The Tech chronicle

December 2018

merry CHRISTMAS

and a Happy New Year!
-The GRS Team

2 Places You Should Never Cut Corners With IT

Today's technology empowers business owners in ways that would have seemed incredible even 10 years ago. With a humming network connecting your team to the rest of the world, and with just a few simple keystrokes, your organization can complete tasks that used to take days.

However, the endless possibility that accompanies technological advancement comes with a catch: to be truly effective, IT requires investment – not just of capital, but of time and attention, resources all too dear to the harried entrepreneurs of the modern age. Perhaps this is why, everywhere you look, small to midsize business owners are

not only failing to realize the full potential of their technology, but are unknowingly leaving massive gaps in their systems and processes for malicious entities to exploit. And so, budding companies that would otherwise dominate the market are prematurely stamped out by competitors with more tech savvy or are hamstrung by costly data breaches.

Even in the midst of this trend, we understand how easy it is to ignore your company's glaring technological gaps. You imagine that you don't have the time or money to address the issue, or that you'll do it down the road once your business is better established. But no matter how big or

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small your business may be, there are a couple foundational tech concerns that you should *never* cut corners on.

1 SECURITY

Pretty much every successful company today is intimately intertwined with the technology on which it depends. So it makes sense that your primary worry should be protecting what's yours from those who want to snatch it. Think of it this way: would you hire a $5 locksmith to secure your office? Of course not. Then why do so many business owners put their livelihood behind a flimsy, $5 firewall – or, even worse, a free antivirus? In 2018, it is more likely that your business will fall victim to a cyber-attack than it is that thieves will arrive at your office in the dead of night, according to a 2017 report from Kroll.

In 2015, SEC Commissioner Luis A. Aguilar wrote, "Cyber security is clearly a concern that the entire business community shares, but it represents an especially pernicious threat to smaller businesses. The reason is simple: small and midsize businesses are not just targets of cybercrime; they are the principal targets." With this in mind, cyber security should always be one of your top priorities.

> **"... you're inviting a crisis into the equation that could easily have been avoided with a keen, proactive eye."**

2 TECH SUPPORT THAT GOES BEYOND THE "BREAK-FIX" APPROACH

It's difficult to overestimate the money, time and stress it can cost you when your technology breaks down. Between server downtime, haywire software, connectivity issues and myriad other potential problems, when your stuff breaks, it can cause more than a massive headache – it can put you out of business.

Most business owners realize this, but many still opt for the classic "break-fix" strategy.

Unfortunately, "If it ain't broke…" is a dangerous maxim by which to steer a ship. If you wait to address a problem until after it becomes an issue, you're inviting a crisis into the equation that could easily have been avoided with a keen, proactive eye. And when your server fails, or your network experiences hiccups, or some other unforeseen issue rears its ugly head, an unfamiliar break-fix technician will take longer to fix the issue than an expert who's been working with your specific network from start to finish and already knows it inside out. It's just not worth it.

In addition, proactively managed service providers will consistently make recommendations to keep your company competitive. Whether it be a small upgrade to software here, a patch there or an overhaul of your server system, these moves can be invaluable in the breakneck marketplace. And, of course, since they're keeping tabs on your tech at all times, any potential problems get addressed long before they hit your bottom line.

By leveraging technology, you and your business can do amazing things. Partner with a team of IT professionals who are actively invested in your success and confidently push your company into 2019.

What's New!

Are your employees giving hackers easy access to your network?

GRS Technology Solutions is hosting a webinar called "Top Employee Errors That Can Cause a Data Breach"

RSVP AT:

www.grstechnologysolutions.com/webinar

Cartoon of The Month

"We haven't yet found what's causing the ringing in your ears, but we were able to set them to vibrate."

4 Resolutions To Carry You Into 2019

As we hurtle into the New Year, business owners are scrambling to set up resolutions that will carry them into the future. It can be difficult to determine the best goals to set, but there are a few tried-and-tested resolutions that *every* entrepreneur should put into place.

First and foremost, you should learn to cut down on feast-or-famine cash flow. And we can bet that your business could benefit from improving your online presence. The same goes for boosting your social-media strategy.

But you can't just focus on the company – the most powerful changes start from within. Start paying attention to factors that allow you to produce your best work. Determine what helps you focus, and cultivate it relentlessly.

TheBalanceSMB.com, 8/13/2018

4 Ways Smart People Blow The Close

The weirdest thing happens when it's time to close a deal: smart people turn to mush!

I've seen it happen a hundred times. Even my own teammates, many of whom have PhDs and MBAs from some of the top universities in the world, aren't immune to this issue. When they're doing *the work, my colleagues are confident, caring and even daring. But when* selling *the work, they often struggle. I see the same four fatal patterns with salespeople of all stripes.*

1 THEY HIT MUTE.

Recently, I was with a colleague in the boardroom of a billionaire CEO of the No. 1 company in his industry. This prospect actually said out loud that his No. 1 leadership problem is exactly what our firm is good at – hiring and leading talented teams across his portfolio of business. After he had outlined all the ways he wanted our help, the close should have been easy. But instead of sealing the deal, my colleague froze up and went silent. For an awkward 20 seconds, we sat there in silence. Eventually, we reached a happy conclusion, but in many cases, you won't be so lucky. Clients want help wrapping up a conversation and setting an action plan. Don't go quiet!

2 THEY AVOID "IMPOSING."

After a long meeting, in which my colleague helped a high-powered CEO identify many of the key problems hindering his company, I watched in shock as he ended the meeting with no follow-up plan whatsoever. When I asked him why, he told me, "I didn't want to impose! I just felt like we were having such a good, trusted advising conversation, I didn't want to turn it into a sales call." I asked him how helping a CEO solve his No. 1 problem could ever be called imposing. Think about it this way: It's one thing to help a leader identify an issue; it's another to help them actually solve it.

3 THEY DAZZLE WITH COMPLEXITY.

The urge to sound smart and impressive is a strong one, but don't let it get in the way of a sale. One colleague of mine explained our services to a prospect at 90 mph, throwing all kinds of compelling data points and analysis at him in a short span of time. But instead of being convinced by her breadth of knowledge, the prospect felt that he couldn't get a word in edgewise. Of course, it's vital that you know what you're talking about and you establish credibility with your prospects, but don't let that take priority over genuine communication and advisement.

4 THEY WIN THE ARGUMENT.

Clients are not often impressed with a confrontational "I'm right, you are wrong" posture. Folks, serving clients is not about winning arguments. Serving clients is about understanding them and figuring out how to get them what they want. You are on the same team. If you forget this, you may win the argument, but lose the deal.

Geoff Smart is chairman and founder of ghSMART. Geoff is co-author, with his colleague Randy Street, of the New York Times best-selling book, Who: A Method for Hiring, and the author of the No. 1 Wall Street Journal best seller Leadocracy: Hiring More Great Leaders (Like You) into Government. Geoff co-created the Topgrading brand of talent management. He is the founder of two 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations. SMARTKids Leadership Program™ provides 10 years of leadership tutoring, and the Leaders Initiative™ seeks to deploy society's greatest leaders into government. Geoff earned a BA in Economics with honors from Northwestern University, and an MA and PhD in Psychology from Claremont Graduate University.
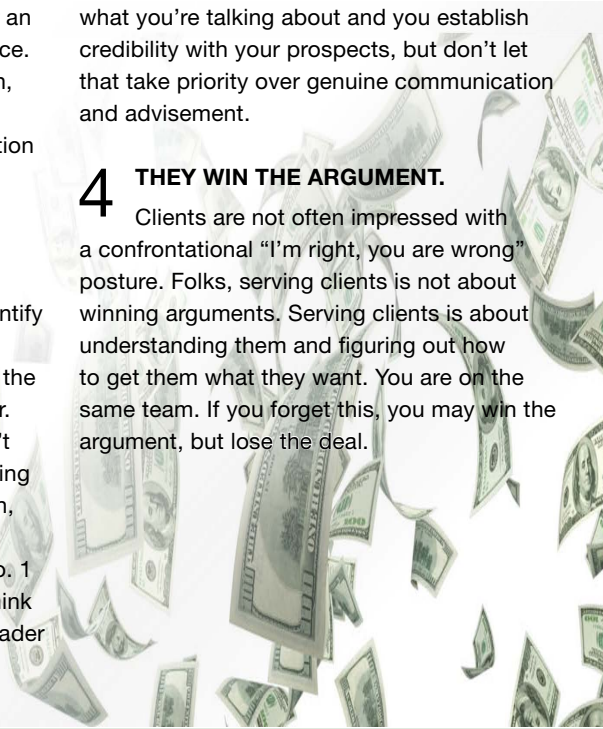
4 Ways Your Employees Will Invite Hackers Into Your Network

Cyber security is a complicated issue, no matter how you slice it, but one of the surest ways to reduce your risk and strengthen your defenses against hackers is to educate your team. Forewarned is forearmed, so make sure they fully understand the risks associated with the most common social engineering strategies. **Phishing**, the most prevalent, uses e-mails, chats or web ads impersonating trusted entities to trick employees into clicking malicious links. **Baiting** is similar, but purports to offer something enticing, such as a music or movie download, to deliver malware onto your system. **Quid pro quo** hackers offer a "service" in exchange for access to private data, such as an employee's login credentials. **Tailgating** is when an unauthorized person physically follows one of your employees into a restricted area or asks to "borrow" their device for a bit and steals all the info they need directly.

Make sure your team is on the lookout for these malicious techniques, and you'll be that much more secure. *SmallBizTrends.com, 9/20/2018*

USE THESE 3 STRATEGIES TO BREAK YOUR BAD TECH HABITS

If you're trying to kick an addiction to your smartphone and other addictive tech, and you're tempted to turn to them whenever you feel uncomfortable or anxious, don't give up. Instead of seeking a distraction whenever you feel bored – for example, checking your e-mail for the 10th time or logging in to Facebook – learn to embrace silence, and yes, even boredom. If you find yourself checking your phone too much at work, set physical boundaries to restrict yourself. Put it in your desk or another place that adds an extra step to accessing it. The next time you have downtime, instead of whipping out your device right away, mull over a specific problem or idea on your own – you might be surprised what you discover. *Inc.com, 7/20/2018*

The Paradox Of Choice
By Barry Schwartz

As the world has grown increasingly complex and consumers have come to expect access to everything they could ever want with the tap of a screen, choice overload has begun to set in.

Most people assume that the more options they have, the happier they'll be, but, as Barry Schwartz argues in *The Paradox of Choice: Why More Is Less*, research shows the exact opposite is true. In fact, by limiting the products we sell to buyers, we can reduce choice overload and greatly increase revenue.
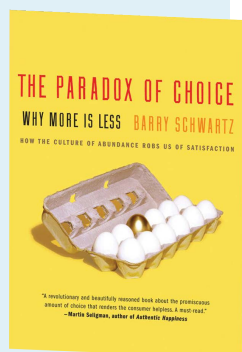
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