



2459 SE Tualatin Valley Hwy #295
Hillsboro OR 97123

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Ready To Transform Your Business With Technology? Follow These 5 Truths ...

Investing In Tech Is A Must. Investing in your own IT infrastructure is critical, but you get what you pay for. Go cheap, and you'll expect to buy again. Go quality, and you'll be more pleased with the results.

It's Not Easy. Shifting a business mindset from analog to digital is hard, especially if you've been doing things one way for a long time. When you prepare yourself and your team for a challenge, you'll be able to better meet that challenge.

It's Fast-Paced. Tech moves *fast*. You see buzzwords everywhere – “5G” or “blockchain” – and it can be confusing. You may feel pressure to keep up, but don't jump in without a plan. Do

research and make changes that truly apply to your business.

Cyber Security Is Essential. Stay up to date on security trends and solutions. Remember that cybercriminals target small businesses, but when you stay ahead of the curve on IT security, you stay ahead of the bad guys.

Leadership Is As Important As Ever. Technology is only as good as the people who use it. As you learn about new tech or invest in it for your business, make sure your team is learning too. Understand how your customers use technology and be willing to learn and adapt to them. *Inc.*, July. 30, 2019.

DO THESE 4 THINGS TO IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS

Read. There are always new things to learn or perspectives to gain. The top entrepreneurs in the world read every single

day. Read books, blogs, articles, anything – but always be reading.

Listen To Podcasts. Podcasts are more popular than ever, and there is a podcast for just about every topic. This is a great way to hear from industry leaders on issues that are affecting them and may be affecting you.

Continue Your Education. How can you improve yourself? Take a class or a seminar! Keep your skills and knowledge base sharp by incorporating continuing education into your yearly plans.

Be Open-Minded. Be willing to give and receive feedback and critique on how you work, manage or anything else you want to improve on. The more open-minded you are, the more comfortable your team will be in giving you feedback – and the better you will be at applying it. *Small Business Trends*, Dec. 30, 2019.



Do You Have A Project Need?

Are you planning on a new server upgrade or a move to the cloud? AlwaysOnIT can help you with your next project from VoIP phones, servers, networking or even a move to the cloud. Give us a call to go over your project and get a quote.

Just this past month we set up a new server environment for a CPA firm and helped another company move from an outdated file share program to a secure cloud sharing program.

Give us a call at **503-601-4335** and let us help with your next project.



Your #1 Threat Of Being Hacked Is INSIDE Your Own Organization

April 2020



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Chris Benson.

Our Mission:

To leave those we encounter better than we found them.

Our Vision:

To become the company that others use as an example of world class service, community support, and giving.

Small businesses are the biggest targets of hackers and cybercriminals. They are targeted because they are less likely to have strong – or any – security in place. But in so many cases, hackers don't need to use malicious code or cracking skills to get what they want. Instead, they rely on your biggest vulnerability: your own employees.

The #1 threat to any business's IT security is its employees. It all stems from a lack of training. Employees don't know how to spot threats, or they don't know not to click unverified links in their e-mails. Most of the time, these actions are simple mistakes – but mistakes aren't excuses and can result in MAJOR costs to your business.

Here are three things you can do to turn your employees from your biggest IT threat to your biggest IT asset:

Establish Regular Cyber Security Training.

First and foremost, get *everyone* in your business trained up on IT security. Wesley Simpson, the chief operating officer of (ISC)², an international cyber security certification group, suggests thinking about IT education as “people patching.” Just as you continually update and patch your software and security, ongoing education serves to update, or patch, your employees. He says, “If you don't get your people patched continually, you're always going to have vulnerabilities.”

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But don't put the training solely on your shoulders. Work closely with a company that specializes in IT security. Doing it yourself can be stressful and time-consuming. An experienced IT firm is going to come in with all the education and resources you need to successfully train everyone in your organization on cyberthreats targeting your business today.

"The #1 threat to any business's IT security is its employees."

Keep Cyber Security Top Of Mind.

While you may have training or educational sessions once a quarter or biannually (regular sessions are recommended), you still need to keep IT security in the minds of your employees on a weekly basis. During weekly meetings, for example, talk about a cyber security topic. Or, if you share news or links with your employees in a weekly, company-wide e-mail, for example, include a cyber security story or tips article.



It's all about utilizing systems you already have in place to keep your team informed and this important topic at the forefront.

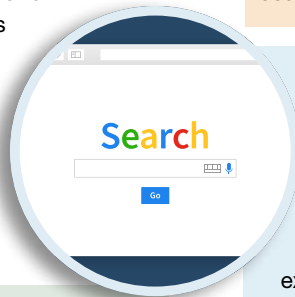
Emphasize Safe Internet Usage Habits.

This should supplement regular training. Employees should always know the best practices when it comes to using the Internet, e-mail or anything else that brings them in contact with the World Wide Web. Part of it involves keeping the lines of communication open. If an employee sees something out of the ordinary come into their inbox, encourage them to bring it to the team's attention – whether they're telling their direct supervisor, manager or you. The easier the communication between everyone on your team, the easier it is to identify and stop attacks.

The goal is to eliminate guesswork. If an employee isn't sure about an e-mail, they should be trained to ask questions and verify.

On top of that, you should have a policy in place that prevents employees from installing unverified software, which includes apps and app extensions (such as browser extensions), without permission. And one more thing – stress safe Internet usage habits not just in the workplace but at home as well. This is especially critical if your employees are bringing in their own devices. If that's the case, you should absolutely have a "bring your own device" (BYOD) security policy in place. It's just another wall between your business and potential threats.

How do you get all this started? Good question! It all starts with reaching out. If you're ready to lock down your business and you're serious about educating your employees and turning them into your best defense, we can help. The best IT security you've ever had is one phone call away.



Help Us Out And We'll Give You A Brand-New Kindle Fire For Your Trouble



We love having you as a customer and, quite honestly, wish we had more like you! So instead of just wishing, we've decided to hold a special "refer a friend" event during the month of February.

Simply refer any company with 10 or more computers to our office to receive a FREE computer network assessment (a \$397 value). Once we've completed our initial appointment with your referral, we'll rush YOU a free Kindle Fire of your choice as a thank-you (or donate \$100 to your favorite charity ... your choice!).

Simply call us at 503-601-4335 with your referral's name and contact information today!

Cartoon Of The Month



"I either need a shorter title or a longer desk."

SHINY NEW GADGET OF THE MONTH

NexOptic DoubleTake Binoculars

Binocular technology has remained the same for a long time – and for good reason! It works well. But now, one company has decided to bring binocular optics into the 21st century and give it a technological makeover.

NexOptic's DoubleTake blends binoculars with common smartphone technology. With 10x digital zoom and a wide field lens, DoubleTake delivers outstanding 4K video and high-resolution photos. Plus, it's packed with a powerful imaging processor to ensure your videos and photos look fantastic every time, and its compact size makes it ideal for travel.

DoubleTake's battery provides three hours of continuous use, meaning it will last most people several days or more before the next charge. Images are saved to an onboard memory card and can be sent over WiFi to your phone or other device for easy sharing or personal use. Learn more at NexOptic.com/doubletake.



The most effective way to anticipate the needs of your customers is to know them well. How else will you know what their expectations are? You have to create a relationship with them to identify what their demands are and fulfill them before they even know what they wanted. So, how do you go about this? Here are just a few examples.

Are Browser Extensions Safe?

Browser extensions let you customize your Internet experience. You can find extensions to help with productivity or block ads. But how do you know if an extension is safe or not? Thankfully, there are red flags you can look for. Here are two common examples.

Permission Pop-Ups

After downloading a new extension, you may see a pop-up asking to "access your browsing activity" or something similar. While most extensions don't have malicious intent (they aren't going to sell your data), others might. If you aren't comfortable with this, you can deny permission or uninstall the extension.

An Extension's Legitimacy

There are a lot of copycats out there – scummy developers use icons or names similar to popular extensions and hope people download them by mistake. Read all the details on the extension download page and verify that the developer (or "offered by") name is correct.

Anticipating Customer Needs

What is the best way to create a loyal customer base and, therefore, a more profitable business?

Anticipate Customer Needs.

Anticipating needs is the best way to let your customers know that their success is your priority. When you deliver something customers need without asking, you create a sense of ease and let them know you have their best interests in mind – it's a proverbial "I have your back."



assume their e-mails will go into a black hole, never to be answered. Not only do I answer, but I also include a ton of resources that basically equal free coaching. There is an FAQ, links to my *Entrepreneurship Elevated* podcast, links to find a Profit First Professional and become a Profit First Professional, links to Clockwork resources, links to Pumpkin Plan resources ... You get my drift. And while it could be interpreted as marketing, anyone who knows me knows I am out to empower others and help their businesses become more profitable. I often get e-mails from readers who are pleasantly surprised – they are getting answers to questions before they even knew they had them. See? Anticipating needs!

Establish A Relationship.


In most of my books, I have a call to action. I ask readers to e-mail me to make their commitment to improving their businesses. Developing this dialogue with readers is an act of accountability on both of our parts. Moreover, it is a big leap of faith for some, and I am honored they trust me. They tell me why they are committed, and I let them know I am here and interested in helping them succeed. My hope is that they feel less alone in their struggles as business owners and more motivated to make the necessary changes they need for a successful business.

Exceed Expectations.

The responses from readers when they receive e-mails or videos from me has been overwhelmingly positive. It seems that most

Ask For Feedback.

I often request reviews of my books. Is this because I want to hear how great they are? No. I ask for reviews because I want honest feedback. How the heck else will I know what to write next? How will I know what problems need solving and what business solutions entrepreneurs are seeking if I don't ask? Getting reviews enables me to focus on the key areas where business owners are trying to improve.



MIKE MICHALOWICZ (pronounced mi-KAL-o-wits) started his first business at the age of 24, moving his young family to the only safe place he could afford – a retirement building. With no experience, no contacts and no savings, he systematically bootstrapped a multimillion-dollar business. Then he did it again. And again. Now he is doing it for other entrepreneurs. Mike is the CEO of Provendus Group. He is also a former small-business columnist for The Wall Street Journal; MSNBC's business makeover expert; a keynote speaker on entrepreneurship; and the author of the cult classic book *The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur*. His newest book, *The Pumpkin Plan*, has already been called "the next E-Myth!" For more information, visit MikeMichalowicz.com.