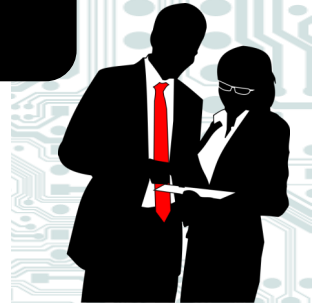# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Tech Times

Solutions Unlimited, LLC

WITH THE RIGHT BLEND OF PEOPLE AND TECHNOLOGY

We make your IT systems run. Better.

Tighten Up Your Belt For A New Year Of Threats

Security is a huge concern for businesses large and small. Unfortunately, malicious hackers don't discriminate when it comes to size. They attack all types of business. Are you protected?

Planning for the New Year. Many companies evaluate their IT management solutions and best practices at the beginning of the year. Wise business owners prepare for threats against their businesses ahead of time to mitigate possible risk.

Hackers are smarter than you think. Hackers are getting smarter about their attacks these days. They are sending more targeted and believable phishing e-mails directly to employees. These attacks may even look like they are coming from a friend, client, or coworker. Their ultimate goal is to collect passwords or your client data. This is just the tip of the iceberg.

Malware is also a menace. Hackers have begun to use encrypting services to test their malware before they send it to you. This allows them to skip past most anti-virus software.

Unfortunately, these infections can cause horrible pop-up messages that plague your computer and travel through your network. Before you click through software updates or any requests, run an anti-virus scan or check with your IT professional about legitimate updates.

Be aware of Ransomware risks. Ransomware Trojans often target computers running Microsoft Windows. These tiny software programs generally wiggle their way into your computer through an infected e-mail attachment. When activated, ransomware such as CryptoLocker will encrypt certain types of files on your local computer and network drives. Once it's in the door you will receive a message on your screen that offers to decrypt the data if you make a payment by a stated deadline. Otherwise,

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What's Inside

"Live Long, And Prosper"

Memorable quotes from Star Trek:

"Logic is the beginning of wisdom, not the end."

"I live to believe that there are always possibilities."

"Life and death are seldom logical"

"Superior ability breeds superior ambition."

Find A New Resolution

New Year's resolutions are easy to come by, but how do you know when you've chosen good ones? You know, the life changing resolutions you really want.

Everyone wants... Sure, we all want to eat healthy, lose weight, or watch less TV. If you stop to think, I mean really think, what types of resolutions could boost your wellbeing?

Moving commitments. There are a few truly heartfelt things to do that are hitting the top 2016 New Year's resolution charts. Take a look:

- Educate yourself
- Learn something new
- Manage time better
- Volunteer more
- Give to charity
- Improve social skills
- Make new friends

Tighten Up Your Belt...

your company information could be deleted if the deadline passes. This type of infection is difficult to clean up. While CryptoLocker itself can be removed, the files will remain encrypted and unusable. You may find yourself in quite a lurch unless you have sufficient backups to restore your files or you pay the ransom money.

Third-party attacks are a challenge too. Third-party attacks happen when a crafty hacker obtains your information from a vulnerable third party, such as a vendor or client. Generally, these types of attacks occur through when you leave your computer logged into an online service. Your best defense is to log out of services you are not using especially when you are ready to leave for the day.

How can you stay protected?
Your people are the first line of defense when it comes to data security for your business. Experts often say the most powerful aspect of security is between your ears. Train your employees about the nature of today's cyber-attacks. Awareness and vigilance are huge components for your company's security. Clicking through error messages or downloads, opening e-mail messages from unknown sources, or leaving your computer systems logged in can leave your network wide open for an attack.

Bad things happen to good businesses. We've all seen it! Put preventative measures in place as a safety net for your business. Catching an infection before it spreads to your entire company can save you a boatload of stress and money. Invest in a good backup solution so you never have to guess if your data is safe or if your company will recover from a mischievous hacker or thief breaking into your office.

Deploy the security essentials today.
Security essentials include a firewall solution for wired and wireless access points, an anti-malware and antivirus solution for servers and workstations, as well as a method for monitoring so you can see when something is amiss. Keep

Star Trek Turning 50

Star Trek is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2016. Join the fun.

The most successful entertainment franchises of all time that inspired over a dozen films is still kicking 50 years later.

The Official Star Trek 50th Anniversary Convention.
This event runs from August 3-7th at the Rio Suites Hotel in Las Vegas. While it may seem a bit geeky, this official convention has a habit of re-upping itself. You'll never know how incredible it may be unless you go. Visit: www.creationent.com/ST50 for more info.

A new series is coming soon. Star Trek fans; get ready! A new series is set to air in just one more year. New episodes will start in January 2017. After all, "For everything, there is a first time."

2016 Top IT Concerns

Here are the top five IT concerns that are bubbling up this year:

1. Alignment: With the ever-changing nature of business today, staying aligned with your company's objectives is a chief concern for all business owners.

2. Security: Network security is a major concern for business owners in 2016. Technology is forever evolving and new developments bring new risks.

3. Productivity and efficiency: Many companies are concentrating on doing more with less. They are trying to streamline activities to gain a competitive advantage over their competition.

4. Controls: Business owners continue to focus on strategy and control. They want their IT to be efficient, secure, flexible and innovative.

5. Agility: Technology is an integral part of business today. Having a clear cut IT strategy is key in reaching your business' goals. A good strategy will pave the way for quick changes or adjustments as your company's needs change throughout the year.

"Do Not Grieve, Admiral. It Was Logical."

Spock's final reassuring words of wisdom for Captain Kirk ring loud and clear when considering the impacts of a malicious virus.
"… The needs of the many, outweigh the... needs of the few," Spock begins to say as Kirk finishes his sentence. Sometimes, when a heated attack is underway it's important to look at the whole picture. Increasingly, we see viruses and malicious network attacks that cripple companies in an instant. In order to recover from these attacks, organizations rely heavily on their backups to restore the data they need to survive.

Make sure your backups are running regularly and include all the data you need, including financials, customer contact information, databases, proprietary software, intellectual property and even media files. Run your backups daily to ensure you never miss a beat and check them regularly. We recommend a test restore every 30 days. This will give you the peace of mind that your data is backed up properly and accessible should you need it in the final frontier.

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Employee Engagement Software: Companies Really Do Want To Know How Workers Feel

Find A New Resolution...

- Commit random acts of kindness

Live inspired. Resolutions like these inspire us to be better people. They help us think positively and improve our overall physical and emotional wellbeing by changing your habits. Look for resolutions you can really sink your teeth into.

Need encouragement? Check out Habitforge. They are the first company to understand what being human is truly all about. This organization is based on training your mind and body. You can forge new habits, healthy habits. Habitforge helps you layout your goals or New Year's resolutions, encourages you daily, and offers a community of other members as well as real coaches to keep you accountable.

Out with the old and in with the new. Time to get excited. There is so much coming our way in 2016. More challenges. More work. More fun. More success. The New Year is a fantastic time to start with a new energy and new attitude

Companies are using special software to gauge the feelings and engagement of their employees. New sentiment-analysis software is designed to help retain employees by determining how workers feel about the company and the way it operates

The survey says... IBM and others have used such software to analyze employee reaction to everything from diversity efforts to their prospects for promotion. Human-resource directors can use this type of software to analyze text from internal comments on blog posts to responses to open-ended survey questions. One of their findings:

- 32% of workers in the U.S. were engaged in their jobs in September. Engagement of employees was defined as being involved, enthusiastic, and committed to their work.

Intel asks its 106,000 employees to complete an annual survey. This survey gauges the company's organizational health. Some questions are designed to learn how employees feel about the company, if they're proud to work there, and if they hope to continue working there for five years or more.

How Intel gains intel. Some Intel workers were agitated when they saw a company post saying it would double the employee-referral bonus if the employee recommended a minority job candidate or a veteran, who was subsequently hired. Some called it reverse discrimination. Using sentiment software, analysts found that people were expressing frustration and fear that their own jobs were at risk. Intel wouldn't have been aware of these fears or be able to address them if they had not survey their employees.

Give it a try. Company engagement measures may include: customer ratings, profitability, productivity, turnover, safety incidents, theft, absenteeism and quality. A variety of services online like TinyPulse, Officevibe, or Engagedly, offer platforms to boost your employees' engagement. These programs allow you to listen to your employees, measure their responses, and better align your company's goals and practices with your employees' concerns.

Knowledge and clarity. Employee engagement programs give business owners the inside information they need from one of their most valuable assets, their workforce. This knowledge can help decision makers provide a nurturing and mutually beneficial work environment in which employees will thrive. Putting a little more focus on your staff can reduce turnover,

Many books on management cite an apocryphal story about an engaged janitor at NASA who when asked by Kennedy what he was doing, replied "I'm helping to put a man on the Moon."

"Sorry, but I've forgotten your name. Turn around and let me scan your UPC code."

"We make all of your computer problems go away without adding additional full-time I.T. staff!"

Ask about our fixed price service agreements — Computer support at a flat

Inquiring Minds...

Did you know that behind the World Wide Web there are other Webs? A huge part of the Internet that is hidden to all but those in the know. Various unfamiliar Webs live behind the scenes on the World Wide Web.

The Dark Web. The so-called Dark Web has very sinister sites where people sell illegal items, according to CNET. Like a speakeasy during prohibition, you have to know where Dark Web sites are to find them and you have to know their passwords. The people who create Dark Web sites, mask the identity of their computers (or servers) and their locations. Even their users mask their identities and locations.

Search engines do not index these Dark Web sites. When you read about a major data hack, the Dark Web is where that data lands. On the Dark Web, cops and robbers play their digital roles, each masking their identity. On the bright side, the Dark Web can be a lifeline for people in countries like China, where the government censors news and websites.

Then there is the Deep Web. Pages on the Deep Web are also not public and not indexed by search engines, but for less villain-

ous reasons. Banks use the Deep Web for security. Web publishing companies use it as a staging area where pages are reviewed before posting. The phrases Dark Web and Deep Web are often used interchangeably but Dark is definitely more sinister than Deep.

Finally, there is the Dark Internet as in lost net, dark address, or darkness. This is where scientific, academic, and medical posts or other pages of snooze-worthy data live. Databases and other information that most people just don't care about are hidden in the Dark Internet. The primary reason the Dark Internet exists is simply to store important information and data away from the search engines and the public eye. The public cannot easily access these networks, which provides a safer environment for the data.

The World Wide Web. There is a vast amount of information online. Some you'll search for through search engines and some are by invitation only. The World Wide Web is a collage of data and security. Stay safe online; don't get click happy. Clickjacking has become a common attack. Malicious programmers overlay hidden buttons on websites to lead you to their infected web pages. Keep your web browser updated and make sure you have proper security tools in place to detect spyware, viruses, and adware.
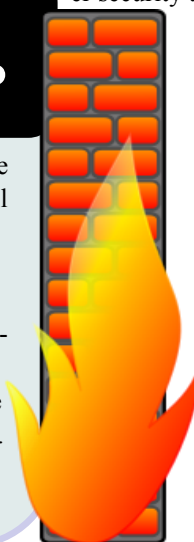
Do I Have To Renew My Firewall License?

We won't lie, firewalls can be expensive, but an attack could be even more costly. So, what do you <u>need</u>? Login to your firewall and click on the Security Summary tab, then view the Summary. This will give you a full list of the active or expired licenses you have for your firewall with their expiration dates. Once you know what services you need renewed, go to the System tab and view the System Information.
This will show you what type of firewall you have. From there you can renew your firewall licenses through your IT manager.
Remember, Not sure if your firewall is up-to-date?
Call today for your <u>FREE Firewall License Check.</u>

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