TechSage Tech Talk

TechSage Solutions

Insider Tips to Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier and More Profitable

We love technology and We love helping people.

Give me a call to find out whether we can help you better secure your data and get more out of technology.

-John Hill
Founder CEO

Don't Settle For Less

5 Questions Every IT Professional Should Say Yes To

Business owners have a wide variety of responsibilities. In many cases, they oversee the hiring process, ensure operations run smoothly and find the best third-party vendors to help benefit their business for years to come. One problem many business owners face when hiring a third party is knowing whether they're the right fit for their business. Making the wrong choice can be detrimental to your business, so how can you ensure you make the right decision? You ask essential questions.

Knowing which questions to ask is easier said than done though. Most business owners are convinced to

use a third party, thanks to the persuasive skills of an excellent salesperson or representative. Still, many of these salespeople hold their cards close to their chest. They only tell you what you want to hear, leaving out anything that might make you doubt their expertise or abilities. We've seen this with many IT "experts," so we wanted to help you by providing you with some questions you should ask before they get anywhere near your network.

Here is what you should ask any IT professional before hiring them to oversee your network, IT and cyber security practices. These are simple yes-or-no questions; if you get a no

from the *"expert"* for any of them, you're probably better off finding a different option.

Are They Monitoring Your Network At All Times To Ensure Security Settings And Security Patches Are Current?
For many businesses, the whole purpose of hiring an IT team or individual is to keep their cyber security protected. They might work with sensitive data that, if compromised, could harm their clients and the business's reputation. You need to make sure any IT expert you hire is going to stay up-to-date with the current security patches so they can ensure all holes are covered to keep

your business protected. There should not be gaps when they aren't monitoring your network.

Do They Provide Detailed Invoices That Clearly Explain Everything You're Paying For?

Some IT "experts" believe the business owners they work with are clueless about the IT and cyber security industry. They'll try to overcharge for simple tasks without fully explaining what they did, and their invoices are as basic as it gets. This shouldn't fly with you. Every third party you work with should provide detailed invoices so you can see exactly what you're paying for. It's a huge red flag if they refuse to do this.

Will They Be Proactive And Provide You With Regular Updates?

If you're hiring someone to oversee your IT needs, you don't want them to be another responsibility you must manage. You want to trust them and know they're doing everything possible to assist your business. If you have to continually go to them to see how they're doing on certain projects, you're better off with someone else.

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Do They Offer Any Guarantees On Their Service?

This is a big one many people don't think about, but it could make all the difference in your decision. A business or individual who does excellent work will stand behind their service no matter what, which means offering guarantees that they'll do what they say they'll do. Find out how they respond if your company's data is compromised or something goes wrong with a particular piece of software. Their response should tell you whether they're trustworthy or not.

Do They Have Set Rates For Each Project?

Before hiring them to assist with your IT needs, you should know how much everything costs. You should be cautious if they say they won't know how much something will cost until they start working. There's no telling how much they'll try to charge you, and it could be difficult to know if you're getting bamboozled or not.

It's important to have IT assistance for your business, as it helps keep your company, employees and customers protected. These are just a few questions you should ask before hiring an IT expert. If they answer no to any of the above questions, then continue your search and find someone who is a better fit and has your best interests in mind.

THE INTERNET IS LIKE A TREASURE HUNT

http://

EXCEPT MOST OF THE TREASURE IS JUST CLICKBAIT.

Remember, all that glitters isn't gold. Just like in a treasure hunt, you need to know where to dig and what to look for. Clicking a malicious link can create a backdoor to your business systems, but the continuous verification of zero trust security can prevent unauthorized access.

SMALL BUSINESS TIPS TO GET READY FOR THE UNEXPECTED

What would you do if your business suffered a ransomware attack tomorrow? Do you have a contingency plan in case of any disasters? The unexpected can happen anytime, and small businesses can get hit particularly hard.

Here are 10 helpful tips to get ready for anything:

1. Create a Contingency Plan
2. Maintain Adequate Insurance Coverage
3. Diversify Your Revenue Streams
4. Build Strong Relationships with Suppliers
5. Keep Cash Reserves
6. Build Strong Outsourcing Relationships
7. Check Your Financials Regularly
8. Invest in Technology
9. Train Employees for Emergencies
10. Stay Up to Date on Regulatory Requirements

Is Work Consuming Your Life?
GET YOUR LIFE BACK

Early in my career, I met with an executive and noticed something strange on her desk. In a small picture frame, she had a little note that said, "Eat lunch." I asked her why she needed that note, and she replied she never eats lunch. Her job was all-consuming.

That horrified me. I felt sad that a competent business leader seemed so powerless in the fight to reclaim her life from her job. Work is not supposed to be like that. It is not supposed to suck the life out of you. Throughout my career, I developed three ways to reclaim my life from my work. To fully get your life back, you have to do all three.

Set Personal Goals.

Think of simple things, like how many nights per week you want to eat dinner with your family. Several colleagues set and track their "family dinner" metric goals. It works. An extremely busy tech entrepreneur set a goal of having a proper "cellphones off" two-week vacation every summer. I've heard all kinds of goals entrepreneurs set and the work they are willing to put in to meet them.

Schedule Personal Time.

An hour ago, I called one of my colleagues. Rather than hearing "hello" when he answered, I heard, "I put the diaper bag on the stroller!" I jokingly told him that I didn't have the diaper bag. "Oh, sorry, how's it going?" he said, turning his attention to me. My colleague was at the zoo, midday on a Thursday, with his wife and two kids. Was I mad that he was not working? No way! I was proud of him. My colleague is one of the hardest-working people I've ever met. And yet, he schedules personal time. If somebody is trying to schedule over one of your personal commitments, tell them you are unavailable. It's none of their business why.

Delete, Delegate, Delay And Do.

When a task is begging you to complete it on your off time, your first instinct should be to delete it. If the task is a high enough priority that it has to get done, your second instinct should be to delegate it to a capable person. If the task is important enough that it has to get done, and there's nobody to delegate it to, consider delaying doing it yourself until a time that works for your calendar. If that isn't practical, then your last resort is to do that task.

If you set personal goals, schedule personal time and practice the Delete-Delegate-Delay-Do framework, you can achieve career success and get your life back.

Dr. Geoff Smart is chairman & founder of ghSMART, a leadership consulting firm that exists to help leaders amplify their positive impact on the world. Dr. Smart and his firm have published multiple New York Times best sellers. He stays active in his community and has advised many government officials.

How Microsoft 365 Copilot Is Going To Transform M365 Apps

Microsoft is one of the biggest players in the office application field. It's at the forefront of introducing transformative technology. The company is about to transform Microsoft 365 in a huge way with its new Copilot app.

Microsoft 365 Copilot is a new tool designed to help users get the most out of their Microsoft 365 apps. This revolutionary tool is an intelligent, personalized assistant.

Let's take a closer look at Microsoft 365 Copilot and the key ways it's going to improve M365 apps and your business workflows.

What is Microsoft 365 Copilot?

Microsoft 365 Copilot is an AI-powered assistant. It helps users with their day-to-day tasks in M365 apps. It works across all M365 apps.

This includes:

- Word
- Excel
- PowerPoint
- Outlook
- Teams and more!

The tool is currently in testing and should be out sometime soon.

How Does Microsoft 365 Copilot Work?

Microsoft 365 Copilot uses AI and machine learning to understand users' needs. It provides personalized help. It uses data from users' interactions with M365 apps. It learns a user's usage patterns and offers recommendations based on their preferences.

Say that you're working on a presentation in PowerPoint and struggling with design. Microsoft 365 Copilot can offer design suggestions based on your company's brand guidelines.
Microsoft 365 Copilot can also help users with common tasks. Tasks such as scheduling meetings and managing emails.

Benefits of Using Microsoft 365 Copilot

- *Personalized Help* — Microsoft 365 Copilot provides personalized help based on users' usage patterns and preferences.
- *Time Saving* — Microsoft 365 Copilot can help users save time on common tasks. Such as scheduling meetings and formatting documents. It can take on many information-gathering tasks, like summarizing meeting notes. Knowledge workers spend an average of 2.5 hours per day searching for information.
- *Reduced Frustration* – Microsoft 365 Copilot can help reduce frustration. It provides solutions when users are stuck on a task. The tool can also help users struggling with an Excel chart or table. Instead of having to figure out how to generate it, they can simply give a command to Copilot to do it for them.
- *Improved Productivity* – Microsoft Copilot handles tasks that go beyond what business apps have historically done. For example, you can use it in PowerPoint to create a presentation for you. Use a command such as, "Create a six-slide presentation based on (this) document." You can also tell it to find appropriate Microsoft stock photos and insert them.

Welcome Newest TechSage Solutions Team Members

Jordan Phelps
Service Delivery

He keeps the office laughing
Marine Veteran
Astros fan
Another dog lover
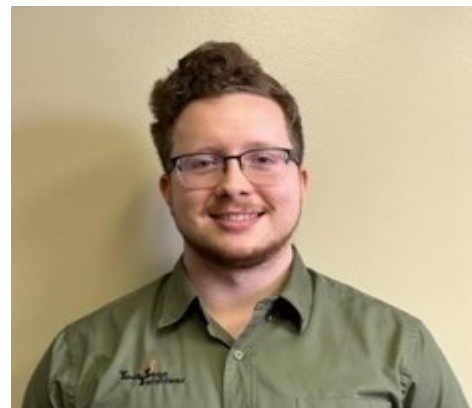
Gareth Lawrence
Compliance

UTSA Grad with Masters in Cyber Security
UTSA Gaming Team
Dual Citizenship (American/British)