TECHNOLOGY TIMES

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

What's New

Scary and crazy times now. I hope that this ends quickly and I hope and pray that the loss of life is as low as possible.

JBTech is considered an essential company so it's as close to business as usual, more like unusual, for us here. We are setting up many clients for work from home and we are putting some clients in the cloud so that they can access their files from anywhere at anytime.

We still answer our phones live and we are here to help you. Please call us for anything, large or small, we will help you.

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This monthly publication is provided courtesy of John Kistler, Business Owner of JBTech, a St. Louis based IT company for over almost 27 years.

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.

Your #1 Threat Of Being Hacked Is INSIDE Your Own Organization

Small businesses are the biggest targets of hackers and cybercriminals. They are targeted because they are less likely to have strong – or any – security in place. But in so many cases, hackers don't need to use malicious code or cracking skills to get what they want. Instead, they rely on your biggest vulnerability: your own employees.

The #1 threat to any business's IT security is its employees. It all stems from a lack of training. Employees don't know how to spot threats, or they don't know not to click unverified links in their e-mails. Most of the time, these actions are simple mistakes – but mistakes aren't excuses and can result in MAJOR costs to your business.

Here are three things you can do to turn your employees from your biggest IT threat to your biggest IT asset:

Establish Regular Cyber Security Training.

First and foremost, get *everyone* in your business trained up on IT security. Wesley Simpson, the chief operating officer of (ISC)[2], an international cyber security certification group, suggests thinking about IT education as "people patching." Just as you continually update and patch your software and security, ongoing education serves to update, or patch, your employees. He says, "If you don't get your people patched continually, you're always going to have vulnerabilities."

But don't put the training solely on your shoulders. Work closely with a company that specializes in IT security. Doing it yourself can be stressful and time-consuming. An experienced IT firm is going to come in with all the education and resources you need to successfully train everyone in your organization on cyberthreats targeting your business today.

Keep Cyber Security Top Of Mind.

While you may have training or educational sessions once a quarter or biannually (regular sessions are recommended), you still need to keep IT security in the minds of your employees on a weekly basis. During weekly meetings, for example, talk about a cyber security topic. Or, if you share news or links with your employees in a weekly, company-wide e-mail, for example, include a cyber security story or tips article. It's all about utilizing systems you already have in place to keep your team informed and this important topic at the forefront.

Emphasize Safe Internet Usage Habits.

This should supplement regular training. Employees should always know the best practices when it comes to using the Internet, e-mail or anything else that

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brings them in contact with the World Wide Web. Part of it involves keeping the lines of communication open. If an employee sees something out of the ordinary come into their inbox, encourage them to bring it to the team's attention – whether they're telling their direct supervisor, manager or you. The easier the communication between everyone on your team, the easier it is to identify and stop attacks.

The goal is to eliminate guesswork. If an employee isn't sure about an e-mail, they should be trained to ask questions and verify. On top of that, you should have a policy in place that prevents employees from installing unverified software, which includes apps and app extensions (such as browser extensions), without permission. And one more thing – stress safe Internet usage habits not just in the workplace but at home as well. This is especially critical if your employees are bringing in their own devices. If that's the case, you should absolutely have a "bring your own device" (BYOD) security policy in place. It's just another wall between your business and potential threats.

How do you get all this started? Good question! It all starts with reaching out. If you're ready to lock down your business and you're serious about educating your employees and turning them into your best defense, we can help. The best IT security you've ever had is one phone call away.

Please **check on your neighbors**, especially the elderly. Sometimes they don't have anyone else around.

These are some pretty weird and freaky times, please make sure that you are taking precautions.

*Wash your hand frequently   *Wear gloves when opening mail and boxes

*Remember to leave your shoes outside *Keep your distance from people, 6 feet.

*Use gloves or wipes for doors, shopping carts, and other public items you touch.

*Stay in touch with others, this pandemic is unprecedented in our times.

*Try to tune everything out for an hour or so, take a nap, go for a walk, sit outside.

*Avoid unnecessary travel and use gloves when pumping gas and dispose of them.
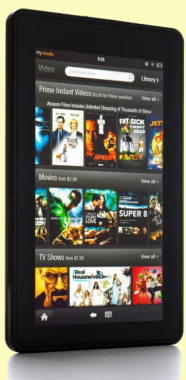
Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

NexOptic DoubleTake Binoculars

Binocular technology has remained the same for a long time – and for good reason! It works well. But now, one company has decided to bring binocular optics into the 21st century and give it a technological makeover.

NexOptic's DoubleTake blends binoculars with common smartphone technology. With 10x digital zoom and a wide field lens, DoubleTake delivers outstanding 4K video and high-resolution photos. Plus, it's packed with a powerful imaging processor to ensure your videos and photos look fantastic every time, and its compact size makes it ideal for travel.

DoubleTake's battery provides three hours of continuous use, meaning it will last most people several days or more before the next charge. Images are saved to an onboard memory card and can be sent over WiFi to your phone or other device for easy sharing or personal use. Learn more at NexOptic.com/doubletake.

Anticipating Your Customer Needs

What is the best way to create a loyal customer base and, therefore, a more profitable business?

Anticipate Customer Needs.

Anticipating needs is the best way to let your customers know that their success is your priority. When you deliver something customers need without asking, you create a sense of ease and let them know you have their best interests in mind – a proverbial "I have your back."

The most effective way to anticipate the needs of your customers is to know them well. How else will you know what their expectations are? You have to create a relationship with them to identify what their demands are and fulfill them before they even know what they wanted. So, how do we go about this? Here are just a few examples.

Establish A Relationship.

In most of my books, I have a call to action. I ask readers to e-mail me to make their commitment to improving their businesses. Developing this dialogue with readers is an act of accountability on both of our parts. Moreover, it is a big leap of faith for some, and I am honored they trust me. They tell me why they are committed, and I let them know I am here and interested in helping them succeed. My hope is that they feel less alone in their struggles as business owners and more motivated to make the necessary changes they need for a successful business.

Exceed Expectations.

The responses from readers when they receive e-mails or videos from me has been overwhelmingly positive. It seems that most assume their e-mails will go into a black hole, never to be answered. Not only do I answer, but I also include a ton of resources that basically equal free coaching. There is an FAQ, links to my *Entrepreneurship Elevated* podcast, links to find a Profit First Professional and become a Profit First Professional, links to Clockwork resources, links to Pumpkin Plan resources … You get my drift. And while it could be interpreted as marketing, anyone who knows me knows I am out to empower others and help their businesses become more profitable. I often get e-mails from readers who are pleasantly surprised – they are getting answers to questions before they even knew they had them. See? Anticipating needs!

Ask For Feedback.

I often request reviews of my books. Is this because I want to hear how great they are? No. I ask for reviews because I want that honest feedback. How the heck else will I know what to write next? How will I know what problems need solving and what business solutions entrepreneurs are seeking if I don't ask? Getting reviews enables me to focus on these key areas where business owners are trying to improve.
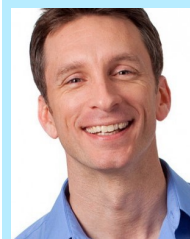
MIKE MICHALOWICZ (pronounced mi-KAL-o-wits) started his first business at the age of 24, moving his young family to the only safe place he could afford – a retirement building. With no experience, no contacts and no savings, he systematically bootstrapped a multimillion-dollar business. Then he did it 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 MikeMichalowicz.com.

Best Practices - Work from Home

1. Make sure that you change your password on your home router from the default one
2. Make sure that you have the ability to work in a secure area in your home with no interruptions
3. Make sure that you take the time for breaks, working from home can get lonely and stressful
4. Make sure that you use a VPN to connect to your office or use TeamViewer with a strong pw
5. Get a comfortable chair and a headset, normally homes aren't designed for 8 hours of work

■ Ready To Transform Your Business With Technology? Follow These 5 Truths...

Investing In Tech Is A Must. Investing in your own IT infrastructure is critical, but you get what you pay for. Go cheap, and you'll expect to buy again. Go quality, and you'll be more pleased with the results.

It's Not Easy. Shifting a business mindset from analog to digital is hard, especially if you've been doing things one way for a long time. When you prepare yourself and your team for a challenge, you'll be able to better meet that challenge.

It's Fast-Paced. Tech moves fast. You see buzzwords everywhere – "5G" or "blockchain" – and it can be confusing. You may feel pressure to keep up, but don't jump in without a plan. Do research and make changes that truly apply to your business.

Cyber Security Is Essential. Stay up to date on security trends and solutions. Remember that cybercriminals target small business, but when you stay ahead of the curve on IT security, you stay ahead of the bad guys.

Leadership Is As Important As Ever. Technology is only as good as the people who use it. As you learn about new tech or invest in it for your business, make sure your team is learning too. Understand how your customers use technology and be willing to learn and adapt to them. *Inc., July. 30, 2019.*

■ Do These 4 Things To Improve Your Business

Read. There are always new things to learn or perspectives to gain. The top entrepreneurs in the world read every single day. Read books, blogs, articles, anything – but always be reading.

Listen To Podcasts. Podcasts are more popular than ever, and there is a podcast for just about every topic. This is a great way to hear from industry leaders on issues that are affecting them and may be affecting you.

Continue Your Education. How can you improve yourself? Take a class or a seminar! Keep your skills and knowledge base sharp by incorporating continuing education into your year.

Be Open-Minded. Be willing to give and receive feedback and critique on how you work, manage or anything else you want to improve on. The more open-minded you are, the more comfortable your team will be in giving you feedback – and the better you will be at applying it. *Small Business Trends, Dec. 30, 2019.*

We are here to help! Please call us!

Even in times like these we are getting more referrals than ever. Three new clients this week said that wanted "someone they could trust". We are so honored that you trust us and we work hard to earn and keep that trust. We also try very hard to let you know that we are here to help, in good times and especially now in the scary times that we are all going through.

We are open from 8am to 6pm every weekday and 10am to 5pm on Sat. We ask that you please clean your computer before you bring it in. We ask that you put in on our disinfecting desk so that we can wipe it down before we start to work on it. The engineers wash their hands often. We will wipe it down again before you pick it up. We have clients pulling up to the door and we are unloading and loading while they wait in the comfort of their car. You can wear a mask or gloves at our office, we ask that you only stay for a short time to minimize your contact with us and others. We ask that we help one of you at a time and to please keep 6ft to 10ft from others while you are here. Together we will keep you up and running.