



Chris Cote, President BCS

BCS Technology Review

“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, and More Profitably”



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Business Computer Solutions

627 S 48th Street, Suite 103

Tempe, AZ

85281

480 731-9300

How We Xray Computers

Modern medicine relies heavily on diagnostic tools such as X-Rays or MRIs. It’s not likely you would allow a doctor that didn’t use the latest medical technology to care for you.

However even today, a lot of computer support companies still use outdated techniques to care for your computer systems. We refer to them as "cave-man" techniques, namely a technician sitting at a workstation and poking and prodding to find the source of the problem. While this technique can be effective and sometimes necessary, BCS invests in tools that improve our ability to troubleshoot and fix problems.

One such tool that we use is called Labtech. You may have noticed a BCS icon in the lower right part of your screen. This icon lets you know your computer’s health is being monitored at all times.



Monitoring is beneficial for the health of your computer. It can detect problems that if not corrected, can lead to serious down time for the user. Problems such as a nearly full hard drive, a failing hard drive, or an application that is hogging your computer power are all conditions that we can detect without a technician sitting at your computer. In addition, a lot of problems can be fixed remotely without a technician travelling to your site and sitting at your computer, which is one less interruption to your work day.

A host of other information can also be pulled. For example, we can determine the existing warranty for almost any computer or server. The type and amount of installed memory, hard drives, add-on cards, voltages and temperatures, BIOS versions, printers, and installed software is automatically and continuously gathered.

For example, if you need more memory, we can determine how much you currently have, the memory type that you system needs, and place an order for the correct part within minutes.

Perhaps the greatest benefit to you is the ability for us to apply Windows updates to your computer at night or on weekends. In the past, this was typically done by a technician coming on site to do the updates. This can be quite time consuming and disruptive. Server updates in particular can be a problem. In the past, everyone would have to “get off the server” while updates are applied, and this process can sometimes take hours. With Labtech, we have this scheduled at 2 o’clock in the morning so your server is updated and ready to go when you are.

Other maintenance that are done off hours include disk defragmentation, removal of temporary files that clog your hard drive, virus updates, and probing your system for potential problems.

We don’t believe that any reputable technology company should be without an “X-Ray” set of tools. We’ve invested heavily in them and would never consider going without them.

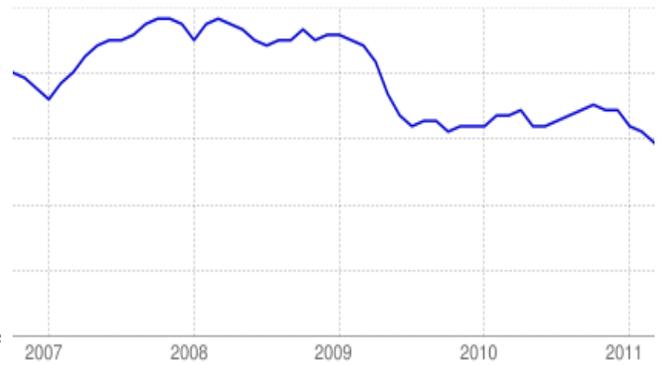
Economic News:

Signs of upturn in Phoenix's long-suffering housing market

USA TODAY February 28, 2012—The Phoenix housing market is showing signs of improvement, even generating bidding wars among buyers for lower-priced homes.

Now, "We list a property and, within two or three days, we have multiple offers," says Keith Krone of Keller Williams Realty in a Phoenix suburb.

The area's January home sales were up 8.1% year-over-year. Multiple offers are common on lower-end homes, investor-buyers say. And the inventory of homes for sale is now **well below the 10-year average**, says Michael Orr, real estate expert at Arizona State University..



Phoenix Housing Inventory

Fed turns \$2.8 billion profit on AIG bonds

NEW YORK (CNMoney) -- Remember those pesky mortgage-backed securities the Federal Reserve had to take off AIG's hands at the worst of the financial crisis?

The Fed just finished selling all of them, and their return on investment isn't too shabby. The sales of the \$19.5 billion portfolio turned a \$2.8 billion profit for taxpayers.

"The completion of the sale of the Maiden Lane II portfolio has resulted in significant gains for the public and marks an important milestone in the wind-down of the extraordinary interventions necessitated by the financial crisis," William Dudley, president of the New York Fed, said in a statement.

Auto sales on pace for big rebound

NEW YORK (CNMoney) -- After a grim couple of years, auto sales finally began to rev up a bit in 2011.

Light vehicle sales for 2011 -- including cars, trucks and SUVs marketed to consumers -- will hit nearly 12.8 million, according to industry research firm TrueCar.com. That's up from 11.6 million last year and is the highest annual total since the 13.2 million vehicles sold in 2008. TrueCar expects the recovery to continue into next year, when it projects that 13.8 million vehicles will be sold.

Jobless claims stick at nearly four-year low

NEW YORK (CNMoney) -- First-time claims for unemployment benefits were unchanged -- at a relatively low level -- last week, in another sign of strength for the U.S. economy.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that 351,000 people filed for initial unemployment benefits in the week ended Feb. 18, unchanged from the previous week's revised 351,000 claims.

Apple Mkt Cap Hits \$500B

Forbes, Feb 28th 2012

With a little up move after hours, Apple now has a market capitalization of \$500.1 billion.

The stock is now at yet another all time high. After rallying \$9.65, or 1.8%, to \$535.41 in the regular session -- closing at the high for the day and giving the company a market cap of \$499.2 billion -- the stock has inched up another 96 cents after hours to \$536.37. That's just enough to push the stock's market cap to the north side of a half trillion bucks.

The stock is now up 32.4% for the year to date.

Orders for durable goods plunge most in 3 years

NEW YORK (CNMoney) -- Orders for long-lasting goods plunged in January, as businesses fiercely pulled back on buying new equipment after a special tax treatment expired.

New orders for durable goods -- long-lasting items like machinery, airplanes, furniture and appliances -- slumped a surprising 4% in January, the Commerce Department reported Tuesday. It marked the biggest monthly decline since January 2009, when the country was in the midst of the recession.

Product Highlight: BCS Sentinel

The Average Failure Rate of Disk and Tape Drives is 100%!

Incredible, isn't it? Most people don't realize that ALL tape drives fail at some point. But what's really dangerous is that most companies don't realize it happened until it's too late.

As a matter of fact, you've probably experienced these problems with your tape drive already (71% of all Tape Restores FAIL! Source: Gartner)

In addition to the fact that they are unreliable and are guaranteed to fail at some point, tape drives require a user to swap out the tapes on a daily basis. If someone forgets, goes on vacation, or leaves the company, the plan falls through.

Plus, the tapes need to be constantly monitored to make sure they are working. Then, if you've ever tried to recover data from your tape drive, you may have discovered how difficult it was, or that the data you thought was being backed up, in fact - wasn't

A few sobering facts:

93% of companies filed bankruptcy within one year of the disaster

50% of those filed immediately

20% of small to medium size businesses will suffer a major Disaster causing loss of data every 5 years! (Source Richmond House Group)

About 70% of business people have experienced data loss due to accidental deletion, disk or system failure, viruses, fire or some other disaster. (Source: Gartner)

Our solution? The BCS Sentinel. Sentinel is a disk-based backup system that takes a 'snapshot' of your server every 15 minutes. In addition, all data is uploaded offsite, to a SAS 70* Certified Data Facility (very secure).

But what we like most about Sentinel its ability to "virtualize" you server which means that it stores an exact replica. It also sends your server image and all updates to a cloud storage facility which means that you always have a complete copy of everything, no matter what happens.

Most importantly, if you server goes down, Sentinel will take over and **become your temporary server**. This way, you can be up and running within an hour while your old server is repaired or replaced. You will have access to everything you had before including files, email, and even accounting systems such as Great Plains or MAS.



We Love Referrals:

Can we buy you dinner and send you to the movies?
How about make a donation to your favorite charity in your name? Earn rewards for referring new customers to BCS.

BCS Loaner Program:

Did you know that BCS offers equipment for free loan to our Managed Services clients such as:

1. LCD Projector
2. 24 Port Switch
3. Netbook
4. Conference Room (seats 6)

Technology News:

Windows 8 makes its beta debut

Cnet, March 2, 2012

Making the biggest splash at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, Spain, this week was Microsoft, which took the wraps off the next iteration of its operating system.

Microsoft is trying to sew up the seams that separate mobile phones, laptops, desktops, and tablets and offer consumers a "consistent" experience, regardless of what type of device they are using, Microsoft's Steven Sinofsky said as he unveiled the beta for the Windows 8 operating system. The company is doing so by focusing simultaneously on the operating system, apps, and hardware.

As a result, using Windows 8 should be a "super fun experience," Sinofsky said. Windows 8 has undergone more than 100,000 code changes since the Developer Preview was released and will feel much more "refined," Sinofsky said. He called Windows 8 a "generational change" in its design, function, and implementation.

IE holds rival browsers at bay

Cnet, March 1 012

For Microsoft's Internet Explorer team, stasis is bliss.

In February's worldwide usage statistics, IE largely held at bay its top challengers, Mozilla's Firefox and Google's Chrome, according to Net Applications' latest measurements. IE has done so for a few months now, a big improvement for Microsoft compared to years of losing share.

IE dipped from 53.0 percent of global usage in January to 52.8 percent in February among desktop browsers; Firefox and Chrome stayed level at 20.9 percent and 18.9 percent, respectively. Safari popped up a notch from 4.9 percent to 5.2 percent, and Opera was unchanged at 1.7 percent.

Google's new privacy policy begins. Does it break the law?

Cnet, March 1, 2012

Google has officially implemented its new, combined privacy policy. On the company's Privacy Policy page, Google describes everything from how it collects information across its many sites to what it does with all that information.

After announcing plans in January to implement a combined privacy policy that covers all of its many services, the search company said that it would make for a "beautifully simple, intuitive user experience."

But not everyone is too pleased the search giant went forward with the change. In a letter dated February 27 and obtained today by CNET, France's data protection authority, the Commission Nationale de l'Informatique et des Libertes (CNIL), wrote to Google CEO Larry Page saying that the privacy policy might not be lawful under European Union rules.

Ford adding Facebook features to Sync

Cnet, February 29 2012

To look up an event location on Facebook, Ford wants drivers to ask Sync for directions--and put down the phone.

Ford engineers are testing how drivers can use the Sync AppLink system to tap into Facebook with voice commands. The automaker says social integration is the next evolution for its voice-controlled Sync system, and accessing Facebook events is just one example already being developed.

Why the iPad 3 could be in short supply

Cnet, March 1, 2012

Will the upcoming iPad 3's 2048x1536 display be available in the volumes that Apple typically needs on the day of announcement? The possibility that it might not is emerging as a concern.

"Samsung is having some difficulty supplying the panels and there's a short delay," a source, who has contacts at display makers in Asia, told CNET.

"Keep in mind that there can be announcement on the 7th but the ship date might come later," this person said.

Japan builds Tokyo Sky Tree, world's tallest tower

March 1, 2012

TOKYO--Nearly a year after the magnitude-9.0 quake that pummeled Japan, construction of the world's tallest tower, the Tokyo Sky Tree, is now complete.

Builder Obayashi, which recently announced plans for a space elevator to start services by 2050, declared the Sky Tree complete ahead of a ceremony Friday. While the world's tallest man-made structure remains the Burj Khalifa in Dubai at 829 meters (2,720 feet), the Sky Tree tops the list of the tallest free-standing towers at 634 meters (2,080 feet).