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Parallax Solutions is an information technology consulting firm located in the Waterloo/Cedar Falls area. What we are trying to bring to the table is a clear understanding of how offices can utilize hardware and software to effectively manage their electronic information.

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I hope you have enjoyed this issue of our newsletter. If you are concerned that your network isn't living up to its potential, give us a call.

Sincerely,

Steve Bantz
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Featured Products

[Windows Server Update Service 3.0](#)

Issue: # 7

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Welcome to the latest edition of our technology newsletter. This month, we are covering Microsoft operating system updates and how to make sure that your workstations are getting them.

p.s.

Just a reminder that we archive all past newsletter issues on our website. You can view the archives by clicking [here](#).

Happy Holidays!

Keeping your workstations updated ...

Many of you received a security warning e-mail from us in mid-October regarding a critical update that needed to be applied to Microsoft operating systems. I am sure this left a few of you wondering whether your workstations are being updated on a regular basis to protect your network from OS borne security breaches.

There are a few ways to make sure your workstations are automatically updated. If you are in a very small network with no server to speak of, you can make sure to enable Automatic Updates on your workstation by paying a visit to the control panel. When prompted to install updates, do so and stay vigilant about it.

In medium to large size network environments, you have a couple of choices. For those of you familiar with Active Directory on the Windows Server operating systems, you can set a group policy that forces workstations to automatically download and install updates. This is a great way to ensure that your machines are actually getting it done with no user intervention required. Does this method work well in all environments? In short, no. Bear in mind that this allows each workstation to download their own updates, which means multiple downloads by multiple machines, all fetching the same content over the Internet. Sounds like a waste of bandwidth, doesn't it? I usually do not recommend this for networks with ten plus machines.

What if you have a server and more than ten machines? Fortunately, Microsoft has an answer and they have revamped their free Windows Server Update Service with version 3.0. This allows you to install the WSUS software on your server, thus allowing your server to download updates and distribute them to workstations or servers on your private network as needed. Having one central download point streamlines the process and it saves a ton of bandwidth. All you have to do is install and configure the software on the server and create a group policy in Active

Directory to have your workstations look to your local server for updates rather than the Internet Windows update servers.

WSUS 3.0 is MUCH better than past iterations. Now that it is an MMC snap-in, it is much easier to maintain and configure. You can see the update status of all machines from within the snap-in, making it easy to see how well you are doing. You can easily approve updates for install on "patch Tuesdays" or you can set the system to auto approve everything, making it totally hands off.

Make it easy on yourself. Try WSUS 3.0

If you are a current client of Parallax, you already have one of the above methods in place, protecting you from future exploits. This, along with anti-malware solutions are a standard part of any network we help maintain...

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