BSSi2

Innovations

Review Twice, Implement Once. Doing IT Right the First Time.

Scott Bernstein, CPA
President

Nick Espinosa
CIO & Chief Security Fanatic

The Lighter Side….

How do you fix a broken pumpkin?

You use a pumpkin patch.

What is a vampire's favorite fruit?

A NECKtarine.

What's the problem with twin witches?

You never know which witch is which.

Why did the man fail as a standup comedian, but later become a prolific axe murderer?

He was a total hack.

What do you do if zombies are attacking your house?

Surround it with treadmills.

What music do mummies like?

Wrap music.

Keep Your Information Secure

By Using Strong Passwords

We use passwords for just about everything. Most of us have to enter a password to get into our computers, then enter more passwords to access our e-mail, social media profiles, databases and other accounts. Even our cell phones and tablets can and should be password-protected. In fact, if you aren't securing all of your devices and accounts with passwords, you should definitely start. It could help prevent your business and personal information from becoming compromised.

Why Passwords?

We use passwords to ensure that those who don't have access to our accounts can't get access. Most of our devices hold large amounts of personal information. Think about the potential harm someone could do if they gained access to your personal cell phone. They would immediately be able to see all of your contacts, pictures and applications. They might even be able to log in to your e-mail, where they could obtain your banking information. If this type of access falls into the wrong hands, it could be detrimental to your life. Passwords offer the first line of defense to prevent others from obtaining sensitive information.

This becomes even more important if you own a business. Each of your employees should be utilizing strong passwords to access company information. If your business is not using passwords – or is using simple passwords – you could be opening yourself up to hackers and cybercriminals. If a cybercriminal gains access to your company's private information through a weak password, they will gain access to customer information, which could damage your

Continue on the next page…

continued from previous page...

reputation and open you up to lawsuits. That being said, everyone within your business needs to utilize complex and unique passwords.

Making A Strong Password

Not all passwords are created equal. When it comes to making a strong password, you must think about it. If you use a password that you can't remember, then it's essentially useless. And if you use a password that's too easy to remember, your password probably won't be strong enough to keep cybercriminals out. Your password should be long, have a mix of lowercase and uppercase letters, utilize numbers and special characters, have no ties to personal information and should not be a word from the dictionary.

In the grand scheme of things, it's not enough to just create complex passwords. They also need to be unique. In addition to this, you should use a different password for each and every one of your accounts to help maximize their effectiveness. Think about it this way: let's say you use the same password across your business e-mail accounts, social media accounts and bank accounts. If someone decrypts the password for your Facebook page, they now have the password for more valuable accounts. If you can't tell that your social media account was compromised, the cybercriminal could try to use that same password to gain access to more important accounts. It's a dangerous game that can be avoided by using unique and complex passwords for every account you use.

Remembering All Of These Passwords

You may be worried about remembering all of your passwords if you have to create a unique one for each of your accounts. Your first thought may be to write them down, but that might not be the most secure option. If someone gets their hands on your little black book of passwords, they'll immediately gain access to all of your accounts with a handy directory showing them exactly where to go. Instead, you should utilize a password manager to help keep track of all of this sensitive information.

With a password manager, you only have to worry about remembering the master password for your password manager. All of your other passwords will be securely hidden. Password managers also give you the option to create random passwords for your accounts to bolster their security. That way you can have the most complex password possible without worrying about forgetting it. Additionally, password managers can also help remember the answers to security questions and more so that you never get accidentally locked out of one of your accounts. They're easy to use, convenient and secure.

Passwords are an important part of your cyber security plan. Make sure you and your employees are using complex and unique passwords. It can also help you to implement some training so your employees understand the importance of secure passwords. When used correctly, passwords will help deter any would-be cybercriminals from accessing your sensitive information.

Business Tidbit

Take Advantage Of Google Reviews

When you are deciding on a restaurant to dine at, you might check the Google reviews to help with your decision. The same thing goes for your business. Before people come in to buy your product or services, they might check your Google reviews – so it's important that your reviews positively reflect your business. If you own a company, you should understand how Google reviews work and do everything you can to encourage customers to leave positive ratings and comments.

If you haven't already claimed your Google business profile, you should do so immediately. It will allow you to add pictures and a description so customers know what to expect from your business.

When customers have completed a purchase with you, encourage them to leave a review if they had a positive experience. Some customers may need help with the review process, so teach them how to leave a review if they have never done it before. Make sure you thank customers who leave positive reviews and try to fix the issues explained in your negative reviews. Being a responsive owner will reflect positively on your business. When you use Google reviews to your advantage, you will see a boost in clientele.

3 Easy Ways To Make Your Mac More Secure

Data breaches and malware attacks have been on the rise over the past few years, so you must take the necessary precautions to protect your devices. Below you will find three easy ways to make your Mac more secure.

- Install a mobile device management profile so you can give an administrator remote access to the device. If your Mac is ever stolen, you can locate it and lock it before any of your data becomes compromised.
- Utilize multifactor authentication which will require you to confirm your login on another device. This adds an extra layer of security to your Mac.
- Backup your data to protect yourself from ransomware attacks. Consider buying an external hard drive or a cloud storage solution and backup software to do so.

Phishing Campaign Targets Apple IDs *From KnowBe4, Inc.*

Researchers at Trend Micro warn that a phishing campaign is using leaked Apple ID credentials to trigger password reset messages. The scammers then attempt to trick the user into granting them access to the account.

"[T]he emails or text messages you receive are LEGITIMATE, generated automatically from the Apple system — due to the scammer's actions," the researchers write. "Remember, NEVER reveal the verification code to anyone.

"Scammers can also contact you, impersonating Apple support, and ask you to provide that code. If you fall for it, scammers can gain full access to your Apple ID and reset the password to block you out. What for? All the private data stored in iCloud."

In addition to password reset emails, attackers continue to use regular phishing emails that impersonate Apple. "More commonly, scammers just pose as Apple and send you fake emails or text messages that contain phishing links to entice you," the researchers write. "Using various excuses like a security alert, Apple ID lock, billing error, or whatever else works, they prompt you into clicking on the phishing link to fix the issue."

Trend Micro has observed the following phishing text messages:

- We've noticed a discrepancy in your contact information, please update your information to avoid restrictions on your account[dot]applesecured01[.]com
- Your last payment failed, please update your payment information {URL}
- Support has noticed a billing error, all features will be disabled until we receive a response. please visit {URL}
- For your protection, your login has been automatically paused. please verify your identity today or your account will be disabled. {URL}

The researchers offer the following advice to help users avoid falling for these attacks:

- Double-check senders' email addresses or phone numbers, but also keep in mind that caller/sender IDs can be spoofed
- Never share any verification codes with anyone
- Don’t click on links or buttons from unknown sources

Business Tidbit

Tech Trends To Improve Customers Loyalty

If you want your business to succeed, you must build a solid customer base. Over the past few years, advancements in technology have made it easier for companies to improve their relationships with their customers. One such way is through the use of AI chatbots. If someone has a question about your service or product, you don’t want to leave them waiting for an answer. Chatbots can be programmed to answer common questions until a live representative is available, if they’re even needed.

Additionally, you should make an effort to monitor content created by people outside your company. If someone is spreading false information about your business, you need to combat it. If disinformation is allowed to fester, it can quickly sink a small business. Simply replying to misinformed reviews or reporting inappropriate content about your business can go a long way toward becoming a more trustworthy source in your industry.

October 2022

BSSi2
35 Aztec Court
South Barrington, IL 60010
(312) 752-4679
www.bssi2.com

“We make all of your computer problems go away without the cost of a full-time I.T. staff”

Shiny New Gadget of the Month

Bril

It might be surprising to hear, but our toothbrushes are some of the dirtiest items in our households. There’s a good chance that there are more than a million kinds of bacteria living on your toothbrush right now. Unfortunately, rinsing your toothbrush after brushing is only so effective. That’s why Bril was invented.

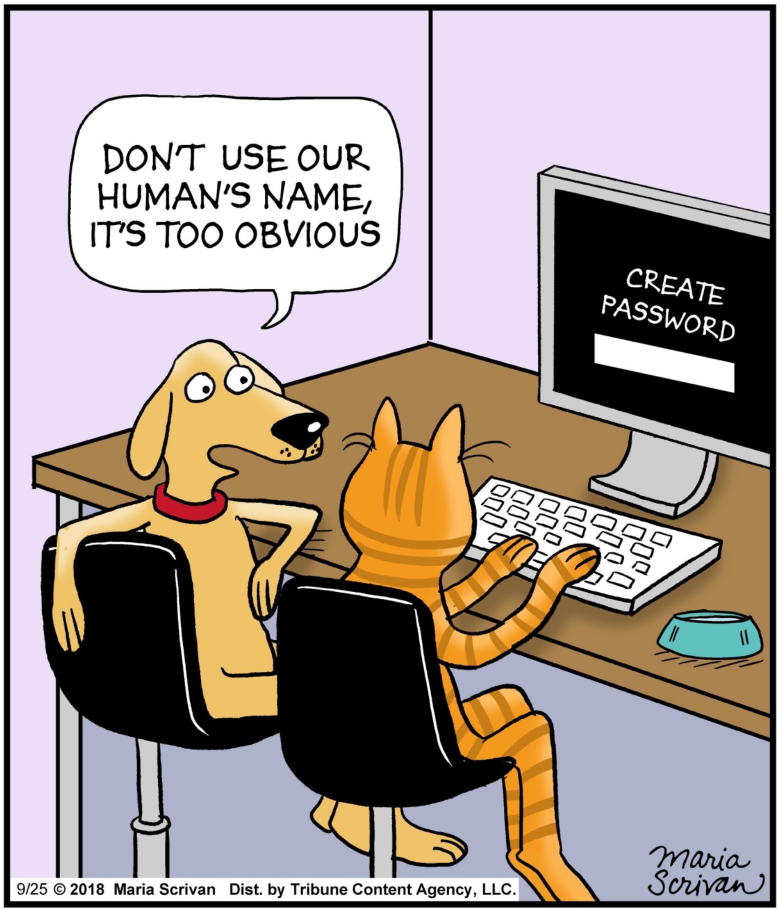
Bril is a portable toothbrush case that sterilizes your toothbrush after every use. It contains an all-natural ultraviolet light that kills 99.9% of germs on contact. It’s simple to use as all you have to do is place your toothbrush inside and close the lid. Bril does the rest. It’s the quickest, most effective and easiest way to ensure your toothbrush head stays clean.

Stay up-to-date

Follow BSSi2 at:

f www.facebook.com/bssi2

twitter.com/BSSi2llc



9/25 © 2018 Maria Scrivan Dist. by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

CartoonStock.com