XperText

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"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably"

XPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE. WE'LL MAKE ALL OF YOUR COMPUTER PROBLEMS GO AWAY WITHOUT THE COST OF A FULL TIME IT STAFF

What Is A vCIO And Do I Need One?

In most large companies, the CEO works with executive-level individuals, to meet the company's goals. Examples include the CFO and COO.

One of these individuals is the CIO (Chief Information Officer). Their responsibility is to provide a strategic direction in information technology for the entire company. The CIO develops an understanding of both the business's goals and its technology requirements. They are familiar with new IT solutions that are available in the market. Promising solutions are examined further to determine if they would improve company productivity.

Even for a small business, a computer network is becoming a necessity these days. Networks come in an array of shapes and sizes. Taking the guesswork out of these choices is a CIO's role, but most small and medium-sized businesses cannot afford to hire one. That is why the option of a Virtual CIO (vCIO) is more appealing for small businesses. With a vCIO, you get all of the benefits of a full-time CIO, without the cost.

Why Do I Need A Virtual CIO?

Technology can become a burden for a business owner or CEO. By implementing a virtual CIO, that burden is taken away from the business owner and put in the hands of the vCIO. The business owner no longer has to worry about keeping track of multiple IT vendors, or license renewals. He or she can now focus on the day-to-day operations of the business, and meet with the vCIO periodically (usually quarterly) to discuss the present state of the business' technology, and where it is headed in the future. It is also more cost-efficient to hire a vCIO than a permanent, salaried CIO.

Where Do I Find a vCIO?

XPERTECHS offers a full vCIO service that will take the frustration of technology away from you, and your organization. Our virtual CIOs individually have over 25 years of experience in advising companies how to best manage their network infrastructures and technology costs.

To learn more about XPERTECHS' vCIO services, call Michael at **410-884-0225**, or visit www.XPERTECHS.com/virtual-cio

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If Disaster Strikes, How Fast Could Your Company Be Back Up And Running?

While it's impossible to plan for every potential computer disaster or emergency, there are a few easy and inexpensive measures you can put into place that will help you avoid the vast majority of computer disasters you could experience.

1. **Make sure you Are Backing Up Your System.** It just amazes me how many businesses never back up their computer network. Once it's gone, it's gone permanently!

2. **Perform A Complete Data Restore To Make Sure your Backups Are Working Properly.** Many business owners set up some type of backup system, but then never check to make sure it's working properly. The WORST time to "test" your backup is after a disaster has happened and you desperately need it!

3. **Keep An Offsite Copy Of Your Backups.** What happens if a fire or flood destroys your server AND the backup tapes or drive? What happens if your office gets robbed and they take EVERYTHING? Having an offsite backup is simply a smart way to make sure you have multiple, redundant copies of your data!

For the absolute BEST offsite Backup solution, visit:
www.XPERTECHS.com/backup
And sign up for a FREE Backup and Disaster Recovery Audit.

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5 Easy Ways To Spring Clean Your Computer For Maximum Performance

With Spring in the air, now is a good time to do an annual clean up of the computers, servers and electronic equipment in your office, both inside and out. Failure to thoroughly clean your computers and servers at least once or twice a year will result in decreased performance and possibly even system failures.

Here's why:

Dust clogs the computer's cooling system causing it to heat up, damaging sensitive electronic equipment. Dust can also cause fan noise and (believe it or not) slow performance!

Crumbs and dirt in your keyboard can cause keys to stick and crunchy sounds when typing. Plus, it's just gross and unhealthy; do you know there are more germs on your computer keyboard than the average public toilet? Even dust, fingerprints and dirt build-up will make your computer monitor dim and fuzzy.

But the physical "dirt" is only the beginning…

Here are 5 quick steps you can take today to clean up your systems and improve performance:

1. Use Disk Cleanup to delete temporary files, unused programs and any other file taking up space and slowing things down. (Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools > Disk Cleanup)

2. Defrag your hard drive to speed up access to your data. (Start > Control Panel > System and Security > Administrative Tools > Defragment your hard drive).

3. Update your spyware and antivirus software with the newest definitions. The internet changes fast. Having outdated security can slow you down dramatically.

4. Make sure you have the latest security patches and updates installed and configured properly.

Check your backups and conduct an emergency "restore" of the data. Remember, the best time to check your backups is when you DON'T desperately need to recover your data!

Prepared, Equipped and Armed with the Right Habits

At the peak of their expansion, Starbucks was opening 7 new stores every day and adding 15,000 employees every week. How did a small coffee shop in Seattle end up with over 17,000 stores and revenues of more than $10 billion, selling $4 coffee in a fancy cup? How did Starbucks build such an incredible organization that has over 135,000 employees? How do they get their new employees to show up on time and excel at delivering exceptional customer service, especially when many of them are young, unskilled, and lacking little if any experience in business? If you knew the answers to those questions, do you think it might help you expand your business or on a personal level … help you to become more successful? Let me give you just a little insight to their formula for success.

Howard Behar, the former president of Starbucks once said, *"We're not in the coffee business serving people. We're in the people business serving coffee."* When your entire business model is built around delivering exceptional customer service, you have got to figure out a way to instill the necessary SELF-DISCIPLINE in your people so they can correctly handle almost any situation. Long lines, complicated orders … and dealing with sometimes angry, mean, and in-a-hurry customers can be a daily routine for an employee at Starbucks. But, the customer and situation I just described can be the norm in a lot of businesses, so why are employees at Starbucks so good at dealing with it?

It all starts with training. Each *first year employee* will spend **over 50 hours** in the classroom and more time at home studying workbooks or conversing with mentors. Starbucks spends hours upon hours **developing powerful habits** to prepare their people for the onslaught of customers. They have found **that following disciplined habits will enable their people to DEAL with almost any challenge they may face.** They focus on life skills and helping them to handle their emotions and show them how to deliver a **BURST of energy, pep, and enthusiasm when dealing with <u>every</u> customer.** They role play with them, interact with them, help, guide, nurture and **SHOW** them how to handle many different SITUATIONS.

Starbucks has spent millions of dollars creating courses that TRAIN their people on not just the steps of the process, but more importantly, on how to **maintain the self-discipline** to *"do it"* every time. One acronym Starbucks uses to help their people is **LATTE.** It stands for *Listen* to the customer, *Acknowledge* their complaint, *Take Action* by solving the problem, *Thank* them, and then *Explain* why the problem occurred. Starbucks has developed numerous routines for their employees to follow to help them during stressful situations. By developing these routines, they are helping their people create the RIGHT HABITS to serve their customers. **When an employee is PREPARED, EQUIPPED, and ARMED with the RIGHT HABITS to address almost any situation, delivering exceptional customer service becomes easy.**

Robert Stevenson is a highly sought after, internationally known speaker. He is the author of the best-selling books "How to Soar Like An Eagle in a World Full of Turkeys" and "52 Essential Habits For Success." www.robertstevenson.org/

The Single Most **Dangerous** Assumption Businesses Make About Bank Security That Can Cause Them To Lose ALL Their Money

Here's a shocker to most business owners: Your bank often can NOT reclaim money stolen from your bank account due to fraud or cyber-crime. That means if money gets drafted from your business bank account from a hacker, phishing attack, identity theft or by any other means, you have little to no chance of getting it back.

Here are 5 essential steps you can take right now to protect your business:

1. **Enforce A Strict Company Password Policy.** Make sure that you and your employees change passwords regularly, don't use the same password for all accounts and require complex passwords.

2. **Set Up A Firewall.** Hackers will target the weakest link, without a firewall, that "weak link" is YOUR company.

3. **Designate A Banking-Only Computer.** The 2011 Business Banking Study showed that 56% of businesses experienced payment fraud (or an attempt at fraud) and 755 EXPERIENCED ACCOUNT TAKEOVER AND FRAUD ONLINE. By using a single computer soley dedicated to online financial transactions (no e-mail, web-surfing, Facebook, YouTube, etc.) it's much harder for outsiders to access your information.

4. **Back Up Your Files Daily.** Thanks to new cloud based technologies, you can even schedule offsite backups to occur automatically.

5. **Educate Employees.** Your staff is the first line of defense AND your biggest security hole at the same time. Uneducated employees are one of the most common causes of data breaches. Make sure that they are aware of the do's and don'ts for your company with regards to data security.

Is Microsoft's New Cloud Based Office Licensing Model Going To Affect Your Business?

Microsoft announced earlier this year that they are going to place all of their Microsoft Office desktop and cloud-based Office 365 software applications under one umbrella in a renewed effort to push their cloud-based subscription model.

Microsoft will still sell their existing desktop versions, but these will not be as "fully featured" as the upcoming cloud-based versions (note that any Microsoft software that ends in 365 is their cloud based software). It's becoming very apparent that whether you're a home user or a large company, Microsoft wants you to buy the cloud version of their products going forward. If you don't want the cloud version on a monthly subscription, you'll have to settle for a dumbed down version of the product instead.

Here's what this potentially means for you:

- The new "Office" family covers all different editions of Microsoft Office, from Student and Home Editions to the most powerful tools that Microsoft offers.
- You will never have to worry about buying CALs for Office 365.
- You will now be able to shift your budget dollars from one time or annual license purchases to an ongoing monthly operating expense, thus evening out cash flow.
- Things should be getting easier for you to manage. Whether you are starting from scratch or updating software licenses for your office, you'll be able to get everyone running on Office, Exchange, Sharepoint, Lync, Word, Excel and even Skype under one single license.
- Microsoft is also preparing a half-dozen bundles for Office and Office 365, many aimed at small business.

THE 411 ON THE NEW HP FOLIO

HP recently released their newest Windows Ultrabook, the Folio. The Folio boasts all of the necessary requirements of an Ultrabook, including a 13-inch screen, sleek design, long-lasting battery life, all of the ports and 'whistles' for working on-the-go, and best yet, a very competitive price!

Starting at just $899, the Folio offers everything that the business traveler needs, and can be compared to the MacBook Air in every category other than weight.

To learn more about the Folio, visit: **www.hp.com**