



Technology Times

"Insider Tips to Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier and More Profitably"

Did you Know

How Will You Handle Ransomware?

Ransomware attacks are one of the scariest and most reported cybersecurity threats, and a recent report found that most victims are now prepared to pay the ransom. The Telstra's 2019 Security Report surveyed 320 Australian businesses, more than half of which paid ransomware attackers to retrieve their data. Interestingly, 77% of those companies successfully recovered their information after paying the ransom. In some ways, this is a good thing. Nobody wants to lose their data to hackers. However, it also incentivizes bad actors, making it possible for them to continue victimizing more people. Having a plan to combat and address ransomware is quickly becoming a critical component of any cybersecurity strategy, and it's one that demands more than just a cache of Bitcoin for a rainy day.

May 2019



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Jeff Cameron, CEO of Stronghold Services Corporation.

Our Mission:

To create and build professional, valuable and exceptional relationships with our clients; to develop and implement the most appropriate and effective technology solutions and processes.



Are YOU Prepared For The End Of Windows 7?

On January 14, 2020, the world will bid a fond farewell to the beloved Windows 7 operating system. Well, sort of. Microsoft has declared that, after that date, it will no longer update or support the system. It's the final nail in the coffin for a trustworthy, oft-touted software package that's been running on fumes since newer versions hit the scene. And, as with any funeral, there are some arrangements to be made for the millions of businesses that have stuck it out to the end. Here's everything you need to know about the coming changes – and what you should do now to prepare.

The End Of An Era

The news of Microsoft closing down Windows 7 support may come as a surprise to some of us, but the operating system has been on its last legs for a while. In fact, Microsoft

stopped adding new features and honouring warranties for the platform back in 2015. When 2020 comes, it will cease releasing patches and updates for good.

This doesn't mean that Windows 7 PCs will suddenly stop working in January; you'll still be able to boot up in the operating system if you keep it installed. But if you value your privacy, your data and your sanity, it's time to upgrade.

Those Microsoft updates that pop up from time to time don't exist just to annoy you; they patch security vulnerabilities and protect you against new viruses and malware. Without that ongoing support, Windows 7 users will become fish in a barrel to sophisticated cybercriminals looking for a quick buck.

Continued on pg.2

Continued from pg.1

That's why it's essential that you call in the professionals to prepare your business for the switch to Windows 10 – or an alternative operating system – now, not later.

It's A Requirement, Not A Choice

Upgrading your operating system well in advance of the Windows 7 end-of-life date may seem like a decision you should make for your peace of mind, but it's even more critical than that. Of course, as time leaves Windows 7 behind, it's certain that pieces of software will steadily become incompatible with the OS. Programs your company uses day-to-day suddenly becoming unusable will present serious headaches, but the real problem lies in the security of your network.

Windows developers are in a constant arms race with cybercriminals looking to exploit vulnerabilities in their platform. Each patch brings a host of bug fixes and security upgrades, but cybercriminals almost always find a new way in. Thus, the developers hastily put together a

“Like maggots drawn to rotting meat, they flock to the abandoned platform and dig into the networks of those stubbornly clinging to the outdated OS.”

new patch, and the cycle continues.

When an operating system loses support from these developers, its users are left completely vulnerable to hackers. Like maggots drawn to rotting meat, they flock to the abandoned platform and dig into the networks of those stubbornly clinging to the outdated OS. This process is expected to be especially nasty after Windows 7's end of life, since so many businesses still use the OS and likely will forget (or refuse) to upgrade.

If you value your business at all, it's not a choice. You need to upgrade before time runs out.

Avoid The Crunch

Not only should you enlist your IT experts to facilitate the upgrade, but you should do it ASAP. As the clock ticks down on Windows 7, tech companies are expecting a flood of upgrade requests as businesses scramble to leave the OS behind before it's too late. Many of these IT providers will have a lot on their plate later in the year as they hurry to upgrade hundreds, if not thousands, of individual PCs. If you wait it out, you're likely to find yourself at the back of a long, long line, potentially to the point that you breeze past January 14 without a solution. If you do, you're almost certain to regret it.

Every day, the need for an upgrade becomes more urgent. Give the task the ample time required, and avoid needless stress. Reach out to your IT provider and ask them to start the upgrade process today.

Free Report Download: If You Are Considering Cloud Computing For Your Company, DON'T, Until You Read This...

INTRO TO CLOUD COMPUTING

“5 Critical Facts Every Business Owner Must Know Before Moving Their Network To The Cloud”



Discover What Most IT Consultants Don't Know Or Won't Tell You About Moving Your Company's Network To The Cloud

If you are considering cloud computing or Office 365 to save money and simplify IT, it is extremely important that you get and read this special report: **“5 Critical Facts Every Business Owner Must Know Before Moving Their Network To The Cloud.”**

This report discusses in simple, non-technical terms the pros and cons of cloud computing, data security, how to choose a cloud provider and three little-known facts that most IT consultants don't know or won't tell you about cloud computing that could end up causing you MORE problems and costing you more money than you anticipated. **Even if you aren't ready to move to the cloud yet**, this report will give you the right information and questions to ask when the time comes.

Get your FREE copy today:

<https://www.strongholdservices.ca/5critical/>

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



VIZR Hopes To Revolutionize Your Dashboard

When it comes to driving, the forces that aim to keep us safe seem to be in constant battle with the pull of convenience. We're supposed to keep our eyes glued to the road while trying to navigate through Google Maps without missing a single turn. It's an inherently dangerous combination.

With their new VIZR tool, FIXD automotive hopes to fix that. After selecting the feature you want, you connect the device to your phone and place it on your dashboard, where it creates a transparent display. This way, FIXD says, you can seamlessly navigate without ever glancing at your phone and putting your life in jeopardy.

Though VIZR is a great idea, the reviews indicate it might not be all it's cracked up to be. You might want to wait until all the bugs are sorted out. For now, just keep your eyes on the road the old-fashioned way.

Expect, Inspect, Correct



It's no coincidence that we have so many ways to say we made a mistake: botched, flubbed, mishandled, misjudged, mucked, messed, screwed or goofed up – just to name a few.

As a leader, you'll hear each of these (some more than others, and likely some more explicit than the ones I've named here) pretty often. When you do, it's important to first try to remember that whoever made the mistake probably didn't mean to.

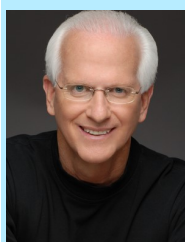
Put yourself in their shoes. Ask yourself if you have ever made a mistake. A bad decision? Have you ever said something you regret? Ever disappointed your boss? Jumped to the wrong conclusion? Done something foolish or outright stupid? Everyone has. Sometimes a simple reminder of our past failings enables us to be a little more tolerant of others' missteps.

Mistakes don't have to be the end of the

world. Mistakes are inevitable and are often essential to learning and progress. They should guide you, not define you, on you and your employees' journey to success. Mistakes show effort, and if you learn from them, they can be some of the best tools for growth.

I've heard it said before that the only people who don't make mistakes are those who do nothing at all. To me, the most interesting part about errors is the gradual evolution in how they're classified. First, they start as mistakes. Then they turn into lessons, followed by experiences and finally as gifts that help us succeed.

Therefore, the only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing. Keep that in mind as you're dealing with your employees or considering your own shortcomings. It's one thing to recognize that mistakes are learning opportunities – it's another to actually implement that concept in your organization.



Robert Stevenson is one of the most widely recognized professional speakers in the world. Author of the books How To Soar Like An Eagle In A World Full Of Turkeys and 52 Essential Habits For Success, he's shared the podium with esteemed figures from across the US, including former President George H.W. Bush, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, Anthony Robbins, Tom Peters and Steven Covey. Today, he travels the world, sharing powerful ideas for achieving excellence, both personally and professionally.

Client Spotlight: WCSE Conference

On behalf of the WCSE organizing committee, and the delegates of the conference, I want to sincerely thank you and Stronghold Services Corporation for your sponsorship of the conference. We know that your support was integral to making WCSE the success that it was, and helped maintain WCSE's philosophy of bringing together all parties involved in post-secondary education—educators, administration, and the education private sector. Would you like your company highlighted here in our "Client Spotlight"? Then give us a call today!

■ Read These Top Tips To Avoid Getting Hacked!

Everyone knows how damaging data breaches can be to a business, but few actually realize that 81% of these hacks are not the result of elaborate scams carried out by sophisticated hackers. They happen because of poor passwords.

Do what you can to prevent your business from being targeted. Demand that your employees create strong passwords: between 8 and 10 characters in length, with letters, numbers and symbols scattered throughout. Instruct them to avoid real dictionary

words and to steer clear of the boneheadedly obvious ones like "12345" or "password." You can test the strength of your password online at Microsoft's Security and Safety Center. If you can, enabling two-factor authentication can go a long way toward your overall security.

Even if you use a secure password yourself, you'd likely be amazed (and terrified) to discover how many members of your team do not. In 2019, a strong password is essential. Make sure every one of your employees

takes care to create one.

1/3/2019

■ Easy Ways To Prevent Great Hires From Getting Away

Today's labour market is tighter than it's been in years. With this in mind, it's essential that you do all you can to attract top talent. One of the best and simplest ways to do that is to improve your hiring process.

First, make sure the job description sounds like a true sales pitch. You should feature the benefits of working in that job above the preferred credentials. Once the applications start coming in, ensure you're keeping in regular contact with your prospects. When it comes time for interviews, make the process as straightforward and comfortable as possible and cater to their scheduling needs. Finally, ask for feedback about your hiring process – checking into reviews on sites like Glassdoor can provide valuable insight. *Inc.com*,

Who Else Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card?

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is Michael from Checkers in London. He was the first person to correctly answer my quiz question from last month: **The QWERTY keyboard has basically been in use since the late 1870s. How could you tell that the keyboard in front of you uses the QWERTY layout?**

A) The first six letter keys on the top row spell QWERTY

You can be the Grand Prize Winner of this month's Trivia Challenge Quiz! Just be the first person to correctly answer this month's trivia question and receive a Cineplex Great Escapes Gift Certificate. Ready? Email us right now with your answer! **Which of these is not a computer operating system?**

- A) LinuxB
- B) Microsoft Windows
- C) Apple OS X
- D) Photoshop

**Email Us Right Now with your Answer at
techtimes@strongholdservices.ca**