

modern business **IT.advisor**

“Insider Tips To Make Your Small Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably”

What's New: Ransomware Protection

Our clients keep asking us: Is my current antivirus and firewall enough to protect me against ransomware? Can I train my staff on how to protect sensitive data and not mistakenly reveal personal data due to email scams, phishing, phone scams, public wireless and more?

Now you can with Secure360. Secure360 is our advanced security solution at a small business budget for small businesses.

Contact us for more information.

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Could You Afford This \$2.6 Million Mistake?



Kayvan Yazdi,
*President of
TruAdvantage*

Our Mission:

To become a trusted advisor and strategic partner to the Bay Area's SMBs and help them solve their daily issues, optimize efficiency and security and grow a competitive advantage with IT.

Two thousand and eighteen is the year of ransomware. According to the 2018 Verizon Data Breach Investigations Report, while malware and hacking breaches have been on a slight decline for the last year, the use of ransomware has skyrocketed. Criminals attracted to ease of use, minimal risk, and high hit rate associated with ransomware have flocked to the strategy in droves, costing small businesses across America millions of dollars in the process. About \$301 million to be exact, as stated in Datto's 2017 State of the Channel Ransomware Report.

But, of course, businesses aren't the only organizations that have been hit by the ransomware epidemic. Just ask the city of Atlanta, whose systems were frozen by ransomware in late March of this year, locked behind a \$50,000 Bitcoin deposit. One interesting component of the case is that, regardless of whether or not the city was actually prepared to pay the ransom, it seems they didn't even have the opportunity. Hackers took down the payment portal not long after the breach, leaving Atlanta officials swinging in the wind. As officials scrambled

Continued on page 2

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to restore basic functions of city programs, it only took two weeks to amass a staggering \$2.6 million bill — a figure that officials expect to climb another \$9.5 million over the coming year.

Even if you're not one of the 10 biggest cities in the United States, cybercriminals cast a wide net — most of the time, it's more profitable to target dozens of virtually unprotected, smaller organizations than to draw the ire of big fish like the US government. If you were a small-time criminal, would you rather break into 10 high-end, unlocked homes abandoned by vacationing tenants, or pull a single, endlessly complicated Ocean's Eleven-style heist?

“The vast majority of ransomware attacks happen through phishing e-mails, which means employees are usually the ones to open the gates.”

Attackers generally follow the path of least resistance. Your business is just that.

So, what do you do in response? Toughen up your barriers, tighten up your processes and enlist your entire staff in the battle against ransomware.

Ransomware attackers don't steal your data, they just lock you out of it. So the best way to make your organization totally ransomware-proof is to make sure a ransomware breach won't actually affect your day-to-day operations. That means regular backups, and lots of them, scattered throughout your primary network in places that won't be compromised by the spreading malware. When ransomware hits, all you need to do is hunt down the source, delete it, and roll the entire system back.

The vast majority of ransomware attacks happen through phishing e-mails, which means employees are usually the ones to open the gates that let the malware in. Luckily, it's easy to train your team to stay vigilant for



the signs of digital scams and put procedures in place that will prevent them from ever clicking that shady link.

Of course, the best way to keep ransomware at bay is by putting a skilled team on the case. Unlike an isolated IT employee, a managed services provider has the combined know-how, time, and resources to proactively manage your network security, implementing systems that will make it all but impossible for ransomware to penetrate your data. To truly seal up all the holes in your digital security, it takes a complex, comprehensive strategy. Bring in the experts and ensure your business doesn't become another statistic in the age of digital crime.

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

PROTECT YOUR NETWORK

“What Every Business Owner Must Know About Protecting and Preserving Their Network”

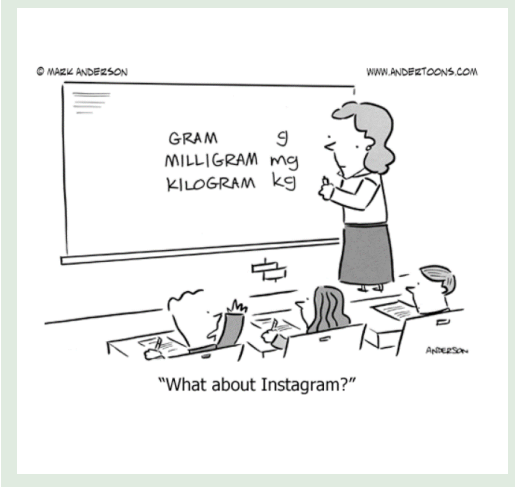


Don't Trust Your Company's Critical Data And Operations To Just Anyone!

This report will outline in plain, nontechnical English the common mistakes that many small-business owners make with their computer networks which 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.

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Cartoon Of The Month



... continued from page 4

3. Add more benefits. Health insurance is a massive factor when employees consider how long to stay at an organization. Dental and vision insurance, as well as a retirement plan, are excellent motivators as well.
4. Be more accommodating. In today's job market, you need to throw employees a bone. Let them leave early for doctors' appointments, work from home when necessary, or even arrange their own schedules if possible.
5. Add more perks. Even something as simple as bringing in a massage therapist to the office once a week can do wonders for morale.
6. Reduce stress. Don't overload your employees and push them to the breaking point. Be reasonable with your demands, and hire an additional team member when necessary. *SmallBizTrends.com*, 6/24/2018

4 Lessons From The Coach's Playbook

For the business leaders we coach in my organization, it is often easier for them to see where others need to improve and course-correct than it is for them to see which changes they need to make themselves. But it's important that we, as coaches, leaders and entrepreneurs, put as much pressure on ourselves to move forward in our own lives and businesses as we do on others. Here are four ways I've learned to cut through the egos and expectations and help business leaders and their teams achieve their personal bests.

1 LISTEN. THAT'S ALL.

It sounds so simple, but it can be very difficult for people who are used to running the show to begin by listening. In any group of strong personalities, you're going to get a lot of brutal honesty disguised as constructive criticism. But that's okay. As a leader, the best thing you can do is listen and not respond until the other person is finished. Avoid "getting in there" and problem-solving right away. Instead, hear what the other person has to say and consider it carefully before you respond.

way?" Find all the things that are not working or could go wrong, and shine a light on them. Then, fix what's broken. Once you get a new plan to a place that feels right, solidify it and put in the work to make it happen.

2 REALIZE — AND ADMIT! — THAT YOU'RE NOT PERFECT.

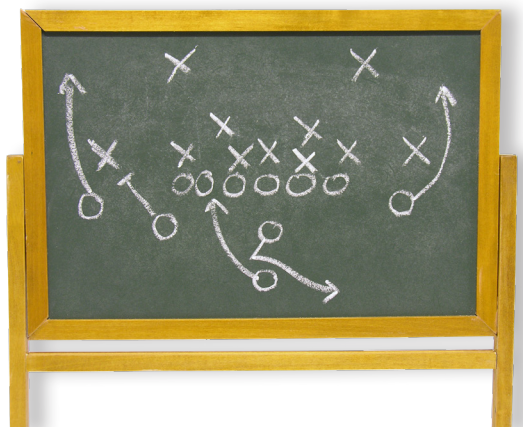
You've been running a business for years. You know where you're going and how to get there. But no matter who you are, you've still got a lot to learn. We all do. The minute you think you know it all is the moment it's time to get back to basics. Invite other voices and opinions to weigh in. Troubleshoot areas where you might need help. Get vulnerable.

4 BE A LIFELONG LEARNER.

A superior track coach will always be looking for the best shoes for their team to wear and the most efficient ways to train. Any football coach worth their salt will spend hours watching game videos and developing new plays to help their team win. As a business leader, it's your duty to do the same for your team members. Adopt a student mindset. Read voraciously. And keep your mind open to whatever may come.

3 TEAR IT DOWN AND BUILD IT BACK UP.

Step back, look at what you've done in the past and ask, "Is this really the best



Andy Bailey is the founder, CEO and lead business coach at Petra, an organization dedicated to helping business owners across the world achieve levels of success they never thought possible. With personal experience founding an Inc. 500 multimillion-dollar company that he then sold and exited, Bailey founded Petra to pass on the principles and practices he learned along the way. As his clients can attest, he can cut through organizational BS faster than a hot knife through butter.

Our Solutions to Optimize Your Office

IT Managed Services 

Managed Security 

Backup & Business Continuity 

Managed Cloud 

VOIP Phones 

IT Strategy & vCIO 

Inside This Issue

Could You Afford This \$2.6 Million Mistake? | 1

What Every Small-Business Owner Must Know About Protecting And Preserving Their Company's Critical Data And Company Systems | 2

4 Lessons From The Coach's Playbook | 3

4 Questions Every Leader Should Be Able To Answer – Can You?

Too many entrepreneurs rush into their leadership roles with nothing more than a vague idea of what they want to accomplish. Though they have the best of intentions, their lack of clarity inevitably spreads to the team, leading to confusion, crisis and a diminished bottom line. To address this common tendency, former Army officer Ed Ruggero helps CEOs and their teams create “leadership philosophies” that nail down their values and keep them on track. Though these documents are usually pretty small – around 750 words – they’re an incredibly powerful tool for leaders of all types.

Start out by outlining your beliefs about leadership, drilling down to the



principles that form the bedrock of your philosophy. Then, establish what you want your employees to expect of you – what will you do for them and the organization? After that, build out the expectations you have for your employees. Finally, lay out your pet peeves, the things that you believe hamper teams and damage company culture. *Inc.com, 4/12/2018*

THE ON-SCREEN KEYBOARD: USE IT!

One of the most notorious spyware/malware targets in your keyboard. Keylogger software has been around for ages, a longtime favorite of electronic crooks. The keylogger does exactly what you’d expect – it logs every key that you type, and then sends that information back to the attacker. How many passwords, account numbers, and other sensitive data do you type on a daily basis?

These are all valuable on the black market.

To protect yourself from these keystroke thieves, use an on-screen keyboard when typing in sensitive passwords, social security numbers or other sensitive data. Your computer will see the on-screen keyboard taps as mouse clicks instead of keyboard input, rendering a malicious keylogger useless.

6 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR TOP EMPLOYEES FROM JUMPING SHIP

1. Give them a raise. It’s a no-brainer.
2. Offer other financial incentives. Give top performers bonuses based on meeting certain goals, or give departmental bonuses to show you value your team. Profit-sharing is another option; if the company does well, your employees will benefit financially.

Continued on page 3