



JAG Computer Service

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You, Your Business, and the world wide web. The internet, a wondrous and sometimes dangerous place. It's almost impossible to imagine our world without it. It's become ingrained in our society. While writing a section for my website on my recent visit to relatives in Australia, I noted that even in the 4 years since my first visit there, the ability of the web has changed our ability to see the world. There are dozens of links to places and information throughout the travelogue that allow the reader to not only read what I wrote, but to discover things for themselves, to move beyond the words displayed on a web page.

What about business? What does the web do for (and to) a business. For starters, it's expected that a person doing business will have e-mail. A website lends credibility to your business. It becomes the placeholder in the virtual world for your company. It can extend and augment what you do, and give you reach to customers beyond your city, state and country.

If the web has become a necessary, even essential tool for doing business, then let's pack our toolkits and prepare to dive in head first to find out how business can safely connect to the web.

The Boy Scout motto is truly fitting when it comes to the web: Be Prepared. (the Boy Scout slogan, Do A Good Turn Daily is also some good advice!) Before jumping into web surfing it's important to: Be Prepared.

Here are the things no good web surfer should be without:

Antivirus. It should be a current version with virus definitions that are up to date. I have two free antivirus programs listed at www.jagcs.com/links, AVG and aVast!. Both are excellent programs, and since they are free, there is no excuse not to have a current and updated antivirus. If you have 10 users or more it's makes fiscal sense to use a centrally managed program that keeps your computers updated automatically.

Pop-up stopper. Many an unpleasant experience comes from pop-ups, and not only because they are annoying. If you are running Windows XP, make sure you upgrade to Service Pack 2 which includes a free pop-up stopper. Yahoo and Google toolbars also include pop-up blockers (although I hesitate to recommend any toolbar but the Google toolbar). You can find a link to Pop-Up Stopper Free edition by Panicware at my website at www.jagcs.com/links. There's that free word again.

Security updates and fixes. If you are running Windows, go to www.windowsupdate.com to get the latest security patches and fixes for your computer. Mac's also have a similar update feature. Keep yourself protected against known vulnerabilities. If you have a Windows server and network you can use another free product from Microsoft, Windows Server Update Services to push updates out to your network machines and keep them centrally managed and updated.

Anti-Spyware: Microsoft is giving away their Antispyware program (it works with Windows 2000 and Windows XP). You can get it at www.microsoft.com. Adaware is a tool you can run to remove spyware from your machine. A free version is available at www.lavasoft.de.

Firewall: Service Pack 2 for Windows XP includes a free firewall. You can find links to free firewalls by ZoneAlarm, Outpost and Kerio at www.jagcs.com/links.

We've got our tools, now, how do we connect our office to the internet. For years good old dial-up modems did the trick, but in a content rich world wide web full of huge files, it's not a pleasant experience. Even sending documents or photos by dial-up can be a painful chore. High speed DSL from phone companies or Broadband from cable are your best way to go for a small to medium sized business. Can't get those in your area? JAG Computer Service is an authorized installer for Direcway Satellite internet. Business class service beamed by satellite as low as 99.00 a month. As part of our Intel Channel membership we can help connect your business with *Qwest* DSL, *Comcast* Broadband and *Direcway* Satellite Internet.

E-mail. There are many ways you can get e-mail, from free services like Hotmail or YahooMail. You can use the e-mail accounts that your internet service provider gives you, or you can use e-mail accounts that are provided by the company hosting your website. You can host your own mail server at your site, giving you flexibility and control over your mail. We can help you decide what works best for your business.

Spam: During my 15 day vacation to Australia, I received to my 3 e-mail accounts approximately 2400 spam mails. To minimize spam and keep your employees from spending the estimated 1 hour per day dealing with it, install spam blocking software such as iHateSpam or server based solutions such as GFI Mail Essentials. The investment can pay for itself in a very short time by giving you back your productivity and inbox! See the facts at www.jagcs.com/um and read the Upload 8-7-05 entry.

Web filtering: But I don't want my employees browsing www.picturesthatwillgetmeintrouble.com. Have a good computer usage policy in place, be aware of what your employees are doing. You can also put webfiltering software and hardware in place, such as Watchguards Firebox X500 with web filtering, giving you control over what content and sites employees can visit, and when!

Web site: There are hundreds of companies out there that do web site hosting and very inexpensively. You can also get a professional web designer to do a great job on providing you a virtual storefront for a reasonable price. We can refer you to some great resources here in Colorado to get you started.

Connecting and keeping your business on the web doesn't have to be a daunting task, just remember the Boy Scout Motto: **Be Prepared.**

Web Check List:

Item	Yes	No
Antivirus installed		
Antivirus definitions current		
Pop-up Blocker Installed		
Spyware Blocker Installed		
Firewall		
DSL or Broadband connection		
E-mail account		
Spam Filter		
Web Filter		
Web site		
I want someone else to do this for me and make sure it's current from now on!	Call JAG Computer Service today at 303-637-9770	Get and keep your business safely on the web today!



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