



Tech chronicle

Creative Consultants Group, Inc.

December 2018

4 Resolutions To Carry You Into 2019

As we hurtle into the New Year, business owners are scrambling to set up resolutions that will carry them into the future. It can be difficult to determine the best goals to set, but there are a few tried-and tested resolutions that every entrepreneur should put into place.

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www.getccg.com/resolutions

Happy
New Year!

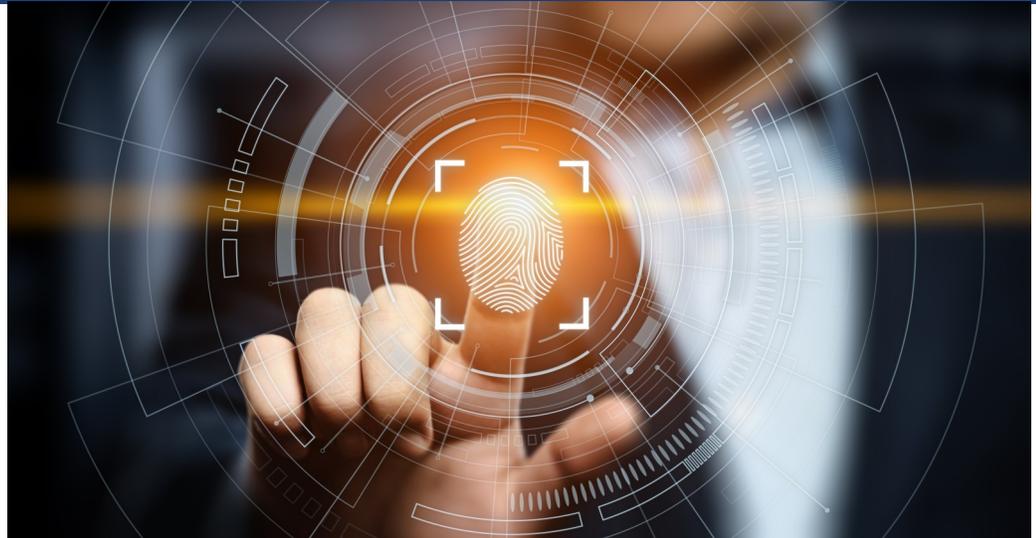
December



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.



2 Places You Should Never Cut Corners With IT

Today's technology empowers business owners in ways that would have seemed incredible even 10 years ago. With a humming network connecting your team to the rest of the world, and with just a few simple keystrokes, your organization can complete tasks that used to take days.

However, the endless possibility that accompanies technological advancement comes with a catch: to be truly effective, IT requires investment – not just of capital, but of time and attention, resources all too dear to the harried entrepreneurs of the modern age. Perhaps this is why, everywhere you look, small to midsize business owners are not only failing to realize the full potential of their technology, but are unknowingly leaving massive gaps in their systems and processes for malicious entities to exploit. And so, budding companies that would

otherwise dominate the market are prematurely stamped out by competitors with more tech savvy or are hamstrung by costly data breaches.

Even in the midst of this trend, we understand how easy it is to ignore your company's glaring technological gaps. You imagine that you don't have the time or money to address the issue, or that you'll do it down the road once your business is better established. But no matter how big or small your business may be, there are two foundational tech concerns that you should never cut corners on.

1. Security

Pretty much every successful company today is intimately intertwined with the technology on which it depends. So it makes sense that your primary worry should be protecting what's yours from those who want to snatch it. Think of it

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this way: would you hire a \$5 locksmith to secure your office? Of course not. Then why do so many business owners put their livelihood behind a flimsy, \$5 firewall – or, even worse, a free antivirus? In 2018, it is more likely that your business will fall victim to a cyber-attack than it is that thieves will arrive at your office in the dead of night, according to a 2017 report from Kroll.

In 2015, SEC Commissioner Luis A. Aguilar wrote, “Cyber security is clearly a concern that the entire business community shares, but it represents an especially pernicious threat to smaller businesses. The reason is simple: small and midsize businesses are not just targets of cybercrime; they are the principal targets.” With this in mind, cyber security should always be one of your top priorities.

2. Tech Support That Goes Beyond The “Break-Fix” Approach

It’s difficult to overestimate the money, time and stress it can cost you when your technology breaks down. Between server downtime, haywire software, connectivity issues and myriad other potential problems, when your stuff breaks, it can cause more than a massive headache – it can put you out of business.

“... you’re inviting a crisis into the equation that could easily have been avoided with a keen, proactive eye.”

Most business owners realize this, but many still opt for the classic “break-fix” strategy. Unfortunately, “If it ain’t broke...” is a dangerous maxim by



which to steer a ship. If you wait to address a problem until after it becomes an issue, you’re inviting a crisis into the equation that could easily have been avoided with a keen, proactive eye. And when your server fails, or your network experiences hiccups, or some other unforeseen issue rears its ugly head, an unfamiliar break-fix technician will take longer to fix the issue than an expert who’s been working with your specific network from start to finish and already knows it inside out. It’s just not worth it.

In addition, proactively managed service providers will consistently make recommendations to keep your company competitive. Whether it be a small upgrade to software here, a patch there or an overhaul of your server system, these moves can be invaluable in the breakneck marketplace. And, of course, since they’re keeping tabs on your tech at all times, any potential problems get addressed long before they hit your bottom line.

By leveraging technology, you and your business can do amazing things. Partner with a team of IT professionals who are actively invested in your success and confidently push your company into 2019.

Contact us at (843)234-9980 to discuss how we can assist your business!



***‘Tis the Season ...
for the highest rate of cyber crime.
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SHINY NEW GADGET THE MONTH

The Casio Pro Trek Smart A Watch Built For Adventure

Today, a lover of the outdoors needs to demand more from their devices if they're going to get the most out of their adventures. The best tech boasts robust, easy-to-use features for when you need them but gets out of the way, leaving you to focus on the grandeur surrounding you.

Luckily, the Casio Pro Trek Smart WSD-F20ABU watch does exactly that in one attractive, intelligent package. Every capability you'd expect from an outdoors-focused device is overhauled here – from the altimeter to the barometer and even the feature-rich compass. Perhaps the best tool is the full-color map you can display on its face, which detects and displays changes in the atmosphere and weather up to the minute. If you're looking for a sturdy, powerful tool to bring along on your next excursion, it'd be tough to do better than this.

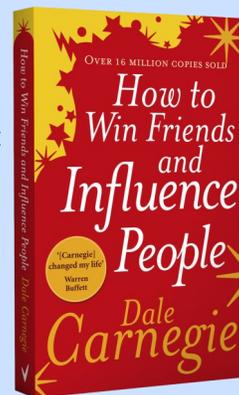


How To Win Friends And Influence People

By Dale Carnegie

Ask 50 businesspeople to name a few books that have changed their lives, and dozens of them will have Dale Carnegie's *How To Win Friends And Influence People* on their lists. Despite being written over 80 years ago, the seminal classic is one of the bestselling books of all time. At the time of writing, it's even No. 9 on Amazon's Most Read list.

Those who haven't been enlightened to Carnegie's approach to life may wonder what's so special about this modest volume. But of course, it's the principles within that resonate with so many people. If you want to learn how to be authentic, kind and honest, and gain the admiration and trust of your colleagues, friends and prospects, this is an excellent place to start.



4 Ways Your Employees Will Invite Hackers Into Your Network

Cyber security is a complicated issue, no matter how you slice it, but one of the surest ways to reduce your risk and strengthen your defenses against hackers is to educate your team. Forewarned is forearmed, so make sure they fully understand the risks associated with the most common social engineering strategies. Phishing, the most prevalent, uses e-mails, chats or web ads impersonating trusted entities to trick employees into clicking malicious links. Baiting is similar, but purports to offer something enticing, such as a music or movie download, to deliver malware onto your system. Quid pro quo hackers offer a "service" in exchange for access to private data, such as an employee's login credentials. Tailgating is when an unauthorized person physically follows one of your employees into a restricted area or asks to "borrow" their device for a bit and steals all the info they need directly. Make sure your team is on the lookout for these malicious techniques, and you'll be that much more secure. *SmallBizTrends.com, 9/20/2018*

Use These 3 Strategies To Break Your Bad Tech Habits

If you're trying to kick an addiction to your smartphone and other addictive tech, and you're tempted to turn to them whenever you feel uncomfortable or anxious, don't give up. Instead of seeking a distraction whenever you feel bored – for example, checking your e-mail for the 10th time or logging in to Facebook – learn to embrace silence, and yes, even boredom. If you find yourself checking your phone too much at work, set physical boundaries to restrict yourself. Put it in your desk or another place that adds an extra step to accessing it. The next time you have downtime, instead of whipping out your device right away, mull over a specific problem or idea on your own – you might be surprised what you discover. *Inc.com, 7/20/2018*

Not All Hackers Are Cybercriminals

Newspaper headlines and Hollywood movies have shaped our understanding of computer hackers, but in the real world it's not so simple. Some hackers are making massive contributions to the field of cybersecurity, it just depends on which hat they're wearing that day. Take a few minutes to learn about white, black, and gray hat hackers.

A complicated history: In the 1950s, the term 'hacker' was vaguely defined. As computers and the people who worked with them became more accessible, the word was used to describe someone who explored the details and limits of technology by testing them from a variety of angles.

But by the 1980s, hackers became associated with teenagers who were being caught breaking into government computer systems — partially because that is what they called themselves, and partially because the word hacker has an inherently aggressive ring to it.

Today, several of those pioneering hackers run multimillion-dollar cybersecurity consulting businesses. So what should you call someone who uses their knowledge for good?

“White hat” hackers: Sometimes referred to as ethical hackers, or plain old network security specialists, these are the good guys. Whether it's selling what they find to hardware and software vendors in “bug bounty” programs or working as full-time technicians, white hat hackers are just interested in making an honest buck.

Linus Torvalds is a great example of a white hat hacker. After years of experimenting with the operating system on his computer, he finally released Linux, a secure open-source operating system.

“Black hat” hackers: Closer to the definition that most

people outside the IT world know and use, black hat hackers create programs and campaigns solely for causing damage. This may be anything from stealing information using malware to forcefully shutting down networks using denial-of-service attacks.

Kevin Mitnick was the most infamous black hat hacker in the world. During the 1990s, Mitnick went on a two and half year hacking spree where he committed wire fraud and stole millions of dollars of data from telecom companies and the National Defense warning system.

“Gray hat” hackers: Whether someone is a security specialist or a cybercriminal, the majority of their work is usually conducted over the internet. This anonymity affords them opportunities to try their hand at both white hat and black hat hacking.

For example, Marcus Hutchins is a known gray hat hacker. He's most famous for testing the WannaCry ransomware until he found a way to stop it.

During the day, Hutchins works for the Kryptos Logic cybersecurity firm, but the US government believes he spent his free time creating the Kronos banking malware. He has been arrested and branded a “gray hat” hacker.

The world of cybersecurity is far more complicated than the stylized hacking in Hollywood movies. Internet-based warfare is not as simple as good guys vs. bad guys, and it certainly doesn't give small businesses a pass. If you need a team of experienced professionals to help you tackle the complexities of modern cybersecurity, call us today.

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CCG Monthly Trivia -Win \$250 Gift Card!

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is Jeff Hellerman of Mungo Homes! Jeff's name was randomly chosen among those that correctly answered my quiz question from last month: Which president was the first to give a turkey an official presidential pardon? The answer was c) George Bush, who made the turkey pardon official.

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

In what city did the Miracle on 34th Street take place?

a) New York b) Philadelphia c) Boston d) Aynor



“We haven't yet found what's causing the ringing in your ears, but we were able to set them to vibrate.”