

# TECHNOLOGY TODAY

## Cloud Cover

With threats on the increase, backing up your data to The Cloud is more important than ever. A prime reason is that reputable Cloud Services encrypt your data before it's backed up. Why is that important? If you still don't know what Ransomware is, it's time you started paying attention: Ransomware encrypts your data so you lose access to it, and sells you a 'key' to unlock it (so that you can resume doing business). Yes, The Cloud has been proven to be hackable, but if your data is already encrypted, Ransomware is shooting blanks.

Just like the accompanying article to the right, do not choose the 'bargain basement' cloud service. Choose one that offers encryption and Guaranteed data recovery - WITH a speedy restore time. No matter what the salesperson says, read your SLA (Service Level Agreement) and be sure it is spelled out clearly. Whether a natural or man-made disaster strikes, you must be sure you can be up and running quickly.

We offer top-tier Cloud Services at the best available prices. Please call us at 818-797-5300 or contact us at [info@itsupportla.com](mailto:info@itsupportla.com) for a free estimate that fits your needs.

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Igor Pinchevskiy, President of IT Support LA.

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.



## Why Hiring The Cheapest Computer Support Company Will Actually Cost You More

As anybody working in IT will tell you, the most common question we get isn't, "Why is my computer running so slowly?" or "Why is my Internet not working?" It's, "What do you charge for your services?" With so many IT companies clamoring for your attention, it makes sense that you'd want to look for the most inexpensive, cost-efficient option, right?

The problem is that this question doesn't get to the heart of the issue. Sure, any IT company can offer rock-bottom prices, but as with anything else, those savings are going to come with fewer, lower-quality IT services. Also, many cheaper services say they are inexpensive, but they typically have slow response times and nickel and dime you over everything. Instead of asking about price right off the bat, the better question is, "What will I get for my money?"

With cheapo IT companies, the answer is not much. Maybe they'll be there when the server breaks down or if Microsoft Word is acting weird on your computer. But you can bet they won't help you implement IT systems that will prevent real, catastrophic issues from arising – the kinds of things that determine the success or failure of a company at the most basic level.

Today, business and technology go hand in hand. It's an inescapable fact that good tech forms the pillars upon which successful companies stand. Many business owners still insist on cutting corners with IT, hiring cheap and inexperienced "professionals" to protect and support the most fundamental aspects of their operation.

Of course, it's hard to fault them for doing so. Without a firm grasp of a business's IT

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needs, it's all too easy for a subpar, would-be IT partner to convince an owner they meet the company's requirements. That's why the question, "What will I get for my money?" is so important. IT support coverage needs to be comprehensive, addressing every potential sink-or-swim crisis before it actually happens. The integrity of your network infrastructure should support your business, rather than force you to run around putting out fires.

A downed server or temporarily unreliable network might seem like minor issues, but even the smallest of IT problems can easily snowball into an expensive nightmare that threatens your company's very existence.

Take a company that stores all its data on a central, networked server, for example. Maybe they're a content creation firm, with terabytes of custom-designed client marketing materials stashed away, or a large law practice with thousands of vital case documents. They were reluctant to spend much on IT support, so they went with the cheapest option available. Of course, regular server maintenance wasn't included in their package, but they assumed their trusty hardware would keep kicking for at least a few more

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years. But when an employee tries to access the database, an error pops up. Upon further investigation, it turns out the outdated server has finally broken down, apparently for good. All those documents, all that data instrumental to the basic functionality of the company, is irrecoverable – thousands of hours of work (and thousands of dollars) down the drain, and all because of an issue that would easily have been caught and prevented by a team of qualified IT experts.

When technology works, it's easy to imagine that it'll continue working without issue. But the fact is that a computer network requires constant, behind-the-scenes monitoring and maintenance to ensure it stays up and running, not to mention secure.

From hordes of hackers waiting in the wings for you to slip up, to hardware failure, to natural disasters, rogue employees and a million other IT threats, it's important to ensure the stability of your network before a problem comes knocking. Cheap Band-Aid solutions work great until the day they cost you thousands. It's better to invest in a team of real IT experts, and avoid crisis altogether. It's much cheaper to prevent something from breaking than it is to replace it altogether.

## FREE Report: 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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## New & Improved Threats For 2018

Last year's 'fixes' often enable this year's vulnerabilities. Cyber thugs are paying attention and developing new attack methods much faster than experts can produce new defenses, and new tactics typically evolve from the last 'stop gap' measure employed to defeat them.

For ransomware and cyber theft, 2017 was a highly successful year for crooks. Over \$5 Billion paid in 2017, up from a 'mere' \$325 million in 2015. We had massive worldwide attacks, testing out new strains and versions, but we are also seeing a shift in tactics. Beginners will still target consumers for a few hundred bucks, but the real players grow steadily more sophisticated, and over 85% of all Ransomware attacks are still aimed at small to mid-size businesses like yours.

With the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) going into effect, experts predict a shift in tactics since, come 2018, the discovery of a data breach can lead to massive government fines – up to 4% of a company's annual sales, in addition to the crippling effects that being locked out of your ability to conduct business – all the more inducement to pay quickly and keep it quiet.

Your best defense against the modern extortion tactics depends on effective web and email gateway solutions, with behavior monitoring and learning capabilities. Make sure you are utilizing these solutions. If you have an IT guy that just comes in when something doesn't work, you are probably leaving yourself open to new threats. It's a full time job keeping up.

When in doubt, give us a call if you are in the Greater Los Angeles / Ventura area. At no charge, we will perform a Security Assessment and let you know what your weaknesses are. Contact us at 818-797 or at [www.itsupportla.com/free-stuff/free-network-security-assessment/](http://www.itsupportla.com/free-stuff/free-network-security-assessment/)

## Run Your Next Meeting Like A CEO

*As both a CEO for a couple of decades and a humble bystander, I've grown to appreciate the fine art of how to run a meeting well. I have seen billionaire tech CEOs run meetings where people cried their eyes out they were so inspired, and I've seen frontline supervisors at an aluminum can manufacturing company run meetings so poorly that people were falling asleep, heads clunking down on the table.*

*Want to run your next meeting like a CEO? Here are three ways experts avoid rookie mistakes and elevate their meetings to the next level.*

### 1 Make an agenda with three simple questions.

This is an absolute ninja level of CEO wizardry. As many authors have said, success comes not when you have all the answers, but when you ask all the right questions. Show you have CEO swagger and print on a piece of paper (and include in the online calendar appointment) three simple questions for the itinerary. Simple questions make valuable meetings.

### 2 Summarize key points you hear.

Meetings get sidetracked when lots of people are talking and nobody is summarizing key points as you go. Great leaders often pause naturally about every 10 minutes and take the time to summarize the key points they're hearing. Little statements like, "It sounds like one big conclusion we are making is X" or, "One big question I hear us asking is Y" can have a tremendous impact. Right after these



summary statements, you'll see the conversation turn toward a decision point and boom – a decision is made.

### 3 Make people feel safe.

I once heard a governor tell a skittish junior staffer, "Tell me more about what you mean by that. I want to understand." On another occasion, a CEO told a new member of her team, "I am not promising I'm going to share your point of view, but I want to understand it. So tell me more." The best CEOs don't want to intimidate people in meetings. Instead, they make people feel safe, so that everyone feels open to sharing useful information without fear of retribution or being made to look stupid. Make people feel respected, heard and appreciated, and you'll be impressed by the value of the information you learn, and the solutions that come from your team.



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## Which Social Network Do Teens Use More Than Any Other? The Answer May Surprise You...

If you're over, say, 30 years old, it's likely that you've missed the latest trend in social media. These days, Facebook marketing is all the rage as businesses attempt to get a grip on the changing media landscape in order to zero in on their demographic. But, it looks like Facebook's on its way to becoming



"so 2015," at least for one key group – American teens.

Perhaps in response to their parents, aunts and uncles flooding the service, lately teens have been fleeing Facebook in droves and migrating to the greener pastures of Snapchat. This is according to Piper Jaffray's biannual "Taking Stock With the Teens" survey, which reports that 47% of teens now consider Snapchat their favorite social network, with Facebook clocking a meager 9%.

*businessinsider.com 10/16/2017*

## Successful Leaders Never, Ever Do These Things

Any good leader is constantly striving to elevate their skills, draw their team together, and steer the ship to profits and success. But even the most vigilant bosses often make some basic mistakes, most of which come down to one often-neglected fact: a good leader's primary concern should always be to serve the needs of their people.

Too many business owners fail to realize that their employees are real people, not just instruments or machines you can exploit to elevate you to the top. A topdown structure will always eventually fail, while a collaborative, participatory structure can only grow stronger as it ages and expands.

The fact is, no matter how smart a leader is, they don't have all the answers – they don't even get close. Intelligent leaders realize this and treat their fellow idea-makers as their most important asset, valuing input and creativity over their own egos. Not only that, but they're available to communicate with the team, instead of existing as some invisible force barking orders from on high. *Inc.com 10/13/2017*

## How To Prevent Hackers From Stealing Your Phone Data

Unfortunately, even though you keep an enormous amount of personal data on your phone, most phones don't have any security software. To combat this, update your phone's operating system at the earliest opportunity. Then, set up an auto-lock system, backed by a six-digit passcode. Ditch as many apps as possible with access to your camera, contacts and email. And when you're out and about on the town, disable WiFi and Bluetooth. At the very least, adjust the settings to stop your phone from connecting to unprotected networks. Next time you're at Starbucks getting some work done, absolutely don't enter any passwords or credit card numbers until you're back home. *Inc.com 10/3/2017*

