Group)

- **Of those companies participating in the Contingency Planning & Management Cost of Downtime Survey: 46% said each hour of downtime would cost their companies up to $50,000, 28% said each hour would cost between $51,000 and $250,000, 18% said each hour would cost between $251,000 and $1 million, and 8% said it would cost their companies more than $1 million per hour.** (Source: Cost of Downtime Survey Results, 2001)

- **Cyber-criminals stole an average of $900 from each of 3 million Americans in the past year, and that doesn't include the hundreds of thousands of PCs rendered useless by spyware.** (Source: Gartner Group)

What These Failures Are REALLY Costing Your Business

Even if you don't factor in the soft costs of lost productivity, there is a hard cost of repairing and restoring your network.

Most major network repairs will require a minimum of ***four to eight hours on average*** to get the network back up and running. Plus, most consultants cannot get on-site to resolve the problem for 24 to 48 hours. That means your network could be down for one to two days.

Since the average computer consultant charges over $150 per hour plus a trip fee and a surcharge if it's an emergency, the average cost of these repairs is $600 to $1,000; and that doesn't even include any software or hardware costs that may also be required.

Over a year, this results in $1,800 to $3,000 in costs without even considering hardware and software costs, or other soft costs of lost sales and work hours. Of course, those numbers quickly multiply with larger, more complex networks.

What's most exasperating about this situation is that 100% of these disasters and restoration costs could have been completely avoided or greatly mitigated easily and inexpensively with a little planning and proactive maintenance.

Why Construction Companies Are Especially Vulnerable To These Disasters

With the constant changes to technology and the daily development of new threats, it takes a highly-trained technician to maintain even a simple 10 to 50 person network; however, the cost of hiring a full-time, experienced technician is just not feasible for most CFOs and COOs.

In an attempt to save money, most try to do their own in-house IT support and designate the person with the most technical expertise as the part-time IT manager. This never works out because this makeshift IT person has another full-time job to do and is usually not skilled enough to properly support an entire computer network anyway.

This inevitably results in a network that is ill-maintained and unstable. It also means that the backups, virus updates, and security patches are not getting timely updates, giving a false sense of security.

It's only a matter of time before the network crashes. If you're lucky, it will only cost you a little downtime; but there's always a chance you could end up like one of these companies:

"General Contractor lost all emails during Sandy"

A local GC discovered the importance of preventative maintenance the hard way. Before Sandy hit, they thought they were in good hands. After the power came back up, their battery backup units didn't. Neither did their old email server. They never knew that UPSes should be replaced every three years (and batteries annually). Nor did their IT company tell them about proactive battery backups unit testing.

Preventing this disaster would have only cost them 1/100th of the cost ($1,000 per month over 36 months) AND avoided the stress of dealing with Sandy's aftermath, including losing all customer and vendor emails. Instead, they were forced to spend a $47,000 to recover their emails and restore their servers. **The cost of lost business is measured in the millions.**

"Cyber crooks steal $588,851 from Maine-based Patco Construction Company"

A Maine-based construction firm got infected with the Zeus Trojan virus and $588,851.26 was transferred from their accounts. Their bank recovered $243,000 but Patco was on the hook for $345,000. Patco was dragged through three years of lawsuits by their bank before the case settled.

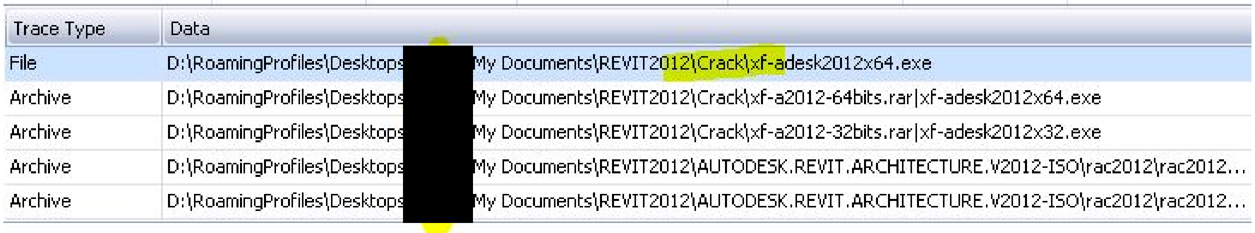
Preventing this disaster would have only cost them 1/250th of the cost ($2,300 per month) AND they would have experienced better performance and fewer problems with their network. Instead, they were forced to spend hundreds of thousands in legal fees. As their owner said

"We had hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees," says Patterson. "So even after we got the $345,000 back, we lost hundreds of thousands.

All of this could have been avoided had Patco invested in proper defenses, employee training and implementing better safeguards with their bank.

“New intern pirates Autocad, infects company. Firm spends $20,000 in cleanup and 9 Long Days of Downtime”

A NYC based architecture firm hired a young intern. The firm used Autocad2008. The young intern was familiar with Autocad2012. He downloaded a pirate version of Autocad2012 and several banking Trojans infected the network.

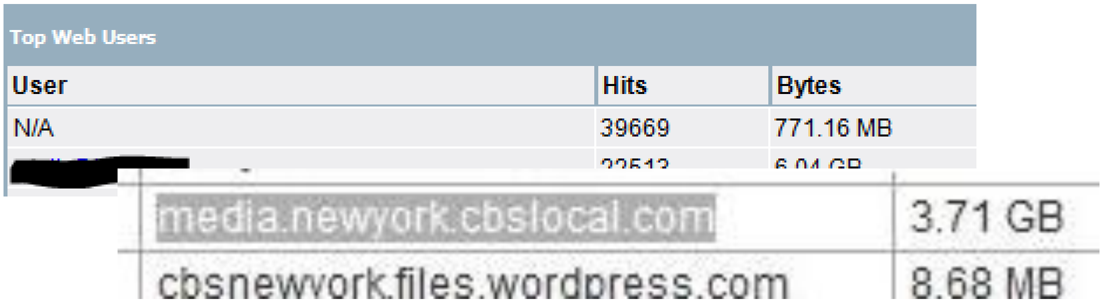


Trace Type	Data
File	D:\RoamingProfiles\Desktops[redacted]My Documents\REVIT2012\Crack\xf-adesk2012x64.exe
Archive	D:\RoamingProfiles\Desktops[redacted]My Documents\REVIT2012\Crack\xf-a2012-64bits.rar|xf-adesk2012x64.exe
Archive	D:\RoamingProfiles\Desktops[redacted]My Documents\REVIT2012\Crack\xf-a2012-32bits.rar|xf-adesk2012x32.exe
Archive	D:\RoamingProfiles\Desktops[redacted]My Documents\REVIT2012\AUTODESK.REVIT.ARCHITECTURE.V2012-ISO\rac2012\rac2012...
Archive	D:\RoamingProfiles\Desktops[redacted]My Documents\REVIT2012\AUTODESK.REVIT.ARCHITECTURE.V2012-ISO\rac2012\rac2012...

It took two days to disconnect, disinfect or rebuild all the systems. Another week was spent agonizing over bank records, reviewing each transaction, enabling account alerts. All this could have been avoided with proper staff training, strong network defenses and adequate safety measures.

“Employee spends the entire day watching the playoffs”

Every morning, we review the nightly firewall reports for all our clients. During one such review, we found that during the playoffs, a single employee consumed as much internet as everyone else combined. He spent the whole day watching baseball at work. Next day, this report was in front of his manager. (employee name redacted).



Top Web Users

User	Hits	Bytes
N/A	39669	771.16 MB
[redacted]	22513	6.04 GB

media.newyork.cbslocal.com	3.71 GB
cbsnewyork.files.wordpress.com	8.68 MB

Does your current system allow you to track web activity down to the user? Does your current IT consultant provide you with this data?

Six Things You Must Do At A Minimum To Protect Your Company From These Types Of Disasters:

While it's impossible to plan for every potential computer problem or emergency, a little proactive monitoring and maintenance of your network will help you avoid or greatly reduce the impact of the vast majority of computer disasters you could experience.

Unfortunately, I have found that most CFOs and COOs are NOT conducting any type of proactive monitoring or maintaining their network, which leaves them completely vulnerable to the types of disasters you just read about. This is primarily for three reasons:

#1. They don't understand the importance of regular maintenance.

#2. Even if they DID understand its importance, they simply do not know what maintenance is required or how to do it.

#3. They are already swamped with more immediate day-to-day fires demanding their attention. If their network is working fine today, it goes to the bottom of the pile of things to worry about. That means no one is watching to make sure the backups are working properly, the virus protection is up-to-date, that critical security patches are being applied, or that the network is "healthy" overall.

While there are over 57 critical checks and maintenance tasks that need to be performed on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis, I'm going to share with you the six that are most important for protecting your company.

6 Critical Steps For Protecting Your Company's Data And Increasing Productivity

#1: Make Sure You Are Backing Up Your Files Every Day

It just amazes me how many businesses never back up their computer network. Imagine this: you write the most important piece of information you could ever write on a chalkboard and I come along and erase it. How are you going to get it back? You're not. Unless you can remember it, or if YOU MADE A COPY OF IT, you can't recover the data. It's gone.

That is why it is so important to back up your network. There are a number of things that could cause you to lose data files. If the information on the disk is important to you, make sure you have more than one copy of it.

#2: Check Your Backups On A Regular Basis To Make Sure They Are Working Properly

Many CFOs and COOs set up some type of backup system, but then never check to make sure it's working properly. It's not uncommon for a system to APPEAR to be backing up when in reality it's not. There are dozens of things that can go wrong and cause your backup to become corrupt and useless.

That is why it's not enough to simply back up your system; you have to check it on a regular basis to make sure the data is recoverable in the event of an emergency. A Health Products Company that shelled out $40,000 to recover data they THOUGHT they backed up. Don't let that happen to you.

#3: Keep An Offsite Copy Of Your Backups

What happens if a fire or flood destroys your server AND the backup tapes or drive? This is how hurricane Katrina devastated many businesses that have now been forced into bankruptcy. What happens if your office gets robbed and they take EVERYTHING? Having an offsite backup is simply a smart way to make sure you can get your business back up and running in a relatively short period of time.

#4: Make Sure Your Virus Protection Is ALWAYS On AND Up-To-Date

You would have to be living under a rock to not know how devastating a virus can be to your network. With virus attacks coming from spam, downloaded data and music files, instant messages, web sites, and e-mails from friends and clients, you cannot afford to be without up-to-date virus protection.

Not only can a virus corrupt your files and bring down your network, but it can also hurt your reputation. If you or one of your employees unknowingly spreads a virus to a customer, or if the virus hijacks your e-mail address book, you're going to make a lot of people very angry.

#5: Set Up A Firewall That Provides Daily Reports

CFOs and COOs tend to think that because they are “just a Construction Company”, no one would waste time trying to hack in to their network, when nothing could be further from the truth. The simple fact is that there are thousands of unscrupulous individuals out there who think it’s fun to disable your computer just because they can.

These individuals strike randomly by searching the Internet for open, unprotected computers. As soon as they find one, they will delete files or download huge files that cannot be deleted, shutting down your company. They can also use your computer as a zombie for storing pirated software or sending spam, which can cause your internet service provider (ISP) to shut YOU down and prevent you from accessing the Internet or sending and receiving e-mail.

If the malicious programs can’t be deleted, you’ll have to re-format the entire hard drive causing you to lose every piece of information you’ve ever owned UNLESS you were backing up your files properly.

#6: Update Your System With Critical Security Patches As They Become Available

If you do not have the most up-to-date security patches and virus definitions installed on your network, hackers can access your computer through a simple banner ad or through an e-mail attachment.

Not too long ago Microsoft released a security bulletin about three newly discovered vulnerabilities that could allow an attacker to gain control of your computer by tricking users into downloading and opening a maliciously crafted picture. At the same time, Microsoft released a Windows update to correct the vulnerabilities; but if you didn’t have a process to ensure you were applying critical updates as soon as they became available, you were completely vulnerable to this attack.

Here’s another compelling reason to ensure your network stays up-to-date with the latest security patches Most hackers do not discover these security loopholes on their own. Instead, they learn about them when Microsoft (or any other software vendor for that matter) announces the vulnerability and issues an update. That is their cue to spring into action and they immediately go to work to analyze the update and craft an exploit (like a virus) that allows them access to any computer or network that has not yet installed the security patch.

In essence, the time between the release of the update and the release of the exploit that targets the underlying vulnerability is getting shorter every day.

Someone needs to be paying close attention to your systems to ensure that critical updates are applied as soon as possible. That is why we highly recommend CFOs and COOs without a full-time IT staff allow their consultant to monitor and maintain their network.

Announcing A Simple And Easy Way To Ensure These Disasters Don't Happen To Your Business:

If you are sitting there thinking, "This all sounds great, but I don't have the time or the staff to handle all of this work," I've got the solution.

Thanks to a service we offer called, "Brainlink ProActive IT" we can completely take over the day-to-day management and maintenance of your computer network and ***free you from expensive, frustrating computer problems, downtime, and security threats.*** You'll get all the benefits of a highly-trained, full-time IT department at only a fraction of the cost.

And here is the best part…

In most cases, we can cut your IT support costs by 30% to 50% WHILE improving the reliability and performance of your network and eliminating spyware, spam, downtime, and other computer frustrations!

The Benefits Are Obvious:

• You'll safeguard your data. The data on the hard disk is always more important than the hardware that houses it. If you rely on your computer systems for daily operations, it's time to get serious about protecting your critical, irreplaceable electronic information.

• You'll eliminate expensive repairs and recovery costs. Our network monitoring and maintenance will save you money by preventing expensive network disasters from ever happening in the first place. <u>As a matter of fact, we guarantee it.</u>

• You'll avoid expensive trip fees while receiving faster support. Our remote monitoring software will enable us to access and repair most network problems right from our offices. No more waiting around for an engineer to show up!

• **How does faster performance, fewer "glitches", and practically zero downtime sound to you?** Under this program, that is exactly what we'll deliver. Some parts of your system will degrade in performance over time, causing them to slow down, hang up, and crash. Our preventative maintenance and network monitoring will make sure your computers stay in tip-top shape for maximum speed, performance, and reliability.

• **You will have ALL of the benefits of an in-house IT department WITHOUT all of the costs.** As a Brainlink ProActive IT customer, you'll have access to a knowledgeable support staff that can be reached immediately should you have any kind of problem or question.

• **You'll receive substantial discounts on IT services that you are already buying**. Most IT firms will nickel and dime you over every little thing they do; under this program, you'll pay one flat, affordable rate and get all of the technical support you need. No hidden charges, caveats, or disclaimers.

• **You will never have to fear a big, expensive network repair bill.** Instead, you can budget for network support just like rent or insurance.

• **You'll sleep easier knowing the "gremlins at the gate" are being watched and kept out of your network.**

• **You'll finally put a stop to annoying spam, pop-ups, and spyware taking over your computer and your network.**

• **You'll gain incredible peace of mind.** As a business owner, you already have enough to worry about. We'll make sure everything pertaining to your network security and reliability is handled so you don't have to worry about it.

What Our Clients Saying About “Brainlink ProActive IT”

The Proactive planning makes my life a lot easier…”

I love the prompt response and the ticketing system. Instead of wasting 10 phone calls calling our old vendor, now I get complete visibility in my email! Having our internal IT staff plug into your ticketing system and follow that process has increased our productivity. I have fewer people in the field that are down or ignored. My staff gets back to work faster. The project plans, proactive budgets and forecasts make my life easier. What sets Brainlink apart is that you guys are doing exactly what you said you were going to do.

Dan Williams, CFO

E W Howell

Industry: Construction

“He and his guys are very sharp…”

“ They have a holistic picture of what we're trying to achieve and Raj has a very good perception of what the businesses need. His advice has always been really practical and easy to implement. He's managed to get it done when he says he's going to do it. I've been really pleased with their work.

Our business was wiped out by a viral invasion prior to hiring Brainlink. They put us back in the business, got all the glitches out, got rid of the viruses, cleaned out all the computers, and saved us in a very big way from failure. It was really an impressive performance**.“**

Mark Ellis, Partner
Cornerstone Architects
Industry: Architecture

“Brainlink’s staff is very responsive and professional…”

“What I like best about Brainlink is that their ticketing system tracks issues and gives us the ability to spot trends or issues before they become major problems “

Chris Gallin, Partner, 4th Generation Owner
John Gallin & Son

Industry: Construction

Do You Want To Enjoy The Same Freedom From Computer Problems As These CFOs and COOs?

Our FREE Security Audit Gets You Started…

Hopefully this report acted as an eye opener to all CFOs and COOs who are not adequately protecting their data and computer network. If you are not doing the 6 steps outlined in this report, your network is an accident waiting to happen. The most important thing for you to do now is take immediate action towards protecting your business.

One of the biggest, costliest mistakes you can make is to ignore this advice with the false hope that such a disaster could never happen to **you**.

Because you have taken the time to request and read this report, I would like to offer you a **FREE Network Security Audit**. Normally I charge $597 for this service, but as a prospective client, I'd like to give it to you for free as a way of introducing our "Brainlink ProActive IT" program to your company.

During this audit we will come on site and…

• **Pinpoint any exposure to or risk** from hackers, viruses, spyware, spam, data loss, power outages, system downtime, and even employee sabotage.

• **Review your system backups** to make sure the data CAN be recovered in case of a disaster. You don't want to discover that your backups were corrupt AFTER a major disaster wiped out your network.

GUARANTEE!

• **Scan your network for hidden spyware and viruses** that hackers "plant" in your network to steal information, deliver spam, and track your online activities.

• **Look for hidden problems** that cause error messages, slow performance, and network crashes.

• **Answer any questions you have** about your network. I can also give you a second opinion on any projects you are considering.

There Are No Strings Attached,

But You Have To Hurry…

As you might have guessed, I cannot extend this offer forever, because time and staff limitations simply won't allow it.

If you want to say goodbye to your computer problems and stop worrying about the security of your data from hardware failures, viruses, hackers, and other threats, then you'll want to sign up right now for this Free Network Security Audit.

There is absolutely no obligation or pressure for you to buy anything, or to ever use our services again. As I stated earlier, this is simply an easy way for us to demonstrate how we can help your business at no risk to you.

How To Secure Your Free Network Security Audit

Fill in and email back the enclosed request form.

1. Call me direct at **917-685-7731**

2. Send an e-mail to raj@brainlink.com with the words, **"Security Audit"** in the subject line. Be sure to include your company name, address, and phone number so I can follow up with you.

Safe and happy computing,

Raj Goel
Owner, Brainlink International, Inc.
www.brainlink.com

P.S. Please note that this offer for a **FREE Security Audit** won't be around forever.

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You run your business, and leave the IT to us.

"Yes! Raj I Want Your Help To Protect My Company from Hackers, Viruses and Human Error"

❑ **Please sign me up for a FREE <u>"Hidden Risks Assessment"</u> so you can make sure we are doing everything possible to protect our business.** I understand that I am under **no obligation** to do or to buy anything by requesting this assessment. I further understand that these audits are being made available on a **first-come, first-served basis**.

Please Complete And Email Back:

Name: ______________________________

Title: ______________________________

Company: ______________________________

Address: ______________________________

City: ____________________ ST: ________ Zip: __________

Phone: ____________________ Fax: ______________

E-mail: ______________________________

Number of PCs: ______________________________

Operating System: ______________________________

Email To: raj@brainlink.com
Or Call Me Direct At: 917-685-7731