

Happy
4th
of July

July 2018

microTECH Times

Covered I.T. 24/7—Never Worry Again!



8 Ways To Protect Your Wireless Network From Hackers And Keep Your Data Safe

There are more than 150,000 Wi-Fi locations in the U.S., according to Statista, and each one is a potential entry point for computer hackers, malware, and other cyber threats. So, how can you keep your company safe?



Leaving the backdoor open.

While performing security audits, managed IT providers often discover easily-exploitable security flaws in wireless networks like shared access points for clients and employees, remote management features left active for anyone to use and out of date security. Here are eight ways to keep your company's Wi-Fi network secure.

1. Set up an independent Wi-Fi network for customers. If your company offers free Wi-Fi to your customers or guests, create a separate public network just for them. Don't allow customers to access your main Wi-Fi network as they may be able to easily gain access to other parts of your network too.

2. Only allow authorized devices to access your company only network. Set your wireless router to give network access only to devices

that have the correct Media Access Control (MAC) address. That keeps unauthorized devices out of your internal network.

3. Protect your data with encryption.

The best way to protect data transmitted through your wireless network is to use encryption. Encrypted data is very difficult for nearby attackers to intercept and use. But in many wireless routers, encryption is turned off by default and no one knows they really should turn it on. Ask your IT provider to check your device and enable encryption if it is available.

4. Shut off remote management features.

Unless your managed IT service provider is providing remote technical support to your router, you should shut off any remote management features. Hackers may use these remote capabilities to gain access to your network and ultimately to your company data.

(Continued on page 2)

What's Inside

3 Ways Meditation Apps Help.....Pg. 2
To Hot To Compute: Recommend Temps For Computers.....Pg. 2
Is Your Digital Copier A Hidden Cyber Threat?.....Pg. 3
Death By Meeting! Strategies That Really Help.....Pg. 4
Network Security Audit.....Pg. 4

Geeky Jokes

If you laugh at this, you like sci-fi:
What did Darth Vader say to the puppy that was playing with cats?
“Look, come over to the dog side.”

If you laugh at this, you may love Word processing too much:
What do you call the Oracle from the Matrix movie, without her guardian?
She's Sans Serif.

If you laugh at this, you understand code:
There are 10 kinds of people in the world: Those who understand binary and those who don't.

4th Of July Trivia

Well, we all know the 4th of July as Independence Day. A huge happy birthday to America! Test yourself with our 4th of July trivia.

Picnics, barbecues, and fireworks

are staples enjoyed throughout the nation on July 4th. But without the founding fathers, this holiday wouldn't really exist. So, we drummed up only the best pieces of trivia for you to share with your friends and coworkers.

July 4th Trivia #47:
How many people really signed the Declaration of independence on the 4th of July? Yeah, we all

get this picture of a group of old men in white wigs trading off the pen to sign, right? Wrong. Only two of the signers actually signed on the 4th of July. The rest came much later.

July 4th Trivia #52:
Do you know what president was actually born on the 4th of July? It was Calvin Coolidge, the 30th president of the United

(Continued on page 3)



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8 Ways To Protect Your Wireless Network...

(Continued from page 1)

5. Update your router regularly.

Router manufacturers frequently release new updates to patch security issues as they are discovered. Your router should be regularly kept up-to-date. To make things easier, your managed IT service provider can check for these updates as well as download and install updates regularly for you.

6. Rename your router. Your router is created with a default name, referred to as the Service Set Identifier, or SSID. The default SSID is set by the manufacturer, and is easy for hackers and malware to identify. The good news is that you can change your router's SSID any time, or have your managed IT service provider do it for you.

7. Change the default password too. Most routers and other hardware come with a default password. Hackers typically have access to lists of default passwords and they can easily break into your system unless you change the

name and password. Make sure to create a strong password too using at least 8 characters with one number, letter, and a symbol too. Stay away from using regular words, the name of your router or the name of your business in your password.

8. Get a complete security audit.

Cyber threats are constantly adapting and becoming more aggressive. The best way to keep your network defenses up-to-date is to get a thorough security audit from a reputable managed IT service provider.

Need help? We've been providing quality managed IT services in the local area for quite some time. If you're ready to take the next step to protect your network, give us a call today. We will conduct a Network Security Audit to uncover any vulnerabilities in your current setup as well as get a new plan in place to protect your organization moving forward.

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3 Ways Meditation Apps Help You Disconnect

According to Fast Company, over 18 million Americans have joined the meditation movement. With clear benefits such as lowering blood pressure and boosting immune systems under its bonnet, cognitive behavioral therapy treatments like meditation are seemingly more important now than ever.

A meditative experience.

Because of this massive following, many developers have dived into the app space to attempt to provide an app-powered meditative experience. Lifehacker looked at meditation apps and pointed out that although apps are by no means a requirement for reaching a meditative state, but they do help people with these three key steps:

1. Build a new habit. Most people have heard it can take 21 days to build a habit and this makes things difficult for people looking to start something new. With an app, there is a built-in reminder to take the time for meditation. They can even track stats like a longest streak and hand out rewards for checking in.

2. Set a time to disconnect.

Clocks or timers are often recommended for meditation to help keep things on track. With a dedicated app, there will be a timer built in as well as a place to store your progress and observations.

3. Connect inwardly more deeply.

When starting out with meditation, it is common for most people to be a bit lost. Guided sessions can help a person stay on track or focus on specific goals like relaxation, creativity or inner peace.

The best part of these apps might be the access to guided sessions because they allow novices to get started without having to wonder what it is they should be doing. They also enable people to see how meditation could work for them without the time or financial commitment when signing up for a class.

Electronics help disconnect people from electronics. Ironically, it could be apps that help the always-connected society find success in disconnecting from electronics and reconnecting with their inner being.

To Hot To Compute?

The heat of summer is upon us. Make sure your electronics are safe and your work environment is top notch to encourage efficiency.

The temperature is rising. Be aware, your computers, servers, copiers, firewall and router are temperamental too. As the thermometer rises, they overheat just like we do. The ideal temp for a server room (closet or nook) is between 50 and 82 degrees. Anything hotter or colder can cause damage to your machines.

Humidity can gum up productivity too.

Too much humidity over 60% can cause corrosion and failures just like too little below 40% can cause a build up of static electricity damaging your equipment. Keep yourself and your equipment in a comfortable environment.

Maintain a good working environment for the humans too.

Much like our equipment, humans tend to get heat cramps, exhaustion and even heat stroke when the temp rises and humidity drops. Takes steps this summer to protect your most valuable assets, your staff and the equipment they use to keep your business booming.

4th Of July Trivia...

(Continued from page 1)
State. He was born on July 4th, 1872.

July 4th Trivia #88: Do you know which presidents died on the 4th of July?

Yeah, there were more than one that died on this commemorative day. The first three presidents John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe all passed on the 4th of July. Oddly enough, the 2nd and 3rd even pass together in 1826 on the 50th anniversary of the July 4th holiday.

July 4th Trivia #123: What is the nations most well known 4th of July annual food tradition? Most people think of barbeques and picnics but, Nathan's Fourth of July Hot Dog Contest became the most celebrated annual event for 4th of July in 1916. It's actually a really funny story. Four men held a hot dog eating contest at Nathan's Famous Stand on Coney Island to settle an argument about who was the most patriotic. This face-off became a long standing tradition that is even celebrated today over 100 years later.

Now you have a few quick trivia tidbits to share with your friends and coworkers this summer. Happy 4th!

Is Your Digital Copier A Hidden Cyber Threat?

The hard drive of your digital copier stores data about everything it copies, scans, prints, e-mails, or faxes. Hackers could steal that data to commit fraud or identity theft. Whether your company buys or leases a digital copier we recommend taking these steps to protect your sensitive information and keep your business safe.



Make sure your copier's network connections are secure.

Computers and servers aren't the only network-connected machines in your office that store sensitive information. The network connections to your copier must also be protected against malware and other cyber threats. Make a plan to check and update your copier's network security on a regular basis to be absolutely sure there are no intrusions.

Use encryption, if available on your copier. Some digital copiers even offer data encryption capability. When activated, this will protect the data against being retrieved from the hard drive. Encryption is frequently turned off by default, so it's important to turn it on if your copier has the capability.

Regularly overwrite the copier's hard drive. The very best way to prevent hackers from getting confidential data out of your digital copier is to frequently clean it out. Purging all the data that has been saved every month will give you a clean slate. Your IT provider can overwrite the hard drive on a regular schedule. Just ask!

Remove sensitive information before disposing of your copier.

When you donate, trade in, sell, or return a copier at the end of a lease, make sure that all your company's sensitive information is removed from the hard drive. This is a complex process, since hard drives are often difficult to locate, and some copiers utilize multiple drives. Ask your IT provider to overwrite or physically remove the hard drive(s) before your equipment leaves the premises. This way, you know none of your company information is walking out the front door.

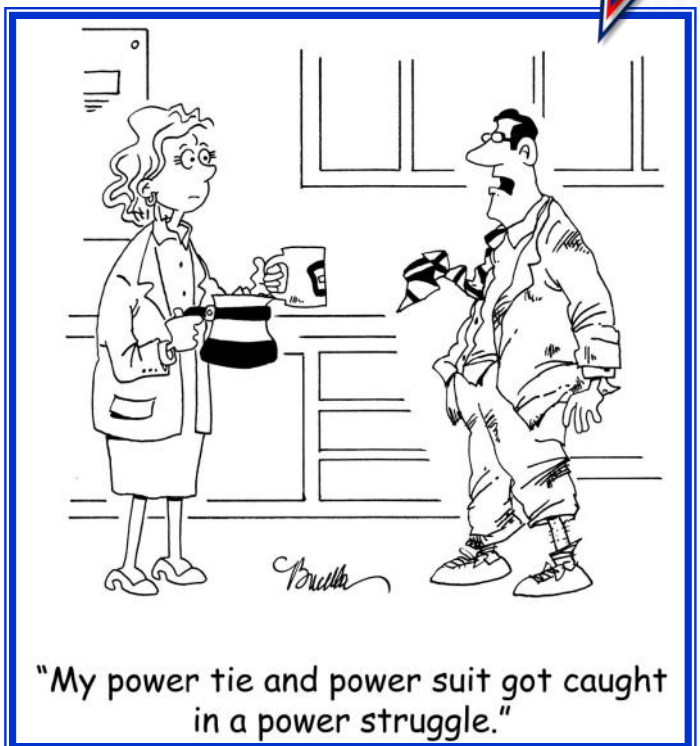
What about my scanner?

Scanners work a little differently. Generally, office scanners are setup to scan directly to a specific computer or folder. Although, this doesn't make them any more safe. Wherever your scanner plops your documents, be sure that location is secure. Leaving critical documents on a single computer instead of in a secure shared drive or in the cloud, could leave the data exposed.

Were you just wondering how full the hard drive is on your copier?

Give us a call. We can advise you on the best way to purge your digital copier. Even if you're just ready for something new, we are happy to clean out your old copier and help you select the best copier for your needs — one that will protect your confidential data.

It's complicated. We know many offices in our area use leasing companies to buy copiers and maintain them. However, not all companies make it regular practice to clean out the hard drives. Ask the question. Don't hesitate. Keep your company safe.



"My power tie and power suit got caught in a power struggle."



“We make all of your computer problems go away without adding additional full-time I.T. staff!”

Ask about our fixed price service agreements — Computer support at a flat monthly fee you can budget for, just like payroll!

Inquiring Minds...

Death By Meeting! Strategies That Really Help.

Despite the fact that meetings are ubiquitous in the business world, Entrepreneur Magazine claims most of the time spent in them ends up being wasted through distractions and lost productivity. Typically well intentioned, meetings are called out of necessity to discuss problems, set directions and goals, and to delegate work once decisions are made. One of the most significant problems with meetings is that they can be a distraction for everyone. Having one scheduled at 10:00 a.m., for instance, can mean that team members working through a complicated problem just before it starts can derail their train of thought for hours as a result.

Too many chiefs and not enough productivity. Ok, so that's not exactly how the old saying goes but, you know what we mean. Sometimes the boss will require people to join the group who aren't really connected to the issue at hand. Unfortunately, this can cause the topic of discussion to wander while contributing little toward making progress. Meanwhile, an hour-long meeting with ten people has in effect kept all of them from performing 10 hours of actual work that is now a total loss of productivity for everyone.

Americans spend about 31 hours per month in unproductive meetings (Forbes). Fortunately, some strategies can be deployed to achieve more productive meetings while avoiding as many distractions as possible.

Take advantage of the fact that most meetings will grow to fill their scheduled timeframe, and schedule them to be shorter. Invite the minimum amount of people necessary to hold the meeting and consider using Amazon's 'two pizza' rule - include few enough people that they can all share two pizzas. Once the session has started, clearly state the objective, consider banning laptops and avoid reading verbatim from a PowerPoint presentation. If all else fails, a face-to-face walking meeting might accomplish more than meeting with an entire group.

Consider a set agenda for all company meetings and stick to it! Some companies have adopted a set agenda (or template) for all the meetings held under their roof. This type of agreed upon guide not only creates a consistent flow for everyone to follow and expect, but it gives attendees a clear vision for what's to come and where they can participate.

Schedule new topics for a later date. Don't be afraid to assign and schedule time to address new topics that arise. Meetings are a great way to identify, discuss and resolve issues but may actually bring new things to light that also need time and energy. Schedule these new topics for a later date and explore them in a new meeting.



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Worried About Network Security?

Worried that your Wi-Fi network may be exposing your company? Concerned about hackers climbing into your business? Tense about huge repair bills if your network is compromised?

Don't let it go that far. Give us a call today to schedule your Network Security Audit. We will run a full audit of your network and give you the results so you can make a plan to tighten up security.

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