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E-NEWS

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Is your Office 365 environment secure?

Microsoft's Office 365 is one of the most powerful business productivity tools today. This cloud-hosted suite lets users work anywhere and collaborate easily. Although it's undoubtedly useful, Office 365 may present a few security challenges that businesses must address.

Vulnerabilities in SharePoint

Businesses typically use SharePoint Online and on-premises SharePoint sites to store sensitive data like personally identifiable data. Failing to secure SharePoint content against unauthorized users is one way to expose data and your business to malicious actors. And for companies that have to comply with regulatory authorities, there are serious consequences to data privacy non-compliance. To prevent this, limit administrator-level privileges and enable encryption. Set the necessary security restrictions per user for every application.

Unprotected communication channels

Launching phishing attacks and installing malware are two of the most common ways to hack into a system, but there are other paths of attack. Office 365 features like Skype for Business and Yammer, both of which connect to external networks, may serve as a medium for ransomware and other types of attacks.

Train your staff to identify potentially malicious files and URLs. Offer guidelines on how to handle and route sensitive files and communication to safe locations.

Security risks in dormant applications

Organizations using Office 365 won't use all applications in it. You may use one or several programs like Word, Excel, and SharePoint but rarely use One Drive.

Microsoft Support End Of Life
January 14, 2020

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TECHNOLOGIES

PRODUCTS:
Windows 7
Windows Server 2008 R2
Exchange Server 2010

END OF LIFE DANGERS:

- ✓ Security Vulnerabilities
- ✓ Software Incompatibility
- ✓ Compliance Issues
- ✓ High Operating Costs
- ✓ Poor Performance and Reliability
- ✓ Replacement Products Backorders

E-Safe is prepared and ready to help you transition to the latest operating systems and computers!!!

Stay ahead of the curve and contact us for a Microsoft End of Life Assessment to start planning your transition to avoid placing your business, users and customers at risk!

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Businesses and users that have not been utilizing specific programs should note that some dormant applications may be prone to attacks. This is why it's crucial to identify the apps that aren't being used, and have an administrator tweak user settings to restrict availability on such apps.

File synchronization

Like Google and other cloud services providers, Office 365 allows users to sync on-premises files to the cloud such as in One Drive. This useful feature is not without security risks, however. If a file stored in an on-premises One Drive is encrypted with malware, One Drive will view the file as "changed" and trigger a sync to the OneDrive cloud, with the infection going undetected.

Office 365 Cloud App Security, a subset of Microsoft Cloud App Security, is designed to enhance protections for Office 365 apps and provide great visibility into user activity to improve incident response efforts. Make sure your organization's security administrators set it up on your systems so you can detect and mitigate dangers as soon as possible.

Cybercriminals will continue to sharpen their hacking techniques, and your organization must keep up to protect your systems, apps, and devices. Call our team of IT experts now if you want to strengthen your business IT security.

Human cloud: the workforce of the future

Companies are increasingly tapping into a virtual, on-demand workforce that's proving to be a third-generation ecosystem for key talent. The human cloud offers a competitive advantage for startups and small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) by letting them outsource specialized skills and expertise globally. Learn what the human cloud is and how it enhances remote team collaboration.

Foundr Magazine's Editor-in-Chief and Publisher Nathan Chan started a 'passion project' that led him to interview some of the most influential entrepreneurs around the world, which he shared through his monthly digital publication.

For Mr. Chan, the launch of this successful project would not have been possible if it wasn't for human cloud service Elance, a freelancing platform that allowed him to leverage overseas talent and build a solid team of graphic designers, audio/video editors, and writers. All tasks and projects for each issue of his magazine are run via the platform, which also conveniently processes payments for his contractors.

Just like Mr. Chan, many business owners are shifting their labor sources from local to global. According to an online survey by social project manager Wrike, close to 44% of business owners predict a rapid shift to distributed teams within their companies.

They believe technology makes their virtual teams just as efficient as if their members were collaborating in one office. Remote collaboration via the human cloud is indeed a game-changer that benefits companies, such as startups, that are inclined to spend fewer resources to build their business infrastructure.

What is the "human cloud?"

The human cloud is a working platform where staff performs white-collar tasks from any location and on any device. Collaboration, file sharing, or discussions on projects are done in a flexible and productive manner, rewarding team members solely for their output. Although having a virtual workforce comes with a few challenges, overcoming them can yield great benefits for SMBs.

Benefits of hiring on the human cloud

Low cost – The human cloud helps save time and money spent on traditional employment processes. Hiring is fast and easy; you pay for the skills you need on a transactional basis, as opposed to paying a high monthly wage on physically hired talent who may have too much idle time.

No overhead – Hiring on the human cloud requires no overhead for office space, thereby enabling firms to stay lean and profit-focused. By becoming "virtual," teams can work independently from their homes or anywhere.

Get skills on-demand – Employers can contract for micro-tasks, such as copying text from business cards, to larger tasks like selling products for a fee, to even more complex projects such as software design and programming.

Global talent pool – Today, even startups can be 'multinational', i.e., they are no longer limited by geography in finding key talent with specialized skills. A good idea can come from just about anywhere and can be performed and delivered from anywhere.

Easy collaboration – Using an online platform gives SMBs the ability to manage projects through virtual workrooms. Wrike's survey revealed that collaboration software is extremely important and even mission-critical for remote teams to work efficiently.

As more startups and SMBs become familiar (and comfortable) with the advantages of the human cloud, the future of work means that location is not the most important factor in determining who will contribute to your business's success. A worldwide network of online contractors is now ready to serve you with the qualifications, skill sets, and shared enthusiasm you seek to turn ideas into valuable products or services.

3 Common storage virtualization issues

Your data storage virtualization plan can go awry when done hastily, causing your business to miss out on the benefits of virtualization altogether. To guide you, we highlighted three of the most common storage virtualization problems you may encounter.

Poorly structured storage from the get go

Within a virtualized data storage framework, information is grouped into tiers based on how quickly it needs to be accessible when requested. Most networks will have to organize data into three different tiers to avoid breaking the bank.

For example, you probably don't need to access archived data as fast as the images on your eCommerce website.

Without a virtualization expert on hand, organizing these data could quickly go off the rails. Consult with your managed IT services provider (MSP) to plan where various data types will be stored and what's the most effective way to set up your data storage framework.

Inadequately maintained virtualized storage

You need to regularly update your virtualized data storage plan so that it always meets your company's evolving needs and it performs optimally.

Whoever is in charge of your virtualization solution needs to have intimate knowledge of how data is being accessed. If you're using virtual machines to access your database, they need to be precisely arranged to make sure you don't have 10 workstations trying to access information from the same gateway.

Incorrect application placement

Placing all of your data-intensive applications on virtual storage networks might cause too much bandwidth usage and network traffic.

Your MSP needs to understand and closely monitor how those applications work so they can recommend how to best distribute them across virtual machines and physical machines to solve connectivity issues.