



Newsletter - Annual Update

May 2007

Again this year, thank you for the opportunity to continue supporting your business. For some of you we have continued our business relationship for anywhere up to 20 years. Welcome of course to the new-comers, and there were 4 of you this past year. While

weather this spring has been unpredictable, most of you have indicated that you're having a good year. Works well for me too, you're all more relaxed!

While emergency support response times and issues had stayed constant or improved for a number of years, this year my logs indicate that I have not been able to keep up with demand. Response times for emergencies went up slightly (but were still under 30 minutes); and most emergencies were resolved in less than $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour as well. However, new and larger projects have placed a high demand on my time. These projects have in some cases dragged months longer than they should have. It's been sheer volume of work with a 28% increase in business in the past year.

Recognizing this, Quality Computing now has a second full-time employee. Kristel joins me having completed her BSc in Computer Science degree, and I'm sure we ALL look forward to her input. She has a completely different skill set from myself, having worked with different programming languages, databases, and web site products. This is good, new ideas are always welcome. Initially she is working on websites and becoming familiar with the greenWORKS package and the D3 database. She has of course spent portions of the last 2 summers working here as well. I'm sure you'll make her welcome as you encounter her on the phone or onsite.

This year has had an upturn in emergency hardware replacement, for the first time in two years. Remember, replacing servers more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ years old, and other computers more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ years old in critical roles is important. Battery backups are critical; that they actually work is even more important. The time to discover that your backup is not functioning is NOT during a May power-outage!

This year has marked the last customer that I reach using dialup for support. You are ALL on the internet now, and most of you have web sites as well. As you know we continue to provide sites to many of you, and can of course support any requests of this nature that you have.

To ensure as few problems as possible for the next year, I continue to recommend AVG anti-virus (or Internet Security) as an anti-virus product, routers to provide a hardware firewall, and Windows Update keeping your computers up to date. Being religious and careful to ensure that all of the pieces are functioning means few problems with Viruses, Trojans, or Worms. This year we've continued to have a very small percentage of the machines we support with a problem, and that's GREAT.

As of today, Windows Vista is NOT yet recommended. It will require you purchase a copy of Accuterm 2k2 in order to function properly as a workstation, and is not yet able to run D3 at all.

Please note that the Accuterm 2k2 purchase on your part will be required for greenWORKS Pro (the "Windows version") still in process here. No wild predictions as in other years, but progress is continuing, particularly with Kristel joining the company.

As always, you'll find an invoice for the annual support agreement for the coming year. As always, prompt payment is appreciated. As I am about 3 weeks late sending them out (yes they should have been out on Apr 30th), I have also set the due date for no credit charge out to Jun 25th. Please note the service agreement on the back of your invoice. This year payments are accepted by cheque, MasterCard or Visa. Cash is good, but somewhat impractical for the mail☺. If there's a problem I trust you'll let me know immediately. Prices have remained the same this year, with the disclaimer that I may raise my rates during the year if currency fluctuations or fuel costs are ridiculous. Rates did have to go up to the US customers due to the continuing weakness of the US dollar. Some of you who have added users during the year will also see a rise in the support cost. Yes, my rates continue to remain somewhat lower than my competition!

Please continue to use the conrad@qualitycomputing.ca address (NOT conrad.k@sympatico.ca please), and if you have reason to email Kristel it's kristel@qualitycomputing.ca .

*As a final note, all **Canadian** customers should already have been notified through their bank that cheque formats are changing for easier mechanical processing. If your cheques do NOT meet the mandated guidelines, they must change by July 1st. Please contact us if you have questions, and of course to change your format once you have the new format cheque. This is mandated by the CPA (Canadian Payment Association), and is not an option. For more info, you're welcome to have a look at the NEBS website (and follow the links to the CPA if you want more info):*

http://www.nebs.ca/canEcat/products/cheque_standards.jsp

As always, I'm looking forward to the coming year. If you have problems, I trust you'll call and make sure "WE" take care of you. If you're happy, tell everyone you meet!

Sincerely,

Conrad Knabenschuh
Proprietor

P.S. - Many of you are using the website for support, and if you're not, you should be! New entries are added to the support page regularly, and newsletters are posted there as well. If you don't have, or remember, your support userid and password, please call and request it.

