



# KINGDOM

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

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Kingdom e-News

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## Living in the Cloud

**D**o you ever wonder what computers and the Internet will be like in another ten years? The changes in the last decade have been mind-boggling. Experts responding to the Pew Internet & American Life Project's fourth Future of the Internet survey said we will "live mostly in the cloud".

It sounds almost mysterious, but "cloud" is simply a metaphor for the Internet. "Cloud computing" describes working through applications based in cyberspace and accessed through networked devices,

as opposed to working from a desktop. Most people will access software applications online, sharing and retrieving information through the use of remote server networks, rather than depending primarily on tools and information housed on their individual, personal computers. Data will be stored in remote locations and tools will be rented.



We are already in the cloud, but it is so seamless that most of us barely notice. The most popular cloud services today are social networking sites like Facebook – 500 million users being social in the cloud. Webmail services like Hotmail and Yahoo mail, micro-blogging and blogging services such as Twitter and WordPress, video-sharing sites like YouTube, and picture-sharing sites such as Flickr all fall into the category of cloud computing. Document and applications sites like Google Docs and even the business site eBay take us into this realm as well.

This does not mean that most of the experts polled think the desktop computer will disappear soon. The majority sees a hybrid life in the next decade, as some computing functions move towards the cloud and others remain based on personal computers.

Of those polled, 71% thought that “by 2020, most people won't do their work with software running on a general purpose PC. Instead, they will work in Internet-based applications such as Google Docs, and in applications run from smartphones.” They noted that cloud computing will continue to expand and come to dominate information transactions because it offers many advantages, allowing users to have easy, instant, and individualized access to tools and information they need wherever they are, from any networked device. Some predicted that people in technology-rich environments will have access to sophisticated, affordable *local* networks that allow them to “have the cloud in their homes.”

In addition to smartphones, which are driving the move to the cloud, predictions included a future featuring many more different types of networked appliances. We can look forward to the “Internet of things” – or a world in which everyday objects have their own IP addresses and can be tied together in the same way that people are now tied together by the Internet. For instance, picture a scenario where you misplace your TV remote and can find it because it is tagged and can be located through the Internet.

Cloud architectures have pros and cons, of course. People can easily and conveniently take advantage of larger amounts of storage and computing power. Centrally located information is more easily accessed, reachable through any compatible device a user wishes to implement. The cloud can provide a back-up to locally stored data, and it allows people to easily share their data with others.

A wide variety of reliability, compatibility, privacy, and security concerns come into play, however, as people put their information under the control of strangers in remote locations anytime they trust in “the cloud.” Survey respondents cited diverse concerns such as security problems and more exposure of private information to governments, corporations, thieves, opportunists, and human and machine error. They expressed concerns that cloud dominance by a small number of large firms may constrict the Internet’s openness and its capacity to inspire innovation. In the cloud, people are giving up some degree of choice and control in exchange for streamlined simplicity.

There are also factors that may limit the future development of the cloud. Will there be enough broadband spectrum to handle the load if everyone is using the cloud? The variability of cost and access in different parts of the world and the difficulties that lie ahead before the ideal of affordable access anywhere, anytime can be reached could be a problem. Complex legal issues may prove inhibiting, including cross-border intellectual property and privacy conflicts.

I guess we’ll just have to hang around and see what happens, but it seems a sure bet that more and more of us will be there – in cyberspace. To read the Pew report in its entirety, go to <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/The-future-of-cloud-computing.aspx>.

## Ask Tech Support

**Question:** Can my neighbors see my WiFi if I can see theirs? If so, can they access my network?

**Answer:** If you are close enough to see your neighbor's wireless network, most probably they can also see yours. They cannot access your network if your router is secured. Make sure that you change your default password to something strong. You might even want to consult a random password generator like the one at <http://strongpasswordgenerator.com/>.



Next add a WEP or WPA key and make sure you write it down, storing it in a place where you are sure you will be able to locate it. A WEP key is a 10-digit hexadecimal code. You will use the numbers 0-9 and the letters A-F. A WPA key, commonly found on newer modems, is a 16-digit code that offers more freedom about the type of characters you can use. Either code is only as good as the password you create; you may want to use the password generator in this instance as well.

## Sites to See

<http://awkwardfamilyphotos.com>

Awkward Family Photos: Spreading the Awkwardness

Childhood friends Mike and Doug began this laugh-out-loud funny blog after Mike saw an awkward vacation photo hung in his parents' home. They realized there were probably plenty of other people out there with their own awkward family images, and decided to create a place where everyone could come together and share their uncomfortable family moments. The first posts were their own childhood photos and those provided by friends. The site took off to become an Internet sensation, receiving millions of hits daily and submissions from around the world.

<http://honeyrockdawn.com>

Honey Rock Dawn

Shreve Stockton has been blogging about Charlie, her pet coyote, on The Daily Coyote for a couple of years now. In order to devote time to the rest of her "family" and other aspects of her life, she began this new weblog. Stockton details her life in a one-room cabin in Wyoming with companions Charlie, the coyote; Eli, the cat; Daisy, the cow; Sir Baby, the bull; and other four-footed friends. The content is eclectic. You can watch Stockton's dream unfold as she mixes stories of the animals with poetry, instructions on how to build a fence, "trailing" cows and the beauties of Wyoming.

<http://www.moonzoo.org/>

Moon Zoo

Moon Zoo is another citizen science project, this time from NASA. The aim of Moon Zoo is to provide detailed crater counts for as much of the Moon's surface as possible. NASA is asking the public to join in the project. The participants look at new high-resolution images of the moon, taken by NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera. They then answer questions about how many and what kind of craters they've seen. The site is extensive, but easy to navigate - you can view a crater and boulder tutorial, do a bit of reading about the moon and then start mapping out the landscape of the moon as you see it. No real special training is required, and your exploration and classification will become a real part of our body of knowledge about the moon.

<http://www.epassportphoto.com/>

ePassport Photo

Billed as the "Internet passport photo booth", this free service allows you to create your own valid passport photo in a few easy steps, saving both time and money. All you need is a digital camera and a computer. First take a photograph following the guidelines the site provides. The web site formats your photos to the correct, compliant size. Print the photos on your own high quality photographic paper, or take it on disk to a local photo store. You can also follow links to online photo printing services that will provide hard copies for free as part of the signup offer. The ePassport Photo system supports the exact government requirement of over 60 countries, from Albania to Zimbabwe. According to the site, ePassport Photo was established in 2005 and has served over two million users from 200 different countries and territories.

<http://www.criminalsearches.com/default.aspx>

Criminal Searches

Whether your inquiry is frivolous or serious, this web site will let you run a criminal history check on anyone for free. The site draws information from the court systems of all fifty states. Offenses are categorized as behavioral, business, drug and alcohol, sex-related, theft or robbery, violent, traffic and other. Fill out first and last name and state to get started. An advanced search option requires a more detailed knowledge about the individual you are searching.



## **Did Lightning Damage Your Modem?**

**\$19 in Store; \$39 On-Site**

Get back online with the K-Force. Includes installation of an internal modem with the latest software drivers. Modem purchased separately. PC operating system must be Windows XP or newer.

## Mini-Tutorial: Customize Your Mouse Pointer

With Windows, you can customize how your mouse pointer looks, including picking its shape, speed, and visibility. With a little tweaking, you can make the pointer more “user friendly”. You can also set the pointer up so you can locate it with one click when it’s gone missing.



### Windows 7

1. Click the **Start** button, and then click **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Hardware and Sound**, and then under **Devices and Printers**, click **Mouse**.
3. **In the Mouse Properties** box, click on the "Pointers" and "Pointer Options" tab, and adjust options.
4. In the "Pointers" tab, you can change the shape and size of your cursor by changing the "scheme."
5. In the "Pointer Options" tab, you can change the speed, visibility, and other characteristics of your pointer.

### Windows Vista

1. Click the **Start** button, click **Control Panel**, and then click **Control Panel Home**.
2. Click **Ease of Access**.
3. Under **Ease of Access Center**, click **Change how your mouse works**.

Follow these instructions to enlarge the pointer and change its color.

### Windows 7

1. Click the **Start** button, click **Control Panel**, and then click **Ease of Access**.
2. Under **Ease of Access Center**, click **Change how your mouse works**.
3. Make the changes you want, and click **OK**.

### Windows Vista

1. Click the **Start** button, click **Control Panel**, and then click **Control Panel Home**.
2. Under **Hardware and Sound**, click **Mouse**.
3. In the **Mouse Properties** dialog box, click the **Pointers** tab, and then, under **Customize**, select an option or click **Browse**.

4. Click **OK**.

It happens...you've lost the pointer. Instead of frantically rolling the mouse in a circle, you can change your settings so that you can find your pointer in the future by clicking your mouse.

### Windows 7

1. Click the **Start** button, and then click **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Hardware and Sound**, click **Devices and Printers**, and then click **Mouse**.
3. In the **Mouse Properties** box, click the **Pointer Options** tab.
4. Under **Visibility**, select the **Show location of pointer when I press the CTRL key** check box, and then click **OK**.

### Windows Vista

1. Click the **Start** button, and then click **Control Panel**, and then click **Control Panel Home**.
2. Under **Hardware**, click **Mouse**.
3. In the **Mouse Properties** box, click the **Pointer Options** tab.
4. Under **Visibility**, select the **Show location of pointer when I press the CTRL key** check box, and then click **OK**.

After you complete these steps in Windows 7 and Vista, just press the CTRL key whenever you need to find the pointer, and it will appear.

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