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## New Release continued

with customers are there, so you have all the information you need to take care of your storage customers quickly.

**Photo ID**

There's a photograph of the customer too. You can store as many photos as you want for each account. Photographs of other people authorized to enter the space allow a positive identification of whoever wants access. You may even want to take pictures of an automobile or boat being stored.

**Double security**

NX.gen offers two kinds of data security. There's the safety of having your data off-site on a secure Internet server. No matter what happens at the storage facility, your customer and site information is all safely stored at another location. And it's easy for you to access from anywhere in the world. All you

need is an Internet connection to review reports, download accounting information, or inspect customer accounts.

We also keep the data on-site as well. Your site manager will always have the information needed to service customers in a timely manner. After all, self-storage is a point-of-sale business, which means that you often have the customer standing across the counter. You don't want him to have to wait very long—and you certainly don't want a customer to wait 15 minutes to make a payment. Or for your manager to guess at crucial information because your Internet connection is down. Space Control NX.gen gives you the best of both worlds—data on-site—and on the Internet.

**Linking your web page**

This data access also allows NX.gen to provide links to your storage site's web page. If a potential customer is reviewing your web

page and decides to reserve a space, NX.gen can provide information about availability through a simple link that looks as if it is part of your storage web page. Reservation deposits and customer payments can be handled in the same way.

We've kept all the accounting reports (cash and accrual), audit trails, and exception reports that Space Control users have loved for years. We've also added some favorites of many storage owners: "What should have been collected this month? What was collected? And where did the difference go?" NX.gen puts it all on one page, so you don't have to search different reports to pull together what you need. Throughout the program development, your bottom line has always been top of mind.

**Please call 800.455.9055 for more information.**



This September, Space Control will launch NX.gen, our next-generation storage management software. NX.gen combines the newest computer technology and 18 years of day-to-day working with and listening to self-storage owners and managers.

## Faster Internet

### Raising the speed limit on the information highway

The Internet is a great source for information. But, accessing that information can be slow going if you're using a standard dial-up connection. To speed up your Internet access, look into broadband.

**What is Broadband?**

Broadband allows data to flow continuously from the Internet to your computer. It is on whenever your computer is turned on, so you never need to dial a number for access. Broadband services will give you entrée to many new web sites and services that a standard dial-up connection simply can't accommodate conveniently — sharing home videos with far-flung friends or family members, or accessing complex data files for the office.

To understand broadband, you first have to consider bandwidth. Bandwidth is shorthand for the speed that digital information travels through an electric wire or wirelessly through the air, and is measured in bits per second. Greater bandwidth means that data

## Space Control Rolls Out New Release

Storage seems like such a simple business. Until you learn about all the quirky occurrences in daily operations. Until you understand the security needed for an absentee owner. Until you know just what, out of all that information, is important to management. All of that experience, plus the newest technology, is the foundation of Space Control NX.gen.

**True yield management**

NX.gen offers a true yield management pricing structure. There is no need for you to waste hours examining reports and changing move-in rates. You establish the parameters once, and until changed, it will manage

rates according to occupancy levels and the time of the year. You can even tell it at what point to allow temporary move-in discounts, and at what point to stop allowing discounts.

**Our screen tells all**

Because NX.gen stores the user ID with each transaction, you'll know who took a payment, reversed a payment, waived a late fee, even changed the customer's address. And, of course, NX.gen keeps everything about each account on one screen; easy to review, easy to understand. Every charge, every payment, rent raise notices, discounts, letters, over-locks, gate lock-outs—it's all there on a single screen. Notes from conversations or telephone calls

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can move faster from sender to receiver. The most commonly used bandwidths in the consumer market are expressed in kilobits, or thousands of bits per second (kbps). The standard 56k modem (which you use for dial-up Internet access) can move data at a maximum rate of 56 kbps. "Broadband" refers to a bandwidth of at least 128 kbps.

**Cable Access**

Most people who have broadband service today use a cable-TV connection. If your local cable-TV company hasn't upgraded its equipment though, you won't be able to go this route.

Contact your local cable company to see what it offers. You may find that not only is cable access offered in your area, but that you can get a discount if you bundle it in with your TV cable. Most companies charge a monthly fee of about \$30 to \$50, which often includes the cable modem rental. Installation usually costs from \$50 to \$150.

Although cable access can allow you to reach speeds of 5-mbps, it is more likely that you will operate between 500 kbps and 2 mbps. The more neighbors that go online at the same time, the slower the connection speed is for each. When you contact your cable company, make sure to ask how many people will share your cable connection. Also ask what minimum speeds they will guarantee.

**DSL**

Using the same copper wires used for your telephone, DSL (digital subscriber line) is another high-speed access solution for small businesses or residents. Like cable access, it isn't available everywhere. Your home or

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## A healthy dose of information

Ever wish you had one of those thick medical books to learn a little more about a medical condition? Try going to the Internet. There are search engines specifically aimed at the medical field. They provide links to a wide range of sites that can help you find medical information, including libraries, publications, hospitals and physician directories. Some examples are: [www.achoo.com](http://www.achoo.com), [www.medwebplus.com](http://www.medwebplus.com), and [www.themedengine.com](http://www.themedengine.com).

The government's [www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov) contains links to dozens of other federally funded sites that warehouse huge stores of health information. Perhaps the largest source of medical articles can be found at [www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov). It is the National Library of Medicine's consumer health site. Most of the millions of articles available here come from the National Institutes of Health,

research centers, medical journals, and associations.

### A word of caution

While the web is a great place to do research, it is also home to a fair amount of fraud. Government or nonprofit agency sites tend to have more objective advice than those run by companies trying to sell you something. To find out who's behind a site, go to [www.nsi.com](http://www.nsi.com) and do a Whois search.

Beware of people online who rave about a particular product. They could be involved in a marketing scheme. Also be suspicious of people who include an 800 number in their message. If you suspect you've come across a health scam, you can file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission ([www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov)).

## Faster Internet

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office has to be located within a few miles of the telephone company's central office. The closer you are to the central office, the faster your connection.

Unlike cable Internet access, you won't be sharing your connection with other local customers. So, the speed of your access won't be affected by your neighbors and it is somewhat more secure than cable access. Most DSL service is asymmetric – the download speed (into the home) is faster than the upload speed (out from it). This means that you could download large files like digital pictures quickly, but they would take much longer to send. Ask your provider what speed it will guarantee vs. its best effort (which is the provider's estimate of what you'll get under the best circumstances).

As with cable access, expect to pay about \$40 a month for DSL with an installation fee of approximately \$100 to \$150.

Although you order DSL from an Internet service provider (ISP), you can end up dealing with four different companies: your local phone company (which strings the DSL line from

the pole to your house/office), the installer (who sets up the wiring and connections inside your house), the DSL provider, and your ISP (which provides access to the Internet). When things go wrong, your problem can take days or weeks to solve.

### Satellite

Satellite Internet access may be the answer in areas that aren't served by cable or DSL. Some of the same satellite companies that offer television packages with hundreds of channels are starting to provide Internet access. Similar to cable access, consumers are often offered price breaks if they purchase a package deal that includes both television and Internet.

To get satellite access, you need to purchase a dish which can run from \$150 to \$400, or more. Installation costs begin at \$200 and fees start at about \$50 a month. This is a relatively new technology which offers great hope to those out of reach of the other broadband systems. But, the price may be a bit prohibitive at this time.

### Protect your Privacy

All three Internet access options bring up questions of privacy. Because your connection is always on, your computer is more vulnerable to online hackers. Especially if your Windows network file – and printer-sharing feature has been activated, or if you run a web server on your computer. You can reduce your exposure by turning off your computer when it's not in use. Be sure to keep an up-to-date antivirus program running at all times, and consider installing personal firewall software.

### Conclusion

Often your choice in Internet connections is limited to what is available in your area. But all will speed you to the next level of web access.

*This article looks at three ways to access broadband service: cable, phone, and wireless. While there are other means of accessing broadband such as T-1 and ISDN, the three methods covered here are more affordable for small business and personal use.*

## The President's Corner



Not long ago, a customer asked me why Space Control had been so quiet lately. Actually we've been quietly working.

In fact, we've been very, very busy. First, we moved. We're now in Nevada City, a small town in the California foothills near Sacramento that began in the 1800's as a gold town. We tested the location thoroughly by first moving our customer support department and it worked so well, we moved our entire company.

But the majority of our efforts have been concentrated on building the perfect self-storage management software. It includes everything everybody had told us they wanted their software to do—and more. It took a lot of effort, but all those wonderful features are worth it, and now we're very excited to be introducing Space Control NX.gen this September.

It's web-enabled, allowing you to access important management data from anywhere in the world, or forward after-hours telephone calls to somebody's home. It will even let you

do such things as rent spaces from a rental kiosk in a shopping mall. All you need is a computer and an Internet connection.

We've added even more security features, including recording the user ID every time there is any input. And NX.gen gives you more control. You can design your own letters and invoices in Word. You can determine just what customer information is required on move-in.

NX.gen is more automated. You can set up a flex rent schedule for each month of the year and it will automatically adjust rents as vacancy levels fluctuate seasonally.

You'll just have to see it to believe it. In addition to our booth at the Fall show we're going to have a special demo room available. So, if you'd like to have a more in-depth demo than you can get on the trade show floor, give us a call at 800-455-9055 to set up a time to see the all new Space Control NX.gen.

*Ramona*  
Ramona S. Taylor



## Calling customer support

The support you receive from your software vendor is as important as the software itself. There are several factors that make support so important to self-storage.

First, it's a point-of-sale business. Your customer is standing at the counter waiting for the site manager—with the assistance of the computer system—to take care of him/her. It's imperative that the software work properly. Word processing in an office is not nearly so time-critical.

Second, many employees are not familiar with computers. They occasionally need someone knowledgeable to walk them through unfamiliar situations.

Self-storage is an expensive business. How much does it take to build a facility? How much money crosses the counter each month while you're not there? Your software audits and accounts for every dollar; it's crucial that it operates efficiently, accurately and in your best interest every minute of every day.

The Space Control Systems team believes that customer support is the most important part of our business. That is the reason we moved the company from the San Francisco Bay Area to a small town in the California foothills over a year ago. We sought a better pool of support technicians, and we found them! Of course, we kept our senior techs, Joanne Harrison, Vicki Vasquez, Eileen Reiner, and Debbie Rosenfeld. And we added Matt Davis, Neil Verling, Justin Osterholt, Lucas Husa, Ken Boales and Jorge Kidwill, all excellent technicians who justify moving the whole company.

We also stopped using our automated telephone system and got a separate toll-free number for the Support Department. We know that people would rather hear a real voice than, "Press 1 for sales, 2 for support. . ." Now the support techs take turns answering

the support line. Of course, if everybody is on the telephone, you still get a machine asking you to leave a message. When you do, please tell us your:

*Name. Telephone number, including the area code. Customer ID number and site code.*

Not only do lots of people have the same names, so do lots of self-storage facilities. We can find your call history a lot faster if we have your Space Control customer ID number and site code. If you don't know what it is, ask one of our support techs. They can look it up for you so you'll have it next time.

### Toll free:

**877-591-0455 (In U.S.)**

**Tel: 530-265-3773**

**email: [support@spacecontrol.com](mailto:support@spacecontrol.com)**

### CUSTOMER SERVICE HOURS

	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
<b>Monday – Friday</b>				
Open	7:00 am	8:00 am	9:00 am	10:00 am
Close	6:00 pm	7:00 pm	8:00 pm	9:00 pm
<b>Saturday – For Emergency Calls</b>				
Open	9:00 am	10:00 am	11:00 am	Noon
Close	5:00 pm	6:00 pm	7:00 pm	8:00 pm