October 2021

IT Radix Resource

We make IT work for you

Read All About IT!

What Your HR People Should Know About IT Security

Human Resources (HR) historically was labeled the "soft function" within organizations. However, in today's world where protection of personally identifiable information is paramount, there is no greater functional business area where so much of the daily work needs to be protected at all costs. Consider the areas of focus for HR professionals: recruiting/staffing employees, compensation, benefits, labor relations, compliance, organizational structure, payroll, training and development, harassment issues and so on. These are all things that regardless of how "perfect" an employer may be, none would want any of that information to be shared beyond the figurative four walls of their own organization. Below are suggestions for HR professionals to lower the risk of a cybersecurity breach.

Stay on Top Of All Legal/Compliance Requirements. Unfortunately, this is a complex task as such guidelines are inconsistent and ever changing—varying across geographies, types of data, line of business, etc. Make sure that a management-level employee takes ownership of this and knows what laws apply. Develop a regular schedule of review and updating of these standards: check key sites (such as industry associations) for updated standards, peruse industry newsletters, and attend seminars to stay current.

Collect and Use Only Necessary Personal Data. Gather personal HR data that complies with business needs. Consider using a unique proprietary sequence, instead of a social security number, in areas where identifying an employee is necessary in forms or records.

Safeguard Confidential Digital Data Everywhere. Put in place HR records retention policies specifying what kind of data can be stored where, for how long and accessible by whom. Utilize software that can scan servers and files for sensitive data to identify information residing in inappropriate or unsecure locations. Establish encryption policies for all HR-related material.

Do Not Forget About Paper Files. The best approach to digital security can greatly reduce risks but there is still paper abounding in an HR Department. The same records retention policies described above should apply to paper documents. Every HR staff member should adhere to a "clean desk" policy. Nothing should be visible to any wandering eye if a desk is unattended. Shred documents on a regular basis. Keep all staff trained on such policies and enforce compliance.

(Continued on page 2)

Take Note

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Combat cybercrime! Ask us about our Security Awareness Training and new advanced security solutions. And… participate in this month's security webinar.

October 27

WEBINAR

10-Minute Tech Talk:

Advanced Security Solutions

www.it-radix.com/webinar

Starts @ 12:10pm sharp

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

More free tech tips at:
www.it-radix.com/blog

(Continued from page 1)

Share Only on a Need-to-Know Basis. The truth is that HR data needs to be shared within the department as well as to the other units of the business. That happens every day. But that always means opportunities for data leaks. Put in place simple security solutions such as implementing safeguards for a PC workstation to log out after a very short time of inactivity.

Here are a few additional security concerns to address. Watch out for chatbots that are used for malicious purposes to gather confidential data. Be wary of spear phishing emails; when in doubt, ask the "sender" directly about anything requested in an email. Also, consider Mobile Device Management systems to secure phones and laptops and keep anti-virus and patching up to date on all hardware corporate wide.

Stay tuned next month as we shine a light on your receptionist and share what he/she needs to know to keep your data safe and secure.

Proudly folded & stuffed by Central Park School

Our IT Radix Reading Circle

Reading is not only enjoyable it's also VERY good for you! Mentally, it improves brain connectivity, slows dementia as you age, fights symptoms of depression, increases vocabulary and comprehension, and fosters empathy towards others. Physically, reading also reduces stress, aids in sleep readiness, lowers blood pressure, and contributes to a longer life.

Thankfully, many of our IT Radix team are avid readers.

Laurie T enjoys relaxing with her iPad and learning something new. She gravitates toward books on technology, psychology, crime stories and mental health. Books riddled with psychological disorders are her favorite. **Patrick** is a movie buff but prefers reading because he gets a better understanding of the characters. His favorites are murder mysteries and science fiction.

Jim enjoys reading about ancient history. It gives him an appreciation for the world we live in and how easy most of us have it. He recently discovered audio books and has been listening to mostly science fiction like Stephen King. **Pat** enjoys books on sports, mysteries, and sci-fi. He reflects how reading opens the world to new experiences, making him feel like he's actually there. **Ken** also feels that reading is a great mental transportation away from whatever is going on. He prefers biographies and thrillers.

Cathy's reading preference depends on WHY she's reading. She enjoys business and personal growth/management books as well as fiction where she leans toward mystery/detective stories. She embraces all platforms—Kindle, iPad, audio, and paper. **Marybeth** is a voracious reader, devouring anything she can get her hands on. Put quite simply, reading makes her happy; and she enjoys a wide variety of genres: literature, suspense, historical fiction, sci-fi, crime/mysteries, and fantasy. She loves the light weight and portability of her Kindle Paperwhite.

Reading gives you room to exist and imagine beyond the reality you're given. Open a book today and grow your mind!

The Buzz — *Our Clients Speak Out!*

"With a 100% remote team based all over the United States, it was getting difficult to manage day-to-day technical issues with the management staff. IT Radix is highly responsive and knowledgeable and addresses issues quickly, keeping my team productive and secure. It's a great partnership!"

Esther Poulsen, Founder and CEO — Raare Solutions LLC

Raare Solutions LLC is an Operational CRM Consulting Firm specializing in transforming data into compelling, personalized customer engagement programs, ensuring brand message and experiences reach the right people at the right time through technology, process and expert insights.

The "Human Firewall"

What It Is and Why You Should Be Freaked Out by It

Social engineering is a scary thing, and we're all vulnerable. It starts when scammers try to build trust with their victims. They trick their victims into handing over email addresses, physical addresses, phone numbers and passwords.

Scammers often use phishing emails (and sometimes phone calls) posing as legitimate sources to get this information. They might tell you they're a representative at your bank or your favorite online store. They may even pose as a colleague and prey on your desire to help or fix a problem.

Social engineering works because scammers know how to break through the "human firewall," or the people in your organization. You can have all the malware protection in the world, but hackers can still break in by **exploiting your employees**.

How can you protect yourself and ensure your human firewall isn't breached? While no method can stop social engineering completely, **ongoing cybersecurity training can go a long way in patching that firewall.** When your team knows what to look for and how to deal with it, they can stop the scammers in their tracks.

Empower your employees by teaching them how to recognize red flags when they are being targeted. Contact us to learn about our employee cybersecurity awareness training and testing services.

"Remember son, you can't judge a book by it's file size."

Don't Check Out on Security

The personally identifiable information (PII) or data that an organization handles is not always the HR data of its own staff. Sometimes it is information about your clients, your vendors, subcontractors and more. Regardless of your business' relationship to an individual, all PII of any kind needs to be protected and kept confidential.

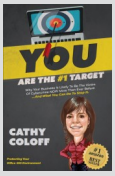
IT Radix recommends regularly reviewing with your team the information it has and how it is handled and shared within or outside the organization. Establish data classification standards and policies around handling data… and follow them! Limit access to all information as much as possible.

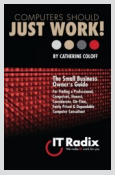
Remember, like a book that's been checked out of the library, the owner of the information is expecting their information to be returned on time and undamaged. You can't check out on security!

Extra, Extra! Read All About IT

Looking for a few good reads? Contact us today for a free copy of Cathy's two books:

YOU Are the #1 Target
and
Computers Should Just Work!





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IT Radix Resource We make IT work for you

"The time you enjoy wasting is not wasted time."

— Bertrand Russell

Enter and Win Trivia Contest

The first person to send an email to resource@it-radix.com with the correct answer to our trivia question will win a gift card to Barnes & Noble.

Q: What was the first book that kicked off the *For Dummies* series of how-to books?

July Trivia Challenge

Q: What is an outdoor recreational activity in which participants use a mobile device to find hidden "treasures"? (Answer: Geocaching)

Congratulations to David Kerner of Meisel, Tuteur & Lewis, P.C., recipient of a "Get Outdoors" Fun Pack!

From the desk of Cathy Coloff

Making sound business decisions requires looking at a situation from multiple perspectives and developing a course of action that is beneficial for all. This is particularly important when it comes to cybersecurity. At IT Radix, we frequently need to make decisions about how to do things securely for our clients or recommend how our clients should secure their technology and sometimes, quite simply, it's not convenient. When we're up against a decision about security vs. convenience, security most often wins. When we calculate the potential downtime, financial loss and stress created by loose or lax security, the investment and inconvenience of strong security practices and solutions pale in comparison. More recently, we've had to take an even stronger approach with some of our clients when it comes to security to ensure that they acknowledge and understand the risks they are taking even if it's uncomfortable for us—that is what sound business decisions are all about.

Sometimes, I end up applying this same principle to situations with my son—be it at school, in sports or at home. Yes, it would be easier to skip steps or avoid things altogether; but in the end, the best decision is to look at a situation or problem from all sides and find an approach that works for all—which sometimes means, he has to take out the trash!

We Make Sound Business Decisions

Every day, each of us at IT Radix are faced with making a host of decisions—some for internal purposes and some directly for clients. While our approach to all decision making is built around our core values of "Clients First" and "WOW Service" …we include "Sound Business Decisions" on its own as another one of our Core Values.

Decision making can vary depending on the type of issue that arises. We know that every business is unique, so we break out of the cookie-cutter approach to IT support by customizing our services to each and every one of our clients to meet their specific needs. Sometimes Occam's Razor axiom emphasizing simplicity makes sense, sometimes it does not. When it does not, we start by identifying the client need or objective, brainstorming on alternate ways of attainment, and selecting the best solution for our client. Often, an alternative is included. But always, once any recommendation is implemented, we review the outcome and adjust as needed.

We pride ourselves in taking ownership of our decisions that are always in the best interest of our clients.

"I was told these words of wisdom a long time ago and they apply today… 'When you know what values you hold dear, decision making is easy.' That certainly is the way we do it at IT Radix."
— Ken Toumey, one of our awesome IT Radix Team members

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