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Cybercriminals Are Taking Aim At Your Business ... Is Your Network Protected?

Cyber criminals love to test your defenses. They love to see how far they can get into the networks of businesses all over the globe. Cyber criminals really love going after small businesses because they can all too often sneak onto a network, copy data and move on.

Through the use of ransomware, they can hold your data hostage and refuse to cooperate until you pay them some amount of dollars – and if you don't pay up, they threaten to delete all your data.

But protecting yourself is not as hard as you might think. While cyber criminals and hackers are an everyday threat to businesses, you can take steps to significantly reduce that threat and take that target off your back.

The first thing you need to do is understand why cybercriminals target small businesses and what makes your particular business vulnerable. There are many things small businesses do and don't do that open them to attack and data theft. These may include not having enough (or any) security in place or not training employees on security protocols.

Realistically speaking, the biggest threat to your business does, in fact, come from your own employees. This doesn't mean they are intentionally harming your business or leaving your network exposed to outside threats. It means they don't have the proper training and knowledge to protect your business from a cyber threat.

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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For instance, your team needs to be trained to use strong passwords, and those passwords must be changed periodically (every three months is a good rule of thumb). A lot of people push back on strong, complicated passwords or use the same password for everything, but this is just asking for trouble and should not be allowed at your company.

Once strong passwords are in place, enable two-factor authentication (2FA) on everything you possibly can, from network access to every account you and your employees use. This is an additional layer of security on top of standard password protection. This feature is generally tied to a mobile number or secondary e-mail, or it may be in the form of a PIN. For example, when 2FA is enabled, after you've put in your password, you will be prompted for your PIN for the associated account.

Another thing you must do to get that target off your back is to get anti-malware software installed. Every workstation or device should have some form of this protection. Not sure what to use? This is when working with a dedicated IT company can come in handy. They can help you get the right software that will meet your specific needs without slowing you down.

“You can take steps to significantly reduce that threat and take that target off your back.”



They will install software that is compatible with your PCs and other networked equipment. Plus, they will make sure anti-malware software is working and is regularly updated.

On top of this, you want to have an active firewall in place. Every business should have its network protected by a firewall; like anti-malware software, firewall security comes with a number of different settings, and you can customize it to fit the needs of your network. Firewalls help keep attackers and malicious software off your network. When paired with a good anti-malware software, your layers of security are multiplied. The more layers, the better protected you are.

Finally, with all of this in place, your employees need to know what it all means. Keep your team up-to-date on your business's security protocols. This includes items like your password policy, malware protection policy and proper e-mail and web-surfing etiquette. The bad guys are never going to stop attacking, but you have the power to protect your business from those attacks.



Free Report: The 7 Most Critical IT Security Protections Every Business Must Have In Place Now To Protect Themselves From Cybercrime, Data Breaches And Hacker Attacks

Eighty-two thousand NEW malware threats are being released every day, and businesses (and their bank accounts) are the #1 target. To make matters worse, a data breach exposing client or patient information can quickly escalate into serious damage to reputation, fines, civil lawsuits and costly litigation. If you want to have any hope of avoiding a cyber attack, you MUST read this report and act on the information we're providing.

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

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What A Football Coach Can Teach You About Getting Better



Woody Hayes spent 28 seasons as the head football coach at Ohio State University, and then he was fired after a now-infamous incident in the 1978 Gator Bowl.

With time running down in the fourth quarter and the Buckeyes already in a position to try a game-winning field goal, Hayes called a pass play. A Clemson player intercepted the pass and was knocked out of bounds along the Ohio State sideline, securing the victory for the Tigers.

Frustrated by the play and the opponent's celebration among his troops, Hayes lost his temper and hit the Clemson player.

For most Ohio State fans, however, that's not the legacy of Woody Hayes. Some, naturally, see his legacy in his coaching record – 238 wins, 72 losses, 10 ties, 13 Big Ten titles, and three National Championships. That proved more than enough to land Hayes in college football's Hall of Fame. The OSU Woody Hayes Athletic Center is also named in his honor.

Others, however, see his legacy in a chair – the Wayne Woodrow Hayes Chair in National Security Studies.

In keeping with his wishes, donations made in his honor following his death in 1987 were directed toward academics, which led to the creation of the chair.

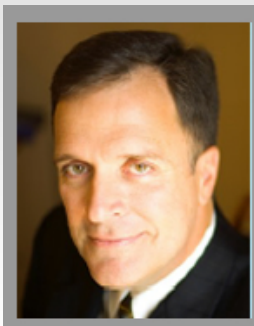
Hayes, who once grilled Richard Nixon about foreign policy, always took academics as seriously as he did football.

I remember Hayes for all of those things, but I remember him most for something he said during a pep rally when I was a student on the Columbus campus: "You're either getting better or you're getting worse," he told the crowd. "Status quo is a myth."

I used to think that was coach talk, but time and experience taught me the truth in what he meant. In a competitive world, if you stay the same, you get passed by.

It highlights the incredible importance of the "innovation imperative": keep making your value better, because your competition keeps getting better.

Regardless of how good you've become, you can't afford to stay the same because status quo is a myth.



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 best-selling 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.

4 Ways Technology Can Improve Your Business

It boosts productivity.

Technology like task management software can change how you work through a day. Everything is listed out, and you can check it off as you go.

You can even make dependent tasks so tasks are automatically created for anyone who may be next in line to work on a project.

It's crucial to marketing.

You need online and social media marketing. This is where people are.

Understanding how social media marketing works can increase the number of people who know about your company, which increases your customer base.

It's essential for security.

Technology and security go hand in hand. As your business relies more on technology, you need to rely more on security to protect your networked equipment, like all of your employees' PCs and your many servers.

You can't communicate without it.

With things like e-mails, VoIP phone services, and direct messaging through social media sites, technology has made communication easier than ever.

When you know how to use all these forms of communication, it puts you above the competition.

Pixel Productions Inc., 7/20/2019

10 Easy Ways To Defeat Stress At Work

1. Take a walk. A 15-minute walk will refresh your mind.

2. Work outside. Weather permitting, working in the sun can boost your mood.

3. Meditate. Use a meditation app like Calm or Headspace to lower blood pressure and de-stress.

4. Take deep breaths.

5. Make a checklist. Write it out and focus on one task at a time.

6. Talk to a friend. Have a conversation about a problem. Talking it out can change your perspective.

7. Watch an informative video. It can be on anything. Videos are a great distraction for 5-10 minutes.

8. Listen to soothing music.

9. Take a 20-minute nap. Nothing does wonders for stress like a power nap — just be sure to set a timer!

10. Trust your instincts. If you feel you need a break, take it. Don't push yourself if it isn't necessary. Small Business Trends, 7/19/2019

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"I miss the old days when we could just tout things."

Ed Bensinger