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Attention Business Owners

by Ryan McMillen

► **Routers** do not protect your computers from 19 year old college students trying to cause mischief and erase files on your server (especially during spring break or summer vacation). They do not stop foreign country organizations from using your server to mail spam out to millions of e-mail addresses. They do not stop Denial of Service attacks. They can be broken into within minutes by even the most novice "hackers" using simple programs found on the Internet.

In other words, routers are inexpensive and are not designed to do everything a business may think they should do.

But maybe I'm getting ahead of myself. What is a router anyway? A **router** is a small device on your network that connects directly to your Internet service provider. You might have *Comcast* or *Charter* or *AT&T* Internet, but the one thing they all have in common is a router, or gateway as it is sometimes called. This device simply takes the single internet connection it receives from your ISP and divides the internet so that everyone on your network

can use it. It's convenient and simple. Unfortunately, it's also just as convenient and simple for outsiders trying to get into your network as well!

A **firewall**, however, is something completely different. It examines each and every bit of information coming into your network sniffing around for any hidden viruses or malicious software meant to compromise your computers. Routers do not do this. Firewalls are also capable of establishing secure connections to your central office from the outside. Let's say you wanted to work from home and get access to the files on your server at work. With a SonicWALL firewall, this can be accomplished. Routers cannot do that either.

If you have a router on your network, or if you are unsure of what you have, call us at 616-997-TECH (8324) and our professionals can guide you through your options. Get the cost effective protection you need!

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Do you own an older **SonicWALL** Firewall? It is now **UPGRADE** time! For a limited time, you can get special **Trade-Up** pricing and purchase a new 4th Generation firewall at huge savings. Buy the **SonicWALL TZ 180 25 Node Firewall** with 2 Years of *Unified Threat Management Services* for only \$659 — **a savings of \$520!**



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Notice: Internet Explorer 8 Issues

by Gary Slager

► **Caution:** do not be quick to install the new Microsoft Internet Explorer 8. This new version of the popular Internet Explorer Browser is already getting a reputation for causing trouble. At this early point it just cannot be trusted to properly install and operate without causing a variety of problems. *CCS Technologies* has clients who have installed the new IE8 and then had serious issues including losing the ability to start Windows XP Professional.



There are many known compatibility issues with IE8. A quick search for "Internet Explorer 8 Problems" directly on the Microsoft support web site turned up over 2,000 replies. That is another good indicator that this new version 8 is loaded with potential problems. If you call *CCS Technologies* and ask for advice about installing IE8 you are going to hear some words of caution, and like most new software, it is usually advisable to wait for further field testing and revisions.



However you do have other software choices for internet browsing. Two of the most respected alternative internet browsers are: **Firefox 3.0.8** <http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/firefox.html> and **Opera 9.6 Web browser** <http://www.opera.com/>.

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