

THE PROBLEM SOLVER

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

What's New

Webinar:

**How Virtual Meetings are Changing:
A look at how Microsoft Teams is Evolving into the Future**



Wednesday, December 16 at 11AM

[Microsoft Teams](#) has become one of the most valuable tools you can use to maintain a cohesive and productive working environment. Discover the new features of this valuable tool and how Teams can help your organization stay productive and collaborate in the coming year.

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Karyn Schell, President at DP

Our Mission: To build a community of successful-minded entrepreneurs that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and expands the capacity of all members to achieve great things.



4 Critical Cyber Security Protections EVERY Business Must Have In Place NOW To Avoid Being Hacked

Did you know the average website is attacked 94 times every day? As cybercriminals become better equipped with more advanced technology, that number will increase. Small-business websites (and small businesses, in general) are the most at risk for attack. Small businesses are tempting targets because SMB websites are often a direct link to that SMB's network, where all kinds of goodies are stored, including sensitive business and customer data.

This is data cybercriminals want.

Cybercriminals and hackers can be aggressive when it comes to attempting to access your network and data. They use malware, ransomware, phishing scams, bot attacks and even direct attacks to get to your data. If you don't have protections in place against these kinds of incursions, you are putting your business in harm's way.

There are many "barriers" you can put between your business and the bad guys, but there are four things you can do (and should do) right now to put yourself ahead of the curve. These will protect your business and protect your data.

1. **Create A Culture Of Awareness.** Education is a powerful tool, and that is 100% true when it comes to cyber security. There are several steps you can take to create a culture of awareness. This includes employee cyber security training, along with ongoing education that keeps everyone in your organization informed about the latest threats and the latest ways to combat those threats.

Training helps your team identify threats and recognize when someone is trying to break into your network (such as through a phishing scam). Because

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cyber threats are constantly evolving, ongoing education will keep these threats top of mind, so as the threats change, your team is right there on the frontlines ready to take on whatever may be around the corner.

2. Monitor Threats 24/7. This is where partnering with an experienced IT services firm really comes in handy. Coming back to point #1, an IT services company can help you create that culture of awareness, but more than that, they can keep two eyes on your network 24/7. This way, if something or someone attempts to force their way into your network, they can stop it before it becomes a problem.

Even better, threat monitoring helps protect your team from more common types of attacks, such as malware or ransomware attacks. Should an employee accidentally click a harmful link or download a malicious program, it can be isolated before it takes hold and spreads.

3. Make Sure Protections Are Up-To-Date. Practically every piece of hardware and software you use needs to be updated at some point. When you don't update, you put yourself at serious risk. Hackers are constantly looking for vulnerabilities in the apps and devices you use. CRM software is a good example. This software connects your business with customers, and it can be used to store all kinds of information,

“You should have an IT handbook – a plan that spells out every detail of your IT protocol and cyber security strategies.”

from very basic contact information to very sensitive customer-specific data.

Should a vulnerability be found, hackers won't waste any time attempting to exploit it. In response, the makers of that CRM software should send out a security patch. If you do not make the update (or have the update automatically installed), your risk increases significantly.

Again, working with an IT services firm or a managed services provider can help you address this minor – but very important – step. They can ensure everything under your roof is up-to-date and that you have all the latest protections.

4. Have A Plan. Every single person on your team should be on the same page. They should all change their passwords every 60–90 days. They should all be required to use secure passwords. They should know how to identify potential phishing scams. They should know who to call if the network or their devices go down for any reason. You should know exactly what to do if your on-site data becomes compromised in any way, whether it's due to malware, a natural disaster (flooding, fire, etc.) or hardware failure.

In short, you should have an IT handbook – a plan that spells out every detail of your IT protocol and cyber security strategies. This goes hand in hand with the three points we've already discussed: awareness, threat monitoring and keeping hardware and software updated. When you have a plan, you know exactly what to do when threats come your way. You're ready and aware.

Cyber threats are always going to be out there. There isn't anything you can do about that. But there are things you can do for yourself and your business to prepare for those threats. Put these four points into action, work with an IT services provider and give yourself the advantage over

What Could 5G Change About the Way We Use Technology?



The rise of 5G networks create the potential for new ways of working as well as benefits to the daily lives of many people that they probably haven't considered yet. We often think about devices bringing us faster and more powerful technology, but the rise of 5G really represents a new option of services that could be available to us regardless of our devices.

Read on to look at a few ways that 5G networks will change the way we work and live with technology over the next several years.

Read the Article here:

<https://www.dpsolutions.com/blog/5g>

Tech Tip

“What is a Deepfake?”

What should you do about them?”

The spreading of misinformation, manipulation of images, and con men have existed well before the advent of the Internet. These types of tricks and lies have evolved with our society in the digital age. One of the best examples of this kind of misinformation in 2020 are Deepfakes.

A Deepfake is a piece of media that are digitally manipulated to deceive the viewer. Not all Deepfakes are bad, [some can be funny](#). However, many of the same tools used to create a funny meme can be used convey deceptive political messages or even scam you into falling for fake offers.

There is no easy fix for dealing with this kind of deception, but you should be aware of them. If you see something provocative, before assuming it's real, do your homework. See if you can find trusted sources that can confirm the information before acting in a way you might regret later.

For more security tips, visit: dpsolutions.com/security-tips-subscribe

5 Secrets To Mold Your Strategic Planning Process for the Best ROI

A company's strategic plan is only as effective as the process that goes into creating it. If the approach is too rigid, hierarchical or only serves as an empty exercise, it's unlikely the business will in any way benefit from the process.

If on the other hand, a company approaches [the strategic planning process](#) as a way to explore the opportunities (and challenges) facing it and its industry in the years to come, the results can be genuinely beneficial to everyone involved – from senior management to employees and provide a strong map to driving revenue and profits.

Let's look at 5 suggestions on how best to mold the strategic planning process to get the best ROI from time and resources and drive execution.

1. Make a top-level commitment to the process.

The most effective way to guarantee a favorable experience is by signaling the CEO or business owner's full commitment to the process. Find an opportunity for the business leader to describe the value of strategic planning to everyone within the organization and to talk about how each employee contributes to its eventual success. This sends the message that planning is key to the company's future growth.

2. Review and refine your personal vision statement.

Strategic planning represents a prime opportunity to review and change your personal vision statement. As we've noted elsewhere, "In a privately-owned business, the strategic plan for a company is not based solely on the assumption that the company's goals and vision are to maximize profit. The strategic plan for your company must begin with your personal goals and vision." As times and circumstances change, your vision might change as well.

3. Put together a great team.

The more diverse your planning team is,

the more diverse perspectives the process will generate. Ideally, says strategist Michael Girdler, "the team should include representation from anyone that can impact the plan or be impacted by the plan: in short all employees." Enlist the efforts of "various departments of your organization – marketing, sales, and operations [and] evaluate the inclusion of vendors" as well.

4. Find a comfortable off-site venue. Regardless of the savings, you might find in staying onsite, generally speaking, strategic planning sessions are more effective when set away from the workplace. It's not just getting away everyday office distractions; a fresh, different location helps participants stay focused on the purpose behind your efforts – thinking in an intensive manner about where the business is going and how you plan to get there.

5. "Test-drive" challenging scenarios. As part of the process of planning in a Pandemic, roll out at least three scenarios (those likely to happen and those less likely to occur), based on how your business will probably fare in the coming year as the vaccines rollout. Are you prepared for a sudden acceleration in sales? What if, conversely, you lose a major customer or two? Devise contingency plans so you're better prepared for the unexpected.

5. With a draft plan in place, invite feedback.

To truly succeed, your strategic plan must be embraced by the entire organization. Remember, your front-line staff – as well as those in other departments – often have valuable insights into product quality, customer service, etc.

By gathering employee input, the final document will be richer and more effective in the long run.

"Consistent communication can "keep everyone on the same page," notes strategist Cara Ong, "and prevent conflicts from occurring before the official strategic

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and operational plan cascades down from senior management.”

Want to learn more about strategic planning?

Check out a demo of TAB's Business Builder's Blueprint Strategic Planning Tool info@tab-bwi.com or denise@tab-bwi.com.



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and make sure to let the recipient know if any action is needed on their part.

Establish Addressing Rules. It's annoying to be copied on an endless series of e-mail replies. Establish team rules about who needs to pay attention to which e-mails by properly utilizing the "To" and "CC" fields.

Use Caution When BCC-ing. Blind copying people on e-mails comes across as sneaky. Refrain from it as much as possible. Only use it for bulk e-mails or when you want to politely drop someone from a chain they no longer need.

Don't Draw Things Out. If you can't resolve something in three e-mails or less, it's time to pick up the phone. Sometimes e-mail just doesn't work.

■ **Top Ways To Identify New Revenue Streams**

There's more than one way to successfully generate revenue, and now is the time to get started exploring options.

Evaluate The Market And Cut Costs. Recognizing how customer needs are shifting is especially useful during economic distress. Cutting costs is equally important because choosing which revenue stream to monetize should intersect with the services you provide.

Stay True To Yourself As Much As Possible. Don't stray too far from your core business – focus on what you do well and how you add value to your customers' lives. There's such a thing as overdiversifying.

Invest In Digital Updates And A Diverse Team. Technology can help companies shift models to meet customer needs and generate revenue. Coupling that with a diverse workforce full of different perspectives can lead to winning ideas. *Business Insider, 09/24/2020*

Rejuvenate Your E-mails, Sales And Revenue Streams

■ **4 Strategies To Improve E-mail Productivity**

As work situations have gone remote, e-mail has become even more vital for communication. So make sure your e-mail habits are good.

Rethink Your Subject Line. Tell the recipient as much as possible in as few words as manageable

