



# SWITCHED ON

“As a business owner, I know you don’t have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That’s where we *shine!* Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!”  
-Adam Morris, Avagio IT Services



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

## **Disaster Recovery: The Most Critical Part To Data Backups That Most Companies Overlook**

Last week I met up with a colleague of mine John Motazedi who runs a similar sized IT Support business to Avagio in Joplin, Missouri, USA.

You may recall back in May that a massive tornado (up to a mile wide) ripped through the centre of the city destroying 35% of it and killing 121 people. The picture to the right is all that remains of his office!



Nineteen of John’s clients offices were also in the path of the tornado and were completely destroyed including all their computers, data and local backup media. But, all of John’s clients had managed offsite backups in place and he was able to restore 100% of all of their systems.

So I know what you are thinking. We never get tornados in the UK (OK we do but they are very small ones that could not hurt a fly) so I don’t need to worry!

This is true, but there are other real world threats to data integrity that are statistically far more likely to happen both in the UK and USA. Whilst fires and floods do happen, you are far more likely to be a victim of theft and even more likely to experience simple data corruption or human error.

So the principals of protecting your data against loss and reviewing and understanding your recovery plan are as relevant to us as they are to businesses in downtown Joplin.

What many smaller business do not understand is that simply having a copy of the data does NOT guarantee a fast recovery. Let me give you an analogy to help you understand...

**August 2011**

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“I wrote assembly instructions for Children’s toys. What did you do?”

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## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month: EVERNOTE



Organisers unite! If you have a lot of “stuff” to organise – pictures, notes, reminders, and more – and want an easy way to capture and organise all of it, you should take a look at EVERNOTE.

This cloud application allows you to type text notes, make lists, record voice notes, store photos, screen shots, travel receipts, itineraries and practically any other item you can think of.

Everything you capture is automatically processed, indexed, and made searchable. If you like, you can add tags or organize notes into different notebooks.

Populating EVERNOTE with content is simple. You can Tweet a note and have it stored, log in and type yourself a note, take a photo of a favourite wine you’re drinking and upload it or clip web sites and upload them.

Best of all, as your “stuff” grows you can easily search and keep track of everything in one simple place: Christmas lists, to-do lists, good ideas you want to remember, shopping lists, pictures of things you want to purchase and much, much more!

## Disaster Recovery: The Most Critical Part To Data Backups That Most Companies Overlook — Cont’d

Let’s suppose we put a disaster recovery plan together for your home. Your house would represent the server and platform, and all your furniture and personal items would be the data. Now let’s suppose we could make a backup of your home by making an exact copy of everything that’s in your house (all your furniture, appliances, clothing, etc.) and storing it in a “backup” shed. Then the unthinkable happens: your house is flooded, razed to the ground or burgled and everything is gone (or a critical part of it is damaged and needs to be replaced). You would think, “Well, at least I have a copy!” True, but the first thing you would need to do is replace the home itself (remember, that’s the platform that everything resides on). Next you would have to “reinstall” the services like gas, electricity and water (let’s call that the software). Then you would have to haul everything from the shed back to the house and “reformat” it by arranging it into the house. Depending on the extent of the damage done to your house, that could take days or weeks; chances are you’d have to find a hotel to live out of in the meantime. In addition, there’s the time and cost of moving everything back in and re-arranging and restoring everything to its proper place. Plus, the above *assumes* you have a recent, working copy of your entire home and everything in it. If you failed to make a copy – or if the shed where you were storing everything had a water leak that destroyed everything inside due to mould – then you’re really out of luck.

Of course, this is a simple analogy – and there are ways to back up your data and network so that recovery can happen inexpensively in a matter of hours versus days or weeks. But if you simply think having only a local backup is going to be your saving grace, you might be unpleasantly surprised. I can’t tell you the number of businesses who ended up losing incredibly valuable, irreplaceable data because they didn’t think through the RECOVERY part of the backup equation.

### So Things To Think About?

- ◇ If you were the victim of theft or a massive failure how would your business function without access to any systems or data? How long could you function like this? Do you have a Business Continuity or Disaster Recovery Plan in place? Do you have adequate insurance cover in place?
- ◇ Do you have an automated managed offsite backup of your critical data? If not, what do you have instead to make sure your data is safe?
- ◇ Do you have backups of several versions of your files to protect against data corruption?
- ◇ Do you need multiple copies of offsite archives of data for compliance needs?

The **BEST** thing to do is contact our office to schedule a strategy meeting to go over your needs and expectations for what should happen in the event of downtime or an outright disaster. That way you know for sure what to expect and – more importantly – how to accurately prepare for a disaster.

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## ***New Facebook App Lets You Leave Messages To Loved Ones (And Enemies!) When You Die***

I suppose it was only a matter of time before someone came up with the idea of a Facebook application that allows you to record a message that will be shared with your friends and family after you die. While the concept isn't a new one, putting it on a social media site certainly is.

This new application called, "If I Die," allows you to record a video message directly from your webcam (you can also draft a letter if you prefer). After recording, you are prompted to select three trustees that will be appointed to hold your message. It takes all three of those trustees to say that you are actually dead before the message is released to all friends and family via your Facebook page. Not too surprisingly, some of the videos being recorded aren't very nice.



If you want to share what you would record upon your death with the Avagio readership then please drop me a line at [Nikki.Batt@Avagio.co.uk](mailto:Nikki.Batt@Avagio.co.uk). I'm sure there's some interesting stories out there!

## ***Steve Jobs Is Building A Spaceship On Earth (Cupertino City, CA To Be Exact)***

Steve Jobs is "selling" Apple again – only this time he's pitching the Cupertino City Council on allowing him to develop a 150-acre plot of land to build, "The best office building in the world." This building will be home to a new Apple Campus – and without a doubt it's a very ambitious plan.

This giant building would hold 12,000 people. But that's not what makes this project so interesting – it's the circular design that gives it a spaceship appearance. In fact, there won't be a single straight piece of glass on the outside.

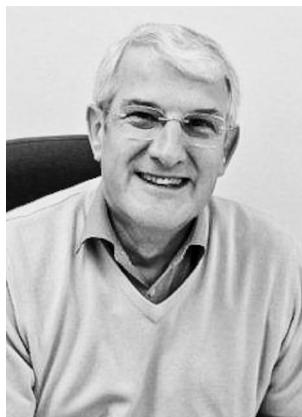
During his presentation, it was reported that Steve Jobs wasn't in his normal "pitch mode" we're used to seeing on stage at Apple keynotes and events. During this presentation he was reported as being much more low-key because he knows the city council can say "No" to his project if they want to. He's still salesy, but doesn't use words like "magical" or "insanely great."

You can still see a tough streak in his proposal. When a council member asked if Apple plans to give the city free Wi-Fi, he replied, "We're the largest taxpayers in Cupertino, so we'd like to continue to stay here and pay taxes." Obviously that can be both a benefit and threat that Apple would pack up its bags and leave if not granted this request.

Other highlights about the campus:

- The building would use its own natural gas generator as its primary source of power and the city's power grid only as a backup.
- The building includes an auditorium for conferences giving them the ability to hold their events there instead of San Francisco.
- Apple wants to break ground next year, and move in by 2015.

## Caller Of The Month



August's caller of the month is Richard Day from Wiltshire Blind

Richard had a new member of staff joining his team who was partially sighted and our assistance was required with installing Dolphin Guide Software.

Avagio liaised with the manufacturer as it was a first for us. The software wasn't designed for company use, but with Avagio's persistence with the supplier we were able to get around this and configure it accordingly.

Dolphin Guide allowed the new member of staff to use the computer with a voice driven system providing simple, easy computing .

## How To Spot An E-mail Hoax

With the Internet and e-mail providing a free, viral platform for online scammers, hackers and cyber criminals, there's no doubt that at some point you'll receive an e-mail hoax. Some are harmless, but many can lead to virus infections, identity theft or worse. Here are some common themes to watch out for:

- ◇ Supposedly free giveaways in exchange for forwarding e-mails.
- ◇ Bogus virus alerts.
- ◇ This has come from "Microsoft" .
- ◇ False appeals to help sick children.
- ◇ Pointless petitions that lead nowhere and accomplish nothing.
- ◇ Dire, and completely fictional, warnings about products, companies, government policies or coming events.

Probably the most common indicator that an e-mail is a hoax is the "Send this e-mail to everyone in your address book" request. Hoax writers want their material to be spread as far and wide as possible so almost every hoax e-mail will have this request built into the message. In some cases, e-mail hoaxes will even give you a specific number of people to send the message to in order to collect a prize or get something for free.

Another indicator that an e-mail is a hoax is that they don't provide a checkable reference to back up claims. Genuine competitions, promotions, giveaways or charity drives will almost always provide a link to a company website or publication. Real virus warnings should only come from your installed anti-virus software. E-mails containing government or company policy information are likely to include references to checkable sources such as news articles, websites or other publications.

A third indicator is often the actual language used. E-mail hoax writers have a tendency to use an emotive, "over-the-top" style of writing peppered with words and phrases such as "Urgent," "Danger," "Worse virus ever," and so on. Another indication is that these messages contain ALL CAPITAL LETTERS for added emphasis. When in doubt, don't forward the message or take the action requested.

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# Trivia Challenge

Congratulations go to Lydia Champier from Highgrove Enterprises who won last months trivia challenge and was rewarded with a £10 M&S voucher. Lydia and her other half Rob enjoyed a Friday night in with one of their dine in for two for £10 offers.

### Last months answer was.....

In 1657 the first chocolate shop opened up in the city of London.

It's the second month in a row the winner has been from Highgrove Enterprises. Anyone out there fancy beating them to it this month!



## Who Wants To Win A £10 PLAY.com Voucher?

Take our monthly "Trivia Challenge" and you could win too!

The word 'patriotism' comes from the Latin *patria* which means

.....

- A) Loyalty
- B) Homeland
- C) Pride
- D) Freedom

Send your answer via email to [triviachallenge@avagio.co.uk](mailto:triviachallenge@avagio.co.uk) right now. The sender of the first correct e mail received will win the prize. Good luck everyone.

# Client Spotlight



F1 Computing was founded by Stephen Price (pictured to the left) some twenty three years ago and is one of only five Microsoft Gold Learning partners in the UK. They have offices in Bath and the City of London.

F1 focus on delivering Microsoft development products training and helping business customers implement CRM (Customer Relationship Management) and xRM Framework solutions. They believe in 'Empowerment through Training' to enable customers to achieve more themselves.

Their clients range from small/medium to enterprise companies who are interested in making more use of the new Microsoft Cloud Services such as CRM Online , Office 365 and Azure.

As F1 are an IT company themselves, IT is system critical to their day to day operations. Downtime costs them money and customers. Having Avagio on board to maximise uptime is a great advantage for them.

**F1 computing would like to offer the Avagio readership 20% off on all training courses during the month of August 2011.** Please e-mail [richardp@f1comp.co.uk](mailto:richardp@f1comp.co.uk).



## “The IT Star Wars Cliché Is True”



Microsoft Corp. unveiled a limited edition Xbox 360 console last week that will be modelled after the character R2-D2, with a wireless gold-coloured controller resembling his droid pal C-3PO.

The console will make the character's signature beeping sounds when the white-and-blue console is turned on and the disc tray is opened.

It will also feature a 320 gigabyte hard drive, the largest available for Microsoft's gaming system.



The "Star Wars" themed console, available later this year, will cost around £275.00 and

come with a white Kinect sensor, headset and "Kinect Star Wars," an action-adventure game utilizing the camera-based controller system.

## *Avagio and Wiltshire Blind Raise £1000 For Charity*



A big thank you to everyone that sponsored Avagio in the Dragon Boat racing this year (the event took place on Saturday 9th July 2011 at Monkton Park in Chippenham).

Although we don't know the exact total, we hope to have raised around £1000 in total. The money will be split between local charities and The Wiltshire Blind Organisation.

I would also like to thank all the volunteers for taking part and adding to the days fun.

For those that do not know, Avagio have looked after The Wiltshire Blind Organisation's IT network for over 3 years and this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year we have teamed up and competed in the Dragon Boat races. Like a lot of smaller charities, TWBO have found raising money harder in the downturn and its important therefore to help as much as possible.

Each boat is 40ft long and had 16 paddlers and a drummer that is supposed to keep the time – think Charlton Heston in Ben-Hur. Although the race distance is short – about 250 meters the intensity is such that everyone is left gulping for air at the end. Importantly, its not about brute force but timing and technique.

Our times this year were consistently good, but unfortunately not good enough to get into the final. Our best time was just under 1 minute 15, just 2 seconds slower than our best last year. Maybe next year.....

Adam

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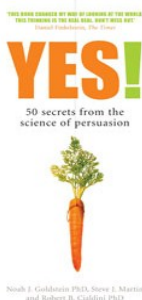
## Groupon: Good Idea Or Invitation To Price Shoppers?

Groupon, launched in November 2008 in Chicago, is a highly successful online marketing venue for businesses looking to gain more customers and for consumers looking for great deals on things they already buy. Here's how it works: Businesses wanting to reach more customers sign up for a "daily deal" promotion where they offer some product or service at half off the normal costs. Groupon then sends that offer out to a list of users who have signed up to receive these daily deals. But here's the "catch" (or the brilliance depending on how you look at it): in order for the deal to be "on," a certain number of people must buy the deal – otherwise it's off.

What this does is fuels people who WANT the deal to pass it on to friends and family to try and pump up the offer so they can get in on it. In doing so, Groupon naturally gets more users to sign up for their daily deal and keeps a hefty percentage of the sale. Also, the deal is only good for that day, building in an automatic urgency to buy. Clearly this is a good deal for consumers who get to buy products and services at deep discounts – but is it a good deal for the businesses that are using this as an advertising media?

Some say yes because it allows a new startup business to gain actual buyers to their store or web site at a break even or loss. If you are providing a service that people really like, chances are they'll come back and tell their friends. However, some say it only attracts price shoppers who have zero loyalty; and no business wants that type of customer, especially when you have to deliver the products and services at a break even or loss. So how do you find out whether or not it will work for you? The best idea is to run a test and track the results. Obviously if you offer a great service that begs repeat business, it makes sense to advertise using Groupon because the upfront loss will be more than made up from in long-term repeat business and referrals. However, if you have a problem with customer retention and loyalty, Groupon might not be the best place for you to advertise. To learn more on how to become a featured business on Groupon, visit [www.grouponworks.com](http://www.grouponworks.com)

## From The Avagio Bookshelf



YES! 50 secrets from the science of persuasion.

It is while ago that I first read this book, but it still remains one of my favourite business books.

The art of influence and persuasion is a crucial skill for every business leader – whether you are trying to sell your product face to face, get buy in from your team or write compelling website copy.

Unlike a lot of so called experts that put forward arguments that are often logical and believable, the author Robert Cialdini has actually researched his subject and backs up each persuasion example with real research, tests and statistics.

There are 50 interesting and valuable nuggets in this book – far too many to cover here but as an example, one of the chapters asks – How can you gain a head-start in the quest for loyalty?

Some consumer researchers did a loyalty test for a car wash that issued two sets of loyalty vouchers. One set of vouchers required the customer to collect eight stamps before receiving a free car wash. The other voucher already had two stamps but required a total of ten stamps before the customer was entitled to a free car wash. Both sets of vouchers therefore required the same number of carwash return visits before they could get the free carwash but one group had a head start. The results showed that 19% of the 8 voucher group collected enough stamps compared to 34% of the 10 voucher group. The sample size was 300. In addition, the head-start group took less time to complete their 8th purchase by an average of 2.9 fewer days. Additional research showed the closer people get towards achieving a goal the more effort they make to complete it.

Besides the obvious application of these findings to loyalty programmes, the result of this study suggest when soliciting another person for help with anything, you should try to point out how that person has already taken steps towards completion of that task.

The principle could be used at home as well. To incentivise your child to complete their homework, you could give them one weekend off for every six weekends they complete their homework, but you could further incentivise by "crediting" them for one weekend before the programme officially begins.

So if you would like your colleagues to agree with you more, your neighbours to stop dropping litter or ask a policeman not to book you for speeding, read this book.

Adam