



Summer 2015

## Newsletter

### Testing Times at BlueLoop

Over the last few months, **BlueLoop** has been carrying out a number of testing regimes on behalf of some of our customers. These tests have been aimed at the security, compliance and resilience of both customer Websites and their Email systems.

In much the same way as how an individual or business will have a Credit Worthiness Rating or Score, similar industry benchmarks are being established covering the resilience, security and compliance of these systems.

Setting up a new website today is a fairly routine exercise but many "out of the box" solutions just don't have the appropriate levels of security for businesses. If you plan to or already take payments on your website, then you are automatically obliged to comply with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard, often referred to as **PCI** compliant. This is only really a starting point and your test scores on both Websites and Email systems will become more and more important in the coming months and years and will develop into yardsticks that have a clear link to business success.

Companies will increasingly seek assurances that it is safe doing business with a company through these scoring mechanisms, so you don't want to be left behind. **BlueLoop** have the tools and skillset to test your systems rigorously and to get your Website and Email system scores up to the highest levels.

If you would like to discuss Website & Email System security tests please call **Jon** on **01460 271055** for an informal chat.

### SFM Technology Limited of Martock

**SFM Technology Limited** is a relatively new customer of **BlueLoop**. Here's what Helen Richards, **SFM Group Marketing** has had to say about the journey so far:

"We came to **BlueLoop** as disgruntled customers of another IT Company and given our bad previous experience were very scared of making the wrong decision. After interviewing 3 local companies it was clear that **BlueLoop** (for our specific needs) had the edge by far. I researched by speaking to existing customers and we met with Robin on two occasions before making our decision. We haven't regretted our decision for a moment. The



patience and skill with which the **BlueLoop** team is unravelling our IT debacle is of biblical proportions... Calm and confident in their approach we have had the utmost faith in **BlueLoop** from day one and I genuinely feel that **SFM** has found its IT partner for life."

### Superfast Broadband - Somerset

**BlueLoop** have been active members of the Somerset Chamber of Commerce for over 10 years now and have always been impressed with their efforts and lobbying to improve Broadband speeds to Somerset businesses. We were delighted therefore to read in the recent Chamber Newsletter that Superfast Broadband (Fibre) has finally arrived at the Blackbrook Business Park in Taunton where the Chamber have their offices.

Having a fast and reliable broadband service is such a boon to business productivity and merely on an IT perspective it opens up the possibilities of true Cloud or hybrid operation, Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephony and In-flight & Off-site backups.

Over the coming weeks and months, High-speed Broadband & Fibre will be rolled out to a number of other Somerset locations including:

- Lufton Trading Estate, Yeovil
- Linen Yard, Crewkerne
- Furnham Road Trading Estate, Chard



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- Stream Business Park, Wells
- Old Brewery, Shepton Mallet
- Cheddar Business Park

One final word of warning though. High-speed Broadband and Fibre availability is still subject to exact locations and is dependent on both availability and proximity to an appropriately enabled exchange.

If you would like **Blueloop** to investigate exactly what speeds and services are available to your business please call Andrew with your full address and postcode on **01460 271055**.

## A busy month for Microsoft

July 2014 will go down as a significant month for **Microsoft** with the end of one Server era (**Windows Server 2003**) and the launch of a significant desktop one (**Windows 10**).

### Windows Server 2003

**Microsoft** support for **Windows Server 2003** ends on July 14<sup>th</sup>. This really shouldn't come as a surprise to any customers as it has long been in the open arena and has been in the extended support phase from **Microsoft** since July 2010.

**Windows Server 2003** won't suddenly stop working, but if you still have one or more of those rogue, once a year applications that run on the platform you really do need to have a firm plan in place to move to a supported platform. The main reasons for this are as follows:

Security fixes will no longer be supplied by **Microsoft** making your systems more vulnerable to malicious attack.

As no technical support is available from **Microsoft** going forward, should you suffer a system outage then for restoration of systems and data, having a **Blueloop** Support Contract in place would be a prudent move.

Application vendors (**ISVs**) are likely to be slightly more helpful should problems occur but will already be working on a grace and favour basis (along with associated costs) for a platform that is 11 years old.

And finally, should you be in an industry that has regulatory compliance requirements such as the Healthcare or Payment Card Industries (**PCI**), then you are likely to be "out of compliance" and may face fines and/or being cut off from key trading partners.

Don't despair though as there are many migration routes available for your business, just pick up the

phone to **Darryn or Andrew on 01460 271055** for an informal chat.

## Windows 10

The release date for **Windows 10** in the UK is July 29<sup>th</sup> and the good news is that there will be free upgrades available to customers already running **Windows 7** and **Windows 8.1**. (if upgraded in the first year).

The **Microsoft** strap-line for **Windows 10** is "**One product family, one platform, one store**", by which they mean there will no longer be split personality between modern apps and the "old" desktop. **Microsoft's** plan was for **Windows 10** to be unified across all types of devices (including phones) with screen sizes from 4 to 80 inches. However we don't believe that ARM-based **Surface** tablets will be upgradeable to **Windows 10**. Touch support however remains a **Microsoft** priority.

The **Start Menu** is back, and is split between **Windows 7 & 8** styles, giving the user the flexibility to customise the look and feel to their personal requirements. Back too, for the techies amongst you, is support for shortcuts such as CTRL+C and CTRL+V.

**Microsoft** have learnt from the customer experience of **Windows 8** so **Windows 10** is more intuitive to use, making users immediately productive.

## Au Revoir

It is with both sadness and pride that we have to announce that Rob Sartin will be leaving **Blueloop** in September. Sadness, as Rob was **Blueloop's** first apprentice but pride as Rob is taking the customer, business and IT skills gained at **Blueloop** on to his next challenge. This is a return to full-time study for an IT degree at Bristol University, specialising in Security, and with those skills we may well see him again. We send him off with all our very best wishes.



## Contact Blueloop

If you would like to discuss any of the items above in more detail or have any other IT related queries or issues, please call either **Darryn or Andrew on 01460 271055** for an informal chat.