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December 2009 Edition

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Upcoming Events

MAIA Convention 2010 - Grand Rapids, MI

[SMART I.T. Services will be exhibiting]
(February 23-25, 2010)

AMS Users' Group National Conference - Nashville, TN

[SMART I.T. Services will be exhibiting]
(March 25-28, 2010)

Take Your Agency to the Next Level 2010 presented by SMART I.T. Services - Sterling Heights, MI
(April 29-30, 2010)

Additional Information

[Proactive Network Management](#)

[Electronic Document Management](#)

Take Your Agency to the Next Level Seminar Scheduled for April 29-30, 2010

Official Dates for our next Take Your Agency to the Next Level seminar are set for April 29-30, 2010.

By attending this event, you will learn how technology can help your agency:

- Build lasting relationships with your clients
- Give your producers the power to service existing clients and attract new ones
- Provide a superior level of service to your customers to help increase retention and referrals
- Reduce your operating costs and improve your efficiencies
- Do more with less

This year's event will now be held over two-days, helping you get the most relevant and useful information for your area of expertise. One-day and two-day packages are available.

Day 1: April 29, 2010

Who Should Attend: Principals, CFOs, and Management

Time: 9 am - 3 pm

Location:

Best Western Sterling Inn
34911 Van Dyke Ave.
Sterling Heights, MI 48312

Despite these challenging times for your insurance agency, some of your competitors are experiencing double-digit growth without cutting programs or hiring additional employees. Leveraging technology is one way some of the leading agencies are accomplishing this.



[Spam Blocking & Email Continuity Service](#)

[Employee Internet Control](#)

[Automation Audits](#)

[SMARTnews Archive](#)



Learn how to leverage some of the latest solutions to position your agency for success by attending day 1 of Take Your Agency to the Next Level. Packed with up-to-the-minute relevancy, day 1 will provide you with insight on the new ideas, products, and solutions you need to succeed in easy-to-understand language without the "geek-speak."

Day 2: April 30, 2010

Who Should Attend: Network administrators and others seeking more in-depth knowledge

Time: 9 am - 3 pm

Location:

Best Western Sterling Inn

34911 Van Dyke Ave.

Sterling Heights, MI 48312

Day-two of Take Your Agency to the Next Level 2010 will dive deeper into various solutions and applications. By attending day-two, you will get in depth knowledge of solutions that will save you time and be more productive. In addition, you will learn valuable tips and tricks that will take your productivity to the next level.

Which option is right for you?

1-Day Package - \$79 (your choice of either April 29 or April 30)

2-Day Package - \$99 total (savings of \$59)

****Clients on a S.M.A.R.T. Services plan receive two complimentary registrations for principals for both days of Take Your Agency to the Next Level 2010****

[Click here to register for more information and to register!](#)

Agency Time-Saver Tip

Did you know you can view Payment Plan and Down Payment % options for your carriers in [ACS2000](#)?



The tables with the Payment Plan and Down payment % options are located in the Task Pane on the **Payment Plan** screen in an ACS2000 Homeowners or Personal Auto quote.

When the **Payment Plan** or **Down Payment** field is highlighted, the Payment Plan tables will appear in the Task Pane on the right hand side of the screen. Click the Payment Plan link for the carrier whose pay plans you wish to view.

Contact ACS comparative

Happy Holidays from SMART I.T. Services

SMART I.T. Services would like to wish you and your family a safe and joyful holiday season!



Guru's Guidance

Rating for more information about Payment Plan options in ACS2000.

Employee Spotlight



Brett Heitz

Brett Heitz is our Marketing Coordinator and is responsible for all marketing activities including campaign development, website maintenance, flyers, seminars, and more. He is originally from the Grand Rapids area and has been with us for two years.

One of Brett's recent works was the design of the cool graphic wrap for our new Chevy HHR (See article in this newsletter). He worked many hours on this and did a great job. The company that put the wrap on the HHR for us was so impressed with it that they submitted the design to a national contest. Our founder Jerry Fetty especially likes the side window design.

Brett also recently revealed our new website and is also the editor of SMARTnews (this newsletter).

In his free time (which we do not believe he has much of), Brett is into watching the Tigers and Red Wings play (he gave up on football), editing photos in Adobe Photoshop, and spending time with friends and family. He also enjoys listening to and creating music, and is an avid guitar and keyboard player. As you can tell Brett is a very creative person and keeps coming up with creative reasons why he cannot do a solo musical performance at our next Take Your Agency to the Next Level Seminar.

Tis the Season... for Security Breaches and Lost Productivity?

With the Thanksgiving holiday and the shopping phenomenon known as "Black Friday" behind us, the holiday shopping season is officially in full swing.

Even more so this year, consumers are relying on the internet to make a great deal of holiday purchases.

For many, the convenience of online shopping far outweighs facing traffic jams, elbow-to-elbow crowds, and picked over store shelves.



But what happens when employees take online shopping to the office? A [study](#) recently released by CareerBuilder indicates that nearly one-third of workers plan to holiday shop while online at work. And hackers are taking note, finding many more opportunities for acquiring personal and financial information of online shoppers.

[Read more](#)

Great Lakes Automation Day (GLAD) Recap

Great Lakes Automation Day (GLAD), presented by the MAIA, turned out to be another excellent event.

Valuable presentations were given throughout the day by Steve Anderson, Angelyn Treutel, and SMART I.T. Services very own Bryant Caudill (pictured). Agents learned about leveraging social media and having an online presence in order to nurture relationships, build new ones, and stand out amongst the crowd.



[Steve Anderson](#) kicked off the event by explaining why people and business professionals need to pay attention to social media. After Angelyn Treutel showed the audience how her agency is incorporating social media tools as part of its sales and customer service strategy, Bryant Caudill demonstrated how to set up a Google AdWords account and campaign to drive traffic to an agency's web site.

Vendor booths, lunch, and a whole lot of networking rounded out the busy day at GLAD. Thank you to everyone who stopped by the SMART I.T. Services booth(s) at the show (we had two of them). It was great to see some familiar faces and some new ones as well!

Look for SMART I.T. Services at the [MAIA's Annual Convention](#) February 23-25, 2010.

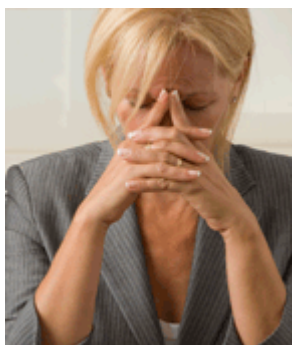
That's a Wrap!

Introducing the Newest Addition to the SMART I.T. Services Vehicle Fleet



Increase employee productivity and reduce the risk of web-based threats with SMARTweb Defense.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Minimize your risk of data with the SMART BDR Backup and Disaster Recovery unit.

[Click here to learn about a better way to back up your data.](#)



Protect your network and save time spent managing spam email messages with SMARTmail Defense.

[Learn what makes SMARTmail Defense better.](#)

Join Our List

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)



The newest edition to the SMART I.T. Services vehicle fleet, a 2009 Chevy HHR, recently got a cool graphic wrap. Purchased under the "Cash for Clunkers" program, our new HHR features computer and technology elements integrated into a classic "hot rod" theme. Brett Heitz handled the graphic design duties for the vehicle.

[Check out more pictures and a video!](#)

Insurance Agents Fined for Not Having Written Security Plans

By Jeff Yates, ACT Executive Director

Recent headlines have underscored the importance of agents having written security plans to protect the privacy of their clients' personal information. Not only could a breach of clients' personal information devastate an agency's reputation; it is likely to result in the agency's having to undertake time consuming and costly actions on behalf of clients whose personal information is compromised.



And now there is the very real possibility of incurring a fine. Just as a well managed agency takes specific steps to protect against E&O risk, it needs to have a written security plan, incorporate the plan into its procedures, train its employees to implement these procedures consistently, and monitor for compliance.

[Read more](#)

Upcoming Webinar

Increasing Employee Productivity with Training

Did you know that untrained users take up to 6 times longer to accomplish work as trained users? In addition, the time for recouping the cost of training is less than nine months, and the return on investment



is estimated at 165%.

The Gartner Group revealed these astounding facts in their 2007 study of employee training and its relation to productivity in the workplace.

So how can your agency utilize training to increase employee productivity, without spending a fortune?

Join us for our free webinar, *Increasing Employee Productivity with Training*, and learn how to structure formal and informal training programs to get the most out of your staff and boost productivity. You will also learn how to tap a variety of resources, many of which are available at little or no cost, to increase employee productivity.

Increasing Employee Productivity with Training

Date: Wednesday, December 23, 2009

Time: 10 am - 11 am EST

Register: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/324785258>

Is there a topic you would like us to cover in an upcoming webinar? Tell us about it by sending an email to info@SMARTservices.com.

Looking for a previous webinar from SMART I.T. Services? Check out www.youtube.com/smartitservices to watch our recent webinars.

S.M.A.R.T. Services System Coordinator Training



S.M.A.R.T. Services customers - we have implemented a monthly schedule for S.M.A.R.T. System Coordinator Training. Designed around your busy schedule, the training sessions are offered on the fourth Thursday of every month, unless otherwise noted.

For new customers, the training is required for the designated S.M.A.R.T. System Coordinator at your company and is essential for getting the most out of your S.M.A.R.T. Services agreement. Existing S.M.A.R.T. Services customers can utilize the training as a refresher course.

Upcoming System Coordinator Training:

Thursday, January 28, 2010

Thursday, February 25, 2010

[Please click here for more information and to register.](#)

Exclusive Content Available for Facebook Fans

All readers of SMART News are invited to join us on Facebook by becoming a fan! Benefits of becoming a fan of SMART I.T. Services include timely news and updates for all SMART I.T. Services webinars and events and much more.



Our page includes:

- Upcoming events and announcements
- The most up-to-date information available
- Special promotions, offers, and contests for fans only

[Click here to check out the SMART I.T. Services Facebook page!](#)

Would you like to learn how to take advantage of Facebook and other social media for your agency? Then be sure to attend the MAIA's Annual Convention from February 23-23, 2009, where Jerry Fetty will be presenting on the topic of social media.

Security Bits

Firms Fail to Secure Mobile, Cloud Data

A recent study shows failure on the part of corporate chiefs to make security a priority. This reactive approach to data protection has left many companies vulnerable to attack, especially via emerging technologies such as smart phones and cloud computing, claims the study.

[The Worldwide State of the Endpoint 2010](#) study, conducted by the Ponemon Institute and funded by security firm Lumension, found that 56% of respondents said that mobile devices posed a significant security risk to their organization and 49% stated that the company's CEO did not give strong support to security initiatives.

"The (survey) provides still more evidence that companies are racing to adopt new technologies faster than they can understand their impacts on data security and develop effective use and integration policies," Larry Ponemon, chairman and founder of the Ponemon Institute, said in a statement. "As a result, networks are growing more and more complex, making the task of securing sensitive data more and more difficult."

How protected is your network from phishing scams, viruses, spyware and other threats? Contact us today at (888) 843-6385 to learn about solutions that can protect your network.

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