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Computer Network Solutions and Management Services

AxiNews

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Fun Facts

Did you know that...

- Cookies originated as small cakes, in Persia, around 7th century AD.
- The chocolate chip cookie was invented by Ruth Graves Wakefield and Sue Brides when Wakfield owned the Toll House Inn located in Massachusetts.
- Cookies are called *biscuits* in England and Australia and *galletas* in Spain.
- The word cookie is derived from the Dutch word *koekje* meaning "small or little cake".
- Animal crackers were first developed in England in the 19th century.
- Supposedly brownies were created by accident by a cook forgetting to add baking powder to a cake mix.
- Other names for cookies were *jumbles*, *plunkets* and *cry babies*.
- Girl Scout troops sell cookies every Spring as a troop fundraiser.



Computer Cookies— Don't Eat These Cookies!

So you've heard about computer cookies and you probably have a general idea that cookies store information from your browser and internet searches but you may not know whether they are benign or harmful. Well, I'm going to clear that up for you right now.

Benign Cookies

First off, there are multiple types of cookies and actually some are OK and generally harmless and some you do not want—ever. The OK ones are Session Cookies, Persistent Cookies and HTTP Only cookies. Session cookies exist from the time you log on to a website until you log off the website. They actually help with the navigation process and are known as Tier 1 technologies. For example, when making an airline reservation online, a cookie might keep track of the flights you're reserving and separate them from the ones that other users might be reserving at the same time.

A persistent cookie, or multi-session cookie, remembers that you've been to website before

and you have to manually remove them from your computer. The persistent cookies are OK as long as the websites are reputable. But, they are not OK when the website is sketchy. An HTTP cookie is used only when transmitting an HTTP request so that other non-HTTP technologies such as javascript and APIs of other websites cannot use the cookie to manipulate your computer.

Harmful Cookies

The bad cookies are LSO/Flash Cookies and Zombie Cookies. LSO stands for Local Shared Object and are sometimes called flash cookies, which stay on your computer, even after you clear your cookies from your computer. You know anything involved with zombies is bad and cookies are no exception.



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Cyber Security Pointers

In light of the Equifax security breach and the heightened incidences of ransomware, this article will give a few pointers about ways to keep your information safe. If an AXICOM client, then your business already has safeguards in place such as routers and firewalls, but scammers can also worm their way in through seemingly legitimate emails and other nefarious means.

Equifax Breach

About 143 million consumers this past summer were the target of stolen information from Equifax credit-reporting agency. Social security numbers and passwords as well as some credit card numbers were accessed.

(Continued on page 2)



Computer Cookies (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

Zombie cookies can recreate themselves after they've been deleted.

How to Clear Away Cookies

So what can you do? You can visit the Networking Advertising Initiative and Opt-Out of Behavioral Advertising for a start. You can also clear your browser cookies and adjust browser settings.

How to clear browser cookies in Internet Explorer: On the top menu bar look for Tools >> Internet Options >> Browsing History >> Delete. From there you can choose what you want to remove from your computer. If you are in IE9 and cannot find the menu bar, look for the gear in the top right corner.

How to clear browser cookies in Firefox:

On the top menu bar look for Tools >> Clear Recent History. From there you can choose what you want to remove from your computer.

How to clear browser cookies in Chrome:

In the top right corner look for the wrench icon >> Tools >> Clear Browsing Data. From there you can choose what you want to remove from your computer.

How to clear browser cookies in Safari:

On the top menu bar, look for Safari >> Empty Cache.

If you have questions about your computer cookies, please give us a call. 818.865.9865.

Cyber Security (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

The breach occurred due to a patch for WordPress, a widely-used website platform, that had not been updated. One way to stall and prevent access to your financial records is to make sure you have two-factor authentication. Another way is to put a freeze on your credit lines. While inconvenient, it is also safer than credit card monitoring.

Phishing Scams

Phishing is the fraudulent practice of sending emails purporting to be from reputable companies in order to cause individuals to send personal information such as passwords and credit card numbers. Companies might send you an invoice by mail; if you do not recognize the email sender, do not open it! Think about whether you might have ordered the item and if not, ignore and

delete. Phishing scams are becoming more sophisticated so they might have some accurate details—be careful about those.

Protect Yourself

Have a geek, knowledgeable family member or computer consultant you can contact when questions come up. Never give a stranger remote access. Don't believe claims from people who call/email/message you that they are from Apple or Microsoft. Have proactive maintenance on your computer which is what AxiGuard provides. Backup your data.

Contact Us!

Do not hesitate to contact AXICOM if you have any questions about your business security. I am also available to give talks to any organization or association that might want to learn more about cyber security.

Cookie Recipe: No Bake Chocolate Oat Bars

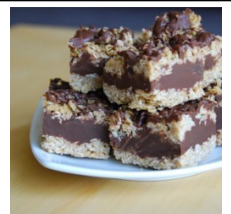
Ingredients: 1 cup butter, 1/2 cup packed brown sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, 3 cups quick cooking oats, 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips, 1/2 cup peanut butter

Directions: Grease a 9x9 inch square pan. Melt butter in large saucepan over medium heat. Stir in brown sugar and vanilla. Mix in the oats. Cook over low heat 2 to 3 minutes, or until ingredients are well blended.

Press half of mixture into the bottom of the prepared pan. Reserve the other half for topping.

Meanwhile, melt chocolate chips and peanut butter in a small heavy saucepan over low heat, stirring frequently until smooth. Pour the chocolate mixture over the crust in the pan, and spread evenly with a knife or the back of a spoon.

Crumble the remaining oat mixture over the chocolate layer, pressing in gently. Cover, and refrigerate 2 to 3 hours or overnight. Bring to room temperature before cutting into bars.



New Microsoft Office 365 Apps for SMBs

Office 365 is the ideal productivity tool for small- and medium-sized businesses. It's cost-effective and receives plenty of support and upgrades from Microsoft. During last month's Inspire conference, they announced even more applications for Office 365 that you will love.

Microsoft Connections

Email marketing campaigns are a great way to build relationships with contacts and increase sales, but they're often difficult to manage. With Microsoft Connections, you can easily launch a campaign in minutes using pre-designed templates for newsletters, referrals, and promotions.

As you acquire more contacts, Connections allows you to segment your mailing list so you can target different customers. For instance, you can send product promotions to clients who have stayed with your business for more than six months.

After firing off your emails, performance charts track important metrics like open rates, clickthrough rates, new sign-ups, and canceled subscriptions that can be used to improve future campaigns.

Microsoft Listings

Microsoft Listings helps you seamlessly manage your online presence. Whenever you update your business profile, Listings automatically publishes those changes across your Facebook, Google, Bing, and Yelp accounts, allowing you to keep important information like business hours up to date.

What's more, Listings includes a web dashboard where you can monitor page-views, reviews, and likes, helping you assess your company's online reputation.

Microsoft Invoicing

Another useful addition is Microsoft Invoicing, a tool that helps you generate price estimates and invoices. When combined with enterprise resource planning (ERP) software, you can program workflows that automatically redirect invoices, pending payments, and estimates to the right accountant. This application works for credit, debit, and PayPal transactions.

Office 365 Business Center

The Office 365 Business Center brings Connections, Listings, and Invoicing all under one roof. This means information listed on one application is automatically registered onto another, saving you from inputting data multiple times.

The main hub also features a unified dashboard where you can track an email campaign's performance, Facebook impressions, and any outstanding invoices, giving you full visibility into your accounting and marketing processes.

According to Microsoft, these powerful features will be generally available for Office 365 Business Premium subscribers in the coming months. But if you want to get early access, consider joining the Office 365 Insider program.

Office 365 will likely have even more surprises for SMBs this year, so make sure to keep in touch with us to get the latest rundown on feature releases and Microsoft news.

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Cookie Recipe: Easy Sugar Cookies

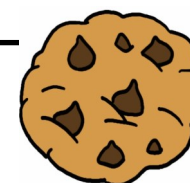
Ingredients

2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup butter, softened
1 1/2 cups white sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Set aside.

In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in egg and vanilla. Gradually blend in the dry ingredients. Roll rounded teaspoonfuls of dough into balls, and place onto ungreased cookie sheets. (Can dip in sugar before baking to decorate.) Bake 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven, or until golden. Let stand on cookie sheet two minutes before removing to cool on wire racks.



AXICOM

Networks • Computers • Security • Service

*Make all of my computer problems go away
without the cost of a full-time I.T. staff*

*Ask us about our fixed price service agreements with
computer support at a flat monthly fee you can budget for
just like rent!*

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Inquiring Minds...

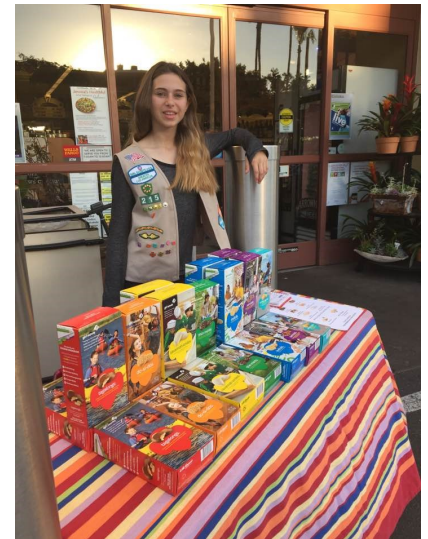
Are you a Slacker?

Slack has become the app of choice for inter-office and inter-group messaging. And, of course, it's an ironic name for a program that helps with office productivity. It's incredibly popular and has garnered much love and appreciation by users which is rather rare for office software. There has been competition to Slack recently in the form of Microsoft Teams and Google Hangouts.

Girl Scout Cookies

The Girl Scout cookie fundraiser supposedly began in 1917 when an Oklahoma troop started selling cookies as a service project. By 1922, the Girl Scout magazine, The American Girl, published a cookie recipe for suggested use as a fundraiser. The approximate cost to

bake almost 7 dozen cookies was about 36 cents. Suggested sale price was 25 cents a dozen. The Girl Scouts would make their cookies and wrap them in wax paper bags, seal them with a sticker and sell door to door. By the 1930s the various councils began to sell commercially-baked cookies. With the advent of WWII and shortages of flour, butter, and sugar, the Girl Scouts sold calendars instead. After WWII ended, more local councils started using commercially-baked cookies and there were 29 bakers licensed to sell Girl Scout cookies with three varieties being sold: sandwich, shortbread and a chocolate mint. By the 1960s and 1970s, many more cookie varieties were available. The boxes also became standardized with pictures. By the 1990s, the Girl Scouts started giving out participation awards for cookie sales. In the early 2000s, the first gluten-free cookie was introduced. In 2016 the Girl Scout S'mores were introduced and soon became the most popular new cookie in the fundraising program. The Girl Scouts learn about entrepreneurship, leadership and persistence through the Girl Scout Cookie Fundraiser.



Top seller in LA area!

Think what a better world it
would be if we all, the whole
world, had cookies and milk
about three o'clock every af-
ternoon and then lay down for
a nap.

- Barbara Jordan