

What is a Server?

A server is a system specifically designed to hold, manage, send, and process data. The technology behind servers:

- Makes them more reliable than desktop systems to run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Helps them process data faster and more efficiently
- Provide integrated data backup and better security
- Reduces data bottlenecks so information flows more freely and quickly
- Optimized for access by multiple users

In short, a server is much more than a supercharged desktop system, and can't be replaced by one. Desktop systems are optimized to run user-friendly operating systems and desktop applications. Even if a desktop sports the same processor speed, memory, and hard disk space as a server, they aren't the same because the technologies behind them are engineered for different usage.

Websites and Email

Owning a local server also gives the office an opportunity to provide a website and email linked to a domain name of your choosing. For example, choosing a domain of www.mydomain.com would allow any number of email addresses similar to owner@mydomain.com or sales@mydomain.com.

Benefits

Many businesses who already have their own websites find that monthly costs can be reduced by hosting a site locally. Exchange email services allow SPAM blocking, email virus scanning and many other services to be managed from one location. In addition, Away Messages and other automatic responses are returned from the server, regardless of whether the individual's workstation is running.

Costs

To reserve and use a domain name, a company will need to pay a yearly fee. In addition, there may be monthly or yearly fees for use of Domain Name Servers that point your custom name to your server. Hosting either websites or email will also require that your Internet connection be a high speed connection (such as DSL, Cable, or Microwave) with a Static (fixed) IP.

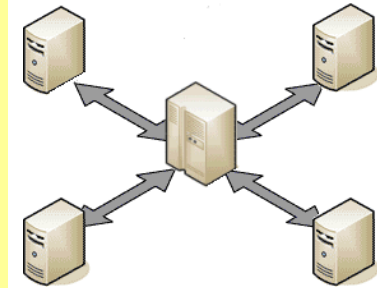
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Why Does Your Office Need A Server?



A breakdown of the benefits and costs of server ownership.

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What are the Benefits of a Server?

Centralized Backup

All businesses should back up their data on a regular basis. By having all of your company and employee data stored on a server, backups can be performed reliably and quickly. So you'll never need to worry about what data is stored on which desktop system as you do in a network without a server. In addition, centralized storage allows you to backup your entire office on a single backup media, which can be utilized for disaster recovery or archival purposes.

Access to Data from Any Workstation

Companies often use a server to share files between multiple users. All users can access the files directly from their machine, preventing time spent sending files back and forth.

A server can be configured with workstations running professional versions of the newer operating systems to create a profile on the server for each user. This profile backs up their data to the server when they logout and provides automatic connections to the folders that they need to access on the server. The benefit to this is two-fold. First, if a workstation fails, the user may access their documents from another workstation simply by using their network login. Second, during future workstation upgrades the installer does not need to spend hours transferring data to the new system. The data already

resides on the server, so the data does not need to be moved before being accessed by the new system.

File and Network Security

By creating individual user and group accounts, rights can be assigned to the data stored on the network preventing unauthorized users from restricted material. For example, the sales staff does not need access to employees' personal records. These records would only need to be accessible human resource or management.

A server allows you to manage file access at one location rather than on each workstation individually, saving time and effort. Plus, if a user's workstation fails, that employee can simply move to another workstation to continue working on the same files. Also, if a person is no longer in your employ, all access granted to that person can be easily removed at one location.

Workstation Restrictions

Often businesses want to limit users or workstations from accessing certain programs. For example, some businesses would like to prevent the average employee from accessing the Internet or installing new programs on computers. A local server provides the ability to limit the programs and other activity of an employee. Each login can be given or denied access to a workstation completely or to specific programs on a workstation.

Collaboration Tools

With Microsoft Office and a Windows 2003 server, the powerful collaboration tools built into Office allow your personnel to work together more productively. Users can share calendars and request appointments without needing to interrupt a meeting. Other collaboration tools provide tracking of changes to documents and shared task lists.

What are the Costs of Owning a Server?

Initial Costs

The initial investment in a server includes:

- The cost of server hardware
- The cost of the operating system and system software
- Initial configuration to setup workstations with server.
- Upgrades to the workstation operating systems, if necessary (The most benefit can be had from a server if all workstations are running professional operating system versions).

Reoccurring Costs

Reoccurring costs associated with a server are similar to the maintenance costs of a workstation with the following exceptions:

- Additional Tapes or other backup media (to replace media that go bad and for monthly or yearly archives).
- Major problems with the operating system will often take slightly longer to fix, as server operating systems are more complex. To help prevent big expenditures, Better. Business. Solutions recommends a monthly server check to catch problems as early as possible.

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