VIRTUAL BUSINESS SOLUTIONS, INC

TECHMinutes

May 2022

Your Small Business Technology Information Source!

This Issue:

Cybersecurity Training Tips from the Pros

5 Tips that Can Help You Be More Productive

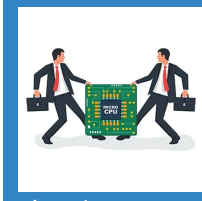
What's Going on With the Microprocessor Shortages?

Avoid these 3 Things When Making Technology Decisions

Getting the Right Communications Tools Can Really Help a Business

Four Problems that Can Undermine an IT Project

What's Going on With the Microprocessor Shortages?



There is a microprocessor shortage influencing all kinds of businesses around the globe, and it's only going to get worse following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Ukraine produces somewhere between 45 and 54 percent of the world's semiconductor-grade neon, something which is absolutely crucial to the creation of microchips. The invasion has...

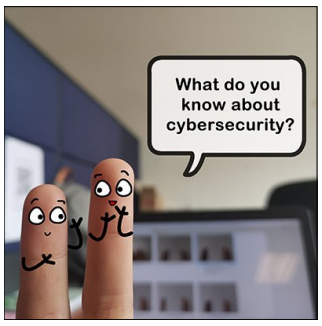
Read the Rest Online!
http://bitly.ws/qfkq

About Virtual Business Solutions

We're in this business to help other small businesses grow and move forward. It's as simple as that. We're driven by the philosophy that if we help local businesses solve their IT issues so they can become more profitable and successful, then we will inherently grow along with them.

Visit us **online** at:
newsletter.vbs-no.com

Cybersecurity Training Tips from the Pros



For every level of business, cybersecurity is a big deal. For the enterprise, they deal with a lot of would-be attacks and need their staff to know how to respond if they are targeted. For the midsize business, the convergence of underwhelming IT support and a growing workforce can be the perfect storm. For the small business, a significant cyberattack could be the beginning of the end for their business. This is why, no matter what size your business is, you need to have a cybersecurity strategy in place that includes tools, monitoring, and protocol. This month, we have put together a list of considerations your business should note to keep your network and data safe.

Create Strong Policies and Force Staff to Follow Them

In order to keep your business' information systems secure, you need your staff to understand that they are a big part of the cybersecurity process and that the protocols you put in place have to be followed to ensure that these systems stay secure. You need to make them understand that they are the weak link in this paradigm and for that reason they need to not only take their security training seriously, but to always follow protocol. All it takes is one slip up and it could mean dire consequences for the business.

All your security policies need to be written out and viewable by every member of your organization. It's actually a good idea to have a system in place that verifies that your employees have read and understood them. Additionally, there should be some time set aside

(Continued on page 3)

5 Tips that Can Help You Be More Productive

In most workspaces and offices, "productivity" is always present on the list of goals. Why settle for one task completed in a set time, when multiple tasks can be completed in the same amount of time without sacrificing the quality of the result? This goal is popular enough for many experts and consultants to have weighed in on. We've decided to give you a basic overview of some such strategies so you may consider them.

Two-Hour Solution

The idea being the "two-hour solution" is to take two hours to plan out a schedule to follow each week, based on how your plans and goals culminated the week before. Investing this time should allow you to make the most of your available time to accomplish what you want to accomplish.

The reason that this is different from simply going over your calendar each week is the fact that, if guided by the Two-Hour Solution, you're figuring out how the time you're spending contributes to your goals. "Green time" is time that helps you generate financial capital, while your "red time" is the time that you spend preparing for green time, without generating any profit. To account for the wrench in the works that would ordinarily throw off your schedule, you also include "flex time" to

(Continued on page 2)

Avoid these 3 Things When Making Technology Decisions

Your business' technology is a great tool, or at least it can be. Like any other part of business, getting value out of your business' technology is essential. In order for you to see the kind of value from your tech that you'd expect, you first need to approach it by making good decisions. This month, we wanted to go over a few ways that you could fall into a trap with your IT.

By Having Blinders On

The boss is the boss, and if you are the boss, all the big decisions will fall on your shoulders. Having said that, IT decisions should not be the purview of the CEO, President, or other authority alone. Big IT implementations or newly introduced technology should not be incorporated into a business based on the desire of just those in leadership positions. There should be a certain pragmatism behind any deployment, and should always be motivated by progress.

If you're looking for some insight, you should turn to your employees. They are the ones with hands-on experience with your technology and use it to drive revenue. Ignoring employee input on production issues can have dire consequences; that includes technology decisions that have an effect on how your business operates.

Continually Postponing Reviews

Nothing lasts forever, including the technology that your business relies on, the protections that keep your data safe, or the relationships you maintain with your employees and customers. As a result, it is recommended that each of these undergo regular reviews to ensure that all is as it should be.

Doing so will help you to maintain your business' functionality by preventing downtime and defending your data, while encouraging operations by helping you keep track of your most promising customers. Therefore, it should be clear that these reviews should be prioritized so that your business isn't inadvertently hobbling itself.

Failure to Innovate

It is important that a business doesn't simply wait for its current technology to become outdated before a plan is made to update or replace it. Acknowledging that technology will eventually need to be cycled out and scheduling regular maintenance until that point will allow a business to be better prepared for such a time. On a related note, business leadership should always be keeping an eye on trends in IT, seeking out the input to guide them to the best possible option moving forward.

Virtual Business Solutions can help you address all of these concerns, and more. Give us a call at (504) 840-9800 ext. 105 to find out what we can do for you.

Virtual Business Solutions can help you address all of these concerns, and more. Give us a call at (504) 840-9800 ext. 105 to find out what we can do for you.

Share This Article!
https://bit.ly/38PHx6r

5 Tips that Can Help You Be More Productive

(Continued from page 1)

provide a buffer. What's left is your "re-creation" time, where you recover from your productive endeavors by doing the things you want to do.

Prioritize Big Tasks

Consider your big priorities, your more flexible responsibilities, and your rote tasks in the workplace as large rocks, smaller stones, and sand, respectively. Your time is a bucket, ready to be filled with these items as you see fit.

Let's say you decide to start with the "sand," before trying to cram in the "rocks" and "stones." Chances are pretty good that you won't be able to accomplish very much at all, at least nothing of any circumstance.

However, if you prioritize the more impactful rocks, then the stones, and fill in the rest of the space with your sand, your bucket—or workday—is then used as productively as possible, and anything you didn't get to complete isn't of consequence.

Two-Minute Rule

While there are countless variables that can potentially influence the amount of time a task will take to complete, you eventually get a feeling for the typical duration, right? So, some tasks can predictably take a significant amount of time, while others take almost no time at all to make it through. The idea of the Two-Minute Rule takes advantage of that difference. Simply put, if a task will take two minutes or less, just get it over with.

The philosophy behind the Two-Minute Rule is to build up your motivation to tackle the larger responsibilities by successfully completing smaller tasks. Think about it—every task, regardless of how large it is, can be broken into smaller, more manageable chunks, chunks that can take mere minutes to complete. Once you've completed enough of these two-minute tasks, it only makes sense to see the...

Read the Rest Online!
https://bit.ly/3KHFnDT

Cybersecurity Training Tips from the Pros

(Continued from page 1)
to reinforce their understanding of these procedures and policies. The more everyone is on the same page, the better.

Comprehensive Training

Most of the time, the organizations that deal with substantial data loss incidents and malware-related problems are filled with employees who haven't had a lick of actual training on what to look for, how to proceed when some type of scam or hack is discovered, and how to operate in an environment where, frankly, there are so many people trying to get over on them.

Your training platform should include everything they need to know to avoid putting your organization at risk. This includes, but is not limited to:

- How to spot a phishing attack
- How to create and store secure passwords
- What multi-factor authentication is and why it's important
- Why using unauthorized software can be detrimental
- Why Internet use on company networks has to have limits (Social media policy)
- Why their personal mobile devices need to be registered to use company Wi-Fi
- What malware, including ransomware, is and how they hurt organizations like yours
- How to properly share and store company files

There are several line-items that aren't posted here that can help you build a more comprehensive training platform. Give us a call at (504) 840-9800 ext. 105 and we can help you establish a thorough list of considerations.

Gamify or Die

You may think it is difficult to get your staff to follow procedure based on the amount of times they ignore it on a day-to-day basis. It is undeniable that this is the most difficult part of the process. No matter how important you make cybersecurity seem, there are just some people that won't take it seriously, and this is a big problem for your business (and for their personal relationship with technology). Since you didn't hire that person to work cybersecurity, you need a way to sufficiently test them.

One way, that has shown proven results, is to gamify the whole experience. This not only covers the core concepts that can work to keep your business' IT secure, it also engages your staff to a point that they may not shrug off the whole thing and end up costing themselves a job and others their livelihood. It's proven that the PowerPoint-centric security training is antiquated and simply alienates an audience that has to be engaged with this material, so using gamification to engage your staff for this purpose seems completely legitimate. After all, people having fun learning new material may keep the fun going and do the things they need to do to keep your IT secure.

If you would like to talk to one of our security professionals about cybersecurity training, give Virtual Business Solutions a call today and we can help you put together a training platform that is sure to help minimize or eliminate data loss and network breach incidents.

Share this Article!
https://bit.ly/365skNC

Getting the Right Communications Tools Can Really Help a Business

Business success relies in large part on communication. Any product or a service is entirely useless if there is no way to share or request information. Whether the communication is internal or external, the method upon which your business relies should be simple yet effective. This month, we will analyze the different methods of communication your business can use.

Why Do You Need a Strong Communication Strategy?

Ineffective communications can and will corrupt a business. Organizational goals, coming to agreements, selling your services, meeting effectively, all rely on effective communication. It is critical that your business is able to provide interpersonal or intrapersonal communication methods.

What's more, you stand to gain financially with improved communications. Your business' operating income can be boosted by an estimated 19.2 percent over just a year with iron-clad communication. This figure disregards the estimated 32.7 percent decrease in growth that low engagement has been correlated to.

Let us go ahead and look at the two different types of engagement your business should focus on: internal, and external.

Internal Communications

Your employees deserve an effective communication strategy. Internal communications enable your team to work as a team. Whether an employee needs to check the status of a project, reach a different department or a supervisor, any in-house communication is referred to as internal.

External Communication

All other communication is external. This would be anyone who is not a part of your team, like clients or vendors. Whomever it is, it typically will pertain to at least one of four goals...

Read the Rest Online!
https://bit.ly/3jxTbVJ

Four Problems that Can Undermine an IT Project

It might be an understatement to suggest that things don't always go smoothly in business. The truth is that when one problem is solved, another is often created. This is why we lean on our technology. These "solutions" are intended to fix many of the speedbumps, but that doesn't mean that choosing, deploying, and supporting these systems don't come with some problems as well. Today, we look at three reasons an IT project could fail.

Failure to Align to Business Needs

Incorporating technology to make things more efficient is typically the goal, but in many instances, management and technology deployment aren't working in concert. This can lead to IT projects that fail because of friction that is caused when there isn't any unity in the direction things are going. In order for IT projects to work as designed, there needs to be some cohesion between planning and practice.

A good strategy to avoid situations like this is to set ground rules about when a major IT project can start. Not only should any project have full clearance from decision-makers, but it should also include regular status updates to keep everyone abreast of any changes or delays that may happen. Typically, new IT deployment will result in some downtime, so having the blessing of everyone that could be affected is a good plan.

Runaway Costs

Not every project is going to run smoothly. One could say that most projects deal with some inefficiencies and even redundancies that increase costs. Most major IT projects require substantial investment and if there is a lack of commitment it can cause projects to fall flat. Of course, many IT investments are earmarked when a budget is set and therefore can be subject to alteration due to other financial factors affecting the business.

To avoid having the IT project tablecloth ripped out from under your china, you should be pragmatic about your IT investments. This means once you've decided to invest in something, complete it since most IT investments will end up providing quicker returns. Go full steam ahead or don't go at all.

Communication Issues

When we cite "communication problems," we aren't talking about problems with your data plans or email server, we are talking about keeping lines of communication open between all the people that have a stake in the project being a success. That means everyone: production workers, administrators, and everyone in between. Obviously, most projects are handled by the project manager and it is...

Read the Rest Online!
https://bit.ly/3M3Azcc

Virtual Business Solutions has been serving the Metairie area since 1999, providing IT Support such as technical helpdesk support, computer support and consulting to small and medium-sized businesses. It's always been our goal to provide enterprise-level IT practices and solutions to the small business sector, with small business prices. Our experience has allowed us to build and develop the infrastructure needed to keep our prices affordable and our clients up and running.

Tech Trivia

Social media accounts for 33% of the total time spent online.

Virtual Business Solutions

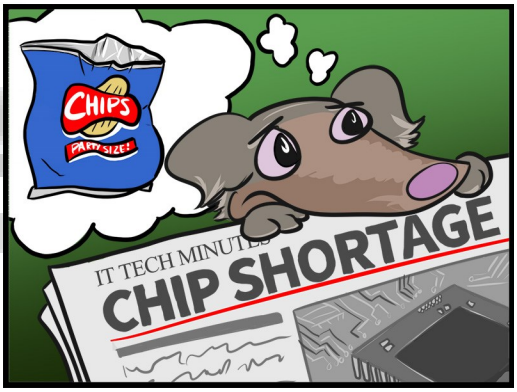
808 North Causeway
Metairie, Louisiana 70001

Voice: (504) 840-9800 ext. 105

newsletter@vbs-no.com

facebook.vbs-no.com

linkedin.vbs-no.com

blog.vbs-no.com

Visit us **online** at:
newsletter.vbs-no.com