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TECHNOLOGY TIMES

What's New

Do These 3 Things To Make Sure You Don't Get Hacked

Train up. Get your entire team trained on IT security fundamentals and best practices. They should know how to create strong passwords, how to safely access the web and how to securely use e-mail – including how to identify phishing scams. They should have a clear understanding of today's threats and how to be proactive in addressing those threats.

Invest in good tech. You should be invested in solid malware protection, including antivirus software and firewalls. All of your data should be backed up to the cloud and expertly secured using encryption software. You should also be invested in threat monitoring.

Establish relevant systems and processes. Have standard operating procedures (SOP) in place to train employees, respond to threats and access networks. For example, are employees connecting with unverified devices from home? Establish rules on what can and cannot happen. Another example: are your cloud backups set up correctly? Is someone checking it? Again, have SOP in place to address these kinds of issues. *Small Business Trends, Feb. 13, 2020*

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Frank M. DeBenedetto, President of TRTG.

"As a business owner, you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we shine! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"

3 Ways To Stop Cybercriminals Cold In Today's Crazy Times

You've seen it. You've probably even experienced it. For what feels like forever now, just about everyone has been forced to modify priorities. As a business owner, you've probably been focused on shifting your business to accommodate this world crisis. You may even be investing more of your time in retaining customers and generating new cash flow. If you're like most people out there, you've barely even had time to think about cyber security and protecting your important data.

Maybe you've heard the saying "Never let a crisis go to waste." It's as if cybercriminals wrote it because that's exactly what they're thinking right now. In fact, they're probably working overtime right now to craft new malware while our lives have been turned upside down. Yes, as you're focused on your business, hackers are finding new ways into your IT network. Their objective is to steal data and passwords, compromise your clients' private information and even demand large ransoms.

Did you know that cybercrime is expected to cost $6 trillion (that's a 6 followed by 12 zeroes!) by the year 2021? But, now is when hackers are expected to do their absolute most damage.

Here are three strategies you can use right now to help protect your business data, money and productivity during these unusual times.

1. Guard Your Inbox. People aren't paying as much attention as they usually do, which makes it the perfect time for cyber-attackers to send e-mails with dangerous

malware, worms and viruses. Always carefully inspect every e-mail received and make sure you know the sender.

Here's another tip: avoid clicking links in the e-mail unless it's abundantly clear where they go. Also, don't ever download an attachment unless you know who sent it and what it is. While it takes a few extra seconds, double check by calling the person who sent you the attachment. Better safe than sorry. Make sure you communicate these safeguards to everyone on your team, especially if they are working from home.

2. Secure Your Company-Based Technologies. During crises like this one, your passwords are a critical first line of defense. Don't wait for your company's finance data to be compromised. Make a point now to reevaluate your passwords and direct your team to create stronger passwords. Too many employees are guilty of using the same password across multiple applications. Use a unique password for every single application.

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Your team may tend to save your passwords in their web browser. Don't do this. A skilled hacker can bypass the PIN required to access your saved passwords. Once they have the password or PIN to access your web browser, they can steal as much as they want – credit card information, customers' private data and more!

We recommend our clients use a password manager. It's convenient, but more importantly, it's far more

secure.

3. Secure Your Home-Based Technologies. With the coronavirus pandemic, far more businesses are encouraging their employees to work from home. That means a lot of people are working from the living room or kitchen without giving a second thought to security. This negligence is an invitation to new cybercrimes.

Here are a few tips to ensure your work-from-home employees are keeping your network and data secure: make sure your employees and contractors are not using their home computers or devices when they are working from home. Add a firewall to ALL computers and devices that will be utilized at home. Finally, your network and data are not truly secure unless your employees utilize a VPN (virtual private network).

There's no need to invite in more problems by letting your computer and network security slide during these times. We would be happy to help you create or even improve your work-from-home environment.

While this coronavirus scare has negatively affected countless businesses, we are proud to say we are open and continuously servicing our customers. If you need additional security advice or would like to have a consultation to discuss how to keep your data safe or how we can help you work more effectively, simply connect with us today.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

Zepp Golf 2 Swing Analyzer

Improve your golf game with a device smaller than a golf ball. The Zepp Golf 2 is a remarkable piece of tech that attaches to the back of any golf glove. It's packed with sensors and delivers real-time analysis of your game.

Using Bluetooth, the Zepp Golf 2 pairs with your smartphone. As the data is analyzed, it's displayed on the accompanying app. It tracks your club speed, backswing positioning, hip rotation, consistency and much more. The Zepp Golf 2 also has a long-lasting battery – up to eight hours – so it will definitely make it through your next game without a hitch. The Zepp Golf 2 is compatible with both iPhone and Android devices. Learn more at Amazon or Zepp.com.

How To Deal With Increasing Customer Expectations

The more you do for customers, the more they expect. That is the nature of customer service.

Excellent service providers scramble to meet the expectations of customers who have become accustomed to great service. Aggressive competitors continue to bump up their offerings in an attempt to take your customers from you. This has resulted in a perpetual desire by customers for more, better, different and/or improved.

In most cases, "good enough" isn't enough. The great art and science of business is to improve product and/or service offerings without giving up margins or increasing prices beyond what customers are willing to pay. It really is about adding value without spending too much to do it.

Any business that can't do this will be relegated to competing at the low end of the market on price alone, and that is a difficult place to be.

Rally your team, from engineering and manufacturing to sales and support, to regularly brainstorm how you can profitably grow your value proposition. Customers will increasingly demand it.

Here are eight things you can do about them.

1. Find out what is important to customers: what they require and what they desire. You're not clairvoyant, so routinely ask customers for input.

2. Explain your value proposition when you must say no. If you can't do something the customer wants, explain why. But see if there is something acceptable you can do instead.

3. Educate customers about the value you create for them. If they don't know about it
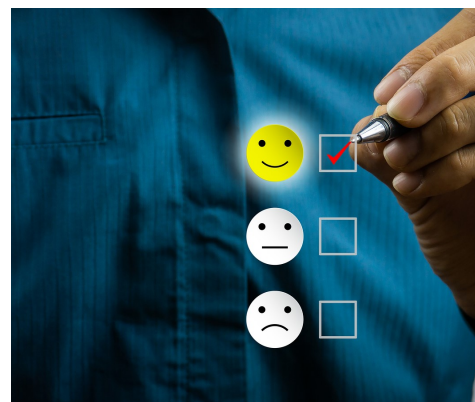
or appreciate it, it isn't valuable.

4. Hold quarterly sessions with your team to brainstorm how to add value to the customer experience.

5. Evaluate the entire customer experience. Look for failure points and irritations that can be eliminated and improvements that can be made.

6. Pay more attention to your customers than to your competition. Know what your competitor is doing, but put your customer at the center of your focus.

7. Pleasantly surprise customers whenever you can. Work with your team to brainstorm ideas on how to do that.

8. Treat better customers better. Treat all customers well, but those who spend more should get preferential treatment.

Business goes to the bold and innovative. Creativity and imagination are the best tools for continually rethinking your value proposition. Good execution delivers and makes customers glad they keep coming back to you for more.
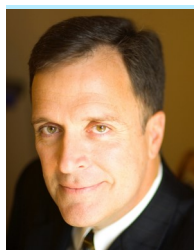
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Services We Offer

Cloud Services ~Managed Networking Services Cybersecurity ~ Hosted Voice over IP

TRTG Happenings

Maintaining Your Sanity While Working From Home

Let's face it, most of us a social creatures who crave consistency and connections. While some can easily adapt to working from home, many cannot.

I've been a home worker for 14 years. In the beginning it wasn't by choice, we were told one day that we would be working from home for a few weeks. A few weeks turned into a few months, and then a few years.

It was an adjustment to be sure. I found myself working more hours than I had while in the office, I wasn't able to "unplug." Many people use their commute home to put work behind them but when you work from home, you don't have that option.

Here are some tips to help you through these times:

- Maintain your normal sleeping/ workday schedule. This is very important; it gives you a sense of control and consistency. Do everything you would normally do in the mornings before heading to the office. Shower, get dressed, grab some breakfast, etc. Maintaining this schedule will help you when you do go back to the office.

- Get dressed! Wear pants! Even casual Friday dress is better than hanging out in sweats and a t-shirt

- If you can, find a part of the house where you can work without disruptions. Having everyone home is a huge disruption. So is cleaning, laundry, etc. Have a room with a door you can close can keep out those distractions.

- If you don't have a room to work in, set down some ground rules. No interruptions during work hours. Tell family members that when you sit down at the computer, it should be treated like you've left the house and aren't even there.

- If your day normally starts at 8, then you should be at your computer ready to start your day at 8.

- If your day ends at 5 the shut down your computer. This is most important! Unless it's time sensitive or urgent, unplug at the end of the day. When I first started working from home, I was plugged in 24/7. I was constantly checking emails or sitting down to do 'just one more thing.' You can't do this; you will burn out quickly. Stick to a schedule.

- Make sure to take a couple of breaks throughout your day and take a lunch! You need to walk away like you would in your office.

- Even though we're socially distancing, that doesn't mean you can't be social. Set up video chats with co-workers instead of just a phone call. Seeing someone's face gives you the opportunity to connect, even if it's only virtually.

- Get some exercise to relieve stress – even if it's walking up and down stairs a few times a day.

And for those of you working from home with kids; Here are a few strategies to help you make this new situation a little easier.

- Get Creative with your schedule. If you have a spouse or another adult in the home with, you consider splitting your schedule to manage day to day tasks, home schooling and work.

- Communicate with your boss or HR Department about any needs or adjustments you have to make in order to work the best way possible. They will appreciate the honesty.

- Stick to a routine. Maintaining a daily routine will help everyone stay occupied and help manage some of the anxiety caused by this big change. Go ahead and make a schedule and pin it on the wall so you and the children can reference it throughout the day.

- Designate a specific work zone in your house and use it consistently. Use masking tape to put around your space if you do not have a door. Make a rule that children must stay behind the line while you are working in your space.

- Let kids make some choices. Giving children the ability to choose some of their own activities, self-serve meals, and snacks helps build independence and allows you to get more unbroken time for work. You could put a list on the fridge with different lunch and snack options along with different activities they could do if they are bored.

- Communicate with your Co-Workers. Your co workers will be more understanding about interruptions if you explain it to them ahead of time. You will find many co workers maybe going through this along with you and you can work together to make the situation work best for your team.

- Plan Breaks with your kids and downtime without them. Working early hours in the morning and later in the evening gives you the opportunity to take breaks during the day. During your "off" time, play with the kids, preside over schoolwork, or get outside.

Just as important: Make sure each adult in the house also has downtime to themselves. Parents who work while managing children are always on, and that can take a toll on everyone's patience and energy levels.

Remind yourself it's only temporary