



The Bensinger Beacon

MONTHLY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY NEWSLETTER



4 Things You Should Absolutely Demand From Your IT Services Firm

How much do you rely on your IT services provider? It's startling to think that a lot of small businesses outsource their IT (which is a good thing), only to get little to nothing out of that relationship.

Why is that?

Well, some businesses just aren't proactive. They only rely on their IT services company when something goes horribly wrong. If there's a network failure or their website gets hacked, they'll make the call to their IT people, but that's the extent of the relationship.

On the other side of the same coin, there are a lot of IT companies that wait around for that phone call. They don't work with their clients as

closely as they should. Both of these reasons are downright irresponsible.

First and foremost, business owners should work closely with their IT pros. They should have the staff and resources to not only address your IT emergencies but also to keep your business safe and secure to minimize those emergencies. Here are four things you should ask of your IT services provider.

"Keep my business safe!"

Your IT company should make sure your network security, firewalls, malware protection, etc., are installed, operating and up-to-date. They should be working with you to do everything to keep your business's data secure and make sure it can be restored in the rare event that data loss does occur.

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Ed Bensinger, CEO of Bensinger Consulting.



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!"

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Keeping your customer data secure should be a top priority. Don't take unnecessary risks, because when you do, the consequences can be devastating.

"Help me keep costs down!" You outsourced your IT to save money. Hiring an internal IT person or staff is a massive expense (plus, many small businesses simply don't have the revenue to sustain IT personnel). However, your IT company should be working to maintain your network and associated hardware and software. They are there to help you avoid costly disasters like data loss or network downtime. If you do a lot of e-commerce, your IT company can be an invaluable asset. You literally pay them to save money.

"Help me stay proactive!" An experienced IT company can often spot an issue before it becomes an issue. They keep your network updated and maintained, and they can help you avoid unnecessary downtime. Working closely with your IT company means you aren't skimping on security, and this alone puts you ahead of so many other businesses that do. And make sure you have an open line of communication between your business and your IT team, even if that means scheduling regular calls. You should regularly talk about security and know about the issues that may impact your business, whether it's an

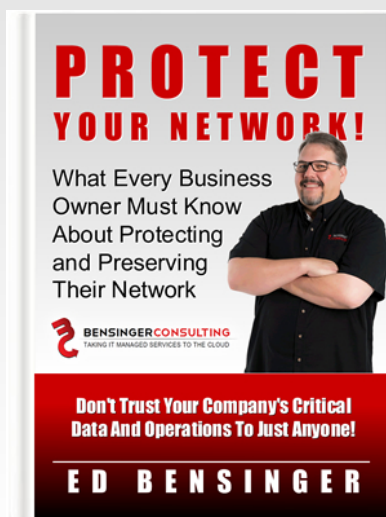


equipment concern or a hacker threat. On top of that, tell your customers you care about the security of your business and their data. They will appreciate it – seriously!

"Keep my network up-to-date!" This covers a lot of ground. Your outsourced IT should be keeping your security updated, from your firewall to your malware protection, but they should also be keeping your network tech updated too. Hackers look for weaknesses in network tech every day – weak spots that allow them to capture data from your network. Sometimes they exploit the firmware, and sometimes it's the hardware. Regardless, you should always rest assured that your IT company is doing everything they can within the budget you set to keep your network as updated as possible.

If your IT company isn't doing any of these things, you need to get on the phone with them NOW! Don't put your business at risk because you only make the call after the worst-case scenario has occurred. Waiting until something breaks is a dangerous – and costly – way to do business. It's time to be proactive and get the most out of the relationship you have with your IT company.

"Waiting until something breaks is a dangerous – and costly – way to do business."



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

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

Download your FREE copy today at bensingerconsulting.com/protect/ or call our office at (602) 362-0202.



1. MAKE YOURSELF INTO A PRODUCT.

Position yourself as the authority in your niche. Develop products like videos or books that share your secrets of success. The beauty of a book is that, once the hard work is over – it's written, edited and published – you simply collect proceeds while you move on to your next project.

2. DO FEWER THINGS.

It's impossible to automate aspects of your business if you do everything personally. Train staff to handle certain aspects of your business and simplify your output. Identify strengths and streamline your offerings, focusing on the items that you can train your staff to replicate.

3. CREATE CONTINUITY.

Billing for each service or product you supply is volatile. Your revenue and your client's expenses vary wildly. By selling a subscription at a flat rate, you create reliable income and provide clients with predictable expenses. Both parties are invested in maximum efficiency – maximizing quality and minimizing hassle.

4. SELL YOUR SYSTEM CHEAP AND MAKE MONEY ON THE REFILLS.

We're talking here primarily about businesses that produce tangible goods. The best two examples of this model are printers and Keurig coffee makers. The devices themselves are relatively cheap. The profit is in cartridges of ink or individual coffee refills. If your machine makes a great cup of coffee or great quality copies, once consumers own the device, you're guaranteed continued business.

5. BECOME THE MIDDLEMAN.

Find a way to broker business and let other folks do the work for you. Becoming an Amazon affiliate is a great example. You link to their site, they sell, and you make money. There's also a fortune to be made in consolidating and coordinating the transportation of goods.

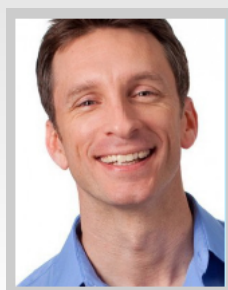
6. BECOME A TEACHER.

Find ways to teach other entrepreneurs how to acquire the skills necessary for opening their own business modeled on yours. Say you own a successful pizza shop. You could write a book or create a series of instructional videos on your family's recipes, or you could market a consumable version of your plan for opening a profitable pizza shop. You can even generate greater consumer awareness for your business.

7. BECOME AN INVESTOR.

Money makes money, but it's important that you're careful about how you invest as an entrepreneur. Here's my tip: look at your clients and assess their needs. Find a company that addresses those needs and invest there. Not only will you be forging a bond between your company and others that focuses on enhancing client relationships, but you also cement your position in your customers' minds as the business that caters to their desires.

Once you've done the groundwork, you're the good guy who makes money without effort.



MIKE MICHALOWICZ (pronounced mi-KAL-o-wits) started his first business at the age of 24, moving his young family to the only safe place he could afford – a retirement building. With no experience, no contacts and no savings, he systematically bootstrapped a multi million-dollar business. Then he did it again. And again. Now he is doing it for other entrepreneurs. Mike is the CEO of Provendus Group. He is also a former small-business columnist for The Wall Street Journal; MSNBC's business makeover expert; a keynote speaker on entrepreneurship; and the author of the cult classic book *The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur*. His newest book, *The Pumpkin Plan*, has already been called "the next E-Myth!" For more information, visit www.mikemichalowicz.com.

Don't Make This \$10,000-An-Hour Mistake

If your network fails or you experience a power outage, your business will come to a screeching halt. You're not making sales or communicating with clients. You're basically inaccessible until everything comes back online.



Over 50% of businesses take more than one hour to get back up after a crash or power outage.

And who knows how long the outage may last. Each hour down is an estimated loss of \$10,000.

While power outages are a major contributor to downtime and lost money, other causes include failing or aging technology and buggy applications.

You don't want to put yourself in a position where downtime becomes an expensive risk.

What can you do? Get a monitoring service! Monitoring services can keep tabs on your infrastructure and report their status 24/7.

You'll know what's working and what's not, and you'll be able to respond to issues faster. That equals less downtime and less money lost.

Small Business Trends, 8/1/2019

6 Things Successful People Do Right Before Going To Bed

Read – Many of the world's most successful people are big readers. They take time every night to read, which sharpens creative and critical thinking skills.

Avoid Technology – They shut off electronic devices and let the brain relax. Blue light from our devices, including TVs and smart phones, makes it hard for our brain to prepare for sleep and can be very disruptive.

Walk – A few minutes of walking just before bed helps to reduce stress and anxiety. Walking is another great way to decompress after a long day.

Make Lists – We all have things we need to do tomorrow. Writing these tasks down gives our brains one less thing to think about, which equals better sleep.

Meditate – Ten minutes of meditation can do the mind and body good. Apps like Calm can help you focus and achieve inner peace before bed.

Reflect – Specifically, reflect on what went well. Going to bed with positive thoughts is a great way to elevate your mood and stay motivated. Keep a gratitude journal and write down what went well that day before going to bed. *Business Insider, 8/12/2019*

