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Don't Let "Them" Fool You

One of the ways that hackers get access to your business network is by tricking your users into thinking they are dealing with your IT company. Example: a user gets a call and the person on the other end of the line says "This is Peter from your IT company" or if they've done a lot of research, they might even claim "This is Ryan from CCS Technologies." By doing research on websites and cross-referencing geographic information, these people might try to convince one of your users that it's us trying to help you. Do not fall for it!

If you are not quite sure, put them on hold and call us directly. You can verify that it is indeed one of our technicians or you can verify whether a particular person works here.

Hackers and scammers are always changing their approach. Be aware and let your users know that if anything seems "off", call us directly at **616-997-8324 (TECH)** and we can verify for you.

Do I leave my PC on at night, or not?

We often get asked this question about whether it is best to leave your computers turned on every night. The answer is almost always yes. And there are many reasons why this is the case.

Let's talk about the elephant in the room: **power costs**. The average commercial power rates in Michigan are around $12.3 cents per KWh. The typical PC uses around 100 watts just sitting there after hours. This works out to be around 20 cents per day or around $72 a year. The typical coffee maker uses more than twice this amount when only run for 4 hours a day. And if you compare that cost to lost wages, consider this. If someone works for $15 an hour and spends only 5 minutes a day waiting for a computer to boot up and down once per day, that is a loss of over $312 per year per employee! And that's if it only took 5 minutes. Many times, a person boots up their PC only to discover updates that require 20 minutes or more to be applied. Might as well go use that coffee maker while you wait!

Next on the list is **"what does the PC prefer?"** Are computers happier when they are left on? I can tell you from my experience as an electronics technician, most issues related to electronics damage happen during the power cycle. Injecting all that power into the circuitry at once is far less desirable than leaving on a steady stream of electricity. The only downside of this is that your fans will most likely need replacement sooner. This is not normally a big deal as fans do not start getting noisy for many years (unless the environment is very dirty) and even then, fans are easy and cheap to replace.

Now the most important part: **Updates**! Our ProVent customers know that we apply those updates in the middle of the night, so you do not have to wait for them to apply when you turn on your PC in the morning. Some larger updates can take as much as an hour to complete and sometimes this requires multiple reboots to accomplish. Imagine waiting at your desk for an hour in the morning until all of these are done. Worse yet, imagine **ALL** of your users waiting!

So, you've decided that leaving your PC powered on is the best course of action. Is there anything else you need to do? Absolutely! Do not leave your computers on overnight unless it is protected by a **battery backup**! Our industry-leading battery backups are made by APC. The batteries generally last for years (unless your power is really bad – then you would have a more pressing issue) and the cost of these devices are quite reasonable**. For $99 you can get an excellent APC model of battery backup** that will serve as a power filter, surge suppressor and battery backup. If you buy multiple backups for all your systems, it only takes around a half hour of support time to get the battery backup installed and properly communicating with your computer. What's even better is that the battery backup lets the computer know it needs to PROPERLY power off in case the power outage is extensive enough that it completely drains the battery. This is far better than a computer just going "dead" during a power outage!

So give us a call and we can help you determine how many you need and for minimal cost, we can get all of your important computers protected from power spikes, brown outs or black outs. **This is something a surge suppressor can never do!**