

# TECH SAGE TECH TALK

**"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably"**

## 5 Steps To Protect Your Business From Cyber Crime

A Seattle company was recently broken into and a stash of old laptops was stolen. Just a typical everyday crime by typical everyday thieves. These laptops weren't even being used by anyone in the company. The crime turned out to be anything but ordinary when those same thieves (cyber-criminals) used data from the laptops to obtain information and siphon money out of the company via fraudulent payroll transactions. On top of stealing money, they also managed to steal employee identities.

Another small company was hacked by another "company" that shared the same high-rise office building with them. Management only became aware of the theft once they started seeing unusual financial transactions in their bank accounts. Even then, they didn't know if there was internal embezzlement or external cybertheft. It turned out to be cybertheft. The thief in this case drove a Mercedes and wore a Rolex watch... and looked like anyone else walking in and out of their building. Welcome to the age of cybercrime.

### You Are Their Favorite Target

One of the biggest issues facing small businesses in the fight against cybercrime is the lack of a cyber-security plan. While 83% lack a formal plan, over 69% lack even an informal one. Half of small business owners believe that cybercrime will never affect them. In fact, small businesses are a cybercriminal's favorite target! Why? Small businesses are not prepared and they make it easier on criminals.

The result? Cyber-attacks cost SMBs an average of \$188,242 each incident and nearly two-thirds of the businesses affected are out of business within 6 months (2011 Symantec/NCSA Study). A separate study by Verizon showed that over 80% of small business cybercrime victims were due to insufficient network security (wireless and password issues ranked highest). With insecure networks and no formal plan to combat them, we make it easy on the criminals.

### How They Attack

The #1 money-generating technique these "bad guys" use is to infect your systems with malware so that whenever you (or your employees) visit a web site and enter a password (Facebook, bank, payroll, etc.) the malware programs harvest that data and send it off to the bad guys to do their evil stuff.

They can get to you through physical office break-ins, "wardriving" (compromising defenseless wireless networks) or e-mail phishing scams and harmful web sites. Cyber-criminals are relentless in their efforts, and no one is immune to their tricks.

### 5 Steps To Protect Your Business

**Get Educated.** Find out the risks and educate your staff.

**Do A Threat Assessment.** Examine your firewall, anti-virus protection and anything connected to your network. What data is sensitive or subject to data-breach laws?

**Create A Cyber-Security Action Plan.** Your plan should include both education and a "fire drill."

**Monitor Consistently.** Security is never a one-time activity. Monitoring 24/7 is critical.

**Re-Assess Regularly.** New threats emerge all the time and are always changing. You can only win by staying ahead!



"As a business owner, you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we *shine*! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"  
John Hill, President, TechSage Solutions

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### Are You Using Social Media To Market Your Business? Here's Why You're Likely To Be Wasting Time And Money On False Marketing Metrics

John Wanamaker is famous for saying, "Half of the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is, I don't know which half!" With an ever-growing number of sophisticated online tracking tools, you'd think that wasting advertising dollars would be a thing of the past. But, in fact, companies are wasting just as much (if not more!) on online media and advertising due to a number of factors, but mostly because they're confusing *activity* with *results*.

In business, the only thing we can take to the bank is money – checks, credit card payments, cash and any other forms of monetary deposits. Leading indicators to revenue, as we all know, are paying clients (orders, contracts, sales) and actual leads from qualified, genuinely interested prospects. However, much of the social media marketing I see is a heck of a lot of activity metrics (clicks, followers, open rates of e-mail, visitors to a site, etc.) that cannot be directly tied to generating a qualified lead, much less cash in the bank; so, unless someone can directly show me how an increase in Twitter followers turns into more profit for a company, I'm not impressed. In fact, I believe management of all the social media sites ends up taking an enormous amount of time away from more productive lead generation and marketing activities and opens the door for customer service and PR failures.

For example, if you have a Facebook fan page, you now need to monitor it daily – even hourly – for negative client comments, which are now public for the world to see, unfiltered and out of context, instead of a client simply e-mailing you their complaint, where it can be addressed privately. Further, clients will assume they can message and/or post their requests to your Facebook page instead of going through the proper channels; if you fail to address their request in a timely manner because it didn't go through your normal process of handling such requests, you've just created a customer service failure that is open for the public to see.

To be clear, I'm not suggesting that you should shut down all social media sites and marketing; there are situations where it's a very smart and strategic part of a business strategy. But, as my mother would say, "Don't jump off a cliff just because everyone else is." Be sure that whatever you're doing online in social media can be measured and quantified to tie in to key sales, service and growth goals you have for your organization, and do not accept "getting our name out there" as a sufficient result for your marketing efforts.

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### The Power of Understanding People



I had the pleasure to be entertained and educated by Dave Mitchell who is the author of the book **The Power of Understanding People**. He was the guest speaker at one of my user groups this past month.

Mr. Mitchell spoke on the different communication styles and how to identify and understand the intrinsic needs of others. Understanding these different characteristics can help with your organization's team dynamics, client satisfaction and enhance your sales efforts by better targeting your brand message to the client's style.

Beware, there is a quiz to determine where you score. For fun, Mr. Mitchell compared our personalities to movie stars. I fell into the same category as Captain Kirk.

The Lighter Side:

### Halloween Graveyard Story from Vienna



**Chris Cross, a tourist in Vienna, is going past Vienna's Zentralfriedhof churchyard on October 31st. Suddenly he hears some music. No one is around, so he starts searching for the source. Chris finally locates the origin and finds it is coming from a grave with a headstone that reads: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770 -1827. Then he realizes that the music is the Ninth Symphony and it is being played backward! Puzzled, he leaves the graveyard and persuades Tim Burr, a friend, to return with him.**

**By the time they arrive back at the grave, the music has changed. This time it is the Seventh Symphony, but like the previous piece, it is being played backward. Curious, the men agree to consult a music scholar. When they return with the expert, the Fifth Symphony is playing, again backward. The expert notices that the symphonies are being played in the reverse order in which they were composed, the 9th, then the 7th, then the 5th. By the next day, the word has spread and a throng has gathered around the grave. They are all listening to the Second Symphony being played backward.**

**Just then the graveyard's caretaker ambles up to the group. Someone in the crowd asks him if he has an explanation for the music.**

**"Oh, it's nothing to worry about," says the caretaker. "He's just decomposing!"**

## Your Computer Network Is Being Haunted!

*(And It's Worse Than Ghosts And Goblins)*



Your small business is under attack. Right now, extremely dangerous and well-funded cybercrime rings are using sophisticated techniques to hack into thousands of small businesses to steal credit cards, blackmail you to recover data and swindle money directly out of your bank account.

82,000 NEW malware threats are being released every single day and HALF of the cyberattacks occurring are aimed at small businesses just like yours. You just don't hear about it because it's kept quiet for fear of bad PR, lawsuits and sheer embarrassment.

The National Cyber Security Alliance reports that 1 in 5 small businesses have been victims of cybercrime in the last year and this number is growing rapidly as businesses continue to move to cloud computing, mobile devices and store more information online.

**Here are 7 critical security measures your business must have in place to have any chance of fending off these criminals:**

**Train Employees On Security Best Practices.** The #1 vulnerability for business networks are the employees using them. If they don't know how to spot infected e-mails or online scams, they could infect your entire network.

**Create An Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) And Enforce It!** An AUP outlines how employees are permitted to use company-owned PCs, devices, software, Internet access and e-mail. Having this type of policy is critical if your employees are using their own devices to access company email and data.

**Require STRONG passwords throughout your company.** Passwords should be at least 8 characters and contain lowercase and uppercase letters, symbols and at least one number.

**Keep Your Network Up To Date.** New vulnerabilities are found almost daily on common software programs you use all the time; therefore it's critical you patch and update systems frequently.

**Have An Excellent Backup.** A quality backup can foil even the most aggressive ransomware attacks, where a hacker locks up your files and holds them ransom until you pay up. If your files are backed up, you don't have to pay to get your data back.

**Don't Allow Employees To Download Unauthorized Software.** One of the fastest ways to access your network is by embedding malicious code in seemingly harmless apps.

**Don't Scrimp On A Good Firewall.** Your firewall is the frontline defense against hackers, so you need a really good one with monitoring and maintenance done regularly.

### Want Help In Implementing These 7 Essentials?

During the month of October, sign up for a FREE Cybersecurity Audit (a \$497 value). To claim your Cybersecurity Audit today, give us a call at 210-582-5814 or by going online at [www.techsagesolutions.com/haunted/](http://www.techsagesolutions.com/haunted/). *This offer is only valid during the month of October 2015.*

## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



## THE AMAZON ECHO: LIKE SIRI FOR YOUR HOME

It's not Rosie the Robot, but your first voice request to Amazon's new Echo moves you one step closer to living like the Jetsons... Think of it as a plugged-in version of Apple's Siri or Microsoft's Cortana.

This "smart" speaker in a 9¼ x 3¼-inch cylinder can order products, turn off lights, set a timer, look up and give you sports scores, read you a book from Audible and more.

You might even get it to tell you terrible jokes...

It won't replace a high-end stereo, but its sound quality compares with any Bluetooth speaker, and it can fill a good-sized room in your home.

Bottom line: Echo offers hands-free, at-home audio access to just about anything on the web, with better sound than a smartphone or tablet.

All in all, it can make your life easier. And maybe just a little more fun.

## Passion Is Powerful

A few months ago I had the pleasure of working with Germania Insurance at their annual sales conference. The night before, at dinner, I was fortunate to sit at the table with Matt Sodolak. I use the word "fortunate" because I was about to witness what I would best describe as TRUE PASSION for your profession.

I asked a question of Matt that I have asked countless times, "How do you like being in the insurance business?" His response surprised me. Without any hesitation he said, "I love it. It's my job for life."

In all my years of interviewing people, I have never had anyone say, "This is my job for life." The passion, sincerity and conviction in his voice just knocked me over. He sat forward in his chair and followed his statement with, "I love helping people, and I get to do it every day."

There was NO DOUBT in my mind the passion Matt felt for his job, career and the company he worked for. I felt that anyone who had Matt as their agent was so fortunate. He never mentioned commissions ... he talked the whole time about protecting his clients and how people counted on him to make sure they had the proper coverage in case something disastrous happened.

Unfortunately, something disastrous did happen; Texas has been slammed this year with enormous floods destroying millions of dollars in property and causing havoc to people's lives. I heard from Matt last week and he shared a quick story about one of the people who works in their claims department. She said,

"Being in the insurance business, all of our customers' problems become our problems and we have to be here to help them through it... that's why they do business with us and that's what keeps our lights on; you gotta love it or you are at the wrong place!"

It doesn't surprise me that anyone who works with Matt would also have a passion for their job; he would attract other people who would want to do, help and care for others. Let me share a few anonymous quotes with you about the Power of Passion:

Maybe the one thing that is keeping your career from taking off ... is that you aren't looking at it as a career; it is simply a job to you; and your customers, associates, managers and boss can sense that.

There is always going to be frustration, toil, hassles, problems, glitches, hitches and difficulties in any job (that is why they call it work). But, if you look at it from a different perspective ... that what you are doing is helping people in some way ... then it all becomes worthwhile.

Galileo, the great Italian astronomer, physicist, engineer, philosopher and mathematician, once said: "Passion is the genesis of genius." So, let your passion become the start of something great for your career.



Robert Stevenson is a highly sought after, internationally known speaker. He is the author of the best-selling books *How to Soar Like An Eagle in a World Full of Turkeys* and *52 Essential Habits For Success*. Robert is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) and is a former All-American Athlete. He started his first business at 24 and has owned several companies. Robert has international sales experience dealing in over 20 countries, and his client list reads like a Who's Who in Business. He has shared the podium with such renowned names as Generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf, Former President George H.W. Bush, Anthony Robbins and Steven Covey.

[www.robertstevenson.org/](http://www.robertstevenson.org/)



## On A Side Note... Could Your Laptop Battery Revolutionize The Way We Drive?



If you like hot cars and green tech, you may have started hankering for a Tesla as far back as 2008...

Yet, aside from cool looks and speed, did you know the simple design edge that's putting Tesla in the spotlight?

Other car builders, like Nissan, GM and even Mercedes, have electric cars on the road. But they all use costly, high-tech lithium ion batteries.

Tesla, on the other hand, simply uses the type of batteries you have in your laptop – thousands of them...

With over a billion of these cells made every year, their design and pricing is driven by the same fierce competition that drives the consumer market.

And if Tesla Motors can put a car on the road with enough battery life, they may just revolutionize the way we drive – like Henry Ford's Model T did over a century ago.

## Google Plus: For Geeks Only? What You Need To Know Now

Is Google Plus a bust? Or is it still a channel to be reckoned with if you don't want to lose touch with your customers?

Google Plus – aka "Google+" – is a social network built by Google. It's been connected to other Google products. It was the birthplace of Hangouts, for instance, now a standalone product.

But things are changing. Google is dismantling Google+ for parts. What will remain may be just a stream, yet it will likely endure due to its die-hard fan base.

So how relevant is Google+ to your business?

The answer is, it depends on your customer base. Are your ideal customers using it? If not, perhaps you can safely ignore it.

However, if you already have a following on Google+, or if you are targeting new customers who use it, here are three ways you can leverage it for your business:

### **Get Found Fast**

It's no surprise that Google Search favors Google+ posts. With a little reader engagement, your post can show up on page one in just a few days.

### **Give to Gain**

Content that helps you target prospects with a simple "thank you" to folks who engage can work wonders.

### **Build Micro-Lists with Circles**

Here's a little-known secret: For circles up to 100, Google+ allows you to "Also send e-mail." This can be a great way to build tightly segmented lists.

Depending on your audience, Google+ may still be the best way to connect with your customers.

## **Who Else Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card?**

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is Cindy Dillingham of San Antonio. She was the first person to correctly answer my quiz question from last month: **What were the first featured menu items at McDonald's?** a) Hamburgers b) Hot Dogs c) Grilled Cheese Sandwiches d) Tacos

The correct answer was **b) Hot Dogs**

Now, here's this month's trivia question. The winner will receive a iTunes gift card.

**At the end of the Pixar Movie Toy Story 3, who owns Woody**

- a) Hannah                      b) Sid  
C) Andy                         d) Bonnie



Email Kathleen Now With Your Answer!

[kpastrano@techsagesolutions.com](mailto:kpastrano@techsagesolutions.com)

With Subject: October Trivia Answer

*At the end of October will draw from the correct answers for the gift card*



**Welcome Charles Kasel**, our newest member to the TechSage Solutions Team. Charles joined us on September 21st as the Lead System Administrator and will be leading the Operational team. He brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience. He did service in the Army serving in Iraq.

Charles will be attending the client meetings with John over the next couple of months. This will give you the opportunity to meet him.

## TechSage Solutions Referral Program

Refer a friend to TechSage Solutions between October 1, 2015—December 31, 2015 for a chance to win a New iPad mini.

Here is how the contest works:

1. Call or email us with your referral information.
2. We will call to schedule an appointment.
3. We will pay you or donate \$25 to your favorite charity for anyone that you refer to us, who we schedule an appointment with.
4. When your referral becomes a client (and spends \$1,000 or more), we will pay you \$75 more or donate \$75 more to your favorite charity. Plus, we will give your referral \$100 off their purchase.
5. What makes a good referral for TechSage Solutions? A business owner who has 10 or more PC's and needs help with their network, data backups, email server or is just interested in having a second opinion on how they are doing things now. We provide service to the San Antonio area and surrounding cities.



**How To Play:** Call or email Beth Hill at [ehill@techsagesolutions.com](mailto:ehill@techsagesolutions.com) (210-582-5814) with your referral.

*For each referral you provide, your name will be entered into a draw for a chance to win the Apple iPad mini*

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