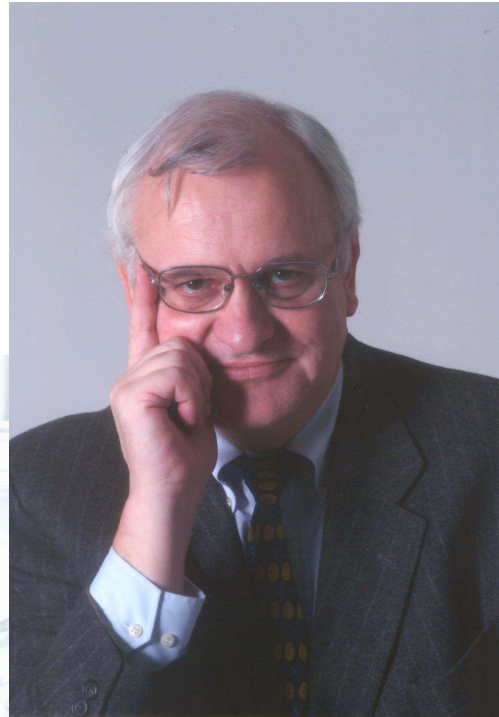


## **WIRELESS WONDERS**

Over the past 100 years the use of radio waves has transformed our lives in ways which would have been unimaginable even in Victorian days. More recently the use of wireless to connect networks of computers has enabled many new ways of working.



### ***Networking***

Networking computers by whatever means brings huge benefits in terms of sharing resources such as printers and internet connections. It makes it easier to backup the data on one computer onto another and vica-versa. It gives flexibility of use for hot-desking. Most businesses will have experienced these benefits for a number of years. The disadvantage of all this has been the need to have fixed cabling which is both expensive and inflexible.

### ***Benefits***

Modern wireless network systems are almost as fast as wired systems for a small network and are far more flexible. Are you just moving into an office but finding it hard to decide on the location of the desks? Consider wireless connections while you settle your layout. Do you use a laptop while you are out of the office but are fed up with fiddling with wires when you want to connect to the office LAN? Consider wireless. Do you need to operate portable machines in various parts of your building, in a warehouse for example. Consider wireless.

### ***Disadvantages***

So surely there are some disadvantages? Well, performance can be an issue where large numbers of computers are concerned. Some environments can be hostile to wireless networks, thick stone walls or some factory areas for example. Before you commit to expenditure on equipment it is worth surveying the site to ascertain whether it is likely to be suitable for wireless networking.

### ***Security***

The major concern with wireless networks is security. Never set up a network straight 'out of the box' it will work but will be open for all to use. This is the point at which we need to use some technical terms. At very least use 128 bit WEP encryption. If possible hide the SSID and restrict access from all but trusted computers (using the MAC address). If you have any doubts about your knowledge in this area take some professional advice.

Despite these concerns the benefits of more flexible working are huge and careful design and installation of wireless networking can bring you huge benefits.

## **Free help sheet**

For a free wireless networking help sheet email [itmatters@itsolve.co.uk](mailto:itmatters@itsolve.co.uk) stating whether your interest is in personal or business networks.

### **Handy Hint**

Do you ever send email forgetting the attachments? Try to get into the habit of adding the attachment *before* writing the cover sheet of the email. My friends and colleagues may laugh all they like, but I do *try* to do it.

This article was originally published in the Newbury Weekly News Business Review in June 2005.

*Charles Zealey is a consultant working with business professionals helping them to improve their organisation's productivity and effectiveness with the use of Information Technology. Typically a return on investment can be achieved with 6-12 months. To access help sheets go to [www.itsolve.co.uk/HelpSheets/](http://www.itsolve.co.uk/HelpSheets/). For a free half-hour consultation on business IT issues phone 01635 869863 or email [lisa@itsolve.co.uk](mailto:lisa@itsolve.co.uk).*

*This article is © Copyright ITSolve Ltd 2005-7. All rights reserved. You may copy or distribute this article in full as long as this copyright statement and full information about contacting the author is preserved. The author is Charles Zealey, ITSolve Ltd., [charles@itsolve.co.uk](mailto:charles@itsolve.co.uk). Telephone : 01635 869863.*

*To subscribe to our newsletter, IT in Focus, email [subscribe-it-in-focus@itsolve.co.uk](mailto:subscribe-it-in-focus@itsolve.co.uk). To 'unsubscribe' email [unsubscribe-it-in-focus@itsolve.co.uk](mailto:unsubscribe-it-in-focus@itsolve.co.uk) using the same email address as that from which you originally subscribed.*

*We keep our subscriber list in confidential. Whilst we aim to ensure that all out-going mail is scanned for viruses we recommend that you ensure that you are fully protected against all forms of malware attack. We only send our general bulletins to those we understand have given their express permission to receive them. ITSolve Ltd never release, sell or give a subscriber's e-mail address to any party outside of the organisation, except when referring business between individual subscribers. Our subscribers only receive email messages that contain requested information, new monthly articles or announcements of new services.*