

TOP PRODUCER COACHING & TRAINING

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Certified Professional 2009 **Top Producer 8i** Certified Trainer **Top Producer**

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TOP PRODUCER 8i e-mail newsletter for February 2011 from Dwight Kitchens

Please deliver this subscription newsletter to :

As you open TOP PRODUCER 8i today, you should notice that new features have been added. Take a moment to view the videos describing these changes. You should be pleased with these improvements.

Possibly you missed that January was 'National Clean Up Your Computer Month'. If so, don't worry. It didn't get much attention, which kept many malware vendors pleased. But, it is not too late to participate on a personal level. Speed up your computer by removing malware, trash, duplicate files, and enjoy working with a machine which responds near new. This is your personal 12-step computer maintenance program. While you can certainly purchase programs to do this automatically, the free versions work well but take a little more effort on your part.

- First: Insure that you have a backup (just in case).
- Second: Update your antivirus software and run a full scan.
- Third: Run the Windows Update for your operating system, installing appropriate changes (update.microsoft.com)
- Fourth: Run your computer manufacturer's update routine (specific to your brand)
- Fifth: Use the free SlimDrivers (www.driverupdate.net) routine to check for updated drivers needed for your computer.
- Sixth: Use Secunia PSI to update many of your installed programs:
http://secunia.com/vulnerability_scanning/personal/
- Seventh: Use Cnet Tech Tracker to update other installed programs and shareware:
<http://www.cnet.com/techtracker-free/>
- Eighth: Run Malwarebytes as a supplement to your antivirus program:

<http://www.malwarebytes.org/mbam.php>

Ninth: Run CCleaner: <http://www.piriform.com/>

Tenth: Run Auslogics Duplicate Finder:

<http://www.auslogics.com/en/software/duplicate-file-finder/>

Eleventh: Run Advanced System Care 3: <http://iobit.com/advancedsystemcarepro.html>

Twelfth: Run Smart Defrag 2 set to 'defrag and fully optimize':

<http://iobit.com/iobitsmartdefrag.html>

Upon completion, your computer should now be as up-to-date as possible, both for the operating system and most programs, have your registry as clean as possible, and have a better organized hard disk drive.

Dwight

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Check www.DwightKitchens.com for the latest details.

Please forward a copy of this newsletter to friends using TOP PRODUCER 8i.

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1. Girls Night Out

During a Columbus, Ohio class, a REALTOR asked how to rectify a problem she had with here database. It seems as if she sponsors one or two 'Girls' Nights Out' each year. She wants to invite only the female species to the event, but the standard Contact Record's salutation is made for both partners. How does she resolve this issue?

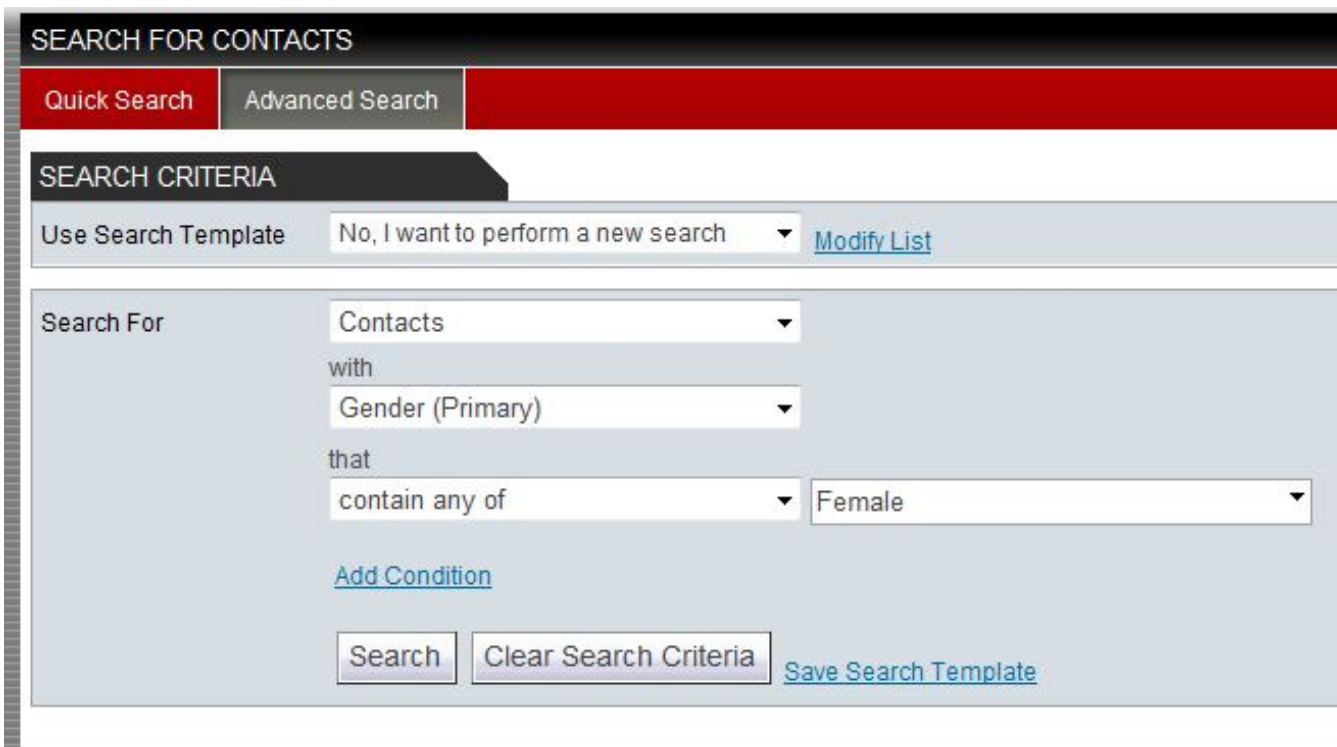
First, I suggest that databases should always be built with consistency. Therefore, my recommendation is that MALES always be listed as the first person in a two person family, and the FEMALES be listed second. While you could reverse this rule, still, consistency should be the name of the game.

Procedural rules:

- a. MALES are listed first (an arbitrary rule). No need to click the button for MALE under gender. It is assumed.
2. For a Contact Record which has only one client, and that person is a FEMALE, do click the FEMALE gender button.
3. For a Contact Record with two FEMALES, do click the FEMALE gender button for the primary contact, and we assume that the second person is FEMALE.
4. Identify couples by adding a Contact Type of 'Couple' to your records with a primary.contact and secondary.contact if they are a couple (husband and wife). To initially fix your database, we will perform a search, checking the contact records reflecting two names in the search results, then perform a Mass Update, and adding the Contact Type of 'Couple'.

Now, when a 'Girls' Night Out' is scheduled, notices need to be sent to all the female past clients, friends, etc.

First, a simple search of all records where the primary person is a female gives us all the results we desire:



The screenshot shows a web interface for searching contacts. At the top, there is a header "SEARCH FOR CONTACTS" with two tabs: "Quick Search" (highlighted in red) and "Advanced Search". Below the header is a "SEARCH CRITERIA" section. It includes a "Use Search Template" dropdown set to "No, I want to perform a new search" with a "Modify List" link. The main search area has three dropdown menus: "Search For" set to "Contacts", "with" set to "Gender (Primary)", and "that" set to "contain any of". A text input field next to "that" contains "Female". There is an "Add Condition" link below the dropdowns. At the bottom of the search area are three buttons: "Search", "Clear Search Criteria", and "Save Search Template".

We ignore searching for primary contacts without the female gender characteristic because that will give us males (singles or male couples), a group excluded from this invitation.

If your contact record contains both a primary and secondary contact who happen to be FEMALE, the established rule will still work, as the primary.contact will still be FEMALE.

Second, perform a search on the contact.type 'Couple'. This should give you husbands and wives. Your concern is only with the wives, therefore we will not use the merge codes of Contact.letter_salutation but make one using "Dear contact.secondary.firstname" in our message. If you don't currently use that contact type, see the instructions below for performing a Mass Update across your contact records.

SEARCH FOR CONTACTS

Quick Search Advanced Search

SEARCH CRITERIA

Use Search Template No, I want to perform a new search [Modify List](#)

To display all of your contacts, simply click "Search" (with no search criteria entered). Or, to perform a

Search in All Contacts Leads Referrals

Contact Type Couple [Select from List](#)

When sending out invitations to the first group (FEMALES only) we can still use the merge codes Contact.letter_salutation and Contact.envelope_salutation, the second merge code being applicable where you are mailing the invitations by the United States Postal Service. The first merge code will work either in the body of an e-mail or a letter. In either case, you will get the name of a single FEMALE if there is no partner, or the name of two FEMALES if there are partners in your contact record (remember, males are always listed as the primary contact, and two males within the contact record would not have a gender designation of FEMALE for the primary contact).

When sending out invitation to the second group, you want to exclude the husbands but include the wives. The 'Couple' contact type will be used to select this group. For either an e-mail or letter we would build a custom salutation by typing "Dear ", followed by the merge code for 'secondary.person - FirstName'. This avoids the husbands name being included within the merge. For an envelope, you would build a new template which instead of using the standard envelope.salutation would substitute something like: "Ms. secondary.person-FirstName secondary.person-LastName", followed by the merge code " Address: Street, City, State, Zip".

If you had taken my earlier advice of using contact types to determine the primary means of delivering messages to your clients, your records would each reflect one of the following three contact types (they are mutually exclusive):

- Deliver by e-mail
- Delivery by letter
- Delivery by phone

With these contact types in place, we could modify our search and make two searches:

The screenshot shows a web interface for searching contacts. At the top, there is a header 'SEARCH FOR CONTACTS' with two tabs: 'Quick Search' (highlighted in red) and 'Advanced Search'. Below the header is a section titled 'SEARCH CRITERIA'. The first row shows 'Use Search Template' set to 'No, I want to perform a new search' with a 'Modify List' link. The second row is a search condition: 'Search For' is 'Contacts', 'with' is 'Gender (Primary)', 'that' is 'contain any of', and the value is 'Female'. The third row is another condition: 'AND' is selected, 'Search For' is 'Contacts', 'with' is 'Contact Type', 'that' is 'contain any of', and the value is 'Delivery by e-mail'. A 'Select from List' link is next to the 'Delivery by e-mail' value. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Search', 'Clear Search Criteria', and a 'Save Search Template' link.

This will present us with all FEMALES (either singles or couples) who desire to receive their information by e-mail. While you may have their street address, this is not how they desire to receive correspondence.

SEARCH FOR CONTACTS

Quick Search | Advanced Search

SEARCH CRITERIA

Use Search Template: No, I want to perform a new search [Modify List](#)

Search For: Contacts
with: Gender (Primary)
that: contain any of: Female

AND
with: Contact Type
that: contain any of: Deliver by letter [Select from List](#)

[Add Condition](#)

[Save Search Template](#)

This will present us with all FEMALES (either singles or couples) who desire to receive their information by letter. While you may have their e-mail address, this is not how they desire to receive correspondence.

Now we have to deal with wives who are FEMALE and husbands who are MALE. This will require a two more searches. These combine 'Couples' with either 'delivery by e-mail' or 'delivery by letter'.

SEARCH FOR CONTACTS

Quick Search

Advanced Search

SEARCH CRITERIA

Use Search Template

No, I want to perform a new search

[Modify List](#)

Search For

Contacts

with

Contact Type

that

contain any of

Couple

[Select from List](#)

AND

Contacts

with

Contact Type

that

contain any of

Delivery by email

[Select from List](#)

and

SEARCH CRITERIA

Use Search Template [Modify List](#)

Search For [▼](#)
with [▼](#)
that [▼](#) [Select from List](#)

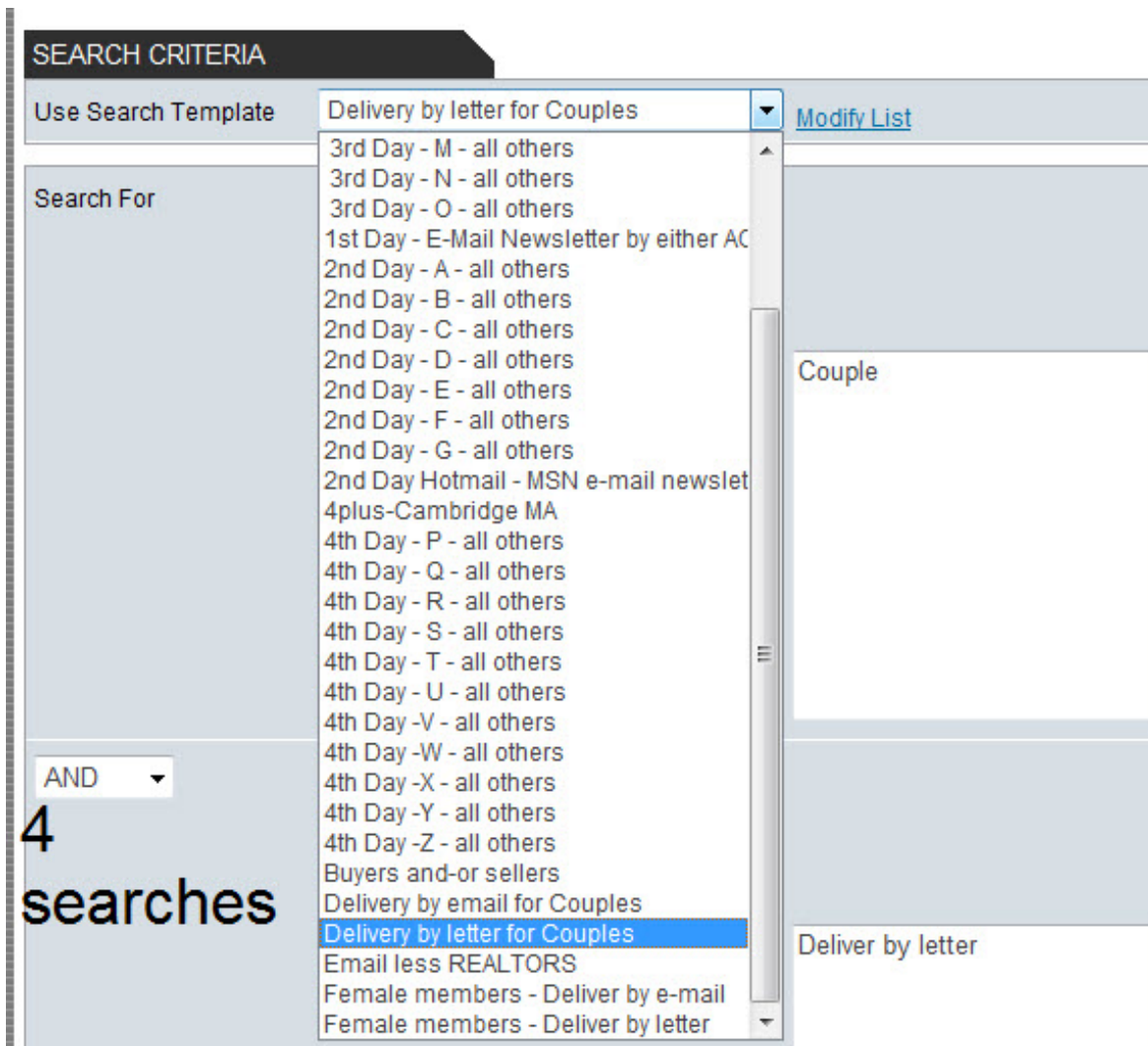
[▼](#) [▼](#)
with [▼](#)
that [▼](#) [Select from List](#)

At the bottom of your Search Criteria window is the option to 'Save Search Template'. Since you will want to use this search repetitively, you will want to save it for instant recall.

[Add Condition](#)

[Save Search Template](#)

The next time you need this search, it will be saved under the Use Search Template drop-down list. Here, the last few in the list provide us with the two search results we require.



Perform your four searches and send the appropriate templates. Just don't forget to ask for that R.S.V.P.!

Using Mass Update to add the contact type 'Couples' to your Contact Records:

Perform a search on your database where gender(primary) is not equal to FEMALE. This will leave Contact Records with at least one male in the record. In the search results you will see records with either one or two names. If you followed Procedural Rule 1 above, the first name will be male. You need to look at the second name. If it is what you believe to be a female's name, select that record. Do this throughout your database list. Once you have completed checking the names, perform a Mass Update across your selected records. You want to add the Contact Type 'Couple' and perform the update. Your records are now ready to perform future saved searches.

2. Sizing Photos for E-mail Stationery

I was asked by, when e-mail stationery is used, do all those attachments show up with the file. The attachments are the graphics being displayed within the e-mail (when I use the TOP PRODUCER 8i stationery, there should be one for the business card graphic and one for the Facebook icon used within my signature block). For the e-mail stationery to display properly, it

has to have the included graphics sent down with the message. TOP PRODUCER 8i does this by attachments. The client should not have to open any of the attachments, they should display automatically.

Now, let's address the sizing of photos within the e-mail stationery.

The agent and company logo photo boxes being used within the e-mail letterhead template are of a fixed size. If your photos within My Account, Photos, are not sized appropriately, they will either be squeezed or stretched to fit the space.


Your Agent photo should be approximately 18/16ths wide by 21/16ths tall. The Company Logo should be approximately 27/16ths wide by 17/16ths tall. How do you get them this way? Put your photos within a photo/graphic editor. You could use something like Google's free Picasa 3 software. You want to crop your photo to the ratios mentioned above (agent photo needs to be 18 units wide by 21 units tall and the company logo needs to be 27 units wide by 17 units tall). Then, save the photo's under a new name, such as Agent-cropped and Company-cropped. Load these new photos into your My Account, Photos (add photo, browse, find the stored cropped photo, and use), then edit to make it the default photo. Do this for both the Agent and Company Logo. They should now fit properly when used within TOP PRODUCER 8i's e-mail letterhead, as well as elsewhere.

3. Sizing Home Photos for Flyers


If when listing a property you take home photos with your own camera, I assume that they load properly within your MLS. To make quick work of having them within TOP PRODUCER 8i, I assume that you pull them from your MLS using TOP CONNECTOR. This puts the photos within the Listings>Listings Summary>View Listing>Photo tab. Of course, when they are pulled from the MLS, they are not named properly. You need to highlight each photo and edit in turn, assigning the proper room merge code. This insures that the program will call the proper photo when requested by a merge code.

Property Address Listing Info Property Details Listing Parties Activities Photos


Front View



Type	Picture
Default?	Yes

[Edit Details](#)  Delete

for this room/view?

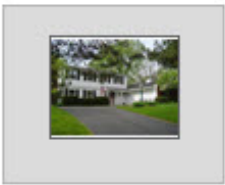
Save Photo Cancel 

753 Concord Ln
BARRINGTON, IL 60010 [Map](#)

Primary Seller: Test test

Listing Date: 2010-09-10
DOM: 7
Type: Resale - single family


Property Address Listing Info Activities Photos



EDIT PHOTO

Type	
Room/View Depicted	Front View
Is this the default photo for this room/view?	Yes

- Foyer
- Front View
- Front Yard
- Garage
- Garden
- Kitchen
- Laundry
- Left View
- Living Room
- Office/Den
- Other #1
- Other #2
- Other #3
- Other #4
- Other #5
- Owner
- Parking
- Patio
- Playroom
- Pool
- Property View
- Right View
- Sauna
- Street View
- Toolshed
- Workshop

Save Photo Cancel 

Now, depending upon your camera, your photos will be a certain size in megabytes, and have a specific aspect ratio (height to width). Assuming that you don't change anything before you send your photos to the MLS, the same photos will be pulled into TOP PRODUCER 8i. Now, this may or may not pose a difficulty for you when you go to make flyers within TOP PRODUCER 8i.

Each of the flyer templates has a specific size box to hold the photos being pulled by the photo merge code. Since you can't edit the original flyers, should you want to make any changes, you will copy the flyer to a new category and flyer name, then edit this copy. This gives you an opportunity to change the size of the photo box. Resize it so that the box matches the aspect ratio (height to width) of your camera's photos. This insures that your photos are rendered as they were originally intended.

As an example, no matter whether you make the photo box 4" by 3", 2" by 1.5", or 1" by 0.75", the aspect ratio remains the same. Therefore, your photos should always display properly so long as the photo box uses the same aspect ratio as your original photos.

4. Mobile Branded MLS Search

Introducing Mobile MLS Search from Smarter Agent.

Smarter Agent's mobile real estate application allows consumers to view all MLS listings anytime, anywhere from the convenience of any standard cell phone or smartphone including the iPhone, BlackBerry, Android and Palm. They can search for properties based on their GPS location, address, city or zip code. The application displays detailed property information, including price, beds/baths, taxes, estimated mortgage, features, maps, photos and more! When the user is ready to see a property, the "Call to See" feature connects them directly to an agent. That agent could be you!

With your own branded Mobile MLS Search application you get:

- A mobile phone application, fully branded with your name and logo
- An application downloader to put on your website
- A custom text code to give to your clients to get your application on their phone
- Access to all listings in your MLS(s), not just your own
- Call routing, so all "Calls To See" come directly to you, regardless of who has the listing!

The agent branded (private label) version is a subscription product. See <http://www.smarteragent.com/> for more details.

Text SA to 87778 to put the national version of the app on any phone.

Want to try it out? Check out at <http://www.smarteragent.com/mobileforconsumers/> for a non-branded version.

Mobile For Consumers**iPhone & iPod Touch****Blackberry****Android****Palm****LG****Motorola****HTC****Customer Reviews****Mobile for Consumers**

You're not sitting in front of your computer when you stumble upon a neighborhood or property where you want to live.

In fact, most of the time you are walking or driving through a neighborhood when you start wondering what is for sale or rent around you.

Smarter Agent makes it possible for you to find the closest properties for rent or for sale around you – from your cell phone!

Send the application to

Enter your mobile number

 - - [iPad / iPod Users Click Here](#)**Send a link to my pho**Or type this URL into your
[m.smarteragent.c](http://m.smarteragent.com)Need help downlo
Call 856-6

Of course, an alternative is the unbranded REALTOR.com applications for the iPhone and Windows CE 5.0.

REALTOR.com is also developing applications for your clients smartphones, although they will not be branded. As of a few months ago, only [iPhone](http://www.realtor.com/iphone) (<http://www.realtor.com/iphone>)and Windows CE 5.0 mobile devices (<http://m.realtor.com/>)were supported. Others are believed to be in development (Blackberry / Android).

5. Mobile Broadband

The use of mobile broadband has become more ubiquitous over the past few years. If you require broadband access and don't desire to be tethered to your office connection, I encourage you to consider adding broadband from your wireless provider. While many newer computers may include broadband within the machine, having a separate device which serves more than one computer has its' merits. Consider adding broadband with multiple computer access to your toolbox.

Whether you are using a single USB broadband modem, or a multi-unit router, each permits you to receive either a 3G or 4G signal to power your computer's Internet connection. Recently, AT&T has joined Verizon Wireless, Sprint, Virgin Mobile, T-Mobile, and others in offering a small MiFi device which permits connections for up to 5 users. Unfortunately, most of these units only offer 3G service. The near future will include 4G service, which is up to ten times

faster (Sprint plans unlimited 4G bandwidth, while AT&T and Verizon both impose limits).

Sprint will be the first out-the-gate on February 27th with their Novatel Wireless MiFi 3G/4G device. The Novatel improves on the older Sierra's feature set with its smaller size (3 ounces versus 4.5) and an estimated extra hour of battery life (for a total of four hours). The Novatel also sports an eInk status display instead of Sierra's LCD. Other specifications are similar: GPS support through the Sprint network, a MicroSD slot to share files between connected users, and support for any device that can speak Wi-Fi, including iPods and iPads owned by people allergic to AT&T iPhone contracts. The Novatel MiFi is priced at \$99 with a two-year contract, which costs \$60 a month for 4G (unlimited) plus 3G (five gigabytes per month) service. Sprint will offer a \$50 mail-in rebate when the Novatel ships on February 27. Based on both price and service after the sale, I suggest you order through [The 3G Store](#) .

Verizon's entries will be similar, with both the Verizon MiFi 4510L and Samsung's 4G LTE. The release dates have not yet been set. Again, [The 3G Store](#) will offer them once the MiFi devices are released.

Personally, I like being prepared for the future. While my 3G [Cradlepoint PHS300](#) router supports up to 15 users, it does require a separate 3G USB broadband modem from your wireless provider and it won't support 4G. Cradlepoint makes multiple routers which support both 3G and 4G service when used with a 3G/4G USB broadband modem. Most cellular providers are still waiting for a MiFi device which supports 4G speeds. Combine the [appropriate Cradlepoint router](#) with a 3G/4G USB modem from your cellular provider and you can be operating now. I've used my Cradlepoint PHS300 to run small training sessions where each student logs into TOP PRODUCER 8i on their own computer. Both routers and 3G/4G modems are available from [The 3G Store](#) now. Just make sure your router will support the appropriate modem from your broadband vendor.

6. Online Storage

Not everything fits into TOP PRODUCER 8i. Therefore, you certainly want to have backup storage of some type. While using either a USB, FireWire, or eSATA external drive does permit you to make images of your hard disk drive, nothing is failsafe. If either your home/office is broken into and your equipment stolen, or a natural catastrophe causes damage, any data still on your computer may be destroyed. Therefore, online storage of some type may be helpful.

[Dropbox](#) (free) rises to that challenge with 2GB of online storage that syncs to apps on Windows, Mac, Linux, [Android](#), and [iOS](#). For larger storage needs, you may get upto 25GB of online storage with the [Microsoft SkyDrive](#) service (free). The service lacks good mobile integration overall, but it [works great on Windows](#) and gives you a clean Web interface for Mac computers and Linux systems. As of this writing, SkyDrive also permits you to share pictures by way of [Windows Phone 7](#) handsets, and a possible update to the OS due in January could add mobile access to other files as well. Additional options include [www.IDrive.com](#) which

upto 50 GB, [and www.Mozy.com](http://www.Mozy.com) which offers 2 GB.

7. Time Management

If you've read The Time Trap, used the Franklin Day Planner System, or been concerned with efficiency, some of the thoughts below may be familiar.

While TOP PRODUCER 8i certainly permits you to build multiple folders within your e-mail manager, some believe that you only need a very simple organizational plan. They would propose that you only require three folders: Action, Later, and Archive. When an e-mail comes in, either take action and file in Action, or move to either Later or Archive. If you can respond in under two minutes, do so and store in Action. If it takes longer, and you need to act on it, move to Later. Archive things you need to save for future reference (not future action). Delete anything which does not fit into these three categories. At the end of every session your e-mail Inbox should be empty.

Personally, this is too simplified for me. I make multiple folders which fit the Later category. As I get approximately 50-100 e-mails per day, I may discard many, but still have many which may be of future use. These get stored in title appropriate categories for later use. An example is that I get lots of newsletters which provide fodder for the TOP PRODUCER 8i newsletter which you receive each month. I don't pay attention to them in detail at that time, but go through a number of them prior to writing articles each month. Since TOP PRODUCER 8i's e-mail manager permits me to categorize and store this information, this seems like an appropriate means of organizing the data. It gets out of my inbox yet is available for reference.

8. Purchase with Price Protection

During November I acquired a new desktop computer from HP. While I got a decent price for the customized unit, I knew that I should be looking to see if the price might be dropped over the holidays. Fortunately, I received a 10% off coupon by e-mail for a new customizable unit and asked for a refund based on price protection. But, I had to check their web-site frequently over about a month to see if the price might have dropped.

An easier way may be to use a price protection site to do the work for you. One which featured Amazon has recently gone out of business. But, another site may serve your purposes well. Check out <http://www.priceprotectr.com/>. You enter the URL of the page with price at which you ordered, and your e-mail address. Should the price drop at your merchant, they send you an e-mail notification. This might be quite useful for those bigger purchases.

9. Another Screen Capture Program

Many of the screens you see within this newsletter are made using [Snagit 10](#) by TechSmith. They offer a very good program at a fair price. While the Windows Vista and Windows 7 'Snipping Tool' does a relatively good job of capturing a designated block from within your screen, it lacks many of the features of the constantly improving versions of Snagit. Recently, I noticed that DuckLink Software has offered a free '[DuckCapture](#)' program which improves upon

the Windows 'Snipping Tool'. It offers the the ability to capture a long, scrolling window, and to annotate the capture. If you don't have a versatile screen capture tool within your toolbox, you might want to consider adding this free program.

10. A new Telephone System

Depending upon where you work, and how you work, you might be interested in the possibility of using a Voice Over Internet Protocol (commonly referred to as VOIP) phone system. These have significantly improved over the past few years, particularly since we generally have higher speed broadband capabilities available. Equipment which shares Internet connections also have been given the capability to give precedence to VOIP traffic over types of data. I've recently looked at the The Ooma Telo system. I'm thinking of either marrying it with my current Brighthouse cable Internet or with a new Verizon 4G broadband connection. Each should have sufficient bandwidth to make this a reasonable alternative to my small business phone system. The [Ooma](#) system offers crystal-clear unlimited free U.S. calling with your Internet connection and existing home phone. You pay only applicable taxes and fees. Unlimited calls are subject to normal residential usage limitations (5,000 minutes of outgoing calls per month equals nearly three hours of outgoing calls per day). You can find further information at [The 3G Store's](#) web-site.

11. Training Schedule

We are working to get training scheduled for Atlanta, GA; Charlottesville, VA; and Wilmington, DE during the May-June time-frame. If you would like to see us in other locations during the September-October time-frame, please drop us a note.

Agent.signature

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