TEKConn

WHAT'S NEW

The decade!

"Here's to a bright New Year and a farewell to the old; here's to the things that are yet to come and to the memories that we hold."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TEKConn is proud to welcome new members to the Team!

Charles Lucas, Systems Engineer

Ryan Moore, Account Coordinator

Get Your Free Cyber Security Assessment + Free *Traction* Book (see page 3)

OUR MISSION
To empower our clients to be successful, by leveraging technology to help achieve their business goals.

This publication is provided courtesy of Stephen Dike, CEO of TEKConn.

NEW YEAR, NEW HEIGHTS

FOUR TIPS TO SUCCESSFULLY LEAD YOUR TEAM TO NEW HEIGHTS

- Keep communication open (and honest). Whether you talk face-to-face, hold regular meetings or rely on chat software, always have a communication option open between everyone at the company in some capacity.

- Be willing to delegate. You can't do it all yourself. You hire people with experience to help your business succeed, so let them shine!

- Anticipate conflict. Conflict can't be avoided, but it can be addressed before it becomes an issue. Train your team on ways to deal with conflict among themselves, with customers and beyond.

- Embrace mentoring. The best leaders are also mentors to people around them. If someone leans on you for guidance, embrace it! *Business Insider, 10/18/2019*

3 PLACES YOU SHOULD NEVER CUT CORNERS WITH IT

We all know how easy it is to cut corners in business; we've all done it somewhere. But we also know we shouldn't. You'll eventually have to face the consequences, whether they're small or large. The same applies to IT. When you cut corners, the consequences to your business can be major. Here are three places where you never want to cut costs.

EQUIPMENT

You want to set up a wireless network at the office, but you don't want to spend more than $50. So, you spend that $50 and call it good. While this new router may deliver a wireless signal that reaches every employee, you could be making a huge mistake that may cost you dearly.

Routers are a good example of technology you want to put extra thought and money into. You want equipment that not only makes sense for your business's network needs but will also perform reliably _and_ securely. Cheap routers aren't known for their security features. You want something that will complement the firewalls or security software you have in place (and you _should_ have them).

This same idea applies to all other equipment, as well as software. When you cut corners, there's a good chance you'll be opening your wallet again to fix the problem in the near future. On top of that, it puts your data at risk if you're buying cheap, potentially faulty equipment. Do research, ask questions and work with an experienced IT company to make sure your equipment is up to snuff.

GROWTH OF YOUR BUSINESS

> **"Whether you're just getting started or you've been in the business for a while now, you always want to invest in hardware and software that will scale with your business."**

Part of it comes back to the first point: cheap equipment isn't typically designed with scalability in mind. It's a quick-fix investment. It's not made for the long haul. Where do you plan on being in five years?

What are your growth goals? You have to ask these kinds of questions to determine what kind of investment you need to make, whether it's in billing software, customer service software, workstations or your network infrastructure.

If you don't think about scalability, as soon as you start really growing, you'll be hit by growing pains. You'll have to reinvest in technology, and you'll be spending far more than you needed to, once for the first investment (on non-scalable tech) and once for the second investment (to catch up with your growth). But because your business has grown since that initial investment, you'll be left with a hefty bill – for much more than you paid the first time. Don't make this mistake!

DATA SECURITY

Just because your data is locked away in the back room doesn't mean it's safe. For one, small businesses are the biggest targets for cybercriminals because most small businesses skimp on data security, making it easy for cybercriminals to steal data and cause a lot of problems.

To make matters worse, if you get hit with a cyber-attack or data breach, it can be incredibly difficult to recover, and many small businesses _don't_ ever recover. They struggle for a few months before finally closing their doors.

You need to invest in firewalls, malware protection, data encryption, data backups, password managers and, as mentioned above, good equipment that is designed with reliability and security in mind. And no, you don't have to figure it out by yourself. It can be a lot, and as you dive into the topic of data security, you'll have questions.

This is exactly why you want to pair up with an experienced IT company that specializes in security. It is very hard to run a business and try to be a data security expert at the same time. Thankfully, you don't have to do that. You can get the most out of your equipment, you can be prepared for future growth and you can be ready for the threats to your data! You just have to make that first investment.

Learn more and sign up for weekly email security tips at

www.tekconn.com/weeklysecuritytips

BYE WINDOWS 7, HELLO WINDOWS 10

THE COUNTDOWN BEGINS

Microsoft will no longer provide security updates for Windows 7 as of January 14, 2020. There are two ways to get around this date, but they'll cost you.

On January 14, 2020 -- Microsoft's support for Windows 7 will cease. That means no more updates or fixes, including security fixes after that date, which is the first Patch Tuesday of 2020, unless a customer pays.

Microsoft officials have announced two ways that Windows 7 users can continue to get security updates beyond the January 14, 2020 date. Both of these ways are designed for business customers, not consumers.

Microsoft will sell paid Windows 7 Extended Security Updates (ESUs) on a per-device basis, with the price increasing each year. These ESUs will be available to any Windows 7 Professional and Windows 7 Enterprise users with volume-licensing agreements, and those with Windows Software Assurance and/or Windows 10 Enterprise or Education subscriptions will get a discount. These ESUs will provide Windows 7 Extended Security Updates through January 2023.

Microsoft also will provide ESUs for no additional cost to customers who buy the Microsoft Windows Virtual Desktop service, which is designed to to allow users to virtualize Windows 7 and 10, Office 365 ProPlus apps and other third-party applications by running them remotely in Azure virtual machines. Those wanting to virtualize Windows 7 after Microsoft support ends in January 2020 will be able to do so for three years by using WVD.

A related reminder: As of January 14, 2020 -- the date when Microsoft is slated to stop providing support for Windows 7 -- Microsoft will no longer support Office 365 ProPlus on Windows 7. Customers paying for ESUs will continue to receive support for Office 365 ProPlus on Windows 7 for up to three years after that date, however. In addition, there are more Microsoft products for which support is ending on January 14, 2020: Exchange Server 2010, Windows Server 2008/R2, and Windows 7 for Embedded Systems (but not Windows Embedded Standard 7).

Windows 8.1 customers will continue to get security updates from Microsoft for free until January 10, 2023. Windows 10 users get free support based on the date when their version of Windows 10 was introduced.
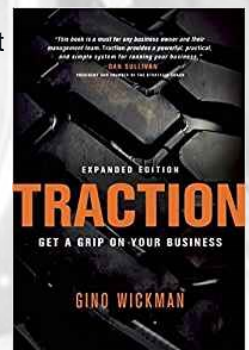
The pending end of support for Windows 7 it's not simply "move to Windows 10"

Microsoft is using the end of support to try to get users to go all the way and move to Microsoft 365, its bundle of Windows 10, Office 365 and EMS.

Referral Program

3 WAYS TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS IN 2020

We all aspire to be better people, but too many of us hesitate to roll up our sleeves and tackle the roadblocks that prevent us from achieving that goal. We stay in our comfort zones, fall back on old habits and then question why our life isn't improving.

When I'm coaching CEOs and they tell me they're stuck in a rut, I always have the same response: start changing what you are doing in your life, because the person you are today will not get you to where you want to be.

Here are three guidelines to do exactly that.

1. START BY GETTING FOCUSED

When planning any journey, the first thing you need to know is where you are. In business, you hold monthly and quarterly meetings to review operations and financial statements so you know how the company is doing. You should be doing the same thing for yourself.

Then you need to figure out where you want to go. What do you want your life to look like one, two or three years down the road? Map out specific goals to achieve this, and then follow them religiously. Stay on task, but don't multitask. Limit your distractions, and control your time.

2. WRITTEN, MEASURABLE GOALS ARE A MUST

The first and most important step toward achieving and exceeding your goals is to write them down. I cannot stress this enough. Writing down your goals and priorities serves as a reminder of what you need to accomplish. As much as you can, keep them **SMART**: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. Carry your list around with you and act on it every day. Do it for 30 days, and you'll be amazed at your progress.

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time-bound

3. LAY A FOUNDATION FOR EXECUTION EXCELLENCE

If you've ever played sports, you are probably familiar with the phrases "in the zone" or "in the flow." It applies to any profession, from songwriting and acting to computer programming and engineering. When you're in the flow, you feel good, have a ton of energy and get a lot of work accomplished. Find the things you need to do on a daily basis to stay in the flow – whether that's exercise, meditating, reading or anything else – and write them down. It's also essential that you hold yourself accountable along this path. Find an accountability partner and share with them your tasks, priorities and deadlines to accomplish your goals. You are much more likely to succeed when you have someone watching your progress and ensuring you cross the finish line.