

Happy Thanksgiving!

November 2016



# Tech Times

## Solutions Unlimited

WITH THE RIGHT BLEND OF PEOPLE AND TECHNOLOGY  
We make your IT systems run. Better.



## 7 Reasons To Take A Proactive IT Approach; You Can't Play Football With A Hockey Puck!

Football is a prevalent sport this time of year, so we wanted to bring the terminology into play while we paint a picture of how businesses can take a proactive approach to IT solutions.

Managing technology proactively will save your company a bundle of time and money. Take a look at these seven reasons to jump in front of IT issues before they become costly hurdles.

**1. Mitigate risk before you're faced with major challenges.** Identify your business needs up front so you can play with minimal risk. Regulations are heavy these days. It's important to know what you're up against and how to combat potential threats associated with your business before an infection, hardware failure, or outage challenges your defenses.

**2. The right equipment can make or break the team.** You can't play football with a hockey puck. Put essential hardware and software in place to better your chances in the playing field. Keep abreast of the latest technology to give your company an edge against your competition. The proper tools in good



working order will allow you to offer more fulfilling services for your clients.

### 3. Live to play another day.

While you won't be scoring points here, the idea is to be ready when threats arise. Football players pad up before a game to ensure they can live to play another day. A player's gear offers a layer of defense from crippling injuries at every turn. Think of your security plan including your firewall, antivirus, and backup solution as your

first line of defense against attacks and disabling down-time.

**4. Keep attackers out of the red zone.** In football, that 20 yard line to the end zone is known as the red zone because this area is where the opposing team

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### Thanksgiving

“Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into Joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.”  
~ William Ward

“Thanksgiving Day is a good day to recommit our energies to giving thanks and just giving.”  
~ Amy Grant

“Thanksgiving dinners take eighteen hours to prepare. They are consumed in twelve minutes. Half-times take twelve minutes. This is not a coincidence.”  
~Erma Bombeck

### Have A Happy Turkey Day

*Thanksgiving kicks off the holiday season with a big helping of stress. Who is coming for dinner? What am I cooking and when should I start everything? Don't face your mountain of tasks alone, here are a few quick tips to a wonderful Thanksgiving.*

#### What's for dinner?

A traditional turkey or ham is nice, but what sides will you make? Take a breather and thumb through a good cooking app like Yummly for ideas. If your family is anything like mine, there is always a grouping of picky eaters. We have one gluten free, one dairy free, three lactose intolerant family members, and 2 vegetarians. Talk about a complicated spread of needs. It's easy with Yummly. Simply type in what you have to work with and it presents you with a boat load of possible recipes.

#### Timely delivery.

My mother always wanted everything hot when we all sat down. So, how can you get all of those yummy dishes prepared

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## 7 Reasons To Take A Proactive IT Approach...

(Continued from page 1) has greatest likelihood to score. In business, a proactive approach to IT services will keep your red zone protected from attack. 24/7 monitoring allows your IT provider to detect potential threats before they tear down your defenses and cripple your business.

### 5. Recovery plans are only as good as the backups behind them.

We all know backups are essential with all the data we rely on in our businesses. However, we often see companies using a solution they have never tested. Do you know what is included in your backup? When was the last time you restored something from a backup? Make sure your defenses are checked regularly and ready for anything that comes your way.

### 6. Support costs money...

You shouldn't be nicked and dimed in your time of need. Don't wait until your company is crippled by infection to take a stand. Recently, we had a company come



to us who was already experiencing issues with Crypto Locker. We worked tirelessly to reformat and restore their computers to working order, but the entire situation took many man hours to rectify which can become expensive.

### 7. You need a full team to win.

If you don't have enough players on a football team, the game is forfeited. If you ask us, businesses should have the same rules for engagement. There are a few essentials to properly operate a business network. Things like a security policy, a backup and recovery plan, and an acceptable use policy are prime examples. If you're missing any of these items, give us a call. You may be playing with a hole in your defenses.

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## What Is Encryption And Do I Need It?

*When you think of encryption, what likely comes to mind is a movie like The Da Vinci Code or National Treasure, right? But, encryption is so much more for businesses today. What is encryption and do you need it for your business?*

**What is encryption?** Encryption is the most effective way to secure data. Encryption is scrambling messages or groups of data with a format that is unusable by an unauthorized party. Think of encrypted data as something you're putting in a lockbox at the bank. As soon as you encrypt something, it is securely stored and you need the key to unlock it again.

### Why do businesses use encryption?

Many people imagine that large companies storing top-secret documents or banking information are the only organizations that would need encryption. However, organizations today are held to high standards even for daily operations. The

main purpose for a company to use encryption is to protect their data and intellectual property to ensure privacy. While encryption doesn't magically secure everyone is safe from everything, it is good practice to use encryption whenever and wherever possible.

**Start with the basics.** Is your company using Wi-Fi in the office? If so, is your connection encrypted? We always recommend a strong encryption on your connections for work. WPA2 if available on your router is a method of securing your network with a Pre-Shared Key (PSK) authentication.

**Not sure what you need?** If you're not sure about your connectivity at the office or you have questions about encryption, give us a call. We can review your Internet settings to ensure you have the proper encryption on your connection to keep your company safe from prying eyes.

## Keyboard Tips

Here is a nice refresher to brush up on the most frequently used keyboard shortcuts for your Office programs.

- ALT+R,S: Opens spellcheck.
- ALT+R,C: Insert a comment.
- CTRL+Up Arrow: Go a paragraph up.
- CTRL+Down Arrow: Go a paragraph down.
- CTRL+SHIFT+E: Turn on or off change tracking.
- CTRL+O: Allows you to open a new file.
- CTRL+S: Let's you save in a flash.
- CTRL+W: Closes your work.
- CTRL+B: Bolds your selection.
- CTRL+I: Puts the selection in Italics.
- CTRL+U: Underlines the selection.
- CTRL+[ : Decreases the font size by one point.
- CTRL+] : Increases the font size by one.
- CTRL+H: Find and replace text.
- CTRL+Z: Undo.
- CTRL+Y: Re-do.
- CTRL+K: Insert a hyperlink.



## Turkey Day...

(Continued from page 1)  
just in time for dinner? Plan ahead. Take a few minutes to write out your menu, place the preparation time and cook time next to each one. This way, you will have a schedule for your prep times and cook times.

### Don't focus on stress, be joyful.

One nice thing about this holiday is there are no political themes. Football and food seem to be the universal language in November bringing everyone together to celebrate. In fact, almost all countries around the world observe a day to give thanks, some for successful harvests and some for victory in war.

### Giving thanks.

It's easy to get wrapped up in the daily hustle and bustle. So, we just wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to say, "Thank you for your business. We appreciate it very much."

**Thanksgiving Day**, don't forget to take a few moments to give thanks for your family, friends, work, food and shelter too. Gratitude is a quality in itself, even if it's just being thankful that you can watch a good football game after dinner with friends and family.

Happy  
Thanksgiving!

## E-mail Etiquette: Courteous Or Conundrum

*In the information age, we are challenged with a variety of communication methods. E-mail, phone and in-person meetings are all a part of our high-touch interactions with clients and vendors. Here are a few basics for proper e-mail etiquette to help you avoid a communication conundrum.*

**What's the subject?** The headline of your message will often dictate the response time. Keep in mind, we all receive a heap of messages each day. If something is urgent or if it can wait a few days indicate the timeline for the next step. The subject field should always accurately reflect the content of the e-mail message.

**E-mail tone.** There really is no clear tone preset when someone reads a message. Honestly, we are all human and often our current mindset will govern how we perceive an e-mail. Make sure your e-mails include a courteous greeting and closing to help lighten the tone. This will keep your message from being received as demanding.

**Formalities are fantastic.** Show the recipient a little respect by addressing them with the appropriate level of formality. Make sure you spell their name

correctly and use proper sentence structure. Capitalize the appropriate words and pay close attention to punctuation. Too many exclamation points can convey a sense of anger and frustration!!!

**Dial in the details.** The whole point of your e-mail message is to convey details and prompt a response. Take time to include all the relevant details or information necessary for the recipient to see your point of view and make a well informed decision. Sometimes generalities can be confusing and spur a long chain of unnecessary back and forth messages that eat up time.

### Keep your emotions in check.

While you may be emotionally charged about a specific topic, we strongly advise you to walk away for a few moments and refill your coffee before you hit send. Sometimes waiting to reply instead of rapid firing a response will help you wrangle your emotions and put together a more constructive message. Remember, anything you put in an e-mail message will be saved, may be shared, and could ultimately be received in an unintentional way.

### A little gratitude goes a long way.

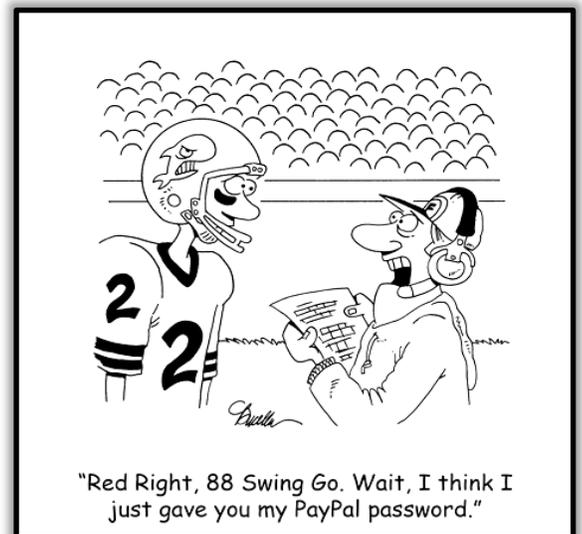
Don't hesitate to say, thank you or I appreciate your help. These simple pleasantries are often overlooked, but are always well received. It's the whip cream on your pumpkin pie communication.

## Password Help

*We recommend changing your passwords for your accounts at a minimum every quarter. I'm sure you're thinking, "Passwords will be the death of me!" Try one of these handy password managers to keep your accounts safe.*

1. Last Pass—LastPass.com
2. Dashlane—Dashlane.com
3. Zoho Vault—Zoho.com/vault

Security you can count on, convenience you won't want to live without. Each of these programs offers two-factor authentication, automatic password capture and replay features and secure sharing. So, you can save all your passwords in one place and update as well as share them across all your devices.



***“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 monthly fee you can budget for, just like payroll!**

## Inquiring Minds...

**Telecommuting** In 1996, just 20 percent of employers offered telecommuting. In 2016, that number has soared to 60 percent, according to the Society of Human Resources Management survey. With workers often on the go, make sure to keep your company information safe.

**Working on the go.** With the holiday's in full swing, it is easier to work on the go. Family is flying in for Thanksgiving, but you have just a few more reports to finish up. Why not hit a coffee shop on the way to the airport?

**Wi-Fi connections offer themselves up at every turn.** The local coffee shop, lunch stops, even gas stations offer a line to the Internet. Make sure your computer and devices aren't jumping on every connection they see without you. Check your phone, tablet and computer to ensure they are not set to automatically connect to every available Wi-Fi offering.

**Risks of public Wi-Fi connections.** Sure, all these free Wi-Fi hotspots make life a little easier and keep your data plan under wraps. However, there are quite a few risks. Be aware, the biggest threat to free Wi-Fi is security. Hackers can position themselves between you and the connection so everything you do is recorded. Hackers can also use unsecured Wi-Fi connections to distribute damaging malware. If you allow file-sharing across a network from your computer, hackers can easily access your workstation and plan nasty little infections.

**Stay safe where ever you roam.** Take a few minutes to explore your computer options. Turn off file-sharing in your system preference or control panel and make sure to turn off your Wi-Fi connections when you're done so they don't reconnect when you're not using your computer. We also recommend using a VPN or virtual private network to connect to your business. This will encrypt your data. That way, even if a hacker is present, they wouldn't be able to read your data and more than likely would discard anything they were able to see or take. Need help? Give us a call. We can review your laptop settings to ensure they are just right for telecommuting. We're here to help!

**Many Thanks To Our Customers And Employees.** Here is a little salutation we would like to share with you, our most valuable asset. Don't be shy, share it with your loyal customers and employees too.

We want you to know how much we appreciate your valuable contribution in making this year such a great success. We want to take just a few moments in this season of Thanksgiving to say,

Thank You so very much for the opportunity to work with you and we wish you a great year ahead.



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## Umm...Merry Christmas?

Feel like you're always burying the hatchet with your current technicians?  
Is IT double talk confusing you about your network needs?

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

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