



# Gulfcoast Networking Newsletter

Your IT Management Experts

March 2021

Hello! We're pleased to send you this monthly issue of the Gulfcoast Networking Newsletter. It's our way of saying that you're important to us and we truly value your business. Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to friends and colleagues. Enjoy!

## MONTHLY QUOTES:

*"Keep your face always toward the sunshine - and shadows will fall behind you."*

**Walt Whitman**

*"We must let go of the life we have planned, so as to accept the one that is waiting for us."*

**Joseph Campbell**

*"Excellence is not a skill, it's an attitude."*

**Ralph Marston**

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## How to Ensure Safer Employee Exits

It has been estimated that on leaving their employment up to 50% of former employees still have access to their company's IT systems through Office365. This clearly represents a significant security threat; even if an employee has left on the best possible terms, you can't expect them to be as careful about security as they move on from your employment as they were when working for you. If an employee has left with any sort of grudge, clearly the potential for them to cause damage to your systems if they retain IT access is immense. Below we set out four ways in which you can make sure that you remain protected against damage to your system, deliberate or otherwise, from former employees retaining access to Office 365.

**Block access/sign out:** make sure a leaving employee is fully signed out of all accounts and sessions to which they had access. Make sure that this applies on all devices, including any they may be taking away with them, e.g. cell phones or tablets belonging to the employee on which they did company work. If you won't be needing any access to their account, you can choose to block all sign-ins from it. Sometimes you might need to continue accessing the account to retrieve data etc., in which case it's a good idea to change the account password.

**Managing mailbox access:** there are a number of processes you can use to change an employee's mailbox settings. You can turn on automatic email forwarding, so that all email address to your former employee is forwarded to a current one; you may wish to turn on automatic replies, so anyone emailing the former employee will be told that they no longer work for you and are given an alternative contact; or, if you wish to continue to access existing emails, you can convert the mailbox to a shared one (this has the advantage of giving other people access without having to purchase an extra license).

**License/app removal:** under the "licenses and apps" button, you can make changes to the Microsoft 365 license. If you remove an employee's license, all data held in their account will be deleted 30 days later; by converting to a shared mailbox (see above) you can save having to buy new license, or you can downgrade your license now the employee won't be needing all applications.

**Link to OneDrive:** in the former employee's area you can click on "Create link to files" which will give you a link to all the former employee's OneDrive files that you can then pass to another employee. Best practice is for the new employee to make copies of all the OneDrive files they will need within 30 days of terminating the former employee's account.

# Tracking Your Website Visitors

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If you want to really get to know your customers and the types of goods and services that they will be interested in, website tracking is an essential tool. It can help you see where your customers live, what demographic they fit, where they are coming from (have they googled you, for example, or come from another site?), what demographic they fit into, and what interests them or does not on your website. Research has shown that only around 2.3% of visitors to the website will actually give that website any business; if you want to buck that trend, you need to be tracking and analyzing visitor activity.

Website tracking can show you exactly how your visitors move around your website, what catches their eye, what they miss, and what they're looking for. With certain types of tracking you can gain a good deal of detail about your visitors, possibly write down to the company they work for and their email address, which you can then use for personalized, customized sales approaches. These can be extremely effective: if you know exactly what a person came to your website looking for and what they found of interest when they were there, you can then approach them with special offers that fall right in the middle of their area of interest.

Visitor tracking technology works in a number of ways: the reverse domain name system collects information regarding visitors' IP addresses, so you have a basic idea of where they've come from. If you want more detail, you can have scripts built into your website that will provide you with the address, social media details, and contact details of people in the company who have visited you, allowing you to make "warm" approaches instead of cold calling.

One thing to be careful of when using visitor tracking on your website (there are many different forms of software available, Google Analytics being the most popular) is that you don't fall foul of Europe's GDPR regulations. These regulations state that no visitor can be tracked without giving explicit consent to the website they are visiting, and if this is not obtained a business can face extremely severe financial sanctions. These apply even when the visitor is in Europe and visiting a US-based website. There are so such regulations in the USA, although the FTC recommends that your website should inform visitors of any information that you are harvesting about them and obtain their consent to use it where appropriate.

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## News Bytes

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### **NurseryCam Concerns**

NurseryCam, which offers remote video monitoring services allowing parents to see their children in nursery, has experienced a data breach in which an unauthorized actor has accessed client accounts, harvesting email addresses, names, passwords, and usernames. It appears that the attacker was not acting maliciously but attempting to signpost weaknesses in security for the company; thus far all they have done is inform the company of what has happened and how it was achieved.

This is not the first time that NurseryCam has been in the news for the wrong reasons: in 2015, concerned parents raised the possibility that anyone on the Internet could potentially access the company's cameras and view their children while at nursery. It is believed that the company took action to remedy this breach and that it is not connected with this most recent problem.

### **LinkedIn Dropped Out**

LinkedIn, the business-oriented social network, suffered a massive two hour global outage on February 23, from 2 pm to 4:21 pm ET. The network did not give any reasons for this drop in service, although their Twitter account jokingly attempted to pin the blame on the WandaVision character Agatha. Outages are uncommon for LinkedIn, with the last big problem coming in January 2020 when for a time it was impossible to make any posts or link with any other users; however, this latest incident was a full global outage rather than a loss of any functionality.



## Question of the Month

**Question:** *How can I fix my Gmail not syncing across devices?*

**Answer:**

Gmail is one of the world's most popular email providers, and generally users are happy with the system, but occasionally it can throw up problems in terms of syncing with the mobile app, leaving you unable to send or receive any emails on your phone. This can happen when data transfer problems create invisible errors that leave the app hanging. However, fortunately this is not a difficult problem to fix: it can be sorted in a few simple steps.

With an Android device, the first option is to undertake a manual sync: simply open the Gmail app and swipe down from top to bottom of the screen. An alternative is to go to settings and enable automatic syncing. If this doesn't work, check that you have a mobile connection, that you have entered the correct password, and that you are using the latest version of the app. Finally, you can go to Settings > Apps and Notifications > Gmail > Storage & Cache > Clear Storage will remove app data and cached files that may be clogging up your system. If none of these works, try the tried and tested method of turning your device off and on again, which in many cases can be all that's needed to get your app working properly.

Many of the above steps also apply to iPhones, but there are a few additional steps that can be taken with iOS. Check that IMAP is enabled; it should be by default, but if it's not, turn it back on. You can also check on your push settings: if you are set to manual syncing, the app will only connect emails when you turn it on: go to Settings > Passwords & Accounts > Fetch New Data > Gmail > Fetch.

Other possible ways of remedying matters with an iPhone are to delete the Gmail app and reinstall it, or delete your account from your phone and set it up again. Doing this won't affect your data apart from removing it from your device and it will be re-loaded when you reinstall the app or account.

## How to Avoid the Zoom Fatigue

Over the last 12 months Zoom has gone from being something many people were only vaguely aware of to a virtually ubiquitous feature in most people's homes.

There is no denying that it has been a useful tool both for business and for families and friends trying to stay in touch, however new research out of Stamford University has shown that too much zooming can lead to a form of burnout, named by the researchers "Zoom fatigue". Whilst many people may regard this condition as being basically exhaustion caused by the stress of the global pandemic, the researchers warn that many are in danger of overlooking four elements that could be Zoom-specific.

Firstly, there can be fatigue caused by excessive eye contact. In a normal business meeting, we tend to glance occasionally at the faces of those we are listening to, but most of the time we will be looking down, jotting down notes. During Zoom calls, we often feel obliged to keep looking at the face of whoever's talking to show we are paying attention, as they can't see our notepad and might think we are just bored. The problem with this is that the brain regards the face on the screen as being out of kilter with reality, and this leads to stress and tiredness. The researchers suggest that reducing the size of the image on your screen could help with this, as could using an external keyboard to take notes.

Secondly, many people don't like seeing their own image, particularly in live video. Many people can experience negative emotions when they see themselves on screen during Zoom calls, feeling self-conscious, exposed and isolated. It is suggested that the best way of avoiding this is to set your Zoom screen only to show the people you're talking to and no image of yourself.

Thirdly, when we make video calls, we don't have much movement at all. If you're talking on the phone or with one other person face-to-face, you can move around, even if it's just shifting your chair a few inches as you talk. Many people feel constrained on Zoom to remain directly in front of the camera; researchers propose that you should set your camera further away from yourself, so you have more space to move around in without disappearing off the screen.

Finally, people become exhausted on Zoom because it involves a whole vocabulary of non-verbal communication that differs from that we are used to in normal physical encounters, which leads to overthinking. You have a restricted view of those you were talking to, and you can easily miss or misinterpret body language and facial expressions due to the limitations of camera quality and screen size. To avoid this, the researchers suggest that it might be desirable to switch off video where possible and just talk over audio.

# Your Newsletter

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A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER TO INFORM AND ENTERTAIN OUR CLIENTS

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## APP OF THE MONTH: FANTASTICAL

Many Apple users will already be familiar with the Fantastical app (App store, standard free or \$4.99/m premium), but the third iteration has just been released with many new features. These include the ability to use Calendar Sets (having a number of calendars for different parts of your life or business), varied meeting times (you can send out a number of suggested meeting times, making dovetailing with your colleagues and clients easier), time zone compatibility (the app will show you what the time will be for someone you're trying to schedule a meeting with in another country), Interesting Calendars, which allows you to import calendars from other entities.



**Gulfcoast Networking, Inc.**

**FROM THE DESK OF:**

***Rob Marlowe***

If you don't have a managed-service agreement in place, please let us know and we'll conduct a needs analysis and provide you with a proposal free of charge!

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