

Cobourg Internet

Newsletter to Customers

January 2010 Newsletter #24

Internet Reliability

There are various levels of reliability in the Internet and communication generally. The actual numbers vary tremendously, but a good estimate of them is as follows:

	Reliability	Outages	Comments
Home phone:	99.999%	5 minutes per year	
Long Distance:	99.98%	19 minutes per year	
Web site up time:	99.95%	4 hours per year	Worse for overloaded servers
Internet service provider – phone (e.g. bell, eagle)	99.9%	9 hours per year	This applies to VOIP phones as well. Mostly line and modem problems.
Internet service provider – cable (e.g. Cogeco)	99.8%	17 hours per year	Problems are mostly in winter. Mostly cable and modem problems.
Internet service provider – wireless (e.g. airnet, xplornet)	99.4%	52 hours per year	Can be worse if there are installation or equipment problems

Of course the problem is that outages tend to occur in clumps. An outage of 1 minute per day, every day, around 2:00am is not as aggravating as 2 hours at 7:00pm 4 or 5 times a year. They also vary with individual users - you may never have an outage yet someone else is often off-line.

Because I need to be always on and available, recent Cogeco outages have forced me to also sign up for Bell Internet service. That means I can always be on-line. With 2 independent services, the outages drop to 2 minutes per year. If internet service is very important for your business, that's what you have to do - even though it causes problems with emails.

Web site Server performance

The response of the server to requests depends primarily on the CPU and the RAM. For simple page requests, this is not very demanding but anything with a script such as a blog, mailing program or forum uses the server computing power. Also, processing mail and cleaning out spam takes computer power. Like your home computer, this power depends on the CPU and the RAM. The server at Cobourg Internet (CobourgHost.com), has a dual core so has plenty of CPU power and if the memory required is more than what's available, then it will use virtual memory - that is, memory based on the disk. However, this is much slower and slows down the performance. I noticed that the server was using a lot of virtual memory, especially for mail, so I arranged to have the memory (RAM) doubled. This was done overnight on Dec 4/5. You probably won't notice any difference - but I thought you might like to know.

Client Information page

To see all previous newsletters plus articles referenced, go to this page.

www.cobourginternet.com/webnewsletters.htm This page can also be accessed from the Cobourg Internet web site from the main menu. See also www.cobourginternet.com/support.htm for information you might need.

John Draper

Note. To see this email (and others) formatted properly, you should ensure your email program is set to HTML and not plain text formatting. The reliability table will show as jumbled text if you are using plain text. And many other emails will look dull! Go ahead, be brave, go play with the email settings! But if you don't have a good anti-virus program, first fix that problem!