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Do you have a PC at home, one at work, maybe a smart phone too? How about others in the company? Is information shared between all of these devices or stored on each one independantly? Controlling data on multiple systems can be complicated and it may be time to consider a server. Below we share some reasons as to why a server would benefit your business.

Do you have security policies in place to protect your data? Harry gives some advice on how to perform a simple security audit.

## What is a Small Business Server - Do I Need One?

Every business uses computers and as your business grows, your business adds on new desktops, laptops, POS (Point Of Sale) systems, smart phones, tablets... Soon you have information everywhere that is only accessible on each separate device.

If this sounds familiar, it may be time for a server - a computer that delivers information and software to other computers that are linked by a network. A network of computers connected to a server is more efficient than employees working on individual non networked computers. If you have 5 or more employees, you need to consider investing in a network server. Below are a few of the reasons to invest in a server.



- Expensive hardware such as printers and scanners can be shared by users on the network.
- Data is stored centrally, allowing employees to easily find, share and modify data from their workstations/PCs.
- Security levels and password protection settings can be created in order to access information. Accounts for individuals and groups can be set up with rights



## Looking for Christmas ideas?

Click free automatic backup includes an external hard drive and a transformer with software that makes backup...

*"Easier than Making Toast"*

...and it really is that easy!

Plug it in, allow the software to do it's job, and unplug. Not even a mouse button to click! A great gift for the not so computer literate individual.



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assigned to the data stored on the server. For example, the sales staff could be set up so that they do not have access to employee personal records.

- Increased reliability. A server differs from a regular PC because it can be equipped with redundant power supplies and multiple hard drives that work in a RAID configuration. To simplify, this means that if one of the server's hard drives fail, it can operate on the other drives for a period of time until the failed drive is replaced. Also, if an employee's work station fails, they can move to a new work station and continue working.

Click [here](#) to read more.

- Janet F, IT Consultant & Account Manager

## System Security - How to do a Security Audit

In today's world people want easy access to their business information. Some of this information will be considered sensitive therefore it is important to properly secure access to only those that should have access.

A security audit is really the final step in the implementation of your security defenses. Prior to this you undertake a risk analysis. Then you develop a security policy to define what you are going to defend and how you are going to defend it. Various protective steps will be put into place to prevent unauthorized access. Perhaps access requires establishing a VPN connection beforehand.



Almost certainly access will require a username & password and various policies will need to be in place as well. For instance, a requirement that passwords meet certain complexity rules or that all information on laptops be encrypted with password protection. A good security audit should find any gaps in your existing defenses.

Many people opt to have external security consultants perform the audit. If you are a small company you might not be able to afford security consultants and you also might not have the in-house expertise to do a sophisticated audit on your own. This however does not mean that you can or should do nothing. The exercise of understanding what you are securing and how you are trying to secure it is worthwhile on its own.

Click [here](#) to read more.


- Harry M, Network Support Technician

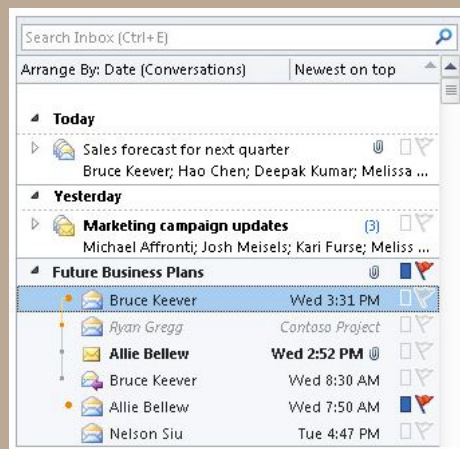
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## Tips & Techs

### Grouping Conversations in Outlook

How often do you search for an email that you sent or for an email that someone had replied back to? I often reference past emails to confirm information that was exchanged and spend too much time looking for "the one I want". Well Outlook has a tool to make searching a whole lot simpler. This is called grouping conversations and it organizes email threads by subject.

Below is an example of how email messages look when Outlook's "Show as Conversations" option is selected. In this example, Outlook has grouped the thread of emails that share the same subject line. Here, you can see that there are 6 emails that share the subject "Future Business Plans". A conversation can be expanded by clicking on the  on the message header.



Even sent items will appear and items that you have filed away into folders. As shown in the example below, the items in Italics are from folders. The email from Janet (me) is in my sent items folder and two of the emails from Doris have been filed into a folder that I have that is named Sales. The other two emails from Doris are still in my Inbox. This makes it so easy to see every email that was sent and received.

Now that you can see the benefits of grouping conversations in Outlook, here is how it's done. On the view tab, in the Conversations group, select the Show as Conversations check box. For more information on viewing emails by conversation, visit Microsoft [here](#).