



Tech chronicle

Is Your Business Prepared For Hurricane Season?

If your server suddenly crashed and ALL your data was erased, how long would it take before your business was back up and running as usual?

If you want to know for sure if your data is safe, contact us for a **FREE Disaster Recovery Assessment!**

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June 2018



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Bill Hinson, CEO of Creative Consultants Group, Inc.

Our Mission

To build a community of successful minded entrepreneurs that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and expands the capacity of all members to achieve great things.



3 Deadly Mistakes You're Making By Being Cheap With Technology

Today's small and midsize businesses (SMBs) have an uneasy relationship with technology – even if they don't realize it yet. As the marketplace reaches new heights of complexity and speed, and consumers migrate to cyberspace en masse to make their buying decisions, SMBs are responding in turn. Today's savvy business owners utilize ever-evolving technologies to capture their customers' interest and imagination, make conversions and manage their day-to-day operations with unprecedented ease and clarity. Certainly, the Internet age is a thrilling time to be in business. Each business is equipped with wildly powerful tech that has transformed the landscape of commerce forever.

But there's an uncomfortable truth that goes hand in hand with this increased dependence on technology. At its best, IT allows us to do incredible things we never would have imagined were

possible even 10 years ago. At its worst, IT is an unreliable, finicky and potentially hazardous scaffolding upon which we built our loftiest hopes and dreams. Even the best IT requires wrangling to shape it to our needs and keep it on track and safe from intruders.

Despite this reliance on technology, the vast majority of business owners consider it an extra expense rather than a foundational element of their company. As a result, they skimp on technology spending. But being cheap comes with a cost – one much bigger and more dangerous than you probably realize. Here are three mistakes you're making by underspending on this key part of your business. .

1. You're spending on technology based on an unrealistic, poorly planned budget rather than building your technology budget around your actual needs.

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When you're an SMB with limited resources, it's easy to see any money saved on software and hardware as a success, leading businesses to opt for cheap, clunky and outdated solutions. But in a world where the lion's share of your day-to-day operations is dictated by the digital equipment you and your team use, where small businesses exist under constant threat of cyber-attack and data is a precious commodity that could disappear at the speed of a failed backup, cutting corners is unwise. Updating your digital approach and tightening your cyber security may not result in obvious, immediate returns on your investment. But adequate technology spending is just that – an investment. When you invest in the latest technology, you're investing in the long-term productivity and security of your business.

2. You're opening yourself up to disaster.

It's one thing to have an employee's computer unexpectedly fail or for an Internet connection to have a momentary hiccup. But if you're skimping on technology, you're leaving your business vulnerable to catastrophes that could cost you thousands. One of the most prominent and overlooked of these threats is cybercrime.

According to the 2016 State of Cyber Security in Small and

“When you invest in the latest technology, you're investing in the long-term productivity and security of your business.”



Medium-Sized Businesses report, half of all U.S. small businesses fell victim to a cyber-attack in 2015 – a number that has only continued to climb. The majority of these attacks are ransomware, in which entire systems are locked out of vital data and forced to shell out enormous sums to recover it. Even if you assume you're secure (and you probably aren't), there are other risks to contend with. Server failures, backup loss and system downtime can shutter businesses just as easily as a vicious hacker.

3. You're letting the competition get ahead.

Outsmarting your competitors takes more than just mimicking whatever latest strategy the thought leaders of your industry are championing at the moment. It requires anticipating future trends and acting on them. And in business, there's one universal truth you can count on: The future of your industry lies in technology. Cloud services, new and constantly updating software, CRMs and a staggering array of productivity-enhancing tools are just a few of the advances your competitors are considering (if they haven't snatched them up already). If you neglect the future, your company is destined to become a thing of the past.

Contact us at (843.234.9980) for a FREE consultation regarding your technology needs.

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DARKWEB  for your peace of mind.

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SHINY NEW GADGET THE MONTH

Watch What You Eat With LinkSquare

Everywhere we go, most of us use vision to navigate our world. Whether our mouth begins to water at the sight of a tasty dish or our brow furrows at the sight of a shady-looking dollar bill, our eyes are one of our primary means of connection to the world around us. But, just by looking, can you tell whether that delicious-looking food is as high quality as it seems? Or be absolutely sure that the dollar is real?

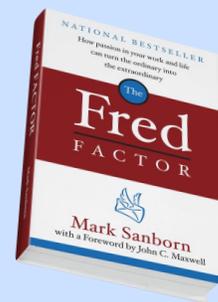
Enter LinkSquare, the pocket-sized spectrometer that enables us to gaze deeper into the objects around us. After you scan an object with the device, it uses machine learning to analyze the properties of all sorts of items, including the freshness of food, the authenticity of money or gold, the identification of stray medications and a huge variety of other potential applications. If you're interested in purchasing this wildly futuristic technology, it'll cost about \$300. Learn more at LinkSquare.io.



The Fred Factor By Mark Sanborn

In today's fast-paced marketplace, so many of us are caught up in the endless daily grind, causing our passion to fade. While this may be the case for you or a few members of your team, it doesn't have to be. In *The Fred Factor* by motivational speaker Mark Sanborn, he tells the story of Fred, a mail carrier who invests himself fully into his career. Instead of seeing his job as a chore he has to grudgingly complete each day, he sees it as an opportunity to improve the lives of others. As a result, his ordinary, day-to-day tasks become something extraordinary.

In the book, Sanborn outlines how we can be more like Fred and transform our exhausting routine into something truly special.



Top Ways To Stay Secure In The Social Media World

Social media allows millions of people to reconnect and stay up-to-date with family members, friends, acquaintances and even former in-laws. But as social media reshapes the way we communicate with one another, it's important to keep a couple of things in mind to protect yourself and your data.

Remember that there's no "delete" button on the Internet. Even if something seems temporary, a simple screenshot or check through the archives can make it permanent. Even if you keep your social media completely private, relationships change, and what was private yesterday may suddenly become public record. The question you need to ask is whether you'll be comfortable in 10 years with what you're posting today.

In the same vein, if you post in online forums or on message boards, consider using a pseudonym. Never share names of real businesses, clients, friends or family. If a bank manager wouldn't allow a picture of all the money in the vault to be shared on the web, you shouldn't allow a picture containing confidential, financial, legal or other protected documents and items to be shared either. A good social-media policy in the office now can save headaches down the road.

How To Quickly and Easily Make Your Business More Profitable

Early in any small business, it's extremely difficult to turn a profit. Even after you gain a little traction, it's easy to get caught up in the never-ending details. This means you have no time left for the things that will

actually increase your revenue. But there are a few things you can do right now to raise your bottom line.

Perhaps the most important action item on your list should be to calculate the exact costs of your business. In order to know where you're starting, you need to look beyond general expenses and pinpoint just how much your activities are worth to the company. Then you can start cutting out tasks that are measurably low in value, automating them wherever possible. If you can do that for both you and your team, you have a great place from which to start.

--*SmallBizTrends.com, March 2018*

The Cloud and Virtualization, Simplified

Cloud computing and virtualization are similar but not interchangeable. Both have their own benefits, so it's worth learning how each technology works. With this knowledge, you can make the most out of your technology investment.

Virtualization

Imagine a company with five servers, each assigned a single task such as storage, email, etc. If one day there were a spike in email traffic, the email server might become overwhelmed, causing it to slow down. Adding another server would remedy the issue, but it would be expensive and inefficient on days with less traffic.

With virtualization software, you can combine the resources of all five of the servers in our example. So if the email server got bogged down, it could borrow resources from any of the other servers with extra capacity. The process is not as simple as it sounds, and businesses often turn to an experienced IT service provider to set up a virtualized environment. Because virtualization software can be installed on a server in your office, it is totally independent of cloud technology. Sometimes, people misunderstand the difference because the vast majority of cloud solutions use virtualization to improve their services.

Cloud Computing

With cloud computing, users can edit documents, save files, and interact with apps that aren't actually on their computer. Instead, they access these items by connecting to a server via a network or internet connection. If your organization can get the information you need when you need it, you already gain a competitive edge.

To carry out its purpose, a cloud platform sometimes uses several virtualized servers to provide users with a simple system that appears to be all their own, even though it's actually shared with several other users and servers. There's no need to purchase additional servers, and you can also save valuable office space by not having to deploy bulky equipment in-house. Obviously, scalability is critical in today's ever-changing business conditions. What cloud computing does is make it easier to manage business tasks to maximize productivity. What's more, it helps streamline operations as more cloud services are integrated. Businesses don't have to worry about infrastructure maintenance because it is covered by the cloud service provider.

Virtualization and cloud computing are both economical technologies that small businesses should take advantage of. If you want to see what they can do for you, give our team of experts a call today at (843)234-9980!

CCG Monthly Trivia -Win \$250 Gift Card!

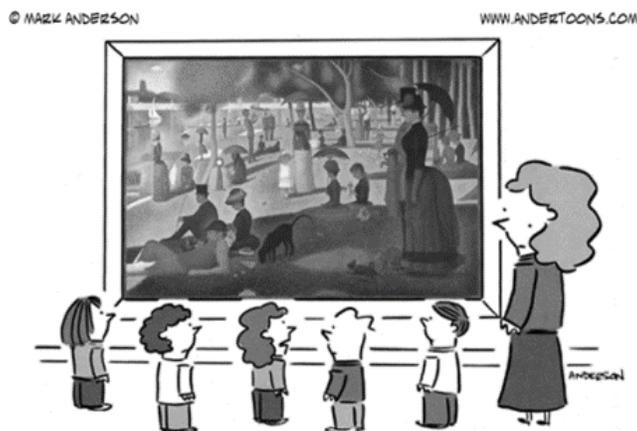
The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is Adrian Rhea from MBD Consulting Engineers, P.A.! Adrian's name was randomly chosen among those that correctly answered the quiz question from last month: Who was the first actor to portray James Bond on screen? The answer was c) Barry Nelson.

Now, for June's trivia question. Email your answer to: swollums@creativeconsultants.net

Where was Rhett Butler of Gone With The Wind born?

a) Columbia b) Charleston c) Savannah d) Hilton Head

Good Luck!



"How come none of them are looking at their phone?"