

# The Aspect Diary



It's normally quite dreary coming back to work in the New Year, but as that's when all the Xmas cards sent to the office finally turned up, it was comparatively jolly! We do hope you all got your Xmas newsletters in the end, though we note one of them came back to us on 30 Mar as a Return to Sender, as the addressee had gone. So that's only, what, 3½ months to make its way through the delivery process? (You'll be thrilled to know this year's Xmas edition is well in hand - hey, the annual fairy tale doesn't write itself, you know?)

During the cold snap in Jan, we left work one evening to find lumps of ice the size of bricks strewn along the road. Being as cold as it was, they were still there for days afterwards. We presume they'd formed on a trailer or something that'd been parked up for weeks, but it looked like someone had demolished an igloo.

In Feb, as we said on the front cover, we reached our 15 year milestone, which we're very proud of. (See, it's even made us forget the rules of grammar!)

We have a client who was interested in procuring the .com version of their .co.uk domain, so we made enquiries on their behalf. The current owner of the domain said he was open to reasonable offers to buy it off him. We thought a couple of hundred quid was reasonable. Unfortunately he wanted £58000...

We've been lucky enough to have looked after many TV & film productions over the years, but we've never actually encountered anyone that you'd describe as famous ... till now. Working on the site of Michael Sheen's new production in March, our guys met the man himself, who rather sweetly introduced himself saying "I'm Michael". Like he doesn't have one of the most recognisable faces on the planet.

Well that's about it for this issue. We say 'about' because despite reaching the bottom of this column, right at this moment there's 2 great yawning gaps still to be filled elsewhere. It should, as you'll have gathered from the motif running throughout, have been the Easter issue, but we missed that by a country mile. The struggle is real. But the end of our financial year is equally real & when choosing which to concentrate on, Year End is jumping up & down like Donkey in *Shrek*, saying "Pick me! Pick me!"

Perhaps we should engage that ChatGPT bot to write the newsletter? Wonder how it'd get on trying to write as Vassilly?



# The Last Laugh



"Alexa, tell Siri I'm not speaking to her."

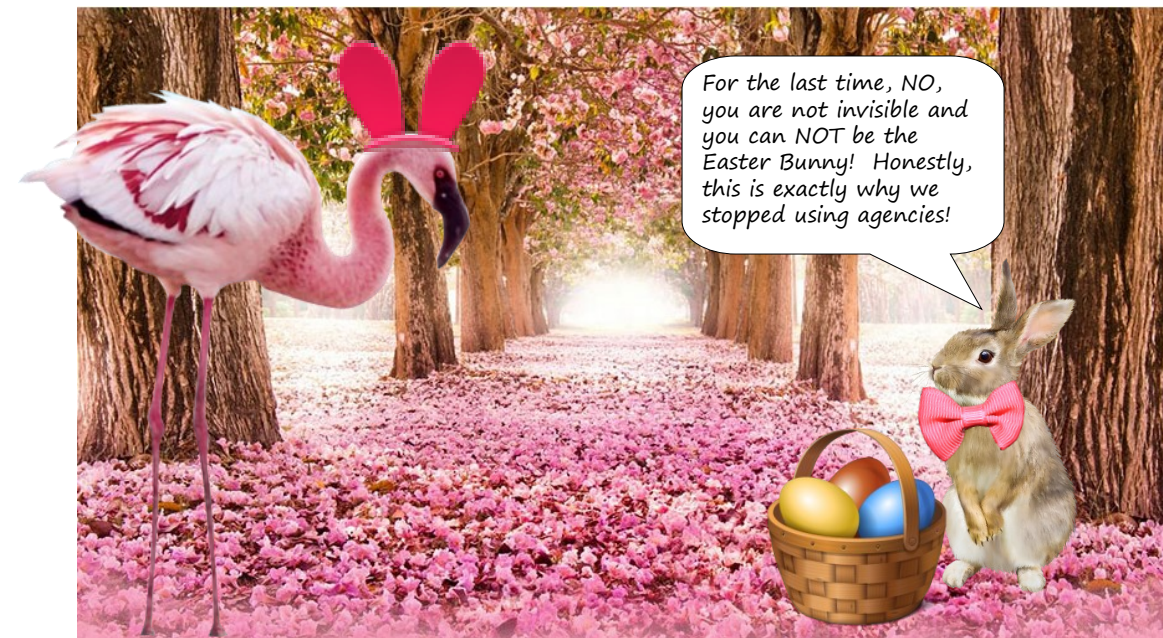
## Technical Support Hotline



"I checked the serial number of your laptop. It's a waffle iron."

# The Aspect Newsletter

Issue 58 - Spring 2023



## In the pink?

(There's probably something deeply non-inclusive or offensive about that title, if the recent indignities that have been inflicted on Roald Dahl's works are anything to go by. Honestly, don't you remember fondly when 'woke' was simply what you did yesterday morning?)

Welcome to a Pepto-Bismol pink newsletter. In case it's never dawned on you, we do change the picture and colour-scheme each time to reflect the season. So we have - depending how you look at it - the colour of cherry blossoms, or a luridly-coloured antidote to too much chocolate. (Just throwing this out there, but is *too much chocolate* actually a thing??)

Can we just begin by saying we know the page numbering in the Christmas edition was all to pot. We printed it from the PDF version instead of the Publisher version, and it just did its own thing. So page 2 was followed by page 7 or some such nonsense. The *index* was right, it was just the page order that was wrong. Hands up who never actually noticed ... ? (It is entirely within the realms of possibility that this edition will suffer the same fate. Look on it as a challenge).

15 years old

Aspect reached its 15th birthday in February (*happy birthday to us, happy birthday to us, happy biiiiirhday dear u-us, happy birthday to us!*), and as we said when we posted the news online, we have you to thank. If you didn't bring your business to us, we wouldn't still be here. We're eternally gratified, and hope that long may you continue to do so. Thank you also to everyone who posted kind messages in response to our post.

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# AspectBC FAQs

## I've had a message that my password is wrong, but I'm sure I've got it right.

Couple of things to mention here. First of all, which password are we talking about? You probably have several, as you're very unlikely (and ill-advised) to have the same password for everything. So the password to log you into your machine/network will not be the same as the one for your email/Office apps, and neither of those is likely to be the same as the one you use to connect remotely via VPN (if you do such a thing). You may just be trying the wrong password in the wrong place. You really should keep a note of the various passwords somewhere safe, as even though you can ask the computer to 'remember' a password, there may well come an occasion when it has to be typed, at which point you may find yourself to be, to use a technical term, stuffed. (On this note, may we introduce you to 'Keeper'? See Page 7 (or whichever page the printer decides to put it on)).

The other thing to note is that you may just be typing it wrong (Caps Lock on, using digits on the numeric keypad when it's not turned on etc). The password box will often have a little link saying 'Show' or an eye symbol. Clicking on this before (or after) you type your password will let you see what you've typed. If such an option doesn't exist, type your password on a blank Word document, or in WordPad, so that you can see it's right, and then copy and paste it into the password box.

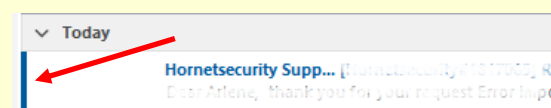


## We've got two wireless keyboard/mouse sets in the office and they've stopped working.

This was a genuine support ticket we had in January, and it turned out to hark back to an issue we mentioned in the last FAQs (Christmas 2022 issue). The users in question had purchased identical models, but each had somehow ended up with the other person's keyboard at some stage. As we said last time, the USB receiver is paired to the keyboard back in the factory, and they're not swappable. You have to keep each receiver with its own keyboard.

## I've turned one of my emails to Unread, and I don't know how - I didn't right click on it, or choose Unread off the toolbar.

Ah well. You know when an email is Unread, it has a bold blue bar to the left?



Well you can toggle an email as Read/Unread just by clicking where that blue bar is. Who knew?

## Laugh? I could've printed an emoji !



You probably use emojis all the time when texting or WhatsApp'ing on your phone, but when people send you emails that have emojis in them, do you find yourself wondering how they did them? (If you already know, good for you, but as with so many things, if you *don't* know, you often assume you're the only person who doesn't and so you feel stupid asking).

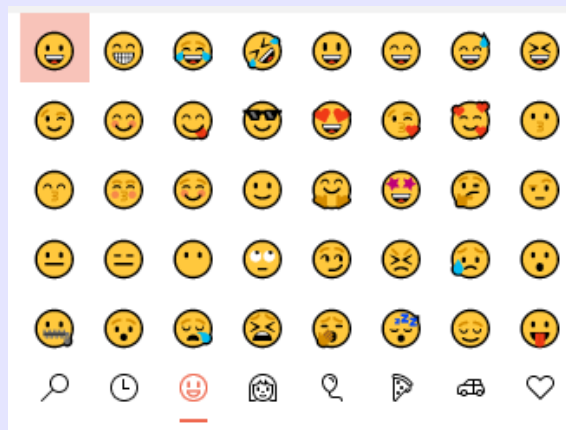
The simplest ones are the smiley face, the winky face and the sad face. Those, you can knock out with a couple of keys. As we've indicated below, the smiley face is just the colon key followed by a closing round bracket:

😊 = : + )

😉 = ; + )

😞 = : + (

But if you want more choices, then press the Windows key and the semi-colon key together (or you can be like me, continually miss the semi-colon key and hit L by mistake ... and lock your PC. Whoops).



As you can see, you've got a whole bunch of emojis now, plus if you use the bottom row to switch between categories (same as your mobile phone), you can insert Santa faces, birthday cake, someone face-palming .... that last one is for me when I've accidentally locked my PC. Again.



We'd love to hear your comments and feedback.  
Just email:  
**newsletter@aspectbc.co.uk**

(Recent issues are on the website if you missed them).

# TMI, people, TMI

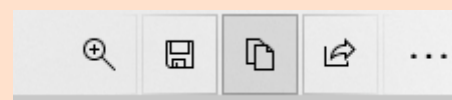
We've often mentioned that we're big fans of screenshots when it comes to diagnosing issues, but there are screenshots ... and then there are screenshots. So though you might think we can never have too much information, sometimes we really, really can.

See, if you hit your Print Screen button, and then just send us the result, it can be very difficult for us to make out what you've sent, especially if you're operating over two screens and you're treating us to the full panoramic view:



The more we try to zoom in, the more pixelated it gets.

So try, if you can, to just send us the relevant bit of your screen. Use the **Snipping Tool**. Press the **Windows key**, the **Shift key** and the letter **S** together, and your screen will darken. Use the mouse to drag a rectangle around the bit you want, and it'll pop into a window at the bottom of your screen. Click on the image to open it up, and then choose the Copy button on the top right (highlighted as below).



Then you can paste it into an email and just send us the bit we need to see.

There's also a set of buttons that you can use to underline or highlight things in the Snip before you copy it, to make it clearer what it is we should be looking at:



# The Keeper of the Keys



As we mentioned in the FAQs section, keeping track of all your various passwords can be a Herculean task.

So say hello to **Keeper Password Manager**. It can create high-strength, random passwords and autofill them, or your own chosen passwords, in the right place on your websites and apps. When your company has Keeper, every user can have it on unlimited devices, giving you security right across your organisation.

The Keeper products can do much, much more than that though. From the Keeper Admin Console, you can control user access, enforce security policies and monitor your data security.

Keeper is an award-winning product, competitively priced as a monthly charge per user. Why not ask us to arrange a demonstration?



# A wolf in sheep's clothing?



We've always made a point of telling you that if you receive an email from a sender you don't know, you should treat it with suspicion. But as mail accounts can be compromised or spoofed, we really need to expand that to say .... if you receive an email from a sender you *do* know, but it's unexpected, out of character or if, in any way, it makes you go 'what?', then again, treat it with the utmost suspicion.

The important point is that you need to give yourself that moment to think 'what?' Do not be a knee-jerk clicker. **Check** the sending address. **Read** the email. If there are links, hover over them first to see if they point to strange-sounding addresses that bear no resemblance to where the email is supposed to have originated. But don't click on them!

**Never, ever, give an email the benefit of the doubt.**

Cynicism is good. Embrace it.

# Jargon Buster #42 - EDR

It's CyberSecurity time!

EDR is **Endpoint Detection and Response**, also sometimes referred to as Endpoint Detection and Threat Response (EDTR). It constantly monitors devices to detect and respond to cyber threats like ransomware and malware.

So why is this different to anti-virus software? Well, anti-virus scans for the threats it's been made aware of. Sure, it is updated continually, but EDR operates a bit more outside the box, looking for suspicious behaviour and activity that no-one's given a definitive label to. It's like spotting there's a storm brewing before the Met Office give it a name. And more than just detecting it, it works to give security teams visibility of what's happening, plus active containment.



EDR uses behavioural analysis across billions of events in real time to automatically detect traces of suspicious behaviour. There are two main things it looks for - IOAs (Indicator of Attack) and IOCs (Indicator of Compromise). IOAs aren't actually concerned with whether the threat you're looking at is malware or ransomware; what they're looking at are the techniques being used to carry out the attack, and the evident intentions of the attack. What it's actually delivering matters much less when it's doing its analysis. Indicators of Compromise, obviously, are exactly as they suggest - signs that a system might have been infiltrated.

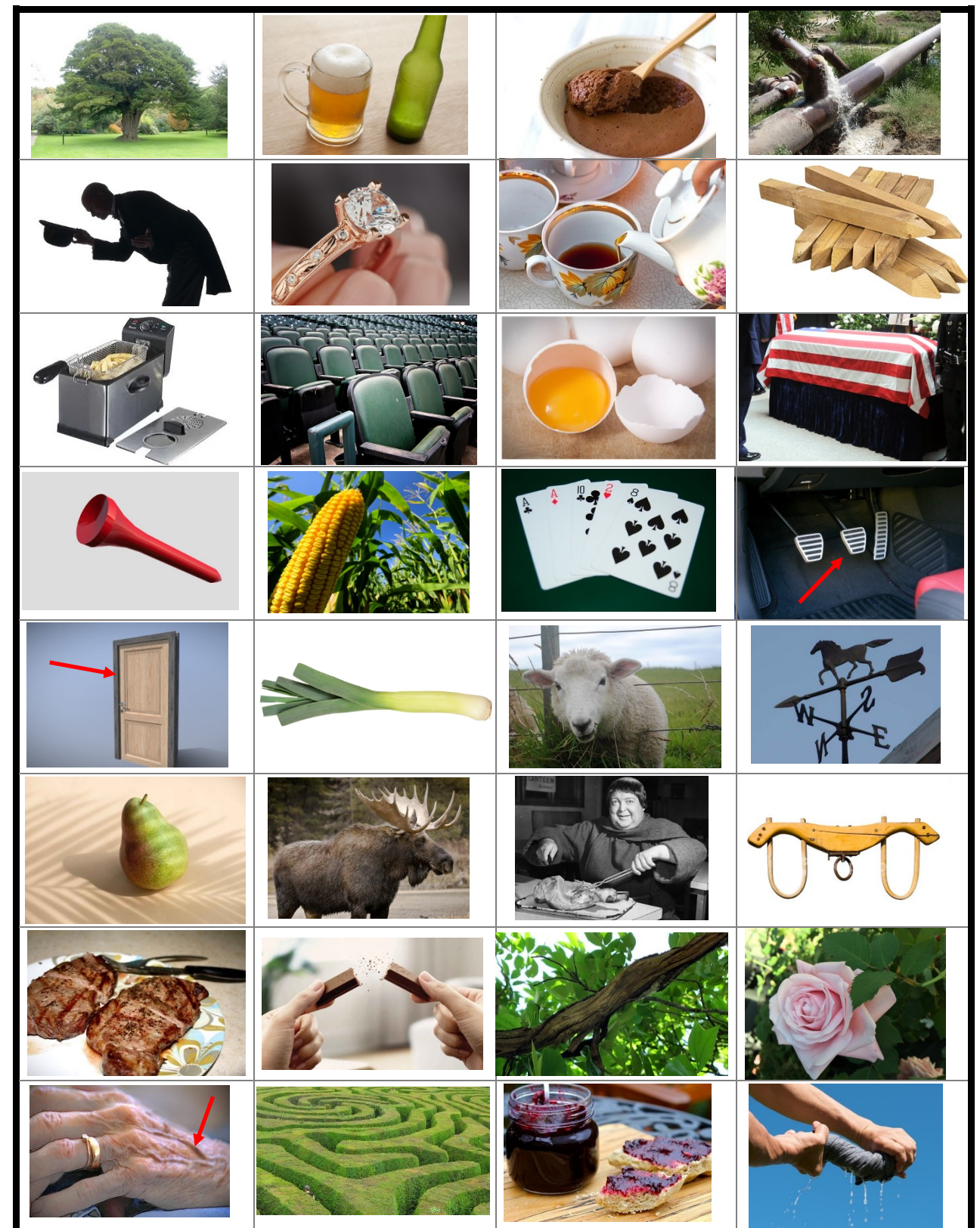
EDR is essentially an extra level of security. As we said, anti-virus software offers protection up to a point, but the tricky time for it is on Day Zero. That's the period when a new virus hits and anti-virus software signatures haven't yet been created for it. This is why EDR is so clever. It's not looking for a *specific* threat, but rather the hallmarks of an as yet undefined threat.

We offer EDR as a bolt-on to our anti-virus software (so yes, that does mean it's an additional monthly cost), but if you think it'd be beneficial to your organisation and were interested in finding out more, get in touch and we'll be happy to assist.

# Homophones Quiz

A homophone, in case you're not sure, is a word that sounds like another word but is spelled differently eg. 'dear' and 'deer'. Can you match up the homophones in the grid below? There is a match for each of them, no decoys, but you may need to think outside the box a bit. Shall we just say, for example, that the first picture is not so much a tree as a *type* of tree.

Answers on the website - follow the link from the newsletter page.





I don't know how to use Tik-Tok, but I can write in cursive, do long division and tell time on clocks with hands ... so there's that

Two Wi-Fi engineers got married. The reception was fantastic.

Four fonts walk into a bar. The bartender says, "Hey, we don't want your type in here!"

Adam and Eve were the first people to ignore the Apple terms and conditions

Are people born with photographic memories or does it take time to develop?

A Teams call is the best way for a dozen people to say 'bye' 300 times

## Vassilly's Blog

Tues 3 Jan

Happy 2023 loyal fans! Are we all full of excites for New Year? Payrolls lady is. She is get present for Chrissabobs of tickets to be seeing miserable peoples in West End in Feb. Is not seem like much of a present to me - she is spend every day with miserable peoples, no? But she is seem pleased. You are wonder how party for Chrissabobs is go? Is much fun, but everything is turn to ice while we is party, and drive back down hill is like Cresta Run. I am brave ruffy-tuffy 'kat, but even I am bite claws down to quick.

Wed 11 Jan

Card from cousin Pyotr for Chrissabobs is finally arrive. Wait .... he say they is win Meerkovo lottery! Yes!!! In your face, Aspects!!! I am doing small dance when Sergei is pick up card and read rest of it. He is shake head sadly when he is pass it back to me. What? ... "I am knowing you is rich western 'kat now, so you is probably not need money. But if you is want share, make sure to be writing back before end of December when we is finalise everything...." NOOOOO!!!!!!

Fri 20 Jan

Is. So. Cold. Payrolls lady is ask if I am not have winter coat. Is she know how much they is cost?!! She say no, am I not grow winter coat and then shed it in spring? Oh yes, for sure. Animals that is come from deserts is famous for thick winter coats. Listen, only 'kat here that is shed fur is Sergei, is all year round, and is disgusting.

Tues 31 Jan

Aspects is looking for extra engineer, and again, I am not in running. I am not know why. Payrolls lady say it is because I am not up on modern softwares, like Burp, Snort, Splunk and Metasploit. Sergei say he is remember them from TV programme in 70's. Payrolls lady say he is maybe thinking of Banana Splits. Later she is confess when she is see these softwares on CVs, she is not know what they is either, and anyways, is not things Aspects is need peoples to know. So is OK for me to be applying then? She say is still no.

Tues 21 Feb

Yes, yes, I am not blog for little while, peoples, I know. Everyone at Aspects is busy-busy, but is not jobs I can be helping with, so I am twiddle paws for weeks and I am have no excites to share. IT Boss Man is have big project and I am offer to help, but he say it is need much accurateness and concentrations. He say I am get distracted too eas... Oooh! Squirrel!!!

Thurs 2 Mar

Aaaarghh! I am glance up at CCTV screens as big spider is crawl over lens of camera. Is like horror movie, peoples!!

Tues 21 Mar

I am full of exhaustions. Last two weeks is all go-go-go. I am up ladders, I am under desks ... Telecommmmms Boss Man say he is train me to do terminatings. Ah! This is news of excellentness! I am dig out long list of peoples that I am add to over the years, but he say no, we is terminate cables. This is disappointing. I am ask if I can say "I'll be baa-aack"? He say yes, as long as paws is busy terminating at same time. (Is turn out that multi-tasking is not strong point, so I am doing terminatings in silence).

Fri 31 Mar

Is nearly Easter, loyal fans, so in case you is feeling full of generousness, I am share with you my Easter chocolate wish list: Egg that is size of head  
Own body weight in eggs  
Or... I think I am see Lindt Rabbit that is same size as me. This is also acceptable. Plus, in cunning plan, I can attach bell to Sergei when chocolate is finished. Then I can pick up phone when I am hear him coming and I am not have to listen to boring stories of Easters he is remember. (Huh, he is so old, is possible he is there for very first one, when they is open tomb).



## The Helpdesk of HORROR ...

Another year, another haul ...



"Am I in time to dial in?"  
"I'm sorry, what do you mean?"  
"Well, what time does the internet close?"

"I need your help!"  
"Sure, what do you need?"  
"I was clicking and dragging a file from one folder to another, but then I sneezed and let go of the mouse."  
"I see ..."  
"My computer ate the file! Where did my file go??!"

"Yeah, I bought a domain name from you guys."  
"Thank you. What issues are you having with it?"  
"Well I type my address and there's no website."  
"Have you linked your site to the domain name yet?"  
"What's that supposed to mean? Where the hell is my website?"  
"We don't make the website for you sir, we just sell you the website name."  
"That's bull\*\*\*t! I paid for my website! Where is it?"  
"You need to either make the website yourself, or pay a web designer to do it."  
"So I just paid you all this money, and I don't get a website?"  
"Sir, you paid us \$4.99. You can't expect someone to make a website for that little money."  
"I wouldn't have bothered at all if I'd known I had to do it myself! You're all crooks!!"

"I've forgotten my password."  
"No worries, we can reset that for you ... OK, we have a selection of security questions you can choose, like 'what is your favourite sports team?' or 'what town were you born in?'"  
"I don't like those. Can I choose my own?"  
"Of course."  
"I want my question to be 'what is today's date?'"  
"I really wouldn't recommend that, sir."  
"No, I'll remember it. Please make that my question."  
{Next day ....}  
"My answer to the security question isn't working! It worked yesterday!!"

"My internet doesn't work! I charged it all night and now it won't work when I unplug it from the modem."  
"No, your modem needs to be plugged in to provide internet."  
"But it should be fully charged!"  
"It's not battery-operated, sir. It needs to remain plugged in."  
"Well that's just stupid. Fine, I'll just preload the internet onto my computer so I can unplug it from the modem."  
"That's not possible either. Your computer needs to be connected to the modem."  
"Humans have to be plugged in all the time to use the internet?!! It's like The Matrix! I don't like it!"  
"I'm sorry you feel that way, sir."  
"Does the government know about this?"  
"Pretty sure they do."  
"Well I'm going to tell them anyway! This is going to damage society, you wait and see!"  
"I understand, sir."  
"So ... do you have the government's address?"

"All right, I've reset your password. Use Password99, but make sure it's an uppercase P."  
"It's just not working."  
"Remember it's an uppercase P."  
"No, it's not working."  
"Look, I'll remote on and type it where you can see it."  
"Ohhh! Uppercaps and lowercaps! Why didn't you say so?!!!"

"Can I ask what ports you have?"  
"I don't have any."  
"You have no ports on the back of your computer?"  
"Oh right ..., no, I'm working on the inside. I had a lot of trouble getting into the case!"  
"How did you open the case?"  
"With a hacksaw."  
"With .... with a hacksaw?"  
"Yeah, down the back of the tower."  
"Sir, you've destroyed every component in your machine, and you're lucky you didn't electrocute yourself."

## Stuck in the middle ...



We've been hit with a triple-whammy of price rises lately, from Microsoft on one side, our broadband services provider on another (to be fair, they're simply passing on the wholesale costs that will be affecting everyone imminently), and our SIP trunk provider on the phones on the third flank.

We're doing everything we can to mitigate these rises, or at least push them down the road a bit so they don't all land on you at once. Hard and fast information has proved quite hard to come by, but as soon as we know more, we will be in touch.