

Keeping In Touch

Summer vacation time often means a chance to get out, see the world, or just relax far away from the cares of home and office. Yet most people today don't really want to be completely cut off, even on a much-deserved holiday.

Southwest Cyberport offers several different ways for travelers to keep in touch via both email and dial-up access.

Statewide

We serve both the Los Alamos/Santa Fe and Albuquerque metro areas with different local high-speed and analog dial-up numbers.

- Albuquerque (56K): **938-1410, 998-5999**
- Los Alamos/Santa Fe (56K): **672-1772**

Nationwide

We have an 800 number for dial-up that's good in the 48 contiguous states for \$10/hour connection time, **(800) 658-6973** plus a toll-free out-of-town Help Desk number **(888) 792-7266**.

Worldwide

Anywhere you can get on the Internet and reach our homepage, you can get your email by means of either of our two different **Webmail** systems. The interface allows you to do all your normal email operations online and even check what spam has been filtered. Your incoming messages stay on our server so you can access them from any computer anywhere. And the service is free.

Finally, SWCP partners with **iPass**, which allows dial-up to local ISPs virtually everywhere. Rates vary from \$2.51 to \$15 per hour. To use iPass, you need to download the latest software and phonebooks through our website. SWCP *strongly* recommends that you read the documentation and test the connection out *before* leaving town.

To find out about our Webmail options and iPass visit our homepage at <http://www.swcp.com/>.

We also offer free email **forwarding** or if you're really getting away, out-of-office **autoreplies** or even **hibernate** your account until you return.

Danger: Zombie Alert!

By Jay Nelson, *Editor*

The FBI has issued a warning about zombie attacks. No, not the kind that crave your brains to eat, these zombies want to eat your PC and turn it into a zombie to attack other computers.

Zombies, also called **bots**, are hijacked computers. It's usually done through trickery. Infection occurs when the user opens an email attachment with a virus or visits a booby-trapped webpage. The virus quickly takes over the computer, using it to steal personal information, wipe out files, send out spam, spread spyware, or even stash illegal content. Tens of thousands of computers can be on a single **botnet**, and the managers of such illicit systems will even sell access to other managers.

The FBI's ongoing **Operation Bot Roast** has identified over one million infected computers. They are notifying the owners, most of whom had no idea their computers were compromised, and are looking for more evidence on how criminals use bots.

It can be difficult to tell if a computer is infected. Telltale signs may include the computer running slowly with Internet traffic or outgoing email when there should be none. If you receive an email saying you are sending spam, that might be a symptom. However, some spammers steal addresses or generate them automatically, so this is not always definitive.

Southwest Cyberport monitors overall network traffic. If we see an unusual amount, or receive reports of spam coming from our customers, we will quickly notify them. However, by that time the contagious computer is dangerous and may be almost useless, so it's far better to prevent infection in the first place.

To avoid the curse of the zombies, use a **firewall** and keep your virus protection current. Some websites offer free scanning, but be careful. Some report an overabundance of spyware to get you to buy their products or even use the scan to install some.

However, sites such as **F Secure**, <http://www.f-secure.com/>, **Trend Micro** <http://housecall.trendmicro.com/>, and **Kaspersky Labs** <http://www.kaspersky.com/> all have a good reputation for being trustworthy.

Net Notes

The Internet uses **packet switching**. Outgoing information is divided up into portable chunks, sent through the network and reassembled by the receiving computer. This system, called **TCP/IP**, like **email**, was supposedly inspired by the **postal system**, which may explain a lot.

Using Spam Filters On Our Servers, Part 2

By Ronald Garduno, *Technical Analyst*

SWCP's Server-side Spam Filters:

How much do they cost? How do you use them?

The use of our spam filters is completely free for every SWCP customer. We know that an email account full of spam is hard to use, so we provide this service at no extra charge.

They are easy to set up. All you need to do is visit our home page at <http://www.swcp.com/> and click 'Anti-spam filter' on the left side. After logging in with your email username and password, you will be presented with the necessary options. The most important option is on top, and is labeled 'Filtering'. This option toggles the entire spam filtering process on and off, so you will want to make sure it is on.

The next option is almost as important. It is called 'The Spam-Assassin', and controls the settings for the SpamAssassin filters discussed last month. This filter can be set on a scale from 1-10. The lowest score is a 10, which only discards obvious spam. On the other hand, 1 is a high score which will very aggressively discard almost all of your spam, but also has a good chance of discarding your legitimate messages as junk. It is for this reason that setting your filters at level 1 is not recommended.

Which setting you choose depends on your needs, but 7 is a very good starting point. From there, you can see if your spam load decreases enough and if you are missing any 'good' emails. Feel free to try turning it down to a lower setting if you need to. There are other filters which are very helpful in individualizing your email's spam-handling, but they are part of the 'Advanced mode'. We'll discuss some of those settings next month.

Websites to Watch

By Jay Nelson, *Editor*

The World Wide Web keeps on evolving. With high-speed access and new tools, your browser is beginning to have the responsiveness and functionality as any of your desktop applications. New kinds of websites are being made, some where you can design your own personalized pages importing just the newsfeeds and features you need, others where you can build your own interactive encyclopedias, or contribute to mapping systems or graphs.

Most of these are in their infancy, all three are an experimental foretaste of the wonders to come. These may bear keeping an eye on.

CircleUp <http://www.circleup.com/>

If you find organizing social activities a bit like herding cats, this might help. CircleUp allows you to email or instant message a group of people, collects and summarizes their responses, and puts the resulting plan online so all your group can see it.

Trulia <http://www.trulia.com/>

Interested in real estate? This website, based on Google Maps, allows you to search for a new home by location, price range, features, and you can talk to people about their neighborhoods.

Wayfaring <http://www.wayfaring.com/>

Also based on a Google Map type interface, with Wayfaring you can create personalized tours, explore and even add to maps of others.



SOUTHWEST CYBERPORT, INC.

5021 Indian School Rd. NE, Suite 600
Albuquerque, NM 87110-8910