

TECHNOLOGY TIMES

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



The End Of Windows 7 is OFFICIAL

Did you know that Windows 7 is nine years old? Yes, and the END of Life is now official since January 14th, 2020. A large number of business computers are still under Windows 7. Review this FAQ to understand what the risk is for your business:

Question #1- What does the “End of Life” of Windows 7 mean?

Answer- The EOL of Windows 7 means that you are no longer receiving security updates and support from Microsoft for your operating system.

Question #2- What could happen to my business if I continue using Windows 7?

Answer- If you continue using Windows 7, your computer will still work. However, it will become more vulnerable to security risks and viruses because you will no longer receive software updates and security updates from Microsoft.

Question #3- How can I upgrade my computer to Windows 10?

Answer- Not all computers can be upgraded to Windows 10. It depends on the year and model. If your business has more than ten machines under Windows 7, give us a call, (713)467-9390 or email us at atiwa@atiwa.com. We will help YOU.

February 2020



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Wayne Springer, President of Atiwa Computing, Inc. Office-technology experts.

Our Vision: We provide peace-of-mind, fast-response, security, and productivity for our clients. Our experience and reliability allows you to run your operations more smoothly, efficiently, and profitably.



If You Think Your Business Is Too Small To Be Hacked ... You're A Cybercriminal's #1 Target

Many cybercriminals look at small businesses like blank checks. More often than not, small businesses just don't put money into their cyber security, and hackers and cybercriminals love those odds. They can target small businesses at random, and they are all but guaranteed to find a business that has no IT security – or the business does have some security but it isn't set up correctly.

At the same time, cybercriminals send e-mails to businesses (and all the employees) with links to phishing websites (websites designed to look like familiar and legitimate websites) or links to malware. They hope employees will click on the links and give the criminals the information they want. All it takes is ONE employee to make the click.

Or, if the business doesn't have any

security in place, a cybercriminal may be able to steal all the data they want. If you have computers connected to the Internet and those computers house sensitive business or customer data – and you have NO security – cybercriminals have tools to access these computers and walk away with sensitive data.

It gets worse! There are cybercriminals who have the capability to lock you out of your computer system and hold your data hostage. They may send along a link to ransomware, and if you or an employee clicks the link or downloads a file, your business could be in big trouble. The criminal may request a sum of money in exchange for restoring your PCs or data.

However, as some businesses have

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learned, it's not always that simple. There are businesses that have paid the ransom only for the cybercriminal to delete all of their data anyway. The criminal walks away with the money and the business is left to die.

And that's not an understatement! Once cybercriminals have your data and money, or both, they don't care what happens to you. Cybercriminals can do more than just major damage to small businesses; their actions can literally destroy a business! We're talking about the costs of repairing the damage and the cost of losing customers who no longer want to do business with you. You're looking at a public relations nightmare!

This goes to show just how critical good IT security really is, but business owners still don't take it seriously. Even as we enter 2020, there are business owners who don't consider cyber security a high priority – or a priority at all. It's a mindset that comes from before the age of the Internet, when businesses didn't face these kinds of threats. And many business owners fall into the habit of complacency. In other words, "It hasn't happened yet, so it probably isn't going to happen." Or "My business isn't worth attacking."

Cybercriminals don't think like this. It's a numbers game and only a matter of time. Business owners need to adapt to today's online landscape where just about everything is

connected to the Internet. And if something is connected to the Internet, there is always going to be some level of vulnerability.

But you can control your level of vulnerability! You can be cheap or complacent and do the bare minimum, which will put your business and customers at risk. Or you can take it seriously and put IT security measures in place – firewalls, malware protection, secure modems and routers, cyber security insurance and working with a dedicated IT security company. There are so many options available to secure your business.

The reality is that cyber security should be a normal, everyday part of any business. And anyone thinking about starting a business should be having the cyber security talk right from the very beginning: "What are we going to do to protect our business and our customers from outside cyberthreats?"

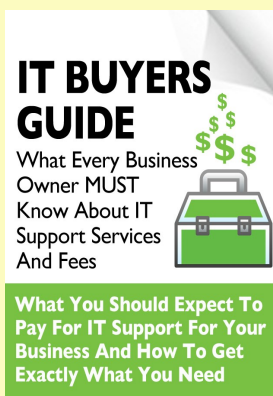
When it comes down to it, not only do you need good cyber security, but you also need a good cyber security policy to go along with it. It's something you share with your team, customers, vendors, investors and anyone else who puts their trust in your business. Transparency about your cyber security is a great way to build and maintain trust with these people. If you don't have IT security in place, why should anyone trust you?

Think about that question and think about the security you have in place right now. How can you make it better? If you need to reach out to an IT security firm, do it! It will only make your business better and prepare you for the threats that are looming right now. No business is too small or too obscure to be hacked.

"The reality is that cyber security should be a normal, everyday part of any business."

Free Report Download:

The Business Owner's Guide To IT Support Services And Fees



You'll learn:

- The three most common ways IT companies charge for their services and the pros and cons of each approach.
- A common billing model that puts ALL THE RISK on you, the customer, when buying IT services; you'll learn what it is and why you need to avoid agreeing to it.
- Exclusions, hidden fees and other "gotcha" clauses IT companies put in their contracts that you DON'T want to agree to.
- How to make sure you know exactly what you're getting to avoid disappointment, frustration and added costs later on that you didn't anticipate.

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Shiny New App Of The Month:

honey

Automatic Coupons, Promo Codes, And Deals.

The Honey app is a Google Chrome extension or add-on that automatically searches for coupons on most of your favorite shopping sites. You install the extension, shop as usual. When ready, you just need to click on the Honey button extension during checkout, and Honey will automatically apply coupon codes to your shopping cart.

Important: This extension Does NOT collect emails, credit card numbers, billing addresses, or any other billing information.

More than 30,000 stores are merchant participants. Sites like Amazon, eBay, Expedia, Sephora, Best Buy, and Macy's are there.

The best version of Honey is in a PC as an extension. The apps for Apple or Android are still working on its performance.

Honey's "motto" is: *We believe everyone should have the information they need to make the best decisions with their money.*

6 Time Management Tips For The Busy Entrepreneur

Face it, there will never be enough hours in the day to accomplish everything you need to do. But if you methodically review how you spend your days and instill focus and discipline while completing daily priorities, you will soon find more time to work on the long-term success of your business. Here are six ways to do it.

1. CONDUCT A TIME AUDIT.

Sit down and review three months of activity. The data from the analysis will show where you spent your time (which projects, tasks and priorities demanded your attention) and with whom you collaborated to get the work done. The audit will also shed light on areas where you were distracted, where you were the most productive and which tasks/projects took more (or less) time than anticipated.

2. ELIMINATE TIME DRAINS.

These are the kinds of things that sneak up on you and steal time and can be better put to use growing your business. Look for these time drains: not delegating tasks, not managing meetings efficiently (Tip: always have an agenda!) and spending too much time writing/responding to e-mails. If you've done your job as a leader, members of your team can handle a majority of meetings and e-mails. You hired great people. Now let them do their jobs.

3. TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR CALENDAR.

Remember: you drive your schedule; don't let others drive it. Block time throughout your day and guard against changing your schedule to work on tasks that are not important or urgent. The way you allocate your time has a direct correlation to your effectiveness as a leader and, ultimately, the performance of your business. Prudent calendar management will also send a strong signal to your team that you take this seriously.



4. PLAN YOUR DAY.

When you know your priorities for the day, you will be better prepared to reset your work schedule if the unexpected comes your way. Once your schedule is set, block off chunks of time to work on your priorities. I recommend 90-minute blocks so you can concentrate on big-picture items or work on a group of related tasks. Stay disciplined and don't allow yourself to go over that allotted time.

5. LIMIT INTERRUPTIONS.

Now comes the hard part. Once you start working on each priority, you need to remain focused. Close the door and don't answer the phone unless it's a critical issue. Avoid checking e-mail. Don't let distractions slow you down.

6. HOLD YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE.

Share your tasks, priorities and deadlines with a colleague. Meet with that person at least monthly to review how well you managed your time. The probability of success increases when you have someone watching your progress and coaching you across the finish line.

Cartoon of The Month



"I'm just sayin' a little conflict resolution trainin' might not be unwarranted."



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.

7 Things To Do So You DON'T Get Hacked When Shopping Online

1. Verify the URL is safe. Many browsers have a little padlock in the URL bar. If the padlock is closed, the URL is safe. If it's open, you may want to avoid the site.

2. Verify the URL is accurate. Many scammers register fake websites using misspelled URLs or extra numbers to look like the real deal. If the URL looks odd, it's probably a scam.

3. Use a secure web browser. Firefox and Chrome, for example, always navigate to HTTPS



(Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure) websites. These websites are more secure than their HTTP counterparts.

4. Don't click suspicious links or attachments. Never click a link if you can't verify it first. In fact, it's better to delete any e-mail you don't recognize.

5. Always bookmark authentic websites. When you bookmark real websites, you never have to worry about mistyping or clicking scam links.

6. Rely on a password manager. It's hard to remember strong passwords, but with a password manager, you don't have to. Never use a bad password again!

7. Use the official mobile apps for online stores. If you download the official app of your favorite online stores, such as Amazon or eBay, you don't have to worry about accidentally

navigating to a scam website. Just make sure the app is verified by Google or Apple. *Lifehacker*, Nov. 19, 2019.

Top Tips For Scaling Security For Your Small Business

Put a greater emphasis on passwords. As businesses grow and adopt more technologies, such as cloud-based apps and mobile apps, they also have to deal with more passwords. The more passwords employees have to remember, the less likely they are to have strong passwords and the more likely they are to use the same password for everything. Another problem is password sharing. A team of people may share a single license for a piece of software, which means they share a single password. Password managers like LastPass can save a lot of hassle while still protecting your accounts, and many password managers are scalable.

Rely on multi-factor authentication (MFA). MFA adds another layer of security on top of firewalls and malware protection. It's like adding an extra password on top of your existing password, though only you can enter it. However, some employees skip MFA because it adds extra steps to the login process. But an extra 15 seconds to log in is worth it for the security. There are many MFA options available for different-sized businesses. Make it a part of your cyber security policy. If you need assistance with MFA or any other topic, give us a call: **(713)467-9390**.

Small Business Trends, Nov. 1, 2019.

Customer Spotlight: RentLife®

RentLife is a full property management company with over 22-years of experience. RentLife serves the Greater Houston and surrounding areas providing solutions to single-family homeowners like property marketing, tenant screening, rent collections, maintenance, property assessments, and financial reporting. What is unique about RentLife is that they are all about educating their clients on the current real estate market and provides them REAL LIFE solutions. The owner Mark Kallus has one goal in his business and that is to have a well-informed client who has had a successful and exceptional real estate experience! Our team here at Atiwa Computing pride ourselves in being able to work with companies like RentLife to get the most out of their technology infrastructure at the same time as we help to secure them. "Atiwa has given me peace of mind. I know that my system is protected, and anytime I have a problem, I can simply pick up the phone or send an email to the customer service department, and they get right on the problem." If you are a real estate investor with one or multiple properties, partner with a team that Prioritizes YOU, YOUR investment, and YOUR time. For a limited time only, they are offering a 10% Discount on Property Management fees for an entire year when using the Promo Code: Jax. You can contact them directly by email: mark@rentlifepm.com, or simply call their office at 832-562-3600. Website: www.rentlifepm.com



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