

Technology Times

Solutions Unlimited, LLC



A cornucopia of considerations for IT: Why you should fire yourself from your IT Department

Many businesses today have a do-it-yourself attitude about IT solutions. However, most don't truly have a full view of the costs of mismanaging their technology needs. Take a look at the cornucopia of things to consider for your business.

IT isn't easy: Key areas to review.

There are many IT tasks that should be delegated to knowledgeable resources. If you are the key player in any of the processes, it's time to fire yourself from your IT department and find a reliable source to manage your day-to-day needs.

- 1) **General technical support:** Helping with viruses, software glitches or errors, updating your systems and installing new software.
- 2) **Server management:** Server updates, patches and maintenance.

- 3) **Backup and disaster recovery:** Daily backup solutions, restoring files when necessary and regularly reviewing your disaster recovery plan.
- 4) **Equipment replacement and improvements:** Replacing computers that are out-of-date, upgrades for workstations that just need an overhaul, or additional equipment for new employees.

IT management trends in businesses today. According to Small Business Trends (smallbiztrends.com), approximately 3.8 million small business have involuntary IT managers managing their IT. Is this you? If the biggest time drain on your schedule is managing your technology solution, it may not be a solution at all. Get out of fire fighter mode and into preventative mode so you can focus on more essential business tasks.

How much time do you spend keeping tabs on your IT needs? Even with smaller companies with just 10-20 workstations, IT management requires roughly 6-10 hours of work each week. Most internal IT departments that are spearheaded by one or two involuntary IT leads are spending a majority of their time troubleshooting and resolving urgent matters. For example, fixing e-mail errors, determining why the backup failed, or cleaning up a virus on a workstation.

The lamp gauge.

Do you have a lamp on your desk? Remember the last time you replaced the light bulb? Well, lamp bulbs generally work for about

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Biz Inspiration

"One finds limits by pushing them."

~ Herbert Simon

"Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions."

~ Albert Einstein

"You will miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take."

~ Wayne Gretzky

Why Turkey?

Turkey and Thanksgiving go hand in hand, or do they?

Actually, the original Thanksgiving was celebrated by the Pilgrims in 1621. At least that's the story we've all heard.

In reality, the Pilgrims never called their feast "Thanksgiving" as their feast was a secular event with activities, dancing, and overall gaiety not afforded to a formal Thanksgiving.

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A cornucopia of considerations for IT...

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1,000 hours per year. That's how much time you should work ON your business improving relationships, develop opportunities, build processes, and evolve your strategy to grow. Don't bog yourself down with IT tasks that keep your working IN your business.

"Work ON your business, not IN it."

This saying is so true no matter how you slice it. As an officer of your company, you need to consider how your organization will improve and flourish. Leave your IT responsibilities up to an IT employee or outsourced provider who will be faster and more efficient with their work. Using a resource to keep your im-

portant IT activities in check allows you to be proactive about your IT decisions and lower your overall costs in the long run.

You're FIRED from IT! Hopefully, this snip-it has opened your eyes to the cornucopia of considerations required to effectively manage your IT needs. If you are interested in outsourcing your IT management tasks or if you are fighting a fire right now, don't hesitate to call. We're here for you.

IT is our business so you can get back to working ON your business.

Shake your tail feathers... Work is killing you!

Do you exercise about 3-5 hours each week and perform muscle strengthening activities? Watch out! Long hours sitting in your office chair without exercise can bring you down.

How long do you sit on a daily basis?

Most office workers sit about 10-12 hours a day. Consider the time it takes you to commute to work (sitting in the car), along with the time in your office chair. Add in any other time you spend on your tail, reading or watching T.V. in the evening. These long hours off our feet, make our bodies tired and sluggish.

Get moving! Build up your energy, improve endurance, and increase your strength fast with a little exercise each day. Just moving your body can change the way it looks, feels and operates. According to the CDC, adults should push for at least 2.5 hours of moderate intensity activities like walking or biking and 2 or more days each week of major muscle exercises like weight lifting or aerobic activities.

Why don't you schedule it for me?

I know what you're thinking, when can I squeeze that time into my schedule? Think of it this way, how can you afford

to let your body go? Not exercising means you may become prone to disease and you won't be able to work at your current pace for as long as you like.

What about exercising at work? A new wave of office furniture to keep you in shape is on the market. Consider biking or walking while you work. Companies like The Human Solution and LifeSpan create adjustable desks with your exercise equipment built right in. You can sit for work and use a control on your desk to raise or lower the workstation accordingly for your exercise time walking or riding a stationary bike.

Imagine a healthier you. Reports have been flooding in about the benefits of exercise workstations. Many people report an increase in energy, improved attitude, and an overall stronger physical state. Exercising while your on the phone or working on the computer really improves efficiency in the end. Not to mention, employees love to finish up their exercise and enjoy their time away from the office.

Savvy saving CutePDF Writer

Trying to save a document as a PDF? Here is a simple program that will speed up your PDF creation technique and give you more options too!

CutePDF Writer is so easy to install and use.

The program actually installs itself into your "printer subsystem" so it is ready when you need it. This also gives you the flexibility to use the program with any file you can print.

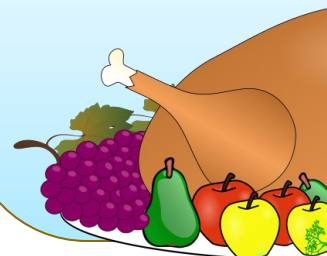
You can even create PDF files of PDF's.

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No annoying ads or watermarks either.

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Why turkey...

(Continued from page 1)

After sailing 65 days, rough seas forced the people aboard the Mayflower to land 250 miles north of their intended destination. With assistance from the Wampanoag Indians, the Pilgrims learned to plant corn, hunt and fish in their new environment.

Cause for celebration.

Those that survived the first harsh winter and the subsequent spring work of planting were elated to celebrate the fall harvest together with the Wampanoag Indians. This celebration was later dubbed the first Thanksgiving.

Where's the Turkey?

Believe it or not turkey was not a part of the first Thanksgiving. Wild fowl, deer, lobster, seal and cod were among the variety of main course dishes. Turkey is a modern-day mascot for Thanksgiving later adopted as a tradition. The truth is, no one really knows how turkeys became an icon for Thanksgiving day. But today, these tasty birds offer a suitable solution for celebrations across the United States.

Happy Thanksgiving!



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Don't let a stormy start blow your business away

Look at the side column here, these are common questions and statements you will hear when the power goes out in your office. The question is, what's next?

Organizations of all types are susceptible to disasters of all sizes.

Natural disasters, man-made disasters, physical threats and political issues can impact your business. Creating a plan to recover from these types of interruptions helps companies solidify their foundation and get up and running faster when the inevitable hits.

Contrary to popular belief, disasters don't always happen to others!

According to the Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS), "Statistics show that, of the businesses that close because of a disaster, at least one in four never reopens." Why? Generally, they close for good because they have lost too much to put the pieces back together since all their operations were under one roof.

Plan for disasters, even the small ones. Creating a disaster recovery and contingency plan, even for little things like power outages and minor flooding, can keep your company on track through the most trying circumstances. When employees know what steps to take and are confident in their decisions, they are more likely to work efficiently despite a troublesome environment.

Volcanic eruptions and tsunamis?

Plan for things that are realistic for your area. You may not need to plan for lava so leave that out but, don't eliminate hazards that could be close by like flooding, extreme wind, or even fires. The first step to developing an effective disaster recovery plan is to identify potential hazards, the impact you could face from each and your vulnerabilities.

Planning doesn't have to be difficult and expensive.

There are many resources online and in your community that can help you get started. For example, the U.S. Small Business Administration at www.sbaonline.sba.gov, FEMA at www.ready.gov, and the American Red Cross at www.redcross.org offer re-

sources for you to create accurate and informative preparedness plans for your company.

Don't forget your technology. When structuring your plans, keep your technology in mind. Your company information, files and communications are the lifeblood of your operations. Ensure your backups are safe and secure in an offsite location and completed daily. Keep your computers and equipment off the floor with stands and furniture. Also, use surge protectors! These inexpensive little tools are a lifesaver when the power blinks on and off.

Keep your business in motion. Join forces with an IT support system that can ensure your company information is safe and can get you back up and running even in an alternate location in hours not days or weeks. Give us a call today to start planning for this winter storm season.



"Is everyone ok?"

"Oh no! I didn't save my work."

"What happened?"

"Do we have a generator?"

"Who do we call?"

"Someone call the power company!"

"Should we just go home?"



"Have you ever considered attending an anger management workshop?"

“We make all of your computer problems go away without the cost of a full-time I.T. staff!”

Ask about our fixed price service agreements

Computer support at a flat monthly fee you can budget for, just like rent!

Inquiring Minds...

Holiday gifts you won't want to miss With Black Friday just around the corner, you can't afford to miss these great gift ideas for 2013. Take a look at this year's newest technology trends you will love:

eReader rundown... Do you have an avid reader in your family? The iPad Mini, Kindle Fire HDX, Nook HD, and the Kindle Paperwhite are truly the cream of the crop. You will find quite a few variations on the market but, none with comparable features and such a wide range of literature available per device.

Gaming fun... Anyone on your list drooling over a new game system? Children of all ages, from 5 to 105 are looking forward to new gaming consoles and devices this holiday season. The new PS4 and Xbox consoles are a hot items and their multi-purpose features allow them to be used to entertain the whole family.

This year, devices like the Nintendo DS2, 3DS, and NVIDIA are up against heavy competition from iPod Touch, iPod Mini and the iPhone. Many people are even shying away from traditional portable devices in favor of programs and packages now available in the app stores online.

Streaming entertainment... The recently release Google Chromecast device allows you to stream video from your tablet, laptop or smartphone on to your TV. This sweet gadget is small, portable, inexpensive, and very easy to use. Currently, Chromecast supports YouTube, Netflix, Google Play Movies and

TV.

Tantalizing tablets... If you've been meaning to get your hands on a new tablet, now is the time. Check out tablets like the Google Nexus 7, the Samsung Galaxy Tablet 2 and the Kindle Fire HD. All of these great devices provide a good basis for a variety of programs you may use for work and play.

Home tools... The new Nest Learning thermostat is a great item for anyone who loves the good old term "set it and forget it." This thermostat actually learns how you like to keep your home. It keeps track of your heating and cooling habits each day and then takes charge for you. It even sync's with Wi-Fi so you can control your thermostat at home from the airport after a long holiday vacation.

Picture perfect clarity... As televisions go, Panasonic has made quite a splash this year with their TC-P65VT60. Many say this TV could be the best plasma picture available yet. It was designed to give you the most vibrant colors and greatest contrast as well as a feature packed unit that includes things like electronic touch pen capabilities, a built in camera, voice guidance and interaction and much more.

So, there you have it; a jump on your holiday shopping. Have a wonderful and safe Thanksgiving and shopping season.



Umm...Merry Christmas?

Feel like you're always burying the hatchet with your current technicians?

IT double talk confusing you about your technology needs?

We can help! Call today for a FREE Network Assessment to get your company back on track.

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