What's New

BIS Designs has a new Social Media Manager! Krystal is an Ohio native who came to the South for a change of scenery. She is amazing with our clients and a huge asset to the BIS Team. Welcome aboard, Krystal!

July 2017

This monthly publication provided courtesy of Phillip Long, CEO of BIS Technology Group.

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.

How to Succeed As an Entrepreneur

To put it simply, if you can't take a month off to travel to Italy (or to write the great American novel or do some other time-intensive activity), you've got a job.

When I started my first company, I thought I was out of the grind of a job. Sure, my company was successful, but after nine years, I realized that I still had a job, not a business. My stress level was still high, and I hadn't made myself any happier than if I had a regular job. So, I made some changes.

Do you want to make the shift from job to business and realize your dreams of independence? Here are five steps to help get you there:

1 MAKE A PLAN. It's best if you can define your priorities by breaking them down into daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly activities. Figure out where you are as a company right now, where you want to go, and how you want to get there.

2 SURROUND YOURSELF WITH THE BEST. If you think you can do it alone and not end up having a job, you're mistaken. You've got to be intentional about surrounding yourself with great people.

3 ONCE YOU HAVE THE BEST, LEAVE THEM ALONE. Relax. Resist the temptation to micromanage your team.

Warren Buffet said it best: "Hire well. Manage little." If you've succeeded with steps one and two, you've already set your team up for success. So, let them do what they do best without hovering.

4 MAKE YOUR BUSINESS INDEPENDENT OF YOU. As I said earlier, if you can't take a month long vacation, you've still got a job. Develop processes that allow your business to run without you. Instead of holding onto knowledge, share what you've got and teach your employees to be problem solvers, rather than come to you for answers.

5 WALK YOUR TALK. Be fair and reasonable with your employees and your clients. Make sure to show up on time and do what you say you're going to do. You'll reap the rewards through inspired loyalty and customer referrals.

Odds are, you're going to have to start with a job to turn your company into a business. It won't happen overnight. But, little by little — if you do it right — things will come together. In musical terms, think of yourself as a conductor. You're not sitting first chair in the orchestra, and you're not playing an instrument. Your job is to get the best players, decide who's going to play what and how, and then let them perform the symphony. Pretty soon, you can put down the baton, listen to the music, and take that much-needed long vacation.

-Andy Bailey

4 Reasons Why Your Website Needs Updating

Your website is a storefront for your business. Your website is most likely the first thing your customer sees. When searching for a business to solve our needs, the first thing we do as consumers is Google them. That in itself is a reason to make your website give that first impression.

Below are 4 strategies you can use to evaluate your website and decide what you need to execute.

1. Your website has too much going on
Did you know that it only takes someone half of a second to decide if your website is credible enough?
Quick Stats –
> Stanford University discovered that 75% of users will make a judgment about a company's credibility based solely on their website design.

You have a few things to take into consideration when it comes to an effective website. The four components of an effective and efficient website are consolidated into:
> Structure
> Color
> Spacing
> Font

The more simplified, readable, and easy on the eyes, the more the visitor finds you credible and the more likely they will convert into a customer.

2. Poor Picture, Graphic, and Logo Quality
One of the most common things we see when reviewing websites for prospective customers is poor photo quality and graphic quality. We find them to be: stretched out, grainy, pixelated, fuzzy, blurry, cropped poorly, etc. The list goes on and on. When we see poor images and logos, we automatically assume that your website is outdated, even if it was created yesterday. Poor logo quality is one way to appear unprofessional. It pays to have a high quality logo created by an experienced graphic designer. When someone designs your logo, you should receive several sizes in a vector format (transparent background), in order to use it on images, signage, and other forms of advertising. The last thing you need is a grainy and stretched logo.

3. Photos That Aren't Yours
Stock photos are great to use because they are high resolution and great quality. The only problem with stock photos is that some images are so useful for a variety of businesses that they become overused. Be very selective in your stock image choices. Try to use as many of your own photos as possible using a camera that has at least 12 megapixels.

4. No Clear Branding
Branding is important for a business across the board from logo, color selections, slogan, to your business cards and letterhead documents. Your website is no different. As a matter of fact, your brand should be clearly defined by your website. Branding helps the visitor see that you are a legitimate and professional business. They know exactly who you are and will recognize your brand from a mile away.

Newer websites are built with the user in mind. At BIS Designs, we give your customer the experience they want with a website that you are proud to call yours.

Is Your Marketing On Track?
Give us a call now to set up your FREE marketing roadmap assessment! Call 251-410-7601!

Client Spotlight: Rolin Construsction
"What stands out the most is their personability. When they came in, they were really professional, but at the same time, really approachable."

- Nikya Rolin, Project Engineer

Rolin Construction is a Native-American owned and operated general contractor. Visit
www.rolinbuilds.com

The Dirty Loophole That Lets Insurance Companies Refuse to Cover a Cybercrime Theft in Your Business

As hacking hit the headlines in the last few years — most recently the global hack in May that targeted companies both large and small — insurance policies to protect businesses against damage and lawsuits have become a very lucrative business indeed. Your company may already have cyber insurance, and that's a good thing. But that doesn't mean that you don't have a job to do — or that the insurance will cover you no matter what.

When you buy a car, you get the warranty. But in order to keep that warranty valid, you have to perform regular maintenance at regularly scheduled times. If you neglect the car, and something fails, the warranty won't cover it. You didn't do your job, and the warranty only covers cars that have been taken care of.

Cyber insurance works the same way. If your company's IT team isn't keeping systems patched and up to date, taking active measures to prevent ransomware and other cybercrime attacks, and backing everything up in duplicate, it's a lot like neglecting to maintain that car. And when something bad happens, like a cyber attack, the cyber insurance policy won't be able to help you, just as a warranty policy won't cover a neglected car.

Check out this real life policy exclusion we recently uncovered, which doesn't cover damages "arising out of or resulting from the failure to, within a reasonable period of time, install customary software product updates and releases, or apply customary security-related software

patches, to computers and other components of computer systems." If your cyber insurance policy has a clause like that — and we guarantee that it does — then you're only going to be able to collect if you take reasonable steps to prevent the crime in the first place.

That doesn't just mean you will have to pay a ransom out of pocket, by the way. If your security breach leaves client and partner data vulnerable, you could be sued for failing to protect that data. When your cyber insurance policy is voided because of IT security negligence, you won't be covered against legal damages, either. This is not the kind of position you want to be in.

All of this is not to say that you shouldn't have cyber insurance, or that it's not going to pay out in the case of an unfortunate cyber event. It's just a reminder that your job doesn't end when you sign that insurance policy. You still have to make a reasonable effort to keep your systems secure

Who Wants To Win A $5 Starbucks Gift Card?

Every week, we will have a Grand-Prize Winner for our Monthly Trivia Challenge Quiz! He or she has to be the first person to correctly answer my quiz question. Last month's winner was Sarah!

Now, here's this month's trivia question. The winner will receive a $5 gift card to Starbucks!

What was the first Ice Cream flavor?

a) Vanilla

b) Strawberry

c) Coffee

Email us right now with your answer!
kfaggard@askbis.com

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

Alexa, Who's Winning the Virtual Assistant War?

There are multiple companies trying to break into the "smart home hub" market, but Amazon's Echo (and its sultry Alexa) are holding on to 70 percent of the market share, and it doesn't look like that's changing any time soon. That's a clear sign of victory for Amazon - and a wake-up call for its competitors.

The voice-activated home assistant market is growing, with almost a third of millennials likely to use a home assistant this year. While it might take a decade or more for the devices to find their way into the homes of older demographics (a situation Saturday Night Live has already mined for comedy), it seems that smart hubs will only increase in popularity from here on out, and that Alexa is poised to rule them all.

FREE Web And E-mail Usage Audit Instantly Reveals If You Have A Problem
If you'd like a snapshot of where your employees are going online and how much time they're spending surfing the net on non-work-related activities, I'd like to offer you a FREE Internet And E-mail Usage Audit worth $300. At no cost or obligation on your part, we'll come by and install a special diagnostic program that will expose lurking threats due to inappropriate employee use of websites, e-mail and instant messaging. I'm making this offer because I'd like to give you a bite-sized sample of our extraordinary customer service and proactive approach to protecting you and your organization. And to be perfectly clear, no matter what we may find during your audit, you are under no obligation to buy anything or ever use our services again.

However, there is a catch: we'd like to help every company on the Gulf Coast eliminate this risk, but we're only able to perform 10 audits per month. Call 251-410-7601, while you're thinking of it. The five minutes you invest could save your company thousands of dollars in lost produc-tivity, potential lawsuits and company resources.

Let's not let your company become yet another statistic, hemorrhaging cash as a result of a destructive cyber - attack. Call me TODAY at 251-410-7601, or e-mail me at plong@askbis.com, and let's make sure your systems are safe. I'll pro-vide you with a Cyber Security Risk Assessment to check for and safe-guard against any points of entry for an attack. This service is FREE, but DO NOT RISK WAITING: con-tact me NOW before the next scam puts your network at risk.

Dinner & a Movie Anyone?

We've decided to start a special rewards program for the clients we value the most. When someone you refer to us becomes a client, we'll give you a gift card to enjoy dinner and a movie on us!

For more information, visit
www.askbis.com/referral
or call 251.410.7601.