

THE TECH CHRONICLE

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

RANSOMWARE

Atlanta was recently brought to a standstill for a week, due to a ransomware attack.

Ransomware is software that quietly encrypts all your network's data and then requests payment in order to decrypt it.

Small businesses are not immune to ransomware. It's estimated that 5% of small businesses fell victim to ransomware attacks last year.

The best protection? A backup that runs multiple times per day.



Here Are 3 Things You Should Absolutely Demand From Your IT Services Firm Are You Getting Even One Of Them Now?

Even as businesses across the country go completely digital, and the entirety of their precious assets are stored on servers, the quality of many IT services providers has plummeted. In a misguided attempt to cut costs and save money, some shortsighted businesses are unable to see the utility of accurately priced IT options, so they opt for lower-tier, "break-fix" firms to keep their network afloat. Instead of paying monthly fees for managed services, they call up an IT professional only after something has broken down and pay them by the hour.

This strategy certainly saves money in the short term, but it opens your business up to all kinds of technological disasters in the long haul. These disasters range from

vicious cyber-attacks that punch through the gaps in your security to total server failures that cause you to lose thousands of dollars of essential data. Break-fix technicians only get paid when something in your system breaks. They have no incentive to be proactive with your network or to detect potential concerns before they become a full-blown crisis. What's more, they're unfamiliar with your network, increasing the amount of time it takes to get your network up and running in the midst of a crisis. Over time, this "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" approach will end up costing much more than a managed services provider.

When you're shopping for the best IT services provider for your business, it's important to remember just how

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Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.

-T.S. Eliot

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much you depend on your technology to stay competitive in today's marketplace. Here are three standards you absolutely need to demand from your team of IT experts *before* disaster strikes.



Constant Monitoring Of Your Network

The best managed services providers aren't reactive – they're preventative. Instead of waiting around until something breaks and your business suffers hours of downtime, they keep an eye on your network 24 hours a day, seven days a week, ensuring nothing goes amiss. By gaining an intimate knowledge of the way your particular network operates, they can see any inconsistencies or holes in your security long before they become a problem. And if an issue *does* arise, they are there to fix it immediately – usually before the

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business owner even realizes there's a problem.

Rapid Response Times

Since your MSP is regularly monitoring your system, they're ready in the event that any potential catastrophe might rear its ugly head, taking a proactive stance before it hits your bottom line. You don't have to wait on hold to find out when the next technician may be available, ticking away precious minutes, hours or days before the problem is addressed. When something happens, the MSP is immediately on it, and since they know your network, they can iron out any hiccups in record time.

A Real Investment In Your Success

Since MSPs depend on the success of your business to survive, you can bet they're doing everything they possibly can to keep your network running smoothly. It's in the MSP's own personal interest to establish a flawless, predictable system that is efficient and easy to work with. Over time, the MSP will implement repeatable processes to fix issues before your customers feel their effects. Because if the customers experience the problem, the MSP will, too. Unlike break-fix technicians who depend on outages to get paid, MSPs will work with you to build a system that requires the least possible effort on both of your parts. This means your system will integrate seamlessly with your day-to-day activities and rarely suffer any issues at all.

Partnering with a managed services provider may cost a little more upfront, but within months, you'll experience the massive benefits of a team of IT professionals who actually want your business to succeed. In the long run, the peace of mind and sheer volume of crises you avoid with an MSP will far outweigh the cost.

Free Report: What Every Small-Business Owner Must Know About Protecting And Preserving Their Company's Critical Data And Computer Systems

PROTECT YOUR NETWORK

“What Every Business Owner Must Know About Protecting and Preserving Their Network”



Don't Trust Your Company's Critical Data And Operations To Just Anyone!

This report will outline in plain nontechnical English common mistakes that many small-business owners make with their computer networks that cost them thousands in lost sales, productivity and computer repair bills, as well as providing an easy, proven way to reduce or completely eliminate the financial expense and frustration caused by these oversights.

Download your FREE copy today at
www.computer-center.com/protect
 or call our office at (608)755-1524

FREE Cyber Security Book

I've just finished my latest book, based on our recent Cyber Security Seminar.

During that seminar, we discussed the very real cyber attacks, identity theft, and hacking attacks that threaten small businesses.

Everyone who attended that live seminar received a complimentary copy of *Essential Cyber Security for Your Small Business*.

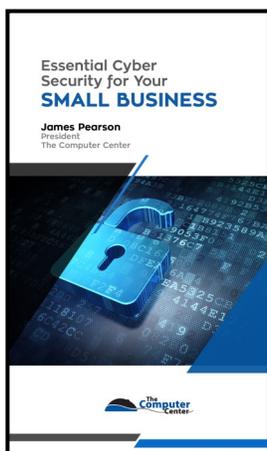
In it I review practical, and even free, things that you can (and must do) in order to protect your business.

I have a handful of these books left.. If you're interested, stop by

www.computer-center.com/essentialsecuritybook

Or call

608-755-1524 to request a copy.



Increase Capacity: Expanding Your Skill And Confidence

You and I know what is probable, but we seldom understand what is possible.

Andrew Shapiro is an example of someone who blew past "probable" and set a new standard for "possible." Inspired by his father's triumphant battle with cancer, Shapiro committed himself to setting a Guinness World Record for pull-ups. He practiced incessantly, building his endurance by doing 10 pull-ups a minute for six hours while watching movies to pass the time. He pressed on despite sore muscles and blistered hands. Then, at a Relay for Life event in Virginia, he achieved his goal, performing 7,306 pull-ups in 24 hours. Andrew not only set a new record that day, but also raised \$4,000 for the American Cancer Society.

In my new book, *The Potential Principle*, I offer four powerful tools for creating breakout improvement, personally and professionally. The fourth tool is this:

Increase your capacity in order to grow your confidence and move closer to realizing your true potential.

Success breeds confidence, and confidence breeds success. It's a virtuous cycle that begins when you commit yourself to spending the time and effort it takes to raise your level of skill.



The Potential Principle includes many tips about how to start this process and keep it going. A great way to begin is to take inventory of the abilities you have right now. You get better by both *exploiting* what you already know and the skills you've developed, and by *exploring* new skills and knowledge.

As you consider adding new skills, make sure you know which ones, if developed, will enhance your existing skills toward the performance you desire. Study the most important skills in your priority areas. Ask yourself, "What one thing, if I started doing it and kept doing it, would give me the biggest return on my investment of time and energy?"

Improvement is hard work, but it pays off. To better your best, dedicate yourself to doing what it takes to increase your capacity. It will give you the confidence you need to achieve your goals and become the person you were meant to be.



Mark Sanborn, CSP, CPAE, is the president of Sanborn & Associates, Inc., an "idea studio" that seeks to motivate and develop leaders in and outside of business. He's the bestselling author of books like *Fred Factor* and *The Potential Principle* and a noted expert on leadership, team building, customer service and company change. He holds the Certified Speaking Professional designation from the National Speakers Association and is a member of the Speaker Hall of Fame. Check out any of his excellent books, his video series, "Team Building: How to Motivate and Manage People," or his website, marksanborn.com, to learn more.

Follow These Basics To Help Protect Your Company From Cybercrime

Modern businesses spend a lot of time and resources protecting themselves from the latest scams and cybercrimes, but it's important not to lose sight of the basics. The same goes for your team. Everyone in the company should be well-versed in essential security principles. Security protocols should be thoroughly documented and included in every new employee's training. Strict policies for violating these items should also be detailed.

Your security plan should mandate strong passwords, requiring users to only ever connect to the network via VPN, with guidelines for regular password changes. A little prevention goes a long way – remembering the security basics and doing some

research are the best ways to protect yourself and your company.

Do These Things to Keep Your Best Employees From Leaving

According to the Gallup's 2017 "State of the American Workplace" report, 51% of currently employed adults in the U.S. are on the hunt for a new job, using company time to search far and wide for a better opportunity. How can you prevent this trend from forcing your best people out of your company?

First, you should give the best people in your organization abundant opportunities to move around and apply their strengths where they're best suited. This means new job roles in addition to lateral growth. Every step of the way, you should be having conversations about their personal and professional development, convincing them to grow with you, instead of outgrowing you.

One great way to "re-recruit" your employees is to conduct regular "stay interview" questions. What do they

like about their job? What don't they like? What are they passionate about doing?

But none of this will matter if you don't recognize your top performers. Learn how your team likes to be recognized and cater to their needs. Everybody wants to feel appreciated. *Inc.com Jan. 22, 2018*

6 Ways To Work Smarter, Not Harder, And Be MUCH More Effective At Work

1. Avoid out-of-control to-do lists. When you're trying to accomplish something, whittle it down to the most essential components and throw away the rest. This way, you won't get overwhelmed.

2. Measure your results, not your time. Instead of getting bogged down with how long something is taking, track how much you're accomplishing. This will increase efficiency and reduce stress.

3. Try to keep a positive outlook. If you're helping wherever you can, pick up the slack of sick team members and never say the work is "good enough." You'll start seeing results immediately.

4. Communicate effectively. Collaborating with others is essential, regardless of the work you're doing, so strengthen these skills the same as you would with anything else.

5. Create (and stick to) a routine. The more you can build good habits, the faster you can get down and focus.

6. Stop multitasking. The data shows that people are much worse at tracking multiple tasks at once than they think. Cut out the clutter and zero in on what's important in each moment. *Inc.com Dec. 29, 2017*

