The Connection

NOVEMBER 2023

Veterans Day is a Time for Thanks

The men and women who have served, or are currently serving, in our military deserve our wholehearted support. Please join Runestone Telecom in celebrating Veterans Day on November 11th by thanking the veterans you know for their service.

Contact Us

100 Runestone Drive / PO Box 336
Hoffman, MN 56339
Phone: 320-986-2013

Office Hours: M–F 8 am to 4:30 pm

Email: rtaoffice@runestone.net

Visit Us: www.runestone.net

Find Us:

Review Us on Google

Please let others know about your experience as a Runestone Telecom customer. Scan this code and leave a review on Google. Thanks!

Runestone
Telecom Association

Upgrade family gatherings in a huge way

Runestone Telecom encourages you to dream big as you prepare for the Thanksgiving holiday. Give this year's celebration a ginormous upgrade by expanding your menu, your guest list, and your streaming enjoyment.

Know what can make a huge difference in streaming? Signing up for faster Internet! Then you'll have the speeds required for you and your guests to experience optimal streaming of football games, movies, and more.

Call 320-986-2013 to double your speed for as little as $3 a month!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Our office will be closed November 23rd & 24th so we may celebrate with our families. Trouble calls will be handled by our on-call technicians.

Celebrate **Big**

Speed availability varies depending on location. Contact us for details.

Cornerstone Group © 2023

Out and About in the Community

The Runestone Telecom team is always busy, making sure our customers and community stay connected. Check out these images!

Runestone Telecom had the pleasure of sitting down to enjoy a delicious lunch of BBQ ribs, chicken, and assorted sides, all courtesy of Arvig. This friendly crew of grill masters provided lunch to Runestone Telecom and Arvig employees.

Joe Polzin, Network Technician, is installing a new RTA LAN switch at our Lowry Central Office.

Our crews take advantage of the great weather during the autumn months, working diligently to get ground construction completed as quickly as possible.

Capital Credit Checks Coming

Capital credit checks will be mailed on November 15th, refunding approximately $1,586,860. We'll be refunding the remaining portion of 2004, 35% of 2022, and balances under $100 for inactive members.
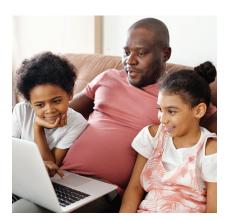
Tips to Keep Track of Your Streaming Subscriptions

Signing up for streaming services is easy, requiring just a few clicks. So, it's not surprising that many people end up with a long list of subscriptions, some of which they began as free trials with every intention of canceling later (but forget to do).

To enjoy what you want to watch without wasting money, it's important to keep track of your streaming subscriptions. Here's how to do it:

Take stock of current subscriptions. You'd be surprised how many people overspend on services they either forgot about or don't use anymore. Go through your checking and credit card accounts and make a detailed list of streaming services including due dates and costs.

Use the same payment method for all of them. Part of the challenge of staying on top of subscriptions is tracking your payments. If you use multiple payment methods, it can be easy to overlook these smaller transactions. Instead, put all your subscriptions on the same debit or credit card for easy reference.

Eliminate overlapping services. Make sure you aren't double paying for services. Companies such as Verizon, Apple, and Amazon may bundle a variety of services, including streaming subscriptions, into a single plan. For example, there's no reason to pay for a standalone Disney+ subscription if it's already included in your Verizon Play More plan.

Schedule reminders for when free trials end. The conclusion of a free trial can easily sneak up on you, especially if the offer is several months long. When you sign up for a new subscription, add a reminder to your phone or planner to cancel your subscription. If you decide to keep the service, schedule another reminder in three to six months to evaluate if you still want it.

Rotate your subscriptions. Do you have a subscription mainly for the purpose of watching a favorite series? Cancel that subscription until the new season is released. To keep your viewing options fresh, you may want to subscribe to a different streaming service each month or each quarter.

To enhance your streaming experience, consider an Internet speed upgrade. Call us at 320-986-2013 for details.

Is Your Information Safe When Using Public WiFi?

When you connect to a website, information travels from your device to the website. That could include sensitive data like the log-in information for your financial, email, or social media accounts.

In the past, if you used a public WiFi network to get online, your information was at risk. That's because most websites didn't use encryption to scramble the data and protect it from hackers snooping on the network. Today, most websites do use encryption to protect your information, so connecting through a public WiFi network is usually safe. You know your connection is encrypted if there's a lock symbol or "https" in the address bar to the left of the website address.

However, it's always a good idea to take these steps to protect your personal information when using public WiFi:

- **Treat all WiFi links with suspicion.** Don't just assume the WiFi link is legitimate. It could be a bogus link set up by a hacker.

- **Try to verify it's a legitimate wireless connection.** It's easy for someone who wants to intercept your data to set up a network called "Free WiFi," or any other variation that includes a nearby venue name, to make you think it's a legitimate wireless network. To protect yourself, ask an employee about the legitimate WiFi access point's name and IP address before you choose a network.

- **Adjust your default setting.** Set it to prompt you to manually select a WiFi network rather than have one automatically chosen for you.

- **Avoid sensitive transactions.** When using public WiFi, don't conduct financial/banking transactions or do online shopping.

- **Protect your devices.** Make sure you always have the current versions of your operating system, firewalls, Web browser, and antivirus and antispyware software.

- **Create and use strong passwords.** Also turn on two-factor authentication when it's available.

Another recommendation is to use WiFi that is password protected and more secure than an open network. If you have a choice between secure and nonsecure, always choose the secure WiFi network, even if you must pay for it.

Employee News

Christian McGaffey has joined our team as a Network Technician. He's originally from Brandon, MN, and he loves the outdoors. Christian previously worked as a lineman for five years in Melrose and has now settled back into the community with his wife, Morgan. Welcome to Runestone Telecom, Christian!

Jacob Veldhouse is leaving Runestone Telcom to take a new and exciting direction in his career. It's hard to say goodbye, but we wish him the best in his future. We'll miss your laughter and your smile, Jacob!

New Members

Barrett
Hyttsten, Neil 320-528-2208

Cyrus
JSB Farms 320-795-2247

Elbow Lake
Bah, Michael..................... 218-685-5152
Janshen, Marlette 218-685-2033

Lowry
Bayerl, Tim & Marilyn 320-283-5891

Help Your Overnight Guests Feel at Home

The holiday season often means more houseguests. To make their accommodations as welcoming as possible, pay attention to the details—from creature comforts to technology touches.

Beyond a good mattress and bedding, here's what guests appreciate:

- **Thoughtful amenities.** A guest room stocked with a few snacks will make them feel like VIPs. Bonus points for including local treats that can double as souvenirs!

- **Space for clothing.** Living out of a suitcase isn't fun. If possible, clear out a small section of a closet or leave a dresser drawer empty so they can put away clothes.

- **An outlet by the bed for a charger.** Many people want to keep their phone near them at night, so make sure there's an outlet or power strip by the nightstand.

- **WiFi details clearly displayed.** Include the name of your WiFi network and its password.

Speaking of WiFi, you can easily set up a guest network with our Managed WiFi service. Call 320-986-2013 to learn more.

Mark Your Calendar for Shopping and Giving

November is a month like no other when it comes to snagging bargains, supporting small businesses, and donating to nonprofits. Make plans now to take advantage of the opportunities offered by these events that follow Thanksgiving.

Black Friday
Black Friday has traditionally been the busiest shopping day (for in-store foot traffic) of the year in the United States. Many retailers offer large discounts to entice shoppers into stores and kick off the holiday shopping season. While not an official holiday, many non-retail employees and schools have both Thanksgiving Day and Black Friday off, creating a four-day weekend.

Small Business Saturday
This holiday was created by American Express in 2010 as a part of their Shop Small campaign. During that year, the U.S. was still in the middle of a recession due to the Financial Crisis of 2007-2008, and American Express wanted to do something to encourage people to shop at small businesses, since they were experiencing most of the economic pain at that time. It's gone on to become a treasured tradition.

Cyber Monday
The National Retail Federation coined the term Cyber Monday in 2005 to describe a shopping trend the group began noticing several years prior: Without fail, online revenue and traffic spiked the Monday following Thanksgiving. When people returned to work on Monday after being home for the Thanksgiving weekend, they once again had access to computers and the Internet — something not everyone had in the early 2000s. The name stuck, and retailers continue to offer online-only deals on this day.

Giving Tuesday
Begun in 2012, Giving Tuesday is a day of giving back to nonprofits within the community, either monetarily or by acting in support of the nonprofit's mission. It's grown from a simple concept to a global celebratory day of the year, with millions taking part. In 2022, a whopping amount of $3.1 billion was raised in donations on Giving Tuesday in the U.S. alone.

Runestone Telecom encourages you to generously support the small businesses and nonprofits in our community.