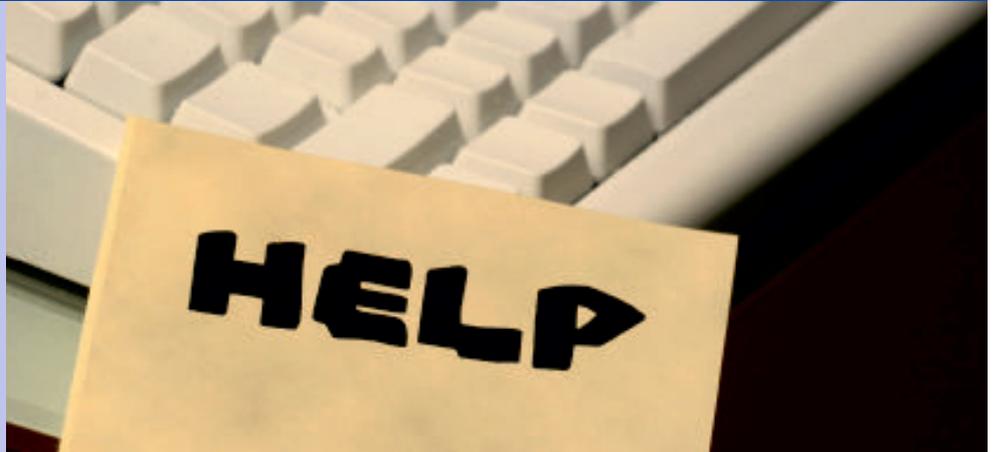




## TECH-TALK IN THIS ISSUE

- UPS - Essential Equipment
- FREE IT Health Check
- Mobile Airtime Offer with EE
- Cloud - not just for the brave
- Latest Virus Threat - ZEUS
- Chromebooks - working offline!

**BUMPER EDITION - 4 PAGES!**



## A UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) could be your best investment!

### What is a UPS?

An uninterruptible power supply is a piece of equipment that provides emergency power when the mains power source fails. It differs from a standby generator in that it provides immediate protection from power interruptions. The battery runtime of most UPS systems are relatively short but sufficient enough for you to proceed with safe shutdown, automated with management software, or swap to an alternative power source.

Typically UPS systems are used to protect computers, servers, data centers and telecommunication equipment where unexpected power fluctuations/cuts can cause serious disruption to a business. It is perceived that the main benefit of a UPS is the protection offered against power surges/spikes by reducing the voltage to a safe level. A UPS will also 'top up' the power in the event of an under voltage maintaining the correct voltage.

### In brief:

- Protects hardware from damage caused by power surges/spikes
- Prevents data loss
- Prevents data corruption
- Eliminates downtime

Many companies overlook the scope of the equipment that should be protected by a UPS. If you are running an on-premise email server you should protect all of the equipment needed to maintain the internet connection for this server.

**A UPS is a fundamental part of any IT system and should not be overlooked.**

If you would like to talk to someone about how a UPS system would safeguard your business, do not hesitate to get in touch.  
**01325 349 686**



## FREE IT Health Check

We will assess all aspects of your IT System, including:

- General IT systems
- Servers
- Networks
- Workstations
- Protection against power surges
- Back-up systems
- Email systems
- Storage



Book your **FREE** check today...

**CALL 01325 349 686**

*Don't let your IT system hold you back!*

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# Cloud Desktops - Not just for the brave

**Cloud** computing has now, after many years of being the new kid on the block and with many onlookers waiting for yet another tech bubble to burst, moved beyond hype and fantasy into the very fabric of today's businesses.

Companies all over the world are realising not only the benefits of cloud computing, but also the practical challenges of adopting these technologies.



Below are a number of forecasts from some of the world's leading analysts:

“ Public cloud spending will grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 26.4% from 2011 to 2016, accounting for 17% of all IT product spend by the end of the forecast period. 46% of all IT spending by 2016 will be for cloud-related platforms and applications.

**Accenture**

“ The bulk of new IT spending by 2016 will be for cloud computing platforms and applications with nearly half of large enterprises having cloud deployments by the end of 2017.

**Gartner**

“ In their recent 'The cloud takes shape' Global cloud survey, the implementation challenge shows 70% of respondent organisations believe that cloud computing is delivering operating efficiencies and cost savings today.

**KPMG**

## Hosted Desktops



There are thousands of companies using and enjoying the benefits of hosted desktops who would never go back to the traditional model. As more and more businesses are moving to the hosted desktop model every day.

Mobile working and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) are growing trends amongst businesses, but their arrival has increased the burden on IT Managers to facilitate these methods of working. Security concerns and a changing threat landscape, along with the more complex management of mobile devices are combining to create a real headache. This is all in addition to maintaining and managing the traditional desktop estate.

**Hosted Desktops** present a very compelling solution, almost a miracle cure to these issues, as it allows all users to experience the same centrally controlled desktop environment regardless of their physical location or the platform from which they choose to connect.

Working with an experienced strategic partner who brings knowledge and expertise means the true potential of hosted desktops is much easier to achieve. We are one of the areas longest serving Cloud Solutions Providers with over 5 years' experience providing Cloud Desktop Solutions to businesses.

## Is Cloud suitable for my company?



Get in touch now to arrange a **FREE** no obligation consultation to discuss your requirements. We will help identify the suitability of **Cloud** computing within your organisation and explain how the many benefits of **Cloud** computing can improve your business systems.

# 2 WEEKS WARNING, SECURE YOUR IT SYSTEMS

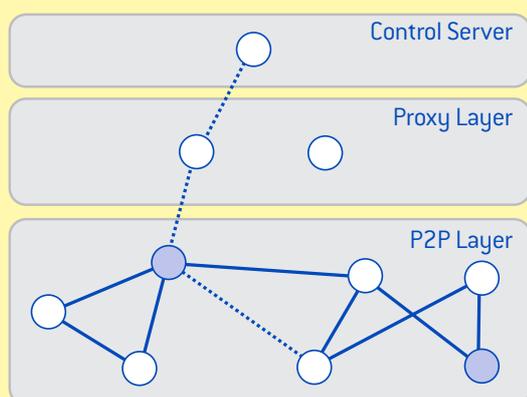
Headlines like the above are always met with scepticism in the IT industry. What better way to distribute an email borne virus than hidden in the millions of well-intended emails generated when the press tries to scare us all with the doomsday headlines.

The recent press coverage of the '**GameOver Zeus**' Trojan and the associated arrest warrants, naming of the suspects etc has been quite different from the norm. '**Zeus**' first appeared in 2007 with a second variant of the main code appearing in 2011. A Trojan is a small piece of malware (Bad Software) that is installed onto a computer. Propagated through spam and phishing messages, primarily used by cybercriminals to harvest banking information, such as login credentials, from a victim's computer. Infected systems can also be used to engage in other malicious activities, such as sending spam or participating in distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks.

When the software is installed into a victim's computer it is known as a 'bot'. When the infected computers are connected to the internet they create a network known as a 'botnet'. Each bot will communicate with a control server on the internet where it will receive commands and send the data it has captured from the victims computer. Over the years it has become quite simple to track and block these control servers rendering the botnets impotent in a very short timeframe, this has now changed.

What is different now is the new variant no longer requires a hard coded control server; it is now a 'Peer to Peer' (P2P) network. This means that the 'bots' can exist without the need for a direct connection to a 'control server'.

For those of you who are interested in the technicality of this, the 'bots' either act as a 'bot' or a 'bot proxy'. The 'bot proxy' gathers information from other 'bots' and relays it to a 'control server'. Where these 'bot proxies' send the data can be changed in seconds making the tracking of the server impossible.



## Topology of P2P Zeus.

Shaded nodes ● represent 'proxy bots'.

The dotted line ..... shows the information flow between a harvester bot and the Control server.

In addition to the extremely resilient structure of this P2P network all the data that is transmitted between 'bots' is now encrypted using a 2048bit encryption key making it impossible to identify the data that has been sent to and from the 'bots'.

**Geeky bit over;** The only way to stop it, very much in the same way as a virus in the real world, is to ensure you can no longer catch it or that if you have it you are inoculated.

**Never has the need for robust Anti-Virus software been more important.**

If you are concerned about your software or relying on a FREE Anti-Virus product, now is the time to ensure you are protected properly, **DO NOT HESITATE to get in touch.**





# Chromebooks - now you can work offline!



Chromebooks are the new computers from Google. They boot in seconds, have virus protection built-in, they are easy to manage and run your favourite Google apps plus so much more.

Google however are not doing a very good job of letting people know that their Chromebooks now operate offline. You can access critical apps and software offline (such as email) and as soon as your Chromebook goes online it automatically syncs and updates.

You'll be able to access your files with secure, built-in cloud connectivity, as well as use powerful web apps to create documents, edit photos and listen to music. Even when you are not connected to the internet, there are a variety of tasks you can still do with your Chromebook.



- **Write emails.** Using Gmail Offline allows mail to be read, responded to, searched and archived without network access. Gmail Offline will automatically synchronise messages and queued actions any time Chrome is running and an Internet connection is available.
- **View appointments.** With the Google Calendar app, you can view a read-only version of your calendar.
- **View, create and edit documents.** Google Drive app allows you to view and edit Google Docs, Slides and Drawings files as well as view Google Sheets files.
- **View and edit photos.** Chromebook comes with a built-in photo editor, so you can view and edit photos that are saved locally.
- **Listen to music.** Play music stored on your Chromebook's internal storage when you're offline. Copy music files that are there directly from a storage device like a USB stick or SD card.
- **View Microsoft Office and Adobe .pdf files.** Easily use your Chromebook to view Microsoft Office or Adobe files without an Internet connection.
- **Take notes.** Google Keep enables the user to take and save short notes that will be synced to the cloud the next time you're connected to the Internet.
- **Read offline web pages.** If you've saved web pages for offline viewing later, these will open seamlessly in Google Chrome on your Chromebook.
- **Use offline-capable apps.** Some very powerful web applications also have offline counterparts, and you can find them in the Chrome Web Store. Some of these apps include The New York Times and Cloud Reader from Amazon.
- **Play games.** The Chrome Web Store is home to hundreds of games, many of which are also available offline, like Angry Birds and Cube Slam.

**Note:** Whilst a Chromebook may be an ideal tool for the mobile worker, its inherent lack of support for everyday business software such as Sage Accounts or Payroll prevents it becoming serious consideration for office computers. However if your applications are hosted in a Cloud Desktop solution this is not a problem as no applications are installed on your ChromeBook.



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