



Cathy's Message

With the volumes of information on the internet, it's very easy to miss quality information that may serve your business for the better. We hope you find our articles included each month valuable.

The Szymanski team values your business and considers that great information should be shared for the benefit of all. So as we find great information, you will be in the know as well.

If there is a product you would like to see us handle, please let us know. We are always looking to see what we can do for our clients. Remember my job is to exceed your expectations.

Are you following us on Facebook? Please like our page at www.facebook.com/szycom



We hope you know how much we appreciate each and everyone of you. Take care and have the best day ever. Cathy & David.

Useless Trivia

- A raisin dropped in a fresh glass of soda will bounce up and down continually from the bottom of the glass to the top
- A dragonfly has a lifespan of 24 hours
- Banging your head against a wall uses 150 calories an hour.
- All porcupines float in water.
- Human thigh bones are stronger than concrete.
- A cow gives nearly 200,000 glasses of milk in her lifetime.



Do You Keep Your Server In A Closet?

Confusion. Dizziness. Fatigue. Muscle cramps. These are some of the first signs of heat exhaustion in humans. But did you know that your SERVER can also suffer from heat exhaustion and "meltdown," causing slowness, blue screens, random reboots and complete meltdowns? If you keep your server in a closed closet or other small, confined space, here are three things you need to address during hot summer months to avoid premature loss of your equipment and data.

Room Temperature. Server rooms should be kept between 68° and 72° Fahrenheit (20°-22° Celsius). If you keep your server in a closet with a closed door, the heat emitted will quickly elevate the temperature to levels that will damage hardware. Consider opening the door or putting in a good exhaust fan to pull the hot air out.

Ventilation. Good airflow is critical for maintaining a safe room temperature and reducing dust, the next culprit that causes damage to electronics.

Dust. Perhaps more dangerous than room temperature is dust. Dust acts as insulation, and traps the heat generated by your computer components. A regular maintenance routine to keep your components clean and dust-free is essential.

Computer hardware is expensive, and unexpected downtime is incredibly frustrating. **If you want to extend the life of your equipment and avoid the sudden meltdown, make sure your server closet is set up correctly.**

If you need help, give us a call for a FREE Summer Server Room Check at 814-240-1454. We'll be glad to do a free evaluation on your server closet or room and let you know if you're at risk of heat exhaustion and dust damage.

Selfie Security Is Coming

Log on to Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, or even simply take a walk in a city park, and one thing is clear: the selfie revolution is upon us. And now it looks as though this contemporary pastime is becoming more than just a social media trend. Major industry players are now using **facial recognition technology to replace passwords** as the new method of online identification. MasterCard is the most recent corporate bigwig to join the party.

At the beginning of this autumn, MasterCard will acquire the help of 500 customers to test out a new application that enables people to verify their identity and authenticate online transactions with a facial scan. What does this mean? Instead of using a traditional password at the online checkout, MasterCard wants to give you the option to snap a selfie instead. According to the credit card giant, they've partnered with every smartphone company in the business to make this mode of identity verification possible.

Why is this happening?

A quote from Ajay Bhalla, security expert at MasterCard, suggests this is an attempt by the credit card giant to appeal to a younger crowd of digital natives. "The new generation, which is into selfies...I think they'll find it cool. They'll embrace it," Bhalla recently said.

That said, the "cool" appeal to youth is likely not the only reason for this change. The firm is likely attempting to make online purchases both more secure and more convenient.

How it works

To use this technology, users will have to download a dedicated app, which they can then use to take a photo of themselves at checkout. But how does MasterCard prevent a thief from using a photo of you to fake your verification? Simple - the app requires you to blink to prove that you're a living, breathing human being.

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Could The Dog Days Of Summer Be A Threat To Your Business?

With the “dog days” of summer upon us, most business owners are looking for ways to keep their company’s sales and profits HOT, while keeping their IT expenses COOL. But if proper attention is not given to your server and network equipment during the summer, all that heat outside can actually bring your company’s growth to a grinding halt and increase your IT expenses significantly.

Excess heat can be a big problem for small to mid-sized business servers, since a server that becomes overheated usually costs more in energy, fails more often and is more likely to crash. For most companies, a server crash can mean hours or days of downtime, unproductive employees, HUGE amounts of stress and thousands of dollars in lost opportunity.

7 Steps Every Business Owner Must Take To Prevent a Heat-Induced Server Crash

Here are a few simple things you can do to prevent your server and network equipment from overheating and crashing this summer:

1. Tidy up the server room; a neater room will increase airflow.
2. Keep the doors to the server room closed and seal off the space.
3. Make sure cold air reaches all the equipment.
4. Have a redundant A/C unit that is specifically designed for computers.
5. Buy a rack enclosure where the cooling is built into the bottom of the rack.
6. Keep the temperature at no more than 77 degrees Fahrenheit.
7. Consider virtualization or cloud computing so that you are generating a lower amount of heat in the first place.

**Don't let the summer heat get you down.
Protect your server and computer equipment from frying
with our FREE “Beat The Heat” Network Audit.**

For free, we'll come to your office and...

- 1) Audit the location and condition of your server and network equipment to ensure that they are protected against the elements.
- 2) Check your computer network’s security settings to make sure you are protected from the latest hacker attacks, worms and viruses.
- 3) Check your data back-up system to ensure it is working properly and accurately backing up all of the critical files and information you never want to lose.
- 4) Verify that you have the most up-to-date security patches installed properly; miss one critical update and you're a “sitting duck.”

**To Schedule Your “Beat The Heat” Network Audit Today,
Give Us A Call at 814-240-1454**

How To Back Up Your Smartphone

You regularly back up your computers (or at least you should), but do you do the same with your smartphone? Given the massive amounts of contact information, photos, videos and other data we all carry around on smartphones, it's critical to back them up or risk losing all that data forever. There are two basic ways to back up your phone: automatically to the cloud or manually to your computer.

To The Cloud. Cloud backups are secured with your password-protected account. They can easily be configured to run automatically so you can “set it and forget it.” Apple users can use iCloud to back up photos, contacts, calendars and other data. Turn on and configure iCloud Backup by going to Settings > iCloud. Android users can back up to Google servers in much the same way, using a Google account. Configure your preferences by going to Settings > Backup.

To Your Computer. Both Apple and Android users also can back up data directly to a computer manually. Generally, connecting the phone to the computer by cable is the quickest way to do this. Apple users can also use iTunes Wi-Fi Sync to wirelessly back up phone data to a computer. Remember, though, when backing up your smartphone to a computer, your data is only as safe as that computer. Be sure to back up the computer regularly as well.



Selfie Security Is Coming

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However, it's been noted by critics that, in today's technological world, even a blink can be animated on a static photo. This leaves those of us with security concerns wondering whether MasterCard will make this app more secure before it's released.

Note as well, though, that MasterCard is not getting rid of traditional passwords completely. Users will still have the option of the more conventional method of verification, as well as the choice of fingerprint scanning to check your identity.

Is this where the future of online security is headed?

With the release due later this year of a similar Windows 10 security application to identify users using biometrics, it appears that this is where the future of online security is headed. And with ever more applications and online services requiring a password, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the average web user to create one that is both unique and secure for each individual service. So whether it's facial recognition, a fingerprint scan or some other technology that's yet to be perfected, it seems as though **some sort of more advanced security solution is inevitable.**

Want more of the latest security news? Looking to implement new security to protect your IT infrastructure from cyber threats? Get in touch today.

How To Avoid Runaway IT Projects That Empty Your Wallet

In 2002, McDonald's decided to implement a system to provide their corporate executives with a bird's-eye view of their 30,000 stores, to track, measure and monitor everything from profitability to cooking-oil quality. The project, named "Innovate," was a massive five-year project with a billion-dollar budget. Two years into its implementation, McDonald's executives abandoned the project and wrote off the \$170 million invested, saying they needed to reduce capital expenditures.

Begin with the
End in Mind.

Even though YOUR business isn't a McDonald's with a billion-dollar IT budget, chances are you've had at least one failed IT project that derailed, emptying your wallet and leaving you with nothing other than a grudge. And if you haven't had that happen yet, chances are, as you grow, you will. So how do you avoid going down a rabbit hole of spending on an IT project? Here are five key strategies to keep you on track:

1. Begin with the end in mind. The clearer you are on what "success" is for the project, the more likely you are to achieve it. Take the time to sit down with your executive team and decide exactly what the new system LOOKS like (including the interface, if you're developing one), how it performs, what it does and how it works.

2. IT projects need to be driven by an executive who understands the business need and outcome, NOT the IT department. If you and your executive team aren't going to be heavily involved with the process, decisions and management of the project, don't start it.

3. Think in smaller, "bite-sized" projects. One of the problems with the McDonald's project was that it was so complex, affected multiple business systems and had such an enormous scope, it was almost guaranteed to fail. If you have a major system to build or overhaul, break it into smaller, manageable chunks so that problems are contained and costs controlled.

4. Manage the project hours. Scope creep is the biggest challenge to keeping your project on time and on budget. If your project starts to take on a life of its own and goes over your budgeted time frame and your budget by more than 10%, it's time to start re-evaluating what's going on. Excessive overtime is a red flag that the project was not thought through properly, that you have the wrong team working on it or that it's being grossly mismanaged. Don't ignore it.

5. Missed milestones are a red flag. While it's normal to miss a few milestones by a small margin, your IT team should not be allowed to consistently miss key milestones in the project. We recommend setting clearly defined milestones every two weeks or monthly versus monthly or quarterly. This allows you to keep a tighter control on the budget and deliverables.

How Great Leaders Inspire Their Employees To Higher Commitment And Performance

It's probably true that most people who work with us will never care as deeply as we do about building our business. If they did, they'd probably be working for themselves! Yet there's a great deal we can do to raise the commitment level and inspire them to peak performance. The operative word here is INSPIRE. You can demand that people who work for you be punctual, or that they perform at a certain production level. Yet real commitment can only be INSPIRED. And inspiring people is what great leaders do best.

How do great leaders inspire others to commit themselves to their goals? It's not just their charismatic personalities, or that they give a lot of high-powered motivational talks. They communicate their vision so forcefully that other people adopt it as their own.

For example, Lee Iacocca stepped into the ailing Chrysler Corporation and said, "We're going to turn this company around!" With clear goals, a solid plan of action and a strong conviction, he was able to inspire enough commitment from the US Congress that he secured the largest loan ever made to a private company. Then he inspired enough commitment in thousands of Chrysler workers to enable the company to pay back the loan ahead of schedule.

And that's the formula for any leader to inspire commitment – **clear goals, a solid plan of action and a strong conviction.** Communicate that to the people who work with you, and you'll have the kind of loyalty that makes them go the extra mile – if that's what it takes to get the job done.

Of course, it takes more than inspiration to run a successful organization. The people who work with you have to **perform consistently at very high levels**, and to get that kind of performance, you have to gain their trust. They have to believe that you will always be fair in your dealings with them, and that you are concerned about their best interests.

One of the most helpful insights I ever learned about leading others is that people do things for THEIR reasons, not for YOURS or MINE. So the goals, the plan of action and the strong conviction have to be communicated in a way that directly answers the question "What's in it for me?"

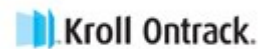
When people honestly believe they will benefit directly from their efforts, and that the more they give, the more they benefit, they perform at peak levels. So it's crucial that you show people how they will grow as they work individually and together to make the company grow, and then back up all your promises with solid actions.

People respond to clear opportunities for personal and professional growth. If I may paraphrase the Hallmark slogan, when people care enough, they'll give their very best!

It takes a lot of patience and effort to build a solid team of people who will share and help you fulfill your vision, but the results will be well worth all you put into it.

Refer Our Services

We love having you as a customer and, quite honestly, wish we had more like you! So instead of just wishing, we've decided to hold a special "refer a friend" event during the month of July and August. Simply refer any company with ten (10) or more computers to our office to receive a FREE Network Checkup (a \$497 value). Once we've completed our initial appointment with your referral, **we'll donate \$100 to your favorite charity** for every referral that you've sent, as a small thank-you for thinking of us.



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