



Protect Your Data and Your Business

Computer failures happen to everyone, but if you're well-prepared they're only an inconvenience, not a disaster. A comprehensive data security program will include off-site storage, scheduled backup media replacement, and device cleaning.

To help with **off-site storage** needs CCS is now offering customers with support agreements a new backup archiving service *at no additional charge!* Just ship a full image backup set to us each quarter—we'll verify the integrity of the backup, store it at our offices, and ship the previous backup set back to you.

Regular **media replacement** is also part of a good data protection plan. Tapes are good for about 50 uses, so daily backup tapes must be replaced annually to ensure reliability.

Weekly **device cleaning** will keep backups running smoothly. Watch the rightmost status light of 4mm tape drives as well: If it blinks slowly, the drive needs cleaning. Cleaning tapes silently stop working after 25-30 uses, so track each use by marking an **X** on the label and discard the tape when used up.

CCS can supply quality media and cleaning tapes at competitive prices. Call us to place an order.

How Would You Like To...

We are considering the introduction of a new printing product, but we need your help in deciding what features to include. Our ideas are described below. Would you do us the favor of reviewing them and telling us what you think? Your comments will help guide the design. And if you have ideas that we don't list here, please let us know.

So, how would you like to...

- View reports on your PC screen
- View reports away from your office
- Receive reports by email

- Use PC printers to print reports
- Print selected report pages
- Automatically email reports directly to customers or vendors (invoices, for example)
- Automatically archive report files to disk for later retrieval by PC
- Replace pre-printed forms with electronic forms that will print on plain paper

We're excited about these capabilities and hope to offer them to you soon, but we want to know what *you* think. Send us your thoughts and comments, please.

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To Spend or Not To Spend, That Is the Question

Making business spending decisions is always difficult, but when spending is for a new application system, it's easy to omit important steps and proceed directly to the accounting: net present value, discounted cash flow, internal rate of return, return on investment (ROI). These numbers matter, of course, but if critical questions are not asked first, the numbers may have no value. Before you start the ROI analysis, ask a few questions...

Does the application fit the company's business strategy? A well-implemented application that is delivered on time and has a high ROI will fail in the end if it diverges from the overall goals of the business. Achieving a harmonious alignment with business priorities is indispensable. Imagine an IT group delivering new inventory functions just as warehousing and shipping is out-sourced.

Should the process being automated be improved first? Poorly-functioning processes that become automated still function poorly, albeit faster. Automation may simply increase the rate at which errors can be generated. Before using an existing business process as a model for a new application system, take a careful look at its

operation, asking the question, "Could we be doing this in a better way?" One of the paradoxes of the software development process—requirements gathering and analysis, data definition, functional definition, and implementation—is that it changes the way we view the very process we're trying to automate by allowing us to see the process in new ways. Carefully examining existing processes early can reduce the magnitude of requirements changes later.

Will the proposed system integrate with current and future processes? The days of stand-alone applications are long past. Today's systems are sources and sinks for processes throughout

the enterprise. A simple example is order entry, which is unlikely to work without connectivity to inventory and purchasing. Even inter-enterprise integration may be required, for example, to extend order entry data flow to outside vendors.

After these questions are answered the features of the application system can be defined, allowing the benefits to be determined. Only with these two essential ingredients in hand can a valid ROI model be built.

“ before you start the ROI analysis... ”

Better Fitness Through Relocation

Do you have a membership in a health or fitness center? Exercise regularly to keep in shape? Here at CCS we've found another way to accomplish the same thing: We moved our office to a new building, and did much of the work ourselves!

A few months ago (seems like yesterday) we moved from our Buffalo Grove address to a new space in Arlington Heights. By now you probably have our new mailing address. If not, check the masthead or the return address on this newsletter. Here's a picture of our new building.

We're well-settled now, and for most of us, it

means a shorter drive to and from work, always a welcome result. If you're in the neighborhood, please stop to visit—we would enjoy seeing you.



Message From the President

As the Christmas season approaches my wife and I must make a large number of decisions: What parties do we attend? What cards do we send? To whom? What gifts should we buy? Chances are you wrestle with similar decisions. As I pause to reflect on my personal life, it reminds me of a fact I read recently: Each person today makes more decisions in one day than a person living 100 years ago made in their entire lifetime! It's astounding.

The technology decisions we face today are overwhelming. Even though I study, enjoy, and work with technology daily, the choices sometimes overwhelm and confuse me. I wonder how "non-geeks" feel. And the pace of change is accelerating. Entertainment, communications, and computers are merging into one device. Cable TV companies are providing Internet and telephone services. Telephone companies are providing on-demand video and Internet services. Cellular phones contain address books, handle email, take photographs, and will soon show the episode of CSI that you missed. We are becoming more connected with every new generation of technology.

The world is changing, and we must change with it, but where can you turn for guidance? You can turn to CCS. We can translate marketing hype into plain language. We can help you make economically sound business choices.

My goal is to make sure CCS keeps changing, continuously improving our ability to give you good service and good value. That's why I asked Y2marketing to evaluate CCS and the satisfaction of our customers. (Thanks to all who participated, your feedback was invaluable.) Many

of you indicated a desire for better communication. Some of you are not sure what you're getting for your money.

This newsletter is one of the ways we're addressing those issues. We will be sending you valuable information every quarter, and will strive to keep it fresh and relevant. We will also be posting articles on our website about new technologies and their benefits, and about good business practices.

We are not the same CCS we were five years ago. We have developed many new capabilities and are ready to deliver them to you. Our newsletter and website, as well as personal communications from me, will keep you up-to-date with our services. And if you have a question, don't wait for us, just call or email. Tell us what you think! Your feedback is critical in helping us meet your needs. Let us know if we covered a topic well enough, or tell us about a subject you would like to know more about.



In this issue you'll find a survey about a potential new product, plus articles about data protection and email security. Our website (www.ccs4vms.com) has a story in the category

"don't let this happen to you," about a disaster recovery effort that provided painful and expensive lessons, but had a happy ending.

I extend my sincere thanks to each of you for being our customer, and I look forward to sharing 2006 with you. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you all, from all of us at CCS.

Joseph W. Repluzzi

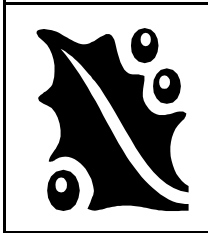


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CCS REPORTS - A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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How to Catch a Virus with Email Preview

Catching a PC virus is so easy, anyone can do it! All you need is a Windows PC and Outlook Express. Here's how I did it:

First, I gave my work email address to business contacts and a few friends and relatives. Then I visited a website for information and another to (shh!) shop, giving them my email address.

Finally I used email preview. Someone said to disable it, but it's a quick way to spot and delete junk email. Besides, its not like opening the message, is it? As the volume of unsolicited email swelled to a flood, I began wondering who was sending it all and where they got my address.

One day I clicked an email from a friend and waited a long time for it to open. It contained pictures and advertising! It wasn't from my

friend at all! Later, while I worked, an advertisement opened by itself, then another. I closed them and went back to work, but I noticed that my PC was slow. Then another window opened, explaining everything: "Your PC is infected. Click for help."

This is what happened: First, my PC was missing the latest updates. Then my friend's infected PC sent my address to a spammer, who sold it 20 times. Finally, an email delivered a picture that could infect my PC if viewed.

And email preview viewed it, automatically. The email opened slowly because virus software was being installed to show pop-up ads, and more. Even the "Click for help" message was an ad.

The moral of the story? Disable email preview!

