

TEAM update



Simple Tips for Tighter Security

SECURITY, and in particular, IT Security, is a hot topic right now. Unfortunately, many businesses find security a complicated and difficult subject even before they get to the implementation stage.

"We've implemented anti-virus and we use passwords. We have a firewall and antispam on our email. We should be ok, right?"

Unfortunately the above quote is flawed in a number of ways, but two stand out.

1. It focuses only on the external threat.
2. It only looks at a fraction of threats and worse seeks only preventative measures, ignoring mitigation strategies.

Sooner or later your security will be breached. The threat can come from outside or inside your organisation, with plenty of evidence out there suggesting the latter is more likely.

When that breach comes, what are you going to do about it? A security policy that looks only at prevention might keep out the majority of threats, but when one gets through – and it eventually will – you'll be powerless to stop it spreading or lessen the effects.

Luckily advice is readily available. Yes you can pay any number of companies (including Team) to analyse your risk, and suggest strategies to mitigate the risks.

Consultants everywhere make a good living helping you build walls to keep nasties out and your crown jewels in. But why not start simple?

Sooner or later
your security will
be breached

READ: There are a plethora of excellent resources out there and I'm not just talking about the internet – go buy a book. If you have a short attention span; and let's face it, today everyone does; try the "For Dummies" series on hacking and security. Some of us even read them!

LISTEN: I haven't been to an IT seminar recently that did not touch on security and some of these sessions have been really educational. Vendors and associations are always sending out invitations to free events. Sure you'll get a bit of a sales pitch (someone has to pay for the free lunch) but frequently there is plenty of good free education on offer.

RESEARCH: Spend some time studying the Australian Cyber Security Centre's excellent online resources. They provide common sense strategies for businesses to help protect their digital assets. I'll cover this more a little later.

ENGAGE: Talk to your trusted IT advisors, and if your needs are complex or the assets you protect are of high value then talk to a specialist in IT security. Contact me if you don't know of anyone.

But back to our problem.

THIS ISSUE

- Year in Review 2
- Simple Tips for Tighter Security (cont) 3
- Miracles Performed Daily 4
- Customer Story – The Mutual 5
- Meet The Team 7
- Introducing 'No Bloat' Software 8
- Recent Projects 9

Continued on page 3

Year in Review

Peter Sanderson, Managing Director

Editorial

BEING A CPA, I tend to think in terms of financial years, so with the EOFY just past it seemed relevant to look back at the last 12 months.

The 1st of July 2017 was one of the biggest days in our history. It marked the joining, officially, of Team Computing and Availability Solutions.

Denis Vaughan, the owner of Availability Solutions, and I had been discussing joining forces for around 5 years, pretty much every time we ran into each other at industry events. We finally made it happen last year. I never had a moment's doubt about the decision. Denis is a very honest guy and what he doesn't know about High Availability hasn't been invented yet!

Availability Solutions helps customers in Australia and around the Pacific with High Availability, Data Sharing and Disaster Recovery. They also have huge experience in infrastructure migrations and migrations to the cloud – a growing market!

All the big stuff in the merger went really smoothly. The customers all came across seamlessly, and more importantly we are now able to offer them increased coverage, a greater skill set, and more resources. Denis slotted in beautifully as the leader of our data protection business and made himself at home from day one.

All staff were simply wonderful and any fears I held about friction were met with flexibility, tolerance,

ingenuity and a bit of 'MacGyvering' solutions to problems. Everyone is now very much on the Team team, and we've been able to keep our warm and family-like atmosphere.

On the plus side, I now have an expanded team of really great people, some wonderful new customers and some new, innovative vendors.

There is still work to be done to completely integrate everything, but we're really happy with the progress. One day we'll even crack that big issue – what brand of coffee to have in the kitchen!

**Our guys
have migrated
more than 5,000
server instances
to the cloud**

We do a lot more on the Windows data protection side now, and we are really kicking goals with cloud migration services. Our guys have migrated more than 5000 server instances to the cloud, including ASW, Azure, IBM and Alibaba clouds to name a few.

Team is now much stronger, with an expanded portfolio and experience. If you haven't used us for data protection or migration before, now is the right time to get in touch.

We're looking forward to working with our customers even more closely in financial year 2018 / 2019 year.





Simple Tips for Tighter Security

Continued from page 1

We can put in place simple ways to “firewall” our systems from outside threats. But what are the recommended ways to really protect your data, and what are some practical ways you can implement them?

PATCHES

Do it now!
Manually if
necessary!

The Australian Cyber Security Centre is a part of the Defence Department and specialises in electronic information – its transmission, storage and protection.

They publish a document called “The Essential Eight Explained”, which was most recently updated in March 2018. Well worth a read if you don’t mind feeling a bit inadequate. You can find it at:
<https://www.acsc.gov.au/publications/protect/essential-eight-explained.htm>

The document covers 8 strategies for protecting your data. They are, in no particular order:

Strategies to prevent malware delivery and execution:

- Application whitelisting – only run validated and approved software, thus preventing malware from running.
- Patch applications – sounds obvious, but new exploits are always being found so stay up to date.
- Configure Microsoft Office macro settings – block macros from accessing the internet and allow only limited functions for trusted macros.
- User application hardening – disable “dangerous” features like Flash in web browsers and OLE in Office to prevent them importing bad stuff.

Strategies to limit the extent of cyber security incidents:

- Restrict administrative privileges – Only those with a genuine need should have administrator privileges and they shouldn’t be used for “regular” tasks.
- Patch operating systems – Don’t use unsupported versions and keep things up to date to block newly discovered vulnerabilities.

- Multi-factor authentication – As painful as it is, this helps make it harder for malevolent actors to gain access to your systems.
- Daily backups – Ensure the right stuff is being backed up, *with an air gap*, at least daily and is tested regularly – at least annually.

Over the next few months we’ll release more detailed coverage of each of these items, but here are some quick fixes you can take action on NOW.

- Review your user profiles. How many of them have administrator access? And NONE of your day-to-day profiles should need that level of access. Special occasions only!
- Implement a DNS proxy. We’ve found this one of the best ways to stop malware (particularly crypto-lockers) from doing their evil work. Get in touch if you want to talk about how this works. Two of the good ones are Cisco Umbrella (paid but feature-rich) and Quad9 (free and does not collect your information – supported by IBM and several others).
- Patches – Do it now – manually if necessary but if you are running a Windows environment consider setting up the Windows update service (WSUS) and enforce this policy on your users. Windows updates are a pain in the butt, but I guarantee malware would be a worse one!
- Backups – Find the person responsible and ask them to explain what is being saved, how it is stored and how frequently it’s tested. Fix the problems as you find them.

The above quick fixes, and even better, the Essential 8, will give you a fighting chance against the bad guys. They will help you fight external threats, reduce the likelihood of internal problems and give you a way to reduce the impact if you are, inevitably it seems, breached.

If you need help with any of the above please get in touch. We’ve seen the reality of poorly secured systems and equally, we’ve been involved in some spectacular saves that proved these simple measures really work.

No Crushing Defeat for this Scanner!



This day had all the makings of a nightmare for this warehouse: Small scanner? Check. All data kept on the scanner? Check. Heavy forklift? Check. You can imagine what happened next.

Scanner was in the drink holder in a forklift. Forklift hit a bump and the scanner fell out. It was crushed under a 2.5 tonne forklift. (2500 kg)!

Problem: All the pick data for the day was on the scanner including quantities and where boxes had been moved. At the end of the day the scanner is docked and it updates the database. But this had not yet happened. ALL the data was on the scanner. And this is a HUGE warehouse! The client believed the data could not be recovered and so had only two options:

- Full stocktake
- Estimate quantities and bin locations

As a last resort the client sent the scanner to TCA. At TCA we got it going whilst still in pieces. In fact it was the only way to get it to work. We took it straight back out to the client. It was dockable and the data was able to be sent to the database.



MIRACLES
PERFORMED DAILY
...and we also do
weird stuff

Team and Red Hat to the Rescue!



Have you ever wondered what goes on during a typical day in the life of a Team Comp Consultant?

Redhat fedora Linux to the rescue recovering a non raid protected NAS.

The consumer NAS device was brought in with critical data and by deft use of REDHAT LVM and the judicious application of screwdriver we saved the data. Result = happy customer.

Customer Story

Mutual Obligations Fulfilled with Transformative Tech Refresh



Customer

Maitland Mutual Building Society Limited

Industry

Banking & Finance

Challenges

- Meeting core member service obligations
- Impact on technology and partner choices of finance sector compliance

Solution

- Technology Refresh – IBM Power AIX Systems (S814 4 Core), 2260 tape drive; IBM storage V5020 SAN; Lenovo System x3650s M5 with tape drives; Windows 2012 R2 DataCenter Server to run a highly virtualised environment; VMWare; APC Smart-UPS X 3000VA Rack
- High Availability Software MIMIX DR for AIX from Vision Solutions

Results

- Transformative, worry free, high performance computing
- 30-50% efficiency gains



With service obligations to its 14,000 members and regulatory stipulations impacting on technology and partner selection, The Mutual's core system refresh ticks all the boxes. It has been transformative in its delivery of worry free, high performance computing.

The Customer

Maitland Mutual Building Society Limited - The Mutual - has been a stalwart of NSW's Hunter Valley financial services for 129 years. Today, it has 80 staff operating from administrative headquarters in Maitland, the Building Society has responsibilities to deliver an innovative product range and the highest service levels to 14,000 personal and business members. And it has proudly fulfilled this obligation since its inception – in October 1888, The Mutual made their first housing loan, and in contrast to the social norms of the day, made this loan to a female.

The Challenges

The Mutual's policy is to assess infrastructure renewal every three years to keep within warranties and avoid ageing-related risks to business critical technology platforms. Essential to the latest update was the specification of a renowned High Availability (HA) solution that would enable it to easily switch between the production system and Disaster Recovery (DR). As a consideration overlay, Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) stipulations governing finance sector privacy and data security have an impact on technology and partner selection.

Todd Paterson, Manager of Information Systems at The Mutual, sought an integrator with finance expertise that understood the organisation's evolving business needs and the demands of regulatory regimes on its ICT. That partner would also differentiate itself by having the ability to commit to personalised support. Todd turned to its trusted equipment supplier, IBM, for a recommendation, and was pointed to Team Computing.

Customer Story

With the help of Team Computing, The Mutual renewed and rejuvenated its systems, evolving with a solution that was better, faster, and able to support The Mutual long into the future.



"Typical of the finance sector, we're conservative by nature. We can't just grab and deploy any technology we want. We have to consider not only the 14,000 people relying on our systems for their financial transactions, but also regulators such as APRA. But we're not afraid of looking at things differently, we're open to new possibilities."

- Todd Paterson, Manager of Information Systems at The Mutual

The Solution

Team Computing proposed a competitively priced, virtualised environment with the latest real-time replication platform. IBM technology was put forward not because it was the incumbent but because the quality component solution was assessed to be the outright answer to The Mutual's needs, and it would let Todd sleep at night. Team Computing engineered the integration of the underlying Power AIX system with the resilient Vision HA layer.

The smoothly coordinated refresh went live on time and within budget. Team Computing was so confident that, at go live, Todd was given Peter Sanderson's [Managing Director, Team Computing] mobile number and told to call any time.

"This was a significant move for us into the unknown. But we had the generous support of Team Computing's business and technology expertise on tap. They were with us in all dealings with IBM and Vision so we were certain we had the right product set and knew exactly how to get the most from it."

- Todd Paterson, Manager of Information Systems at The Mutual

Results

The Mutual has experienced no problems with the new environment in the three months since go live.

Every business day – Monday to Saturday – the system has to be prepared for normal trade and again for end of day close down. Todd says these multiple processes had taken 40 minutes to complete but, with the new equipment and replication, that time has been trimmed by half. And the recent end of financial year roll over was reduced from four to under two hours.

Todd was also impressed by Team Computing's ability to mitigate risk, even in the small things he hadn't considered: "They setup an automatic 'flick over' to duplicate some key cabling in our servers. That may not sound much but if something as simple as a cable is dislodged, the impact can be huge."

"The refresh has been transformative in terms of providing us with worry free, high performance computing. And we have seen 30-50 percent efficiency gains across most areas of our IT service."

- Todd Paterson, Manager of Information Systems at The Mutual

Meet the Team



David Green

CONSULTING SERVICES MANAGER

With compliance an increasing concern for all businesses, we are excited to announce we have expanded our team's capabilities with David Green as our new Consulting Services Manager.

When it comes to insight into customer challenges, there is nothing like experience. With thirty years in senior ICT positions, David's roles have spanned industries including financial services, insurance, manufacturing, telecommunications and consulting. His focus on aligning technology with business goals makes him a strong support for organisations seeking to capitalise on the digital economy.

Managing strategic, global integration and mission-critical projects has given David valuable capabilities in leading technical change and transformation. His strategic thinking, as a former CIO, enables him to devise the structure, policies and processes needed to succeed in modern business environments. David's leadership on cyber-security governance is helping a number of corporate and government entities to build a safer online future.

David's advocacy for secure, forward-thinking IT, and his knowledge about managing liability, are vital elements of securing all-of-business support. Whether adapting to new Notifiable Data Breaches (NDB) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and industry compliance, establishing stronger disaster recovery practices, or building IT environments to support ambitious business direction, David is a great addition to Team's experienced consulting capability.

David Roseby

SALES MANAGER



With 23 years experience in the IT industry specialising in sales, marketing, business development, and channel management, David's strong collaborative style ensures his customers get the best of Team's products and professional services.

David's focus is on helping customers with infrastructure, software, managed services, outsourcing and cloud based solutions. This includes system design, consulting, hosting, facilities management, backup and recovery.

Prior to joining Team, David was with IBM Australia initially as a Territory Sales Rep specialising in small and medium business across IBM's product portfolio including Infrastructure (hardware), Software and Services and most recently as Distribution Channel Management - IBM Global Business Partners, where he was responsible for the management, sales forecasting and financial performance of IBM's Distributors in Australia and New Zealand, across the entire IBM product portfolio.

This role entailed developing strategic channel management plans incorporating; sales, technical, operational, digital, and marketing planning.

More importantly, David is an avid runner and competed in the Boston Marathon this year in brutal weather of strong headwinds, downpours and 0 degree temperature – after training through the Aussie summer! Now that's commitment!

New Products Taking the Bloat Out of Software

Ever used a great product that does the job and then it gets updated until one day it's so bloated you need a PhD to use it and you pay big money for it. At Team we're introducing 'no bloat' products that get the job done at a low cost.



QUICKTRANS

QuickTrans – Team's Fast, Simple, and Low Cost B2B Gateway Tool

THERE COMES A TIME when exchanging information accurately with the outside world is needed.

Your customer's order will typically be placed via a VAN (Value Added Network), which acts like a virtual post office, distributing transaction files such as purchase orders from one subscriber to another. The order will come with conditions, such as delivery time and date, or packaging instructions.

Transitioning from your customer's file format to yours is essential and the standout tool is IBM Sterling B2B Integrator, which we can help you with BUT, if you just need a simple, cost effective B2B gateway that users can quickly learn, QuickTrans can help.

QuickTrans can perform communications with VANs, as well as FTP or SFTP sites. It allows for translation of file systems from one format to another, and for users to perform functions such as copying, inserting or deleting data, and archiving files. It is very simple to understand – when we train users, it doesn't take long before they are confidently performing all functions independently.

Need extra functionality such as inserting translated data into a SQL server database, Google BigQuery or to various BI tools? We can develop new functionality to suit your needs.

QUICKSTOCK

QuickStock is a fast and reliable means of interfacing your warehousing operations with your existing back office ERP system via QuickStock's API's.

ARE YOUR WAREHOUSE STAFF still using paper packing slips and ticking off items as they go? Are you experiencing picking errors – especially when new staff join the company?

What if you could go paperless and reduce picking errors and closure time for stocktakes for a fraction of what you'd expect to pay, AND implement it in as little as a month with minimal (if any) modifications to your existing systems?

Starting at \$1,800 per module, per annum,

Modules include:

- Order Pick
- Order Pack
- Order Pickup
- Shipment Despatch
- Stocktake
- Stock Receiving
- Stock Transfer

We just implemented QuickStock for an automotive and industrial hardware products distributor who went from paper-based to paperless picking in one month to overcome picking errors. Talk to us today.

Projects & Sales

Offshore Outsourcing Brought Back Onshore

**IBM Power 9s – 2 x 9009-42A - 8 core
Mimix High Availability Software, and
Managed Services including 24 Hour Monitoring
and On-call:**

ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST farming and processed food producers with over 8,000 employees has chosen to move from outsourcing with an offshore provider to working with Team Computing to run their ERP in both a production and DR environment on IBM Power 9s. The partnership includes 24 hour Monitoring and OnCall.

Power and QuickTrans

**IBM Power 8 S814's
Storage: V5010's,
Mimix High Availability**

CLOTHING GIANT encompassing 7 well-known brands has chosen Team for their upgraded Power Systems environment and QuickTrans for handling their EDI and B2B messaging. The company's entire operation depends on continuous uninterrupted access to the underlying platform. To this end, Team's infrastructure option is capable of delivering continuous uninterrupted operation using the IBM i platform, Mimix Professional High Availability Software and our SAN storage offerings. QuickTrans ensures easy and secure file translation and transfer with their trading partners.

Paperless Warehousing

QuickStock

OUR NEWEST SOLUTION is already kicking goals, being taken up by an industrial and automotive products distributor. Paper-based picking was replaced by QuickStock and fully implemented in 1 month at a fraction of the cost of one module of a competitor's offering. That's no bloat software!

QuickStock
was fully
implemented in
1 month

Technology Refresh for Electronics Giant

**Power 9 Server - S914,
Storage: V5010**

AT THE START of their second century in business, a market leader, and household name in the field of consumer electronics and B2B solutions, chose Team Computing to help them with their technology refresh. We were recommended to them by their ERP provider who, having worked with Team Comp on other successful projects, suggested us based on our 'deep' skill base with the IBM Power Systems and expertise.

Technology Refresh for Personal Care Distributor with 10,000 Retail Outlets

**Power 9 Server - 9009 Model 22A
Storage: V5020**

TEAM COMPUTING'S EXPERTISE in innovative configurations and IBM Power solutions has won us the opportunity to refresh the core production environment of a leading supplier of health, wellness, beauty, household, and personal care products in Australasia. This company markets a range of beauty and hair care products through retail channels in Australia and dominates their respective segments. Our solution allows them to maintain national operations with replication to geographically separate DR environments.

AS INFRASTRUCTURE SPECIALISTS, and the largest IBM Power Systems Managed Services Provider in Australasia, we are very familiar with platform transitions and upgrades, and are well used to working as part of a larger team, including company resources, and specialist ERP integrators.



Key Competencies

- Product/application/bespoke software development
- Application hosting and consulting
- Systems hosting
- Outsourcing and managed services
- IBM Power, IBMi, AIX, Linux
- Mobile integration and development
- Web development, integration and hosting
- Architecture and product sales
- Network consultancy and network outsourcing
- High Availability and Disaster Recovery
- B2B and EDI design, consulting, programming and implementation
- Application modernisation

Consulting

- Telecommunications
- Security
- Lotus Notes
- System Design
- DBA
- Architecture
- Business Continuity
- Operating Systems Management
- High Availability and Disaster Recovery
- ERP – Whatever your ERP, whatever your platform, we can analyse, protect and integrate your data.

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Hosting or In-House

In-house, cloud-based, managed or hosted. It's your choice. With our partners SAS IT, we have over 110 systems under management, most of which are mission critical.

Cloud/Infrastructure as a Service

Our IaaS option gives tremendous economies of scale without ever restricting your ability to grow.

Managed Services

Team manages systems and assets located at our customers' own premises, or wherever your infrastructure resides.

Applications Management & Development

With a strong programming team, we can maintain and develop modern and legacy code and we can host your applications on our equipment.

Disaster Recovery & High Availability

To reduce risk and cost of downtime, Team offers a number of options including placing your backup systems in our data centre, sharing our systems and infrastructure environment, or employing a fully dedicated or shared alternative system.

Procurement

Our Technical and Operations teams can design technical solutions that meet individual business needs and minimise risk.

EDI / B2B / B2C / MDM

Whether you are trying to connect suppliers, customers, or even two different applications, our years of experience gives us the expertise you need to trade efficiently, reliably and securely.

Software

For over 30 years Team have been delivering innovative, high quality, customised solutions including ERP, EDI, CRM, Document Management, High Availability & Disaster Recovery and IBM software.