

Connected

JANUARY 2017

It's Time to Save Yourself Time

When the clock strikes midnight, resolve to make 2017 the year you get the most out of every minute. After all, time is our most precious resource.



Chariton Valley offers services to help you maximize your time including internet, Paperless Billing, Auto-Payment, and computer maintenance. When you let us provide solutions like these, you'll have more time for the people and activities you value most.

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Chariton Valley Computer and Network Solutions
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1206 N Missouri, Macon
Mon - Fri 8 am - 5 pm
Email: cvcns@charitonvalley.com
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*This is a residential only offer at this time. Credit will be applied for each new qualifying service category, not multiple lines, boxes, service upgrades, etc. Eligible service categories are Telephone, Internet and Video. Bill credit will be applied after 61 days of service. Wireless Phone and Wireless Home Internet services are excluded from this promotion. Speeds not available in all areas.

Cold-Weather Care for Your Mobile Devices

Mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, don't like cold weather. When a lithium-ion battery is exposed to cold temperatures, it can drain faster than normal or indicate it has ample power remaining and then suddenly go dead. Low temperatures can also make a device's glass surfaces more sensitive to cracks and breaks, especially if there's already a nick.

Here's what to do:

- To keep your device from getting too cold, don't leave it alone for long in frigid places such as a parked car. It's best to stash it inside pockets closest to your person, where it can absorb some of your body heat.
- In the event your device does shut down, do not restart it until you're inside and have given it time to warm up. Restarting immediately could actually cause more harm and shorten your battery life.
- Cases also help to keep devices warm. You may want to consider the cases designed to regulate a phone's temperature in extreme weather.

To learn more, consult the manufacturer's website.



Beginner's Guide to Streaming Movies and TV Shows

If you haven't yet jumped on the streaming bandwagon, this article is for you! It covers the basics to help you get started enjoying this entertainment technology.



What is streaming?

Streaming is content sent in compressed form in a continuous stream over the internet and played as it arrives. The user does not have to wait to download a file to play it.

What devices are needed?

You can watch streaming movies and TV shows on your smartphone, tablet, laptop, desktop computer, HDTV, or "smart TV." For example, you could connect your laptop to your HDTV with an HDMI cable and stream on your laptop and watch on the TV screen. If you have a "smart TV," it has built-in apps (and app stores) and networking to get on the internet. You can use them to download most of the streaming apps you'd want.

What streaming apps are available?

You have many options here, too. Here are a few of the most popular ones:

- **Netflix** – You can watch past seasons of TV shows and recent movies at a low monthly cost. Netflix also offers original shows such as *Orange is the New Black* and *House of Cards*.
- **Amazon** – This streaming service is available to Amazon Prime members. Like Netflix, it offers many TV shows and movies to choose from as well as its own original content.
- **Hulu Plus** – You can get next-day access to shows from ABC, NBC, Fox, and CW, along with some cable channels. Hulu Plus also offers some movies and original TV shows.
- **Dish's Sling TV** – Sling TV offers about 20 channels in its basic package including ESPN, ABC Family, AMC, and Food Network but no broadcast channels like CBS or NBC. Add-on packages for sports, movies, kids, lifestyles, and world news are also available.
- **HBO Now** – New episodes are available through apps about the same time they are shown on TV. Current and past seasons of most HBO shows are available on demand, as well as hundreds of movies.

What are the internet requirements?

For a good streaming experience, you'll probably want internet download speeds of 75 Mbps or more.

Call 660.395.9000 or visit www.cvalley.net for details on the internet speeds we have available.

How to Spot Ransomware and Avoid This Common Threat

Ransomware is a type of malicious software (malware) that cyber criminals can install on your computer, enabling them to hold your files for ransom. They use a variety of means to do this, including email attachments, fake websites, and phony ads. They're counting on you opening their attachment, or clicking on links within their emails or on a website. But, no need to feel foolish if you've ever done this — the fakes can be very convincing.

One of the latest ransomware scams is called Fantom, and it's particularly harmful. Here's why:

- It poses as a Windows update that you need to install.
- It looks realistic, complete with the Microsoft copyright and "critical update" file name.
- It locks up all your files and prevents you from using your computer while it's "downloading."

Once it's installed, you'll receive a notice informing you that your files have been encrypted, and you need to pay a ransom before the criminals will unencrypt them. You can pay the ransom, and the bad guys *may* unencrypt your files. A better strategy is to ignore the request for a ransom and just restore your backed up files; this is one reason regular backups are so important.

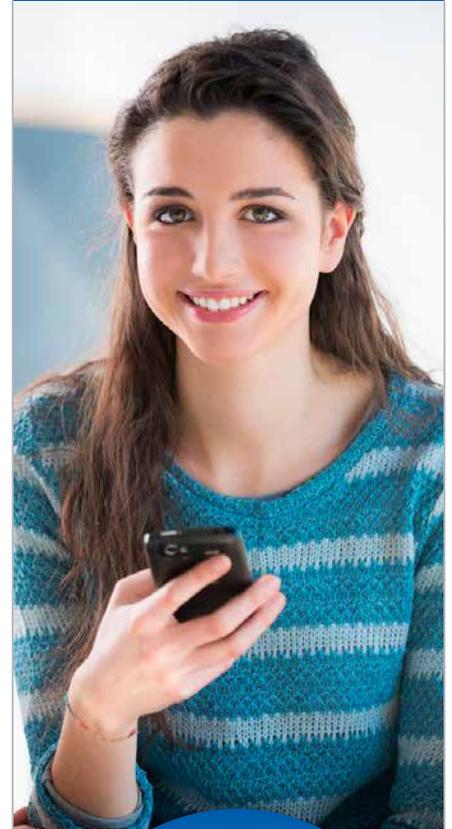
But the best strategy is to avoid ransomware in the first place. You can do this by installing a strong computer security system. In addition, follow all the standard online safety rules:

- Don't open email attachments or click on links within emails from unfamiliar senders.
- Stick to well-known websites, and be thoughtful about where you click.
- Don't accept file transfers from unknown sources.
- Keep your applications up to date (with the real updates your system provides).
- Never give personal information, such as login data, to someone calling you from out of the blue. If it's a company you do business with, always call them back at a number you already know.

To learn about the computer security and backup services available from Chariton Valley, call 660.395.9000.



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3 Tech Resolutions to Make in 2017

Don't forget about technology when making New Year's resolutions. It could save you tons of time and trouble in the coming year.

- 1. I will back up my data.** Consider the vast amount of personal data (some of it irreplaceable) stored on your devices. What happens to these files if someone steals your laptop, your hard drive fails, or there's a nasty virus? It's imperative to back up your data regularly, either through an external hard drive or cloud storage.
- 2. I will keep my software and operating system updated.** Software makers continually update their programs to fix problems or add more functionality. If you have the option for "automatic" updates—in software such as your operating system, internet security programs, and Web browser—click to accept this feature.
- 3. I will fight back against spam.** You can greatly reduce the amount of spam you receive by employing a combination of strategies. Check your email or webmail program to see what your options are for junk mail filters, and bump up your filters so they keep more spam out of your inbox.

6 Tips for Improved App Security

There's an app for virtually everything these days, and their power and convenience make us love our mobile devices even more. You can reduce the odds that cyber criminals will succeed in their plots by following these tips:

- 1. Always download apps from a secure, trusted source.** If you're uncertain about an app, do a quick search under the publisher's name and look for many apps with good reviews and lots of downloads.
- 2. Choose only popular apps.** Apps that have been downloaded a lot aren't likely to be poisoned.
- 3. Think carefully before authorizing any access.** For example, some apps use geo-location services. If you allow an app to know your location, you may be allowing the creator of that app to track your movements.
- 4. Stay current with updates.** Apps are updated by their developers to fix the weaknesses that cybercriminals exploit. Monitor your app stores and update your apps at least monthly.
- 5. Do not allow your mobile device to save your app store credentials, login information, or payment information.** Although convenient, this information may be available to, or misused by, hackers.
- 6. Watch your wireless bill.** Some rogue apps do things like cause you to unwittingly subscribe to ring tones. Review your wireless bill thoroughly each month.

Remember, arming yourself with knowledge is your best defense against the security threats posed by apps.

Save Time And Money...

Sign Up For Paperless Billing

And Get A \$5 Credit*



One-time credit will be applied after 61st day of service. Must have a valid email address. Call for complete details.

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