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“I can access the Internet. Why can't I get my e-mail?”

Internet Access, Web Hosting and E-Mail: What they mean to you.

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With the fairly recent introduction of low cost, high speed Internet access to most office buildings in Center city, having “always on” Internet Services has become the norm rather than the exception. From new features built into the operating systems alerting you of updates, to accessing legal research sites, to having a presence on the web, the Internet and your various access points to it have grown increasingly more vital to your everyday business.

While all this technology seems great, and wow is it making life easier, there are a few key points that you as a consumer should be aware of in reference to how your various Internet Services fit, overlap and why one can work while others seem hopelessly unreliable.

Internet Service Provider

The Internet Service Provider or ISP is probably your most important service provider, this is your gateway to the World Wide Web. Without internet access, you can not send Internet Mail or do legal research.

Common ISPs we work with include Erols (now RCN) and Bee.net. They are often used for dial-up or single user access. These ISPs may also be used for a roaming user who access the network from the road or possibly at home.

Eziaz (formerly Siteline), CAIS, OnSite Access and Digex are some of the providers we use for High speed dedicated Internet access. You may see signs for these companies in the lobby of your building. Think of these companies as entrance ramps on a highway.

E-Mail Hosting

E-mail is a tricky subject! There are various services that overlap when dealing with e-mail. Unlike at home where e-mail and internet access are integrated, they are independent functions in the Business environment. ISPs, web hosting, and in many times your own server, have a hand in how your e-mail is routed. While that is true, your “mailbox” may be maintained by an entirely different service provider or again housed on your very own mail server.

Often times, with *PHONEslips* especially, your ISP can not provide the mail services compatible with the mail package retrieval process, so we pass that job to a different Service Provider.

Domain Name Services

Approximately every two years, you will receive an invoice from Network Solutions for Domain Name registration. This is nearly the equivalent of maintaining your car registration, except it is for your domain name (eg. www.lansultants.com). They hold the deed to your piece of the Internet. When you receive an invoice from Network Solutions, pay it promptly! If not paid promptly, they could cancel your Domain Name Services. This will interrupt e-mail, and could allow someone else to grab and re-register your domain name!