TECHSAGE Monthly Newsletter

Tech News YOU CAN USE

Tips & Awesome Info for Technology
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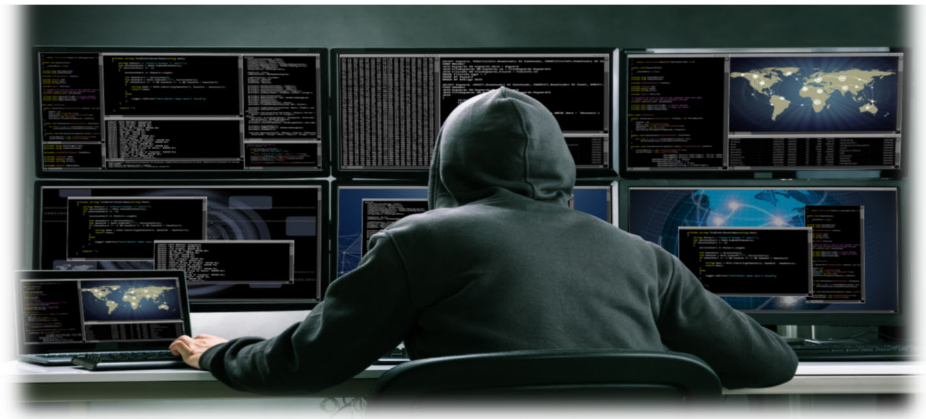
Inside This February Issue



Sneaky Ways Cybercriminals Access Your Network

And What You Can Do To Prevent It TODAY

Hackers prefer the little guy. The high-profile data breaches you read about in the news — your Facebooks and Equifax's and T-Mobiles — are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the digital crimes being perpetrated day after day, especially against small businesses. Today, according to a report by the National Cyber Security Alliance, 70 percent of hackers specifically target small businesses. Attracted by the prospect of easy money, they search for those organizations who underspend on protection, who have employees untrained to spot security risks, and who subscribe to woefully out-of-date practices to protect their data. As a result, more than 50 percent of small businesses have been hacked, while 60 percent of companies breached are forced to close their doors within six months.

Most business owners have no idea the danger they're putting their livelihood in by leaving cyber security up to chance. According to a survey conducted by Paychex, 68 percent of small-business owners aren't concerned about their current cyber security standards, despite the fact that around 70 percent of them aren't adequately protected. In the face of an imminent, global threat to the very existence of small businesses everywhere, most CEOs offer up a collective shrug.

The tactics and software available to hackers become more sophisticated by the day, but with so many unwitting victims, most criminals don't even need to work that hard to net a six-figure income. By sticking to two tried-and-tested tools of the trade — phishing, ransomware and the subtle art of guessing users' passwords — they leech comfortably off the earnest efforts of small businesses all over the world.

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So, what's to be done? Well, first things first: You need to educate yourself and your team. Protect your organization against phishing by fostering a healthy skepticism of any email that enters your inbox. Make it a habit of hovering over hyperlinks to check their actual destination before you click. If an email is coming from someone you know, but the email address is different, verify it with the other party. And never, ever send passwords or personal details to anyone over the internet if you can avoid it.

Speaking of passwords, you probably need to upgrade yours. The majority of folks use the same password for everything from their Facebook account to their business email. The fact that this includes your employees should make you shudder. It may not seem like a big deal — who's going to take the time to guess SoCcErMoM666? — but aside from the fact that simple software enables hackers to guess even complicated passwords in minutes, that's not even usually necessary. Instead, they can just look at the data dumps from a recent more high-profile breach — think the Equifax fiasco — pull your old website from there and type it into whatever profile they want to access. If you keep all your passwords the same across sites, it won't take them long to dig into your most precious assets. To avoid this, implement a strict set of password regulations for your business, preferably incorporating two-factor authentication and mandatory password changes every few weeks.

Of course, you can read up on hacking techniques and teach them to your team until you're blue in the face, and a data breach can still occur. Cybercrime is constantly evolving, and staying abreast of its breakneck pace takes a dedicated awareness of the latest protective tools and measures. That's why your single best weapon to defend you against the hackers at your door is to find a managed service provider (MSP) with a background in defending against digital threats to partner with your organization. These companies not only regularly monitor your network, they also keep it updated with the latest patches and measures to prevent the worst. And if crisis somehow still strikes, they'll be able to get your network back up in minutes rather than days, equipped with an expert knowledge of your systems and years of experience in the field.

> **"In the face of an imminent global threat to the very existence of small businesses everywhere, most CEOs offer up a collective shrug."**

In today's digital world, leaving your cyber security up to a subpar antivirus and some wishful thinking is more than irresponsible — it's an existential threat to your company. But with a little savvy, a bit of investment and a second opinion on the circumstances of your company's security, you can rest easy knowing that no matter what comes, you're protected.

Prepare for Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008 End of Support

Don't let your infrastructure and applications go unprotected. We're here to help you migrate to current versions for greater security, performance and innovation.

On January 14,2020, support for Windows Server 2008 and 2008 R2 will end. That means the end of regular security updates. Putting a plan into place now will ensure you are ready, secure, and getting all the benefits for an enhanced IT infrastructure—sooner, rather than later. The clock is ticking—don't leave it until it's too late! If you're running on Windows 7 or Windows Server 2008, talk to TechSage Solutions about a plan of action for migrating your server and upgrading to Windows 10.

Call NOW at 210-582-5814 or email info@techsagesolutions.com

New *Gadget Of The Month:*

This Smartphone Is Also A Projector: Introducing The Movi

Sure, your big honking iPhone or massive Android is impressive, but does it have a screen the size of an entire wall?

The Movi is the first smartphone to integrate a built-in pico projector into its design, allowing users to project 720p images up to 200 inches in size wherever they are. At only $599, it's a bargain when compared to other comparable projectors.

However, there are caveats: the Movi's FHD phone screen can't compare to its higher-end OLED competitors, and its camera leaves something to be desired. But if you're an avid video buff with a mind for convenience, the Movi may be just what you're looking for.

2019 Is The Year Of Personalized Marketing

The year 2019 will be one of rapid innovation, where new technologies continue to empower consumer to make even more informed decisions. However, this does not mean that business can totally automate, depersonalizing the sales process from start to finish.

This includes your marketing, which needs to be more personal than ever. Stock images and generic campaigns will no longer cut it. Laser-targeted, individually tailored content will drive conversions where Adwords will fail. It's also worth noting that with the advent of voice search technology, search engine optimization will shift more toward long-tail, conversational queried—the kinds of questions humans *actually* ask. Keep these facts in mind, and you will be a step ahead of the competition.

Watch Your Doors

When was the last time you looked at the doors to your business? It isn't just about who comes in; it's also about how.

Let me give an example. A new restaurant opened near my office. It's been very successful, and I eat there regularly. The only problem is the horrendous door you have to go through to get in. Opening it causes an obnoxious grating sound, not unlike a few metal tomcats duking it out in an alley. The pull is hard and inconsistent. At first I thought they'd fix it, but since it hasn't been dealt with in months, it's clear to me that the owners don't give much thought to the first impression it creates.

Actual doors are important, but the metaphorical doors to your business are even more important. These "doors" are entry points, drawing people in or keeping them out. They can welcome or they can warn.

What about the doors to your business? Your website is your online door. Is it aesthetically pleasing? Easy to navigate? Up-to-date? Can a visitor quickly find contact information? Does it just advertise, or does it make it easy for visitors to actually take action?

Your phone is a door too. Whether answered by a person or a recorded message, it speaks volumes about your professionalism and punctuality.

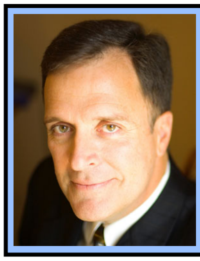
The way you handle service and support is yet another door. How easy is it for a customer to schedule a repair? Do techs arrive when promised? Are they professional in appearance and friendly in demeanor?

Then there's your social media accounts. What image do your various platforms convey? Does your social media support or detract from your brand?

Your office environment is another. Is it a place customers enjoy or endure? If you serve coffee, how good is it?

Gordon Hinckley said, "Eternal vigilance is the price of eternal development." Paying attention consistently will allow you to develop and achieve success. Ignoring the doors, literal and metaphorical, can be costly.

A good door makes it easy for customers to enter. A great door invites them in and sets the tone for what follows. Make sure yours immediately conveys everything you want others to know about your business.



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Do You Know What Your Employees Are Doing Online?

If You Don't, You're At Risk!

The Internet and e-mail have become indispensable tools for businesses, but many companies are finding employees are using these tools as much or more for personal activities than job-related tasks. In fact, many business owners have recognized that unrestricted use of the Internet by employees has the potential to drain, rather than enhance productivity and, at worst, can even have dire legal consequences.

A Two Pronged Approach

To reduce the risk and minimize non-productive activities, business owners are utilizing a two pronged approach: (1) Implementing an Internet Acceptable Use Policy (IAUP) and (2) installing a monitoring system to restrict and police employees' online activities. An IAUP is nothing more than a written agreement that sets out the permissible workplace uses of the Internet and e-mail. In addition to describing permissible uses, an IAUP should specifically set out prohibited uses, rules of online behavior, and access privileges with penalties for violations of the policy spelled out, including security violations and vandalism of the system.

Not only does an IAUP reduce wasted hours on the net, it can reduce bandwidth and equipment needs, as well as shield you, the business owner, from possible sexual harassment and other lawsuits arising from your employee's inappropriate use of the web.

An IAUP Is A Good First Step, But It's Only Half The Battle Won

Unfortunately, not everyone follows policies, and some accidentally will violate your IAUP. To ensure company policies are being followed, businesses are choosing to monitor all Internet activity initiated by their employees using a web content filtering software (or hardware).

Tools available today, like our TechSage Shield Advance Security solutions, make monitoring of employee Internet usage simple and easy. Most companies choose to regularly monitor summary level activity like hours connected to the web, number of sites visited, and illegal or banned sites visited by the company while leaving detailed transaction reviews as necessary on a case-by-case basis.

And if someone complains that this is a violation of their privacy, rest assured that nothing could be further from the truth. It's not only legal but good business. After all, they are using your company assets and if employees are focused on productive work and minimize personal use of the internet, you're likely to never need to address their Internet usage. Just be sure to include a clause about Internet monitoring in your IAUP and have your employees sign the agreement. **Send an email to info@techsagesolutions.com for an example of the Internet Acceptable Use Policy.**

Refer a friend

From January 1 through March 31, 2019:
Get an ALL-NEW Echo Show (2nd Generation)
Premium sound and a vibrant 10.1" HD screen

How the Contest Works:

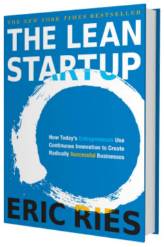
1) Call or email us with your referral information and receive $25 gift card.
2) We will call your friend to schedule an appointment. If an appointment is made, we will send you a $50 gift card.
3) After the appointment we will add your name into the drawing for All-New Premium Echo Show Premium 10.1 HD Screen.
4) If your friend becomes a client and spends $1,000 or more, we'll send you a check for $100. As a bonus, we'll also give your friend a $100 discount off our services!

What makes a good referral for TechSage Solutions?

A business owner who has 5 or more PC's and needs help with their network, data backups, phones, email, data security, etc. 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.

Send email to info@techsagesolutions.com or call (210)-582-5814

The Lean Startup By: Eric Ries


THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
THE LEAN STARTUP
How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses
ERIC RIES

The list of start-ups that come up with a seemingly brilliant idea, rush into business and promptly crash and burn in infinitely long. But the fact is most of this failure is not a product of fickle consumer interest or some external factor, and it is actually totally preventable. The key is to not succumb to conventional management strategies. In his book: *The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation To Create Radically Successful Business,* Eric Reis outlines an approach that empowers companies of all sizes to be more efficient, nimble, and successful for the long term. Through continuous testing and constant adaption, even the chunkiest organizations can slim own and stat abreast of their competitors.