

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

## What's New

The Bad News: We're Out of Deals.  
The Good News: It's April Fools Day...

One of the things most of us love about spring (aside from better weather, blooming flowers, and generally feeling happier) is the sense of a fresh start. April can be a time of renewal for your body, mind, and spirit. Many of us think about yard work or a Spring clean up.

Easter Long weekend to start the month and let's not forget Earth Day is April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Stronghold continues to provide e-waste recycling services for our customers. Your business may want to consider moving your system to the cloud; this decision can bring numerous benefits and generally will also reduce your organizations carbon footprint.

Interested in discussing this or other technology changes we would love to hear from you.

Happy April everyone!

### April 2021



This monthly publication provided by Stronghold I.T.

#### 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.



## Is Your Cyber Security Policy (Or Lack Of One) Leaving You Wide Open To Attacks?

Every business, big or small, should have a cyber security policy in place for its employees. Employees need to know what's acceptable and what isn't when it comes to all things IT. The policy should set expectations, lay out rules and give employees the resources necessary to put the policy to work.

Your employees represent the front lines of your business's cyber security defence. You may have all the antivirus software, malware protection and firewalls in the world, but if your employees aren't educated about IT security or don't understand even the basics, you're putting your business at MAJOR risk.

What can you do to remedy that? You can put a cyber security policy in place. If you already have one, it's time to update it. Then, once it's ready, put it into action!

**What does a cyber security policy look like?** The specifics can look different from business to business, but a general policy should have all the fundamentals, such as password policy and equipment usage.

For instance, there should be rules for how employees use company equipment, such as PCs, printers and other devices connected to your network. They should know what is expected of them when they log into a company-owned device, from rules on what software they can install to what they can access when browsing the web. They should know how to safely access the work network and understand what data should be shared on that network.

Breaking it down further, many cyber security policies include rules and expectations related to:

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- Email use
- Social media access
- General web access
- Accessing internal applications remotely
- File sharing
- Passwords

Policies should also break down IT roles within the organization. Who do employees call, text or email if they need IT support? What is the hierarchy they are expected to follow? Do they have internal support? Do they contact your managed services provider (MSP) or IT services partner?

It's important for employees to have resources in order to effectively execute policies. This can come in many forms. It may be a guidebook they can reference or a support phone number they can call. It might be ongoing training on cyber security topics. Or it might be all of the above (as it often is!).

**Break down every rule further.** Passwords are a great example of an area of policy every business needs to have in place. Password policy often gets overlooked or simply

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isn't taken as seriously as it should be. Like many cyber security policies, the stronger the password policy is, the more effective it is. Here are a few examples of what a password policy can include:

- Passwords must be changed every 60 to 90 days on all applications.
- Passwords must be different for each application.
- Passwords must be 15 characters or longer when applicable.
- Passwords must use uppercase and lowercase letters, at least one number, and at least one special character, such as @, #, % or &.
- Passwords must not be recycled.

The good news is that many apps and websites automatically enforce these rules. The bad news is that not ALL apps and websites enforce these rules – meaning it's up to you to define how employees set their passwords.

Putting a cyber security policy in place isn't easy, but it's necessary, especially these days. More people are working remotely than ever. At the same time, cyberthreats are more common than ever. The more you do to protect your business and your employees from these cyberthreats, the better off you'll be when these threats are knocking at your door.

If you need help setting up or updating your cyber security policy, do not hesitate to call your MSP or IT services partner. They can help you put together exactly what you need for a safer, more secure workplace.

## Free eBook Download: 3 Essential Types of Cyber Security Solutions

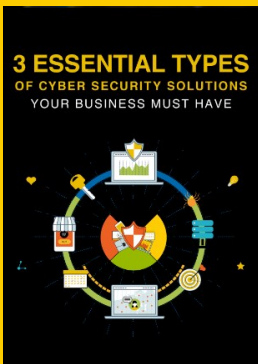
- The history of cyberattacks and why they're getting worse
- Modern examples of network perimeter security
- How anti-virus software works and why it isn't enough by itself
- The impact of non-IT security on the safety of your data
- ...and more

In an age when global cyberattacks regularly make headlines impenetrable network security seems impossible. Our FREE eBook boils everything down to the basics and explains how small and medium sized businesses can optimize their solutions without breaking the bank.

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## The right way to set up guest Wi-Fi

Customers, partners, and vendors expect Wi-Fi access when they're visiting your office. This is why having guest Wi-Fi access is common for most companies. But setting it up the wrong way can create a frustrating experience for people looking to connect to the internet. In some cases, it can even leave your company exposed to cyberattacks. Here's how to do it right.

### Never give guests access to your primary Wi-Fi

Giving your guests access to your company's main Wi-Fi connection might seem like a good idea, but you should avoid this at all costs.

Someone with technical know-how could potentially access your company network, including confidential data. In addition, if any of your visitors' mobile devices have been compromised, it's possible that they could transmit malware to your entire network.

### Ways to create secondary Wi-Fi for guests

If your router comes with built-in guest Wi-Fi support (you can check this feature through a quick web search), you can use it to create a separate "virtual" network. This means guests will have access to the internet without directly connecting to your company's primary network.

If your router doesn't support multiple Wi-Fi networks, you can implement a separate wireless access point that bypasses the rest of your network and connects directly to the internet, thus preventing any outsider from accessing your company's private data.

Remember, your guest Wi-Fi should only provide outsiders with internet access, nothing more. While the proper setup isn't rocket science, it can be a tedious process. Having said that, if you need a team of experts to take care of it, or if you simply have questions about how else to leverage your hardware for better efficiency and security, just give us a call.

## Why You're Not Rich Yet

Recently, Petra Coach presented a webinar called "Why You Aren't Rich Yet" with David Waddell and Teresa Bailey of Waddell & Associates. The webinar is aimed at helping entrepreneurs identify key biases that may be preventing them from maximizing their net worth and how they can change that. You can see the full webinar at [PetraCoach.com/why-you-arent-rich-yet-with-david-waddell-teresa-bailey](https://PetraCoach.com/why-you-arent-rich-yet-with-david-waddell-teresa-bailey). Following the webinar was a Q&A, which is presented here.



### Q: What sectors are forecasted to make a run over the next three to five years based on your own DD and personal interests?

**A:** We may see a reprisal of what we saw in 2000 to 2005, when the tech stocks went sideways. You may make more money in foreign investments and from sectors like financials, industrials and materials rather than Facebook over the next five years.

### Q: At what point should you start implementing some of these levers? We are early along and my husband doesn't see the value in investing.

**A:** First, make sure you have an emergency account – about six months' worth. Second, load your 401(k) (a plan similar to Canada's RRSP) with all the savings you can and put them in stocks. The younger you are, the more impactful the compounding becomes. Early investing pays off.

### Q: Are you seeing traditional value plays in this market, or are they just less overpriced?

**A:** No, there are value plays. You have to recognize what's driving the market. The government is about to spend the most money since the 1950s. The Fed has increased the money supply over 25%. There is just a lot of money pouring into the system that's going into the hands of consumers and corporations. The market doesn't go down just because it has a high PE. There's going to be a lot of money to make. Things will continue to melt higher until we hit

some kind of wall. The indicator to look at daily is inflation, and we're not seeing that yet.

### Q: How are you different from wealth or asset management companies? Are you just advisors? If so, how are you different from others?

**A:** On staff, we have lawyers and CPAs. The CPAs are going to be most important within the coming years. A lot of firms also don't talk about the balance sheet and strategy the way we do. Here, the quality of our staff is high, and their regulatory track record is high too. We have thousands of clients across America. While we're "paid" to manage assets, we talk about everything. They're fiduciary advisors, so they're actually allowed to give advice.

### Q: If you had \$200K in the bank and are comfortable sleeping on a cash pillow (or at minimum prefer access to those funds without penalty), where would you put it? ETF, mutual fund or something else?

**A:** Choose what you need to be liquid, then migrate the balance into active mutual bond funds with an open mandate (if you don't want to put it in the stock market).

*Disclaimer: Waddell & Associates is not making specific recommendations. Always speak with a licensed financial advisor before making any financial or investment decisions.*



David S. Waddell is the CEO of Waddell & Associates Wealth Strategists. He has over 20 years of experience as an investment expert and has been featured in The Wall Street Journal, Forbes, and Barron's. He is a true global economics specialist and is an internationally recognized speaker. Teresa Bailey is a Wealth Strategist who is dedicated to helping her clients achieve financial success. She is a Certified Divorce Financial Analyst practitioner and a Certified Financial Planner. It is Teresa's goal to help people discover more about financial planning so they can realize their full potential.

## ■ Zoom Getting You Down? Here's Why And What To Do

Zoom burnout is real, but with remote work becoming more prevalent than ever, it's here to stay. There are several reasons why Zoom burnout is happening, but there are things you can do to stop it in its tracks.

**Stay Structured.** Like traditional meetings, Zoom meetings can eat time. But more than that, they can be tiring. In larger Zoom meetings, you may have to take in a lot of information. Plus, you have to pay attention to a screen and everyone on it. This can quickly lead to information overload, which can then turn into burnout. Small Zoom meetings can be just as disruptive, especially to the productive flow of your day. So, like traditional meetings, if it can be an email, make it an email.

**Stay On Track.** Strive to keep meetings succinct. If you're hosting a Zoom meeting, it's your job to keep things on topic. If it goes off

the rails and you can't get it back, this disrupts everyone's day, including yours. Disruptions are hard to come back from and seriously hurt productivity, which leads to burnout. *Inc., Feb. 11, 2021*

## ■ How To Keep Employees: Compensation Transparency?

With more companies relying on the work-from-home model, these same companies have had to shift the way the business operates – including how they hire and retain employees. Employee retention has become a hot topic. According to a SilkRoad Technology survey, 40% of employees intend to quit their current job at some point this year as a direct result of how their employer handled the pandemic.

Employees are rethinking what matters to them when they accept a job. This year is going to be hard on companies that don't meet employee expectations – and one of those expectations is related to pay. More employees want transparency in what the company pays so they

can better make job or career-related decisions. Another study from Beqom found that 58% of employees would leave their job for another that offered more pay transparency. They want to know that they're being paid fairly, and they want to know what other people are being paid. *Inc., Feb. 11, 2021*

## ■ Your Business Needs Personality

Does your business stand out from others? It can be a hard question to answer, but success can be found in building a personality for your business. It's something that sticks in people's minds, so when they need something you provide, they are more likely to remember you.

And that's where a business's personality starts – by being worth remembering. But more than that, you have to be authentic. How do you do that?

**Know Your Customers.** The more you know your customers, the better you can meet their needs, so keep records on customers' demographics, psychographics, buying habits, and so on.

**Be Consistent.** Consistency helps build and define your brand. The customer experience, from your marketing to every customer interaction, should be uniform.

**Craft A Story.** Tell your story and open up to customers. Stories define who we are, and they can define your business's personality. *Forbes, Jan. 27, 2021*



**Larry Grew A Unibrowser.**