

HUXLEY COMMUNICATIONS

We are your company!

Help With Your New Year's Resolutions

It's that time of year again — time to make a list of your New Year's resolutions. If you're like many of us, it will include statements such as:

- "I'm finally going to get organized."
- "I'd like to simplify my life."
- "I want to save more money."

Need some help? We've put together a few ideas on how to achieve these goals when it comes to your communications products and services.

1. Stay on Top of Computer Maintenance

Begin 2009 with a plan for computer maintenance, then resolve to stick with it. Once you develop a routine, you'll be able to avoid the big computer problems by staying on top of the little ones. Make sure you cover the essential tasks of doing regular data backup, defragmenting your hard drive, updating your anti-virus and spyware software, and updating and installing patches to your operating system. You should also regularly delete your trash bin, temp files, and any other files you no longer need. They eat up hard drive space and will start to impair your computer's performance.

2. Protect Your Kids Online

With undesirable websites and chat rooms, the Internet can clearly be a dangerous place for children to visit. If you've been meaning to get serious about parental controls, now's the time to take action. A variety of easy-to-use software programs exist to help you manage your children's online usage through Internet content filtering and access controls, time management tools, and activity reports.

3. Streamline Bill Paying

Save yourself time and trouble every month by switching to online bill paying this year. You'll no longer have to write all those checks, search for stamps, and allow days for "snail mail" delivery. With online bill paying, you can pay your bills instantly — using your bank account or credit card — with just a few clicks.

4. Bundle Up for Savings

It makes good financial sense to bundle your communications services like local and long distance phone, call features, and Internet access. You'll pay significantly less than buying these services separately from different companies. Plus, you'll gain the convenience of dealing with just one company and receiving just one bill.

Good luck with your resolutions and may this year be a very successful one for you.



HUXLEY HAPPENINGS

Huxley Communications Annual Meeting
Saturday, March 21, 2009
10 A.M. to 12 P.M.
Ballard High School Auditorium in Huxley



CONTACT INFORMATION

Huxley Communications
P.O. Box 36 • Huxley, IA 50124
515-597-2281 or 800-231-4922
www.huxcomm.net
huxtel@huxcomm.net

Free Internet Tech Support
597-HELP (4357) • Available 24/7

Report an Outage
515-597-2281

Call Before You Dig
Iowa One Call • 800-292-8989

Bill Hotchkiss
General Manager

Gary Clark
Chief Financial Officer

Connie Patrick
Customer Care Supervisor

Terry Ferguson
Director of Operations

Brant Strumpfer
Plant Manager

WINTER 2009

Americans' Spare Time is Spent Online

Recent reports from Media-Screen and the University of Southern California's Digital Future Project have revealed that Americans are spending more and more time online. In fact, we're now the biggest consumers of online information in the world — and we spend about half our spare time surfing the Web.

Time spent online is being boosted by broadband connections like those offered through Huxley Communications. As of last year, 75% of all Internet users had a broadband connection at home — up from just 25% the previous year. These high-speed Internet users now spend more than an hour and a half online during each workday. About half of that time is spent on activities related

to communication and entertainment.

What exactly are Americans doing online? Here's what we found:

- 80% of adult Internet users have searched for health topics online — making this one of the most popular activities
- 83% said they researched a product or service before buying it
- 80% of Internet users age 17 and older said the Web is a more important source of information than television, radio, or newspapers
- 71% surf the Web without a specific destination
- 60% search for news
- 35% play games

- 25% read humor-related content
- 21% have a search engine (like Google or Yahoo!) set as their home page

If you'd like to make your online time even more convenient, call Huxley Communications at 515-597-2281 and ask about our high speed Internet services.

You'll enjoy an always-on connection plus the ability to make phone calls and surf the Web simultaneously.



Cases Reported of New Electronics with Viruses

You've heard about computer viruses that can invade your computer system via e-mails or pop-up ads. But now, damaging viruses may already be inside the new electronics you buy as well. Consumers have purchased products such as digital picture frames, iPods and navigation systems for their cars — only to discover they were contaminated with digital viruses that spread to their computers. Some of these viruses were even programmed to steal passwords.

How did it happen? Industry experts aren't sure yet, since manufacturers are keeping detailed information confidential. However, it appears that the occurrences so far may have been accidental; taking place in the final stages of production after the products came off Chinese assembly lines. Such infections can happen if employees unwittingly use their own infected devices with a computer at the manufacturing plant, for instance. If the same computer is used later to test newly manufactured electronics, they could in turn become contaminated with viruses.

In most cases, little damage has been caused. However, it's a good reminder to always keep the latest antivirus software on your computer to help detect and remove such viruses. Huxley Communications offers one of the best antivirus products on the market with SecureIT Plus and it can be included with your high speed Internet service. For more information call us at 515-597-2281 or visit www.huxcomm.net.

The Key to Outsmarting Spammers

The amount of spam e-mail you receive can get overwhelming, so fight back with these strategies:

Spam filters.

Most e-mail software comes with filters you can set up to dump the majority of unwanted mail into one folder.

Anti-spam software.

Using a third-party anti-spam utility gives you additional protection against spam and lets you customize which types of messages you do and don't want to receive.

Alternate address.

To register at websites and get information from companies that you actually want, you must provide an e-mail address. Instead of supplying your primary address, have a second address you use solely for activities such as website registrations and online shopping. That way, any spam these activities generate goes to this second address without junking up the inbox of your primary address.

Keep it private.

Avoid placing your e-mail address in the public domain, such as on websites, newsgroups, and Internet directories. Spammers often employ "spider" and "bot" software that can scour millions of web pages looking for e-mail addresses to harvest for their mailing lists.

Avoid "unsubscribe."

If you open spam e-mail with instructions on how to unsubscribe from their mailing list, avoid the temptation to do so. All this does is let spammers know that you are reading your spam e-mail and the e-mail address is valid. The so-called "unsubscribe" feature actually opens you up to receiving even more spam.



Privacy policies.

Before you divulge your e-mail address to a website, read its privacy policies. It's some pretty dry reading, but it will let you know if the organization plans on selling or sharing your e-mail address with other entities. If you read phrases such as "we may share your e-mail address with our partner companies," you might want to think twice.

Don't respond.

This may seem obvious, but spammers only spam if they are making money in some way. If everyone would ignore their messages, the spam attacks would eventually end. Don't ever respond to spam messages, as they are usually attempts to defraud you.

Put ICE in Your Phone

None of us like to think about it, but accidents do happen. If you're ever injured or ill and can't communicate, emergency personnel need to know who to call. When you program ICE (for "In Case of Emergency") into your cell phone, they'll be able to find the right contact more quickly.

Simply put ICE as one of your contacts, along with a name and phone number. Be sure that your ICE contact knows personal information about you that can be helpful to physicians and EMTs — including medications you take and other medical conditions. If you want to include backup contacts, use ICE1, ICE2, and ICE3.

The ICE idea started in Britain in 2005, thanks to an ambulance worker who often had difficulty finding appropriate contacts for those in his care. Now more and more people are using this simple strategy. Put ICE in your phone today. It's a "cool" way to stay prepared for emergencies and make things easier for people on the scene.





Huxley Resident wins new HDTV

The fall season is always a wonderful time for Huxley Communications as we host our annual cooperative member's appreciation BBQ. This year was no exception as we had over 700 members and their guests attend a fun-filled evening of free food and association.

The luckiest person at the event was Ruth Taylor of Huxley. She was the happy winner of a brand new 32" high definition TV. Ruth was very pleased to win the new TV and intends to share her prize with her husband Duane. Thank you to everyone who attended the BBQ!

"DTV" Doesn't Mean "New TV"

If you're concerned about whether you need to invest in a new TV to get ready for the Digital TV (DTV) conversion in February 2009, Huxley Communications wants to put your worries to rest.

Current Huxley Communications cable TV subscribers won't have to do a thing.

You can get a new TV if you'd like, so you can more fully enjoy the crisp, clear pictures offered by Digital TV.

However, this is not necessary. As a cable customer, you're already viewing a digital signal, so the DTV transition will not affect you in any way — even if you keep your existing TV set.

If you'd like to upgrade your services and add new channels, this is a great time to do so. Huxley Communications offers a wide range of entertainment options for every taste. Just give us a call at 515-597-2281 or visit www.huxcomm.net to learn about our latest and greatest packages.



Are you getting our eNewsletter?

If you haven't signed up for our eNewsletter, now is the time to get on the list. It's available free of charge, and offers valuable information that can help you navigate the Internet, and more.

Every issue covers helpful topics such as:

Tips on tackling computer issues.

Whether you're wondering about key features of the latest software, or looking for warnings about prevalent viruses, we'll keep you current on web-related happenings.

Sites of the month.

Enjoy a variety of informative websites related to current events, seasonal activities, and more. You might not discover them otherwise!

New resources from Huxley Communications.

Whether it's a new product or service, or interesting company news, we'll keep you informed of what we're doing for you and our community.

Tutorials.

Learn how to play online games, download the latest web browser, change settings on your computer, and more.

To register for your Huxley Communications e-newsletter, send an e-mail to newsletter@huxcomm.net and submit your e-mail address.

