

Double C Tack-Just Keeps Growing

By Scott Laird

Dawn Carr never expected her business to grow quite this fast.

Carr is the owner of Double C Tack, a business she started this past June, which has expanded twice in those short six months. "I had never done retail before," said Carr. "I didn't really know what to expect."

Carr had worked as a nurse for twenty-three years, when the doctor she worked for unexpectedly closed up shop. While deciding what to do next, she was encouraged by Creatures (a pet store in Vernonia) owner Lisa Edgar to start her own tack shop. Carr, who has been riding horses since she was five years old, laughed off the idea at first, but then started doing some research. "I knew all the things I needed to carry-- It came pretty easy to me," said Carr. She spent about two months emailing wholesalers, and then went ahead and started up, renting a small area in the back of the Vernonia Florist half of Lisa and Ben Edgar's building that also houses Creatures at 736 Bridge Street.

Carr started with some saddles, tack and other equipment. The Edgars asked her to take over selling grains and feed they were carrying, and Carr made her first expansion, taking over another small adjacent area of the store. "I added supplements, farm equipment, hay and straw, bedding, even stove pellets," said Carr. "I've tried to add something new every week."



Dawn Carr, owner of Double C Tack

Carr recently put a waterproof goat blanket on display, and when a customer was returning a horse blanket that didn't fit, she saw the blanket and promptly ordered ten. "I only had the item in the store a couple of days and have taken orders for fourteen already," said Carr.

It seems like everything Carr has tried has worked. She began selling Hillsboro Feed, increasing what is now available in Vernonia, and has been moving it as fast as she can get it delivered, which necessitated another expansion. Ben Edgar removed a wall and expanded the area that is dedicated to Double C Tack, installing metal racks for the feed, and giving Carr more area to grow.



Carr has used her connections in the horse community to build a customer base. She has been a 4-H leader for nine years and involved with OHSET--the Oregon High School Equestrian Team--for six, but notes that she sees customers she has never met before every week. Last year, she started her own 4-H group and increased membership from four to fifteen in one year.

"I try to treat customers the way I would want to be treated myself," said Carr. Her great attitude, and love for riding also seem to come through when dealing with customers. "I look forward to being here everyday. I don't mind special-ordering things for people. I like helping find what my customers want, and trying to find ways to save them money."

Carr has been running monthly specials, picking out new items to feature each month, which has helped increase traffic through the store. She is now carrying American Saddlery, Tex-Tan and Saddle King products, has a number of new and used saddles in both western and English styles, and continues to look for new products that will meet the needs of her customers.



The next time you stop in, she will probably have had to expand again.

Intruder Alert-- Safe Computing Practices: What You Should Know About Adware and Spyware

By Burt Tschache

At the end of last month's column, I promised to increase your understanding of adware, spyware, phishing and spoofing scams and how you can protect yourself from being taken advantage of by cyber-criminals.

Adware and **spyware** are forms of resident computer programs that were originally designed to monitor your online computer activity so advertising could be driven your way that would be suitable for your personal interests. Hence, you might be more inclined to purchase said products. That is one of the ways money is made on the Internet and the Internet is about making money.

As long as that was all the programs did, that was fine. However, some of these programs dig a little deeper in the well and serve up your personal information that you have stored on your computer. One of the ways you can protect yourself is to encrypt any personal information. There are programs that will do this for you and they are worth checking into if preserving your personal data is important. The better computer security suites will protect your personal data, also.

Another issue that has occurred with adware and spyware is the insertion of viruses into the programs. The most popular are Worms and Trojans. Last month, I mentioned BotNets, and adware and spyware are the main proliferators of BotNets.

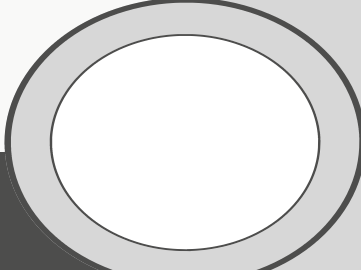
As an aside, November 11, the plug was pulled on a major Internet spammer and controller of several of the major BotNets. The amount of Internet Spam dropped by 65% as McColo, a large Internet hosting and service provider, was disconnected from the Internet. No charges have been filed, as yet. McColo operates under the premise that what their clients do is the clients' business, and not theirs to monitor.

There are also pieces of adware and spyware that have been adapted to take over your computer and prevent you from doing anything. Others, called keyloggers, will record your keystrokes and send them off to who knows where. There are even adware and spyware programs that are themselves adware and spyware. That is why it is good to go with known protection.

One of the best free ones is AdAware. They also have a paid version that installs a resident scanner. Another good free one is SpyBot. If you run both of them, they will catch most of the problems as long as you keep them up to date. Just make sure that you only install ONE resident scanner or else your computer performance will degrade.

Well, it looks like I will have to get into phishing and spoofing next month. As you can see, there is a great deal to keeping your computer safe, but once you do it and keep it up to date, you will be pretty safe.

Burt Tschache is the owner of B&B Computing in Vernonia. He can be reached at bnb998@msn.com or 503-429-0817.

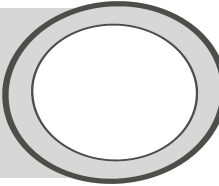



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