

Rich Snippets

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Patch Management

The August routine updates from Microsoft caused some machines to "Blue Screen*" after startup, giving pause to consider the automatic and/or manual updates of patches like these.

It is recommended by Microsoft to choose the automatic method of installing the patches and updates. However, here is another case against this practice. This one particular security update (Security Bulletin MS14-045) along with three other non-security related patches (KB2970228, KB2975719 and KB2975331) were pushed out back in August 12th (on what is commonly referred to as Patch Tuesday**) and by August 15th Microsoft had officially asked that affected users uninstall the update. Users who typically install their updates manually and wait a few days -- or better yet have your Agility consultant manage the patch approval and installation policy by the use of AMP-- would have had information available to them, in this case, within three days and might have waited to implement the patch.

To be fair, most updates are stable and usually go unnoticed. However, navigating the Microsoft website to check the stability of the latest updates can be daunting. The best approach is to deploy on a test environment before wider distribution. Patch management can sound about as boring as regularly changing your password, but that doesn't make it an unimportant topic.

**For the lucky ones who have never seen a 'blue screen': it gets its name from the blue background that the system failure displays upon.*

***Patch Tuesday is an unofficial term used to refer to when Microsoft regularly releases security patches and updates for its Operating Systems and software products. Patches that are deemed as not critical enough to be released out of band are posted and released for public consumption on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.*

IRONMAN Matt Bartels

Agility's own Matthew Bartels, the head of our Manages Services practice and AMP (Agility Management Platform) administrator, completed the IRONMAN Wisconsin earlier this month – a testament to training and personal triumph. The IRONMAN by definition is 140.6 miles in three back-to-back events: "2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bicycle ride and a marathon 26.2-mile run, raced in that order and without a break. It is widely considered one of the most difficult one-day sporting events in the world." Just to finish is an accomplishment of endurance and perseverance, and Matt did finish - within his stated time goals. Matt described the event to some peers as "wickedly hard but totally worth it"!

USA Voice & Data

We are excited to announce our new partnership with USA Voice & Data, a telecom advisory and telecom services brokering firm.

USA Voice & Data are experts in identifying more modern and more cost effective telecom service solutions for businesses, and frequently save their clients between 20% and 40% on their ongoing monthly telecom costs while simultaneously providing upgrades to their services and equipment.

Over the coming weeks please be expecting a call from either your Agility Account Manager or directly from USA Voice & Data, as together we attempt to extend these savings and upgrade opportunities to all Agility clients.

Equally if you are either currently, or any time in future, facing any of the following critical situations please don't hesitate to reach out to your primary Agility Consultant:

- Moving or establishing a new office or facility
- Renegotiating your expiring contracts
- Need more bandwidth or a new phone system
- Have no business continuity or emergency notification solution
- Want to network your offices or facilities
- Have experienced recurring outages
- Concerned with rising travel, telcom and internet spending
- Moving to a data center or the cloud

As always, Agility - now along with USA Voice & Data as one of our partners - is committed to helping you make the most educated decisions regarding these matters.

Matt has been with Agility since October 2006 and is a leader in support of both the consultant base and our client service offerings. He brings an "Iron" level of determination and drive to his Agility post. If you happen to talk with Matt, tell him congratulations on his accomplishment.

Questions, comments, feature requests? Call us at (877) AGILITY
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