

ProAgent Magazine: East Bay Edition
The Tech Guy b: Darrell Gray



www.ProAgentMagazine.com

ProAgent

MAGAZINE

For and About Bay Area
Real Estate Professionals

As green as it gets
A PAPERLESS
PUBLICATION

Lori & Alice
Top Pros

Secret Ingredients of
Successful Agents

Auto Reviews for Realtors

Have Courage

5 Ways to Save Money on
Computers and Phones

My View

A Word of Caution

MARCH 2009 | EAST BAY

www.ProAgentMagazine.com

FOR INFORMATION

Bob Salmon
Executive Publisher
t: 209.572.3831 f: 323.679.0381
Bob.Salmon@ProAgentMagazine.com

Sadhna Perez
Publisher
t: 209.572.3831 f: 323.679.0381
Sadhna.Perez@ProAgentMagazine.com

Tracy Laughlin
Associate Publisher
t: 925.872.0400
Tracy@ProAgentMagazine.com

PUBLISHER

ProAgent Magazine, Inc.

3428 Saginaw Court
Modesto, CA 95355
Phone (209) 572-3831
Fax (323) 679-0381
Bob.Salmon@proagentmagazine.com

President/CEO
Bob Salmon

Vice President
Sadhna Perez

Associate Publisher
Tracy Laughlin

Chief Financial Officer
Robert Farrace

Production Coordinator
Mary Parag

Accounting
Francisco Perez

Webmaster
Casey Salmon

Web Site Development
Zanna Pelczynski

NOTICES

COPYRIGHT ProAgent Magazine, Inc. ProAgent Magazine is copyrighted and protected per the U.S. Government Copyright Act of 1976, Amended 1998—Title 17 U.S.C. § 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200. Any duplication or reproduction in part or whole of materials from ProAgent Magazine without written authorization from ProAgent Magazine, Inc. will be in direct violation of Federal Copyright Law and is expressly prohibited. **SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Distributed free to REALTORS® and real estate affiliates online. **LIABILITY:** While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of published materials, ProAgent Magazine cannot be held responsible for opinions expressed or facts reported by its writers, advertisers, and/or feature story subjects.

ProAgent

For and About Bay Area
Real Estate Professionals

MAGAZINE



PROFILES

- 26 Elaine Berlin White**
Top Pro Agent
By Labeña Gonzales-Figueroa



EDITORIAL

- 04 We Need Some Good News**
By Bob Salmon
- 06 The Secret Ingredients of Successful Agents**
By Bob Corcoran
- 10 How to Maintain an Unstoppable Market**
By Christy Crouch



- 12 Secrets of my Success**

- 14 A Word of Caution**
By Dirk Zeller

- 16 440 Bits and Pieces**
By Jim Randel

- 18 The Bay Area Insider**



- 24 The Tech Guy**
By Darrell Gray

- 32 Auto Reviews for REALTORS®**
By Charles Donaldson

- 36 Profit by Publicity**
By Edward Segal



- 38 Real Estate Marketing Strategies**
By Maya Bailey

- 40 Seven Sins of Dirt Deals**
By Michael Williamsen

- 42 Have Courage; Hold On, This Will All
Be Past Us Soon**
By Richard Paille



- 44 Understanding the Foreclosure Process**
By Robert Farrace

- 48 Your Full Value: Do Your Clients Know It?**
By Sandy Geroux



- 50 My View, From Lake Tahoe**
By Scott Tiesche

- 52 Short Sale Administrator Interfering With
Your Commission?**
By Walter Sanford

- 56 Online Marketing**
By Scott Pierce

MARCH 2009 | NORTH BAY

By Darrell Gray

The Tech Guy

Five ways to Save Money on Your Computers and Phones

Have you ever added up what your office spends on computers, phones, and other technology? Don't. It won't make you happy. Instead, focus on reducing those expenses with these easy technology fixes.



Darrell Gray

1) Convert your phones to VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol)—Internet-based phone service has finally arrived. Call quality and signal consistency are better than cell phones, and almost as good as land lines. Vonage and others offer “all you can talk” flat fee packages covering local and long-distance, plus the usual ups and extras like voice mail and call forwarding. You may have to buy a small VoIP box, but it's easy to install and quickly

pays for itself.

Rough cost savings: \$40 per month per person

2) Switch to online data backup—Most companies have one of two data backup strategies: the “I hope strategy” (as in, “I hope I never need backup data because I've never backed up my data.”) Or, the “I can't believe it costs this much but I gotta do it strategy,” paying a data storage company more than seems reasonable for monthly offsite backups. Neither strategy is optimum. Online data backup, using a company like Carbonite or Mozy, is quick to set up, easy to use, secure, and inexpensive at roughly \$50 per computer per year.

Rough cost savings: Between \$30 per month and priceless (depending on your current strategy)

3) Change your web hosting company—If you are paying more than \$5-6 per month for web hosting you may be paying too much. Most

hosting companies' basic service should meet your needs if you have a traditional website. We've found that BlueHost and Lunarpages work well for many small and mid-sized businesses.

Rough cost savings: \$15+ per month

4) Buy a Netbook rather than a notebook—If you are in the market for a new computer, explore Netbooks. Netbooks are small, light, easy to carry, and include all the basics for e-mail and web-browsing. They are made by well-regarded companies like Dell and HP. Best of all, they are less than half the price of a notebook PC.

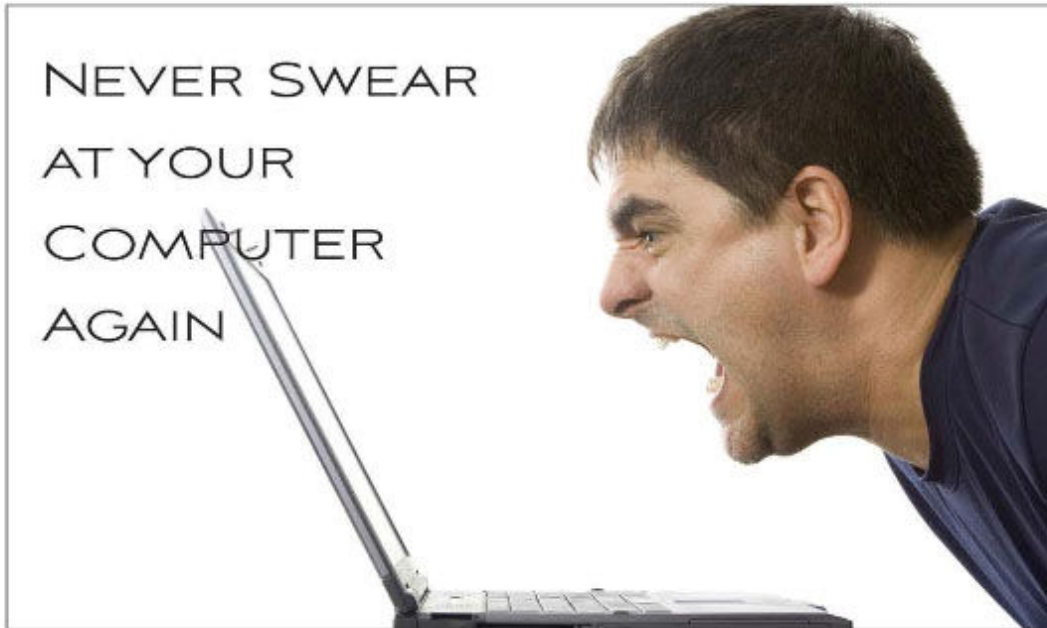
Rough cost savings: \$600+ per computer

5) Use Google Docs instead of Microsoft Office—Bill Gates has plenty of money. There is no need for you to give him more. Instead of buying Microsoft Office for new computers, use Google Docs. The online suite includes programs that work like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Google Docs files can be opened in Microsoft Office. Even better, all your Google Docs files are stored online, so other users (including those with the Netbooks you just purchased in step 4) can easily access them.

Rough cost savings: \$300 per user

If you start making these changes today, you will be saving money by the end of the month. Look for our next article—which will feature more ways to reduce your technology expenses without reducing your productivity

Darrell Gray is the President of Networkistics, an IT firm that specializes in providing technology solutions and services to growing businesses. He has over 20 years experience in information technology, hardware, and software engineering. You can reach Darrell for computer and technology advice at Darrell@Networkistics.com or 925-249-9880. www.Networkistics.com



Instead Call Networkistics. We are experts at setting up and fixing computers and networks. Whether you have a computer that is running too slowly, e-mail that doesn't reliably work, or a network that won't always let you print or access the Internet, we can fix it. We can also help you with curse-free computing by:

- Removing viruses and installing virus protection software
- Setting up and maintaining secure wireless networks
- Designing easy ways to back up your data
- Securing your network with firewalls
- Supporting and maintaining your server
- Helping you choose the right new computers
- Establishing secure remote access
- Doing everything else you need to keep your PCs and Macs running smoothly

CONTACT NETWORKISTICS NOW!
WE WILL CHANGE YOUR PROFANITY TO SANITY.



IT Solutions and Services

925-249-9980 Info@Networkistics.com www.Networkistics.com