

Computer Bytes – March 2017

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Hello all. I hope you've been enjoying the rain and the relief it's bringing us. Here's to a continuing prosperous and healthy new year!

I don't generally endorse products in my information presentations. I'm not meaning to do that here, but it's such a neat tool I wanted to pass on to those of you not already using it. I'm talking about Dropbox. For those of you who've not used it, or those who are, hopefully this information will assist you in its use.

Dropbox is an 'online' location for pictures, documents, videos, word files, etc. Anything you add to Dropbox will automatically show up on all your computers, phones and even the Dropbox website — so you can access or share your information residing there from anywhere.

If you've purchased a new system you may note it is often pre-installed. This does not mean it will just work. This is the application only and you must set it up for your specific use. There are "personal" and "business" options. You can also download the free application to access Dropbox from your computer and/or mobile device. Once you get it configured for your specific account, and you use it routinely, you'll get the hang of it. Again the first level of the program is free. You are provided with a set amount of space (2Gb) with the free setup. If you find it's something you really use and want or justify, you can increase your space with fees applied.

This tool is extremely cool for sharing pictures and such that are too large to send via email (we've all run into that issue!). You can post photos then your folks you share with can download, print, whatever they wish to do. The other feature is on the business side you can share large files, including documents, pictures, whatever, again in a streamlined fashion. A recommendation and practice I encourage is once you've shared and recipients have downloaded the files/folders, delete what's in the Drop Box. This will allow you to save on costs for a larger account if it's not really needed.

The following link is a really clear overview of the program. One item I reiterate is I don't really recommend it as a 'backup' nor the folder where your files permanently live. My reason for reviewing it is the value of 'sharing' and/or 'transitioning' files between users via online internet features. Backups are a completely different animal.

<https://www.dropbox.com/tour/0>

Switching gears, I generally focus on one item but another issue I talked about last year just won't go away so I'm hitting on it again...

There is a continuing 'scam' issue. A blue screen with a warning not to turn off the computer and call a phone number immediately pops up. It often references Microsoft as well. In some cases users could just close and move on, other could not move forward/backward – just locked up.

For the most part this seems to be just a 'pop-up' scare tactic to get your money. In other cases it did seem to install other malware we had to run cleanup on to get rid of. The bulk of our

clients called us first and we assisted them without going down the wrong path of hooking up with the crooks doing this.

DO NOT CALL AND DO NOT PAY AND DO NOT LET THEM LOG INTO YOUR COMPUTER! No reputable service would ever do this. The misleading part is if you do let them in, they run bogus files that display supposed errors meant to scare – and unfortunately if you're not familiar with the practices it can be scary. **THEY** are the bug! Again, **DO NOT GIVE THEM ANY MONEY!!!** Call your local IT support. The cost will be less if you do have an issue and you're working with someone you can trust and 'see'.

Again this brings up the never-ending recommendation of keeping anti-virus/anti-malware tools up to date. Some of these annoyances can still occur but you want to do your best to minimize them.

NOTE: Our sharing of information within articles includes suggestions and tips. USE AND/OR APPLY AT YOUR OWN RISK. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our offices for professional service/guidance.

Until next time, don't forget your backups! For more information, contact Harv Oliver, HANDS-ON Consultations, (805) 524-5278, www.hocsupport.com