

So long, SP2 (and Windows 2000)

July 2010 marks the end of support for Windows XP SP2 and for Windows 2000 in its entirety. You should already have upgraded but, if not, do it now!

If you are still using XP SP2 you can install the SP3 update (this will be supported until 2014) or you can upgrade to Windows 7; if Windows 2000 is still running on your PC then you have no choice but to move to the newer Windows version if you wish to receive security updates and official support from Microsoft. Of course, Tarragon will continue to support your system on a best endeavours basis but please talk to us for advice and assistance if you are in this situation!

The July patch issue from Microsoft is comparatively small - only 4 bulletins - but three of them are described by Microsoft as *critical* and the fourth, marked *important*, is for the Outlook email client and you don't want vulnerabilities in your email client! As usual, you should ensure the patches are installed as soon as possible.

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Secure Offsite Backup

packages have been available from Tarragon for some time and are very popular. Previously you have needed to choose a package based on the size of the data to be backed-up but now, in addition, we are able to offer **unlimited backup** for just £200+VAT per month.

All Tarragon's backup solutions are extremely fast and efficient because they upload *only* those parts of your files that have been altered since the last backup. The resulting reduction in overhead means you can take backups more frequently (up to every 15 minutes, kept for 3 months) and have a more effective archive for your data.

Remember - your data is so important to your business that having secure and easily accessible backups could mean the difference between survival and failure.

Okay, apart from

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Symantec score own-goal with World Cup threat site

Good ideas, when not well implemented, can easily go wrong. This has been discovered by the net security specialists Symantec who created the 2010netthreat.com web site specifically to help users protect themselves from malware, scammers and spammers using the World Cup as bait.

Symantec's site posted information about reported threats so everyone could be aware. The site also allowed users to comment on a public forum – but did not require registration and did not use any image verification tool to prevent automated responses. The result was that the forum was deluged by spam adverts!

Symantec have now removed the spam and have disabled the comment function.

In another good-idea-turned-bad, there has been a real furore this week over a decision by the famous* game producer Blizzard. Faced with heated online arguments between mainly anonymous players on their "World of Warcraft" MMORPG**, Blizzard had the good idea that it would require gamers' *real* names on comments posted. The effect of this was dramatic; within 24 hours over 1,000 comments were received, almost all criticizing the idea. Within three days this had grown to 50,000 comments.

The threat to Blizzard was not just to their sensitivity; each gamer pays around £9 every month to take part [why??] and many were threatening to close their accounts. So, just 3 days after the original announcement, Blizzard made an about-turn.

*apparently (I admit it, I know absolutely nothing about gaming)

**MMORGP: Massively Multiplayer Online Rôle-Playing Game. Yes. Quite.

Tip of the Month - one for the Accounts people!

For a while now we have been encouraging all our clients to use electronic methods of payment rather than sending cheques, as these have a tendency to go walkabouts in the postal system. I'm pleased to report that most of you are now using Online Banking, Direct Debit or BACS to pay our invoices – though increased use has shown up an interesting problem of identity.

When an Online Banking or BACS payment is made, the transaction can be given a reference which will appear on the notification we receive from the bank, along with the name of the originating bank account. Usually, this is sufficient to match the payment with the company that issued it – but we have received a few payments in which it has not been immediately possible to use the reference or account name to determine the client it came from. Carolyn sorts it out in the end but there is a risk of delay, especially if hardware orders are waiting on the payment.

So, the tip for this month is: when making a BACS or Online Banking payment (to Tarragon or anyone else) and your bank account name is not the company name as shown on the invoice – please include the invoiced company name in the reference! It's always useful if you can include the invoice number(s) in the reference as well!

Please let us know what you think of [Solutions!](#) - email solutions@tarragon.co.uk