April 2011

Update

Moncrieff's monthly newsletter

Delivering IT with integrity

A stronger team to look after your needs

April is promising to be a great month. It's already started nicely with the upcoming Easter holidays and Anzac day, but to top that we're excited to announce that two new staff members have joined our team! We welcome a new business development manager and a consulting engineer, both highly skilled and experienced individuals.

BDM Andrew will be concentrating on mid-market and enterprise and consulting engineer Soobash will provide expertise on Level 3 support issues.

With our two additional resources we aim to further develop existing relationships and create new, long-lasting ones, whilst continuing to deliver exceptional service. We are delighted to welcome two fresh faces to the Moncrieff family.

National Cyber Security Awareness Week

National Cyber Security Awareness Week will be held from the 30th of May to the 3rd of June and is an Australian Government initiative held annually to help Australians understand cyber security risks as well as educating home and small business users on the simple steps they can take to protect their personal and financial information online.

During last year's awareness week around 150 government agencies, industry, community and consumer organisations collaborated to deliver events and activities around Australia.

The week promoted six simple tips for better online security.

- Install security software and update it regularly.
- Turn on automatic updates so that all your software receives the latest fixes.
- Get a stronger password and change it at least twice a year.
- Stop and think before you click on links or attachments.
- Stop and think before you share any personal or financial information - about yourself or your friends and family.
- Know what your children are doing online. Make sure they know to stay safe and encourage them to report anything suspicious.

For more information on this year's awareness week, go to www.staysmartonline.gov.au

What's inside

Inside this month's newsletter you will find:

- The effect of the proposed carbon tax on IT
- We're running out of IP addresses; what does this mean?
- ECU partners with Moncrieff to position for growth
- Did you know?
- Quote of the month

And a Lenovo special on the back page!

The Lenovo money tree

Lenovo's latest promotion seeks to reward you for purchasing Lenovo products with tangible, environmentally friendly rewards. Every eligible product purchased and then redeemed gives you:

- A monetary reward that you receive on a Lenovo virtual Visa card. If you wish, you have the option to donate this monetary reward to their green charity Greening Australia which they will use to plant one tree for every $10 donation.
- The opportunity to have your old PC products recycled for free by Lenovo. You can have one PC recycled for free for every new Intel powered Lenovo product you purchase.

For more information go to www.lenovo.com.au/moneytree

Moncrieff is a Perth owned and operated IT company, providing reliable IT services with integrity and has been operating since 1966.

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What the carbon tax means for IT

Technology is one of the biggest drains on power within an organisation and the interest in green IT is becoming larger. Once the carbon tax legislation passes, there may be more opportunities than the initial expectations for 2011 would suggest.

Cloud providers could struggle if Australia proves to be an early adopter of carbon taxes, with overseas providers able to offer solutions without calculating the carbon tax in the price.

However, APC believes the rising cost of power, while a problem, won't see the lion's share of business head overseas just yet. There's regulation in place around certain privacy information that means it needs to be kept within Australia. The hosting industry hasn't been globalised to that extent, just yet, and they don't see it happening for the next five years.

But even without the carbon tax, datacentres are already looking at energy efficiency as a critical concern at CEO and board level. Datacentre owners are moving operations to the suburbs to develop more efficient energy designs and those that remain in the CBD are the ones looking at hosted solutions.

Other technologies that stand to benefit in a renewed interest in green IT are those that improve optimisation. And whilst virtualisation is potentially one such technology, organisations will need to consider other areas that can also be improved, rather than just expect virtualisation to fix everything.

Smart grids and technology can also expect an injection of interest from the carbon tax. With some heavy vendor involvement from the likes of Cisco and IBM, Government support and an EnergyAustralia Newcastle 'Smart City' project, being able to better monitor and manage energy usage will provide integrators with new access to the utilities sector.

Technology is a key enabler in helping companies measure, monitor and modify energy usage. With smart grids, smart meters, building sensors and building management systems all connected and managed, it creates an intelligent dynamic system. A system to assist in managing some of the challenges being faced today with energy usage and utilities at peak demand.

There are a lot of business benefits around making energy consumption more efficient and considerations around smarter energy usage will be made, regardless of the outcome of the carbon tax legislation.

Source: www.arnnet.com.au

IP addresses running out

Every endpoint that connects to the internet — whether it's a computer, mobile phone or TV — relies on a unique IP address to communicate. The problem is, the current protocol, IPv4 (also known as IP), will run out of addresses this year. We need more addresses so all our devices can stay connected.

As a next generation protocol, IPv6 provides a vast number of addresses by today's standards — four billion times the number that are available under IPv4. Companies and governments around the world are depending on IPv6 to continue growth of the internet. Unfortunately, there are problems with IPv6, because recent studies indicate about 0.05% of internet users (1 in 2,000) can't reliably connect to websites that enable both IPv4 and IPv6 addresses (known as "dualstacked" websites).

Websites don't want to enable IPv6 just because a small number of their users may have trouble connecting. But at the same time, doing nothing means that even more users will have trouble connecting to these dualstacked websites.

That's why a 'world IPv6 day' (June 8th) has been organised where companies will work together to test the IPv6 and synchronize plans, communication and support. The day also promotes awareness among hardware and software suppliers, and should encourage everyone to create robust IPv6 products and fix bugged ones.

Between now and June 8th, there's an opportunity for the entire industry to ensure hardware and software isn't just IPv6-capable, but that it can reliably connect people to dual-stacked websites.

The exhaustion of IPv4 addresses isn't a huge drama, because there are always solutions when there's enough energy put behind a big problem. An economic solution is for organisations to buy IPv4 addresses from others willing to sell them. But this isn't a sustainable solution, and it's perhaps not fair when you consider how the internet has historically been fully open and accessible. On the technical side, there are many protocols and devices in different stages of maturity. But some v4-to-v6 transitional protocols are so old they are nearly phased-out or obsolete.

Whilst running out of IP addresses may not be reason to cause panic, it does involve considerable challenges that will affect all of us.

ECU partners with Moncrieff to enable growth

Edith Cowan University (ECU) is a large multi-campus institution serving communities in Western Australia and a significant cohort of international students.

ECU now has more than 24,000 students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels – approximately 5,500 of them international students originating from over 90 countries.

This phenomenal growth is reflected in an exponential demand on ECU's IT infrastructure.

"Around 2004, when we decided to standardise on the Intel server platform, we took Moncrieff's recommendation and chose IBM as our vendor. In 2008 we standardised on IBM storage as well," said ECU's Infrastructure Architect, Peter Austin.

According to Peter, keeping up with growth is being accomplished in two ways. "We're using virtualisation to retire multiple older servers wherever appropriate and replace them with high performance, consolidated systems. We set ourselves a target for 80% virtualisation last year, and we more than achieved it. Storage demand is a different story – we're probably spending more on storage now than servers."

Through close ongoing contact with Moncrieff's account team over the past eight years, we are able to offer continuous support for ECU's growth – assisting with capacity planning and developing cost-effective, scalable solutions to cope with massive increases in demands for storage and processor capacity. As an Advanced IBM Business Partner, we deliver advanced expertise in IBM server and storage technologies. This includes fast access to the latest technical information and the ability to leverage our close IBM relationship to rapidly escalate any issues ECU experiences.

An example of our cooperation is the commissioning of ECU's new Identity and Access Management system. Identity and Access Management is the ability of an organisation to search and verify who is accessing its systems and is critical to meeting corporate security and compliance requirements.

ECU's current fleet of servers did not have the capacity to house the new system. Peter Austin, together with our solutions architects, created a specification for two new IBM X3850 servers with the required processor power and redundancy to deliver the performance and system uptime required.

We then built, configured and supplied the servers, ready for ECU to implement the new system in line with the project's objectives. ECU's new Identity and Access Management System enables new users, employees and contractors to gain access to the applications and information they need for their productivity, according to their designated role – at the same time allowing ECU's IT team to maintain tight control over access rights to systems and data. The system reduces IT management overheads, and offers a scalable approach to allow for IT expansion with ease.

One of the reasons that our relationship with ECU has been so successful for so long is the mutual sharing of our core value integrity. To ECU, integrity means 'behaving ethically and pursuing rigorous intellectual positions'. To us, it means working with all of our clients – large or small – to deliver effective technology solutions which enhance their business and support their growth over the long term.

"Having a good account manager to support us in hardware decisions and purchases is extremely important. I originally chose Moncrieff as our supplier because I knew they would offer us excellent support. The relationship is about much more than the equipment they deliver – it's the level of service and expertise they provide over the long-term," said Peter.

Did you know?

- Easter time sees the making of nearly 90 million chocolate bunnies.
- Columbus brought cacao beans back to Spain on his fourth voyage in 1502.
- The cacao tree only thrives in latitudes no more than 20 degrees north or south of the equator.
- One plain milk chocolate candy bar has more protein than a banana.
- Chocolate contains phenylethylamine (PEA), a natural substance that is reputed to stimulate the same reaction in the body as falling in love.

Quote of the month

"If we could sell our experiences for what they cost us, we'd all be millionaires."

- Abigail van Buren

Lenovo ThinkPad T420: perfect balance of manageability, mobility and security

Top reasons to own the new Lenovo T420 notebook:

- Military-spec tested for proven superior durability
- ThinkPad best choice enterprise notebooks
- Superior performance features like Lenovo RapidDrive technology
- Increased battery life - up to 30 hours with bottom slice battery pack

- Choice of Intel Core i3, i5 or i7 processors,
- Windows 7
- 14" screen
- up to 8GB RAM
- up to 250GB HDD
- DVD ROM,
- WLAN, LAN, WWAN
- from 2.24kg
- More info www.moncrieff.com.au/specials

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