

Did You Know?

Learn about the signs and symptoms of a malware infection. These include:

- ◆ Several pop-ups appear even when not browsing the Web.
- ◆ Unusual slowness of the computer and Internet connection.
- ◆ System hangs or freezes.
- ◆ Corrupted programs.
- ◆ Antivirus is disabled.
- ◆ E-mails sent to or from your account which you did not send.
- ◆ High network activity, even when not using large programs or accessing huge data.
- ◆ Redirected access to some sites.

If you have questions or concerns with regards to malware prevention and resolution, feel free to call us. Our support team is always ready to help.

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Shan Dholaria, CTO of PcPlus Networks

“As a business owner, you don’t have time to waste on technical and operational issues plus security is a BIG concern too. That’s where we shine! Call us to put an end to your IT problems finally and forever.”



The Best IT-Related Resolutions For The New Year

The past couple of years have been difficult for just about everyone. Business owners and entrepreneurs have had to adapt and evolve to survive in an ever-changing climate. There’s no telling when or even if things will go back to what we once thought was “normal.” As we enter a New Year, many business owners are putting their resolutions in place to survive and hopefully thrive in 2022.

People will focus on plans for growth and ways to bring more profit in for their resolution, but it’s important to include tech- and IT-related resolutions as well. Technology might not be an obvious approach to growing a business, but it goes a long way toward making your clients and employees feel more secure about everyday interactions. This can inadvertently lead to growth as you improve customer relationships as well.

Here are a few tech-related resolutions that we think can greatly improve any business.

Use Multiple Layers Of Cyber Security Protection

There is no security approach that covers every hole or flaw that cyber security threats are looking to exploit. The best way to keep your defenses protected is to put in place multiple approaches to cover every possible gap. By using multiple programs and layers, you will ensure that every individual component of your cyber security program has a backup to counter any issues.

Your first line of defense should be a firewall. Firewalls help monitor incoming and outgoing traffic and work as a barrier between networks you trust and don’t trust. They essentially shield you from malicious or unnecessary network traffic. Multifactor authentication is an important layer as well. This prevents cyber-attacks that come from weak or compromised passwords. With multifactor authentication, you and your employees may have to receive a text to your cell phones to prove that

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the correct person is trying to access the network. This will help prevent the use of employee passwords to gain access to sensitive information.

Back Up Your Data And Replace Old Equipment

Unfortunately, preventive measures don't always work. An unexpected disaster could cause your network to go down or someone could accidentally delete some important files. Plus, if your data is not backed up, you could lose sensitive information as well as time and money down the road. Customers will also be upset if you lose information pertaining to them. This could devastate your brand's reputation and cost you customers. If you do not have a backup plan or program in place, you should definitely get one for 2022.

In addition to backup plans, it's important to have equipment that is up-to-date. Using slow and outdated technology can take away from productivity and will make your job more difficult. If some of your equipment goes down, think about replacing it with something new rather than repairing it. While it might be more expensive at first, this decision will save you time and money in the long run.

Employee Security Training

If you want to run a cyber security-aware business, you'll need to train your employees in security awareness and



create a culture that ensures information security. Providing your employees with training related to information security can make them more comfortable and confident in their decision-making and overall employment. This rubs off on your clients and makes them feel more comfortable about doing business with you. According to information from the UK Information Commissioner's Office, human error is to blame for 90% of cyberdata breaches. Getting your employees trained in cyber security awareness can help reduce the chance of human error.

As you lay out plans to make your business more successful throughout 2022 and beyond, ensure that your tech and information security practices are updated. There are simply no downsides to improving your technology and cyber security. Adopting these practices can go a long way toward making your employees and customers feel more comfortable and confident in their decisions.

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- How to make sure you know exactly what you're getting to avoid disappointment, frustration and added costs later on that you didn't anticipate.

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Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

Keep Cozy All Winter With BioLite FirePit+

Campfires are an American camping tradition that brings people together to talk, relax or even cook. But the main problem with campfires is the smoke. It gets in your face, hair and clothes – and can ruin an otherwise relaxing evening. For this reason, BioLite created the FirePit+. This is the upgraded model of their classic FirePit and creates hyper-efficient flames by using patented airflow technology that can erase smoke. FirePit+ is Bluetooth-operated and comes with a mesh screen that allows for visibility from any angle. It's not just a firepit either. You can put charcoal underneath the fuel rack to turn the FirePit+ into a grill. If you're looking for a device to completely revolutionize your campfire or camping experience, look no further than the FirePit+.

Don't Give Up On You



As you venture through your business and personal life, you'll have people tell you "no" or that your ideas aren't good enough. But remember: you know your goals, dreams and aspirations better than anyone else, so why would you let their opinions have an impact on your vision? I certainly wouldn't be where I am today if I had listened to all of the naysayers and critics. If you have a dream, don't let anything hold you back from accomplishing it.

After I wrote my first two books, *The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur* and *The Pumpkin Plan*, I approached my publisher and said I had written another book: *Profit First*. They looked it over and said, "Nobody needs another accounting book." I was a little stunned, but I wouldn't let that stop me.

I knew that I had a really strong book, and my mentor at the time told me to "make them regret it," so I doubled down and decided to publish *Profit First* myself. It ended up being a roaring success. I sold so many copies that my publisher reached out to me about buying the book after they had rejected it the first time!

We made a revised, extended edition for Penguin Books, and it is definitely my most popular book to date. If I had listened to my publisher the first time around, I never would have made *Profit First* or any of the other small-business books I have written since then. I get calls and e-mails all the time from small-business owners who have improved their businesses through things they learned in *Profit First*. All of the money these businesses saved and the lessons they learned from *Profit First* never would have happened if I have given up on my goal.

If you come up with a product, service or idea that you think can help people in any regard, try to push forward through any negativity or criticism. Critics don't always see the big picture and may use preconceived ideas to form an opinion about your business or idea. If you think you are on the verge of something great, don't let anyone or anything stop you from pursuing your vision. You absolutely cannot give up on yourself. Push on and continue chasing your dreams.

~ Mike Michalavics

IT Security Tip: Your Firewall is USELESS unless...

A firewall is a device that acts like a security cop watching over your computer network to detect unauthorized access and activity – and EVERY business and individual needs one.

However, your firewall is completely useless if it's not set up or maintained properly. Your firewall needs to be upgraded and patched on a continual and consistent basis, and security policies and configurations set. This is not something you want to try and handle on your own – you are best served by letting the pros (us!) handle that for you.

If you're a PcPlus Networks client, we got you covered. If not, you should call us immediately to correct the error of your ways: (678) 523-5599.



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Work Smarter, Not Harder

In many cases, entrepreneurs try to do as much as possible in order to meet their standards and succeed in their industries. Sometimes, these entrepreneurs do way more work than is necessary. Unfortunately, this may involve more busy work, on a daily basis, which will put any entrepreneur on the fast track to burnout and may even reduce profits.

If you feel like your days are bogged down with busywork, you should look into business automation tools. These will help get your business back on a profitable track while also alleviating stress.

Automation tools are available to boost nearly any aspect of a business. Google Workspace and Office 365 can help with various tasks, Mailchimp and Constant Contact can make emailing a breeze, and Freshbooks can help automate billing. If you're not using any automation tools in your business, you should start now. Do your research and find the programs that will benefit your business the most.

The Keys To Quality Content Marketing

If you're interested in starting a marketing campaign, you're probably wondering how to make the best possible content. A strong marketing campaign does not rely solely on flashy images and strong keywords. There are a few things you need to do to ensure that your marketing content is quality.

Start by deciding on a few potential topics and performing extensive research. Use Google Trends or similar sites to find related keywords that will expand your search. You also need to brainstorm ideas related to your keywords and research. It's also very important to focus your research on areas that relate to your clientele. A marketing campaign will never be strong if your customer base can't connect with it. In addition to this, your title should be clear and thought-provoking while using strong keywords that drive search engine optimization. Put your content together and design it before finding the perfect place to publish. Take advantage of social media to also help expand your audience. By following a proven system, anyone can create widespread and meaningful content for their campaign.