

## Connecting the Dots...

### Connecting the Dots with Technology

Running a business is exciting and at times challenging. Regardless of the size of the organization, most businesses face similar demands and issues. We all know that business conditions are constantly changing. So it goes without saying, as a business landscape shifts, various problems and opportunities require different solutions.

Planning is fundamental to any business. Every successful business consistently reviews its business plan to make sure it continues to meet its needs. But how often is technology included in a company's future strategy? Most recognize the importance of technology, but still look at the upfront cost rather than focusing on the big picture.

Connecting business vision with technology requires a sound business plan and an understanding of your company's business objectives. It's never too late for a company to evaluate its technology needs and begin mapping out a comprehensive strategy.

Ultimately, your business plan should include technology that is designed for change. Without a well-defined strategy, businesses will make poor buying decisions which will result in implementing ineffective tools. Be sure your technology solutions are able to grow in the most proficient and cost effective way as your business needs grow and change.

First, decide where you are and where you want to be. Determine how you will use technology to manage and support your future goals.

Then, take a look at business operations, consider which functions require or could benefit from technology such as communication with your customers, order fulfillment, inventory and supply management, and internal communication. The alignment between business processes and IT is a key issue as it directly impacts an organization's ability to meet business needs.

Putting the right systems in place for your business and understanding how to take advantage of an IT infrastructure will maximize results and simplify future technology enhancements. For example, implementing a robust Internet Protocol (IP) network makes it easier to employ new technologies, such as VoIP. With the ground work already in place, a company can utilize VoIP to help lower calling costs and provide advanced phone-based capabilities.

Technology benefits are not always defined in revenue. It's difficult to measure the value. It's important to consider organizational proficiencies.

Ben Franklin coined the famous expression... "Time is money!" It's a fact that a well-planned infrastructure with advanced collaboration tools will improve your bottom line. We all know that systems degrade over time. A properly maintained computer system will provide you with higher speeds. If your system is slower than molasses, it is going to impact overall productivity.

Take into account employee morale. There is no getting around it, the tech savvy employee of today expects to work with up-to-date technology. When these expectations are not met, technology can have an impact on job satisfaction. Clearly, it's safe to say, that employee

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### Take Note

#### Windows 10 Upgrade Deadline is Around the Corner!

July 29th is the deadline to upgrade to Windows 10 for free! Need help managing your business' upgrades? Call us...we'll be happy to help!

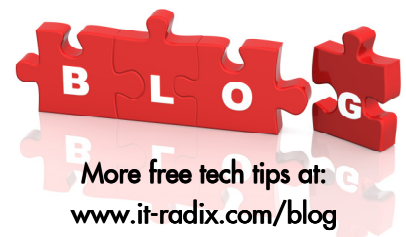
#### Taking Our Lunch'n'Learn Events on the Road!

Do you know business owners or have clients that are concerned about issues related to Cybersecurity? We'd be delighted to partner with you and share our expertise through a presentation. Call us for more details.

#### Welcome Andrew

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to our new intern, Andrew Yost.

If you would rather receive our newsletter via email, sign up on our website or send an email to [resource@it-radix.com](mailto:resource@it-radix.com)



## Connecting Through Vendor Management

Noted French anthropologist Claude Levi Strauss said, “The wise man doesn’t give the right answers, he poses the right questions.”

Navigating the terrain in the world of communications and information technology is not easy. Smart business executives leverage Vendor Management services from outside experts to help. That expert asks the key questions of the organization and based on those answers, recommends the best way forward in terms of services/providers. At IT Radix, we do this all the time. Examples of such questions recently posed to us in such a role include:

- What level of Internet speed must my organization have to successfully and productively operate from the Cloud? Who is the best provider of that?
- Are the terms and conditions listed in this proposal from this data center in line with my business needs? Should I look elsewhere?
- Does the new office we acquired have adequate network cabling to accommodate our data needs? If I have to invest in upgrading, who should do it?
- What provider of VoIP phone services offers the best flexibility as my business grows without locking me in a long-term contract?
- Does it matter what web technology my website is built with for future changes and enhancements? What happens if I want to move my website?

The IT Radix approach to a vendor management project starts with “wise” questions first, so we understand clients’ needs both today and into the future. Next, we scrutinize the market to bring together vendor options for the client and help them choose the best fit. However, that is really only half the job.

Where the rubber meets the road is managing vendor performance—ensuring that the vendor provides the goods and services on time, on or below budget. And through that process, we continue to be “wise” and ask a lot of questions of the vendor, challenging them to ensure goals are achieved. The key to our giving the best vendor management services is communication—both ways. We make no assumptions that the vendor truly understands the needs of our client, so we clarify that constantly. Also, we keep the client informed while also keeping the client away from the needless minutiae of projects.

If you understand the value of a general contractor when it comes to building and remodeling projects, then you understand the value of IT vendor management. At IT Radix, we are happy to help in this capacity. Bringing us in would be a wise move!

## Unified Solution

Windows, Mac OS, Android, Linux, laptops, tablets, phones and the list goes on. With all of the various computers, devices and operating systems in use at a typical business how does one find a unified solution to protect it all? The answer is actually quite simple, it’s with a hardware firewall.

Well, it’s not really that simple. You must use the right firewall and get the right services to go with it. A true business class firewall will always offer add-on services that enhance its functionality. These add-on services are key to building a unified solution to protect all of the devices on your network.

Intrusion prevention, gateway anti-virus and content filtering are generally the minimum services you want from your firewall. These services will be subscription based so you will have to renew them periodically. Don’t let the subscription expire, these services will cease to function if not kept current.

These services provide an excellent first-level defense for your network no matter what device is being used. Stopping users from ever getting to that infected website, or blocking the malicious advertisement on a legitimate site.

So when you are evaluating a firewall for your business, make sure you are including the investment of these additional services. At IT Radix, we have taken the guesswork out of this decision. Every firewall we recommend to our clients will ALWAYS include these services, and we will make sure those services remain current.

**OUR CLIENTS  
SPEAK OUT:**

### THE BUZZ

*“IT Radix is an all-around fantastic IT support organization. Their friendly and knowledgeable staff, combined with their willingness to go the extra mile to ensure our technology and business success sets them apart from all other IT outsource firms. I am more than happy to refer them to whomever asks me about them. Keep up the great work, IT Radix!”*

Joe Leno, VP Consulting Operations – CMK Select

## Connect...Technology

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morale can be hindered by the technology solutions an employer provides.

And what about customer service experience and supporting better relationships with key partners? Technology is a cost of doing business, and an opportunity to do additional business!

Given these points, I think you will agree that technology redefines opportunities. As we mentioned earlier, business conditions and technology are constantly changing. Perhaps you've had to make adjustments to your business goals and vision. Incremental technology planning and monitoring is essential to ensure that systems live up to their full potential.

How do you know that your technology investment is providing the value required to realize your business goals and vision? Transforming vision into reality often requires outside expertise. Why not call us today... we'd love to help you connect the dots!

Proudly folded & stuffed by Park Lake School

### SPECIAL OFFER



Dot Your I's  
and Cross Your T's

Sign up for a year of IT Radix Management and Support during the months of **April, May and June**, and receive Bluetooth speakers!

All three plans are eligible:  
**Capstone, Cornerstone, Keystone**

Visit [www.it-radix.com](http://www.it-radix.com) to learn more about what's included in each of these proactive maintenance plans. Offer for new managed service clients only. Call **IT Radix** today to learn more!

## Using Big Data to Connect the Cybersecurity Dots

Big Data is generally defined as data that has a very high volume, lots of variety, is from a trusted source (veracity), changes rapidly (velocity) and has value.

As you can imagine, there is lots of data associated with cybersecurity and it comes from lots of sources. As technology improves and changes, more and more sources of data exist in the area of cybersecurity. Most of this data is generated by machines: network logs, event logs, firewall and security system data, web logs, email logs and more. Pretty much anything and everything running in your computer infrastructure generates data.

But what to do with all this data? It needs to be processed quickly and frequently (sometimes real-time). Proactive cybersecurity needs sophisticated data management in order to aggregate and analyze all the data collected. The goal: to improve alerting, develop preemptive processes to detect and stop threats and to provide real-time reporting.

This machine-generated data can be problematic to aggregate, mine and analyze. And even after the data has been extracted, it may need to be combined with other information to provide context, and establish patterns and trends related to cyber attacks. The process is very forensic in nature and can be difficult at best.

IT Radix is constantly researching and evaluating technology solutions that leverage big data analysis as part of its cyber protection. For example, we are shifting clients to a new endpoint protection platform that not only leverages big data analysis but also cloud technology to provide greater protection to end user machines and devices. The software combines file pattern and predictive behavior recognition to allow for continuous real time detection of potential threats. It also leverages the data and knowledge from all its users and technology partners such as Microsoft, HP, RSA, Cisco and more that generates more than 200+ terabytes of data to quickly identify and manage new threats. It uses a collective approach to ensure that end points are always protected.

The Internet of Things (IoT) has introduced an even greater threat vector. As more and more devices are Internet-enabled, the attack surface for cyber threats is expanding. While it's tempting and easy to put everything on a single network, IT Radix recommends considering isolating work-related equipment from your IoT devices—sometimes this is easier said than done.

Finally, when protecting against cyber attacks, another important aspect is situational awareness or knowing what's going on around the organization. By understanding what's happening within an organization and combining it with big data analysis, real-time assessments and decision making can be done to respond to potential threats and anomalies. The bottom line, technology is enabling big data analysis to enhance your business' cyber protection landscape. Want to learn more about our new preferred endpoint protection platform or other ways you can protect your business from cyber threats by leveraging big data technology to connect your cybersecurity dots? Give us a call today.



“One must always maintain one’s connection to the past and yet ceaselessly pull away from it.”

— Gaston Bachelard



“My computer at work is so old, the keyboard only has dots and dashes.”

**From the desk of:** Cathy Coloff  
**Subject:** Making the Connection...



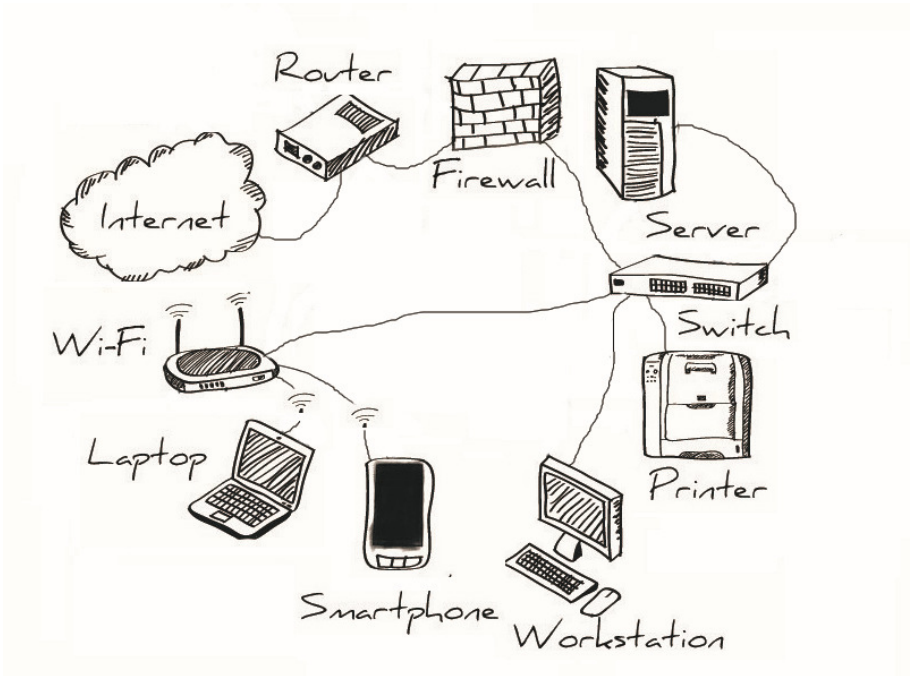
We like to be the trusted advisor to our clients on all things technology. While this does not mean we are the experts of all technology, we are knowledgeable about a wide diversity of technology that our clients use. We then in turn use this knowledge to benefit our clients. Many don’t realize the connections between various technology used in a business. For example, most consider a domain name something basic—used for a website and as part of your email address. But, what they don’t realize is the connected dots behind the scenes that makes all that “stuff” work.

This is where we love to add value. By helping to ensure that everyone is on the same page and appropriately connecting the dots, we’re able to ensure that the client’s business needs are met. They have a nice new interactive website, a simple name to use to connect back to the office remotely and that their email doesn’t hiccup during the website transition.

Having been in the industry and the SMB space for 25+ years, both I and my team have had the luxury of seeing a wide diversity of technology—sometimes successfully implemented and sometimes not so. So, it was interesting to review some of the responses to last month’s trivia contest—one possible solution is depicted below. As always, I learned that there is more than one way to connect the dots!

## Connections Completed...

Congratulations to **Allan Valvano** for making the right connections between a standard IT infrastructure and winning a set of adult Dot-to-Dot puzzle books. The correct connections are shown in the diagram below. All entrants received a box of DOTS candy just for participating! What a sweet deal!



### Enter and Win!

### Crack the Code

The first person to send an email to [resource@it-radix.com](mailto:resource@it-radix.com) with the correctly deciphered message below will win a set of adult Dot-to-Dot puzzle books.

Crack the Code  
(note that “+” separates words):

```

-.-.  -.-.  ..  .-.-  ...  +
-.-.  ---  --  .+
..-.-  ..  -.-  ...  -
    
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#### April Connections Contest:

Congratulations to Allan Valvano of PayMedia, recipient of a set of Dot-to-Dot puzzle books.