

TECHNOLOGY TODAY

We're In The Bar!

The San Fernando Valley Bar Association, that is. As we work closely in conjunction with officers and trustees of the SFVBA, we have joined the association to promote, among other things, better security training for those in this profession, where criminal exposure of client data is not just a catastrophe, but also a cause for malpractice lawsuits.

This training is absolutely FREE through the SFVBA website, and we do extend this free offer to law firms through the Greater Los Angeles and Ventura areas.

For more information, please contact us at 818-797-5300 or online at www.itsupportla.com

*No, we are not qualified to give legal advice, but, we CAN point you in the direction of an excellent attorney.

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Yuri Aberfeld, CEO 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.



Your #1 Hacking Threat Is INSIDE Your Own Organization

Every movie portrays hackers in pretty much the same way. When it comes to crunch time, they crack their knuckles, sit down at the keyboard, and begin tapping away at lightning speed. The timer is ticking down, the music reaches its peak of tension, but the hacker remains cool as a cucumber. Within seconds, they're in, they've "hacked the mainframe" and prompted high fives from their swarm of cohorts waiting in the wings with bated breath.

In reality, hackers are rarely up against some impenetrable digital fortress, digging into the passwords of a megacorporation or the US government. The vast majority of the time, they're nothing more than a ragtag group of bored criminals up against some unassuming small business. And more often than not, netting thousands of dollars from ordinary businesses just going about their

day-to-day routines requires little coding at all, and certainly no "mainframe hacking." According to IBM's 2016 Cyber Security Intelligence Index, 60% of the time, all it takes is an unwitting insider to accidentally leave the company's digital front door wide open.

The Dangers Of Human Error

Cybercriminals may be experts in sniffing out the slightest vulnerability in your company's security, but a lot of the time, the data they need practically falls into their laps. Every day, internal e-mails are mistakenly addressed to the wrong people, sensitive info is inadvertently made public and employees unknowingly click on malicious links.

As technology has progressed, the number of potential threats has increased exponentially.

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Average Joes simply can't be bothered to keep up with hacking trends, and therefore are prone to opening your business up to cyber-attack by simply bumbling through their daily activities. If they've never been taught, how could they possibly know otherwise?

Digital Impostors

One of the easiest ways hackers can gain access to your business's valuable data is by posing as a trusted figure within your organization. This may sound complicated, but in today's world of social media and constant interactions through screens, it really isn't. Hackers can use data pulled from Facebook to either hijack the e-mail accounts and identities of employees or pretend to be them outright. After that, they can send peculiar requests to other members of your team. After all, if your CEO, Controller, or Office Manager sends you an urgent e-mail, you're probably going to open it. In many cases, by gaining access to a particular team member's credentials, hackers can bring down barriers and decrease the effectiveness of your security network, while staying completely invisible.

Smarten Up Your Team

No matter how comprehensive and powerful your cyber security

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software may be, it's not going to do much if an unsuspecting employee welcomes the bad guys into your network. With that in mind, it's vital that we provide specific training to our teams to truly make data security a priority.

But don't do this alone — after all, you're not the security expert. Instead, ask us (or your current provider) to equip you and your employees with the know-how to stave off digital attacks. We provide comprehensive services for you and your team, including:

- Giving employees a crash course on contemporary hacking strategies. You'll likely be shocked by how many of them don't even know what phishing is. During the training, we will provide specific examples of potential attacks - especially phishing - and how to avoid them.
- Putting systems in place empowering employees to alert the organization of vulnerabilities. For example, if John in manufacturing receives a suspicious e-mail, the entire company should be on the lookout within minutes.
- Teaching your employees that software updates and patches are more than just a nuisance, they're a necessity for up-to-date security. When a new patch for a key program is released, we'll make sure your team knows it's available and that they shouldn't avoid installing it until later, and provide them with the tools to make it happen.
- Testing your team on what they've learned, such as sending out false suspicious e-mails containing shady links. If anybody fails the test, there's still work to do.

Your people are your greatest asset, but they can also be your biggest liability. In the modern world, it can feel impossible to protect yourself from data breach. Luckily, when it comes to your team, there's one potential avenue for hackers you can fix with a little perseverance.

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 common mistakes that many small-business owners make with their computer networks that cost them thousands in lost sales, productivity and computer repair bills, as well as providing an easy, proven way to reduce or completely eliminate the financial expense and frustration caused by these oversights.

Download your FREE copy today at
www.itsupportla.com/protect/
or call our office at 818-797-5300

Sheep's Clothing

No, we're not talking about cute little bonnets and sweaters for Lamb Chop, but those sly crooks trying to phish their way into your network to encrypt your data and hold your business hostage for a hefty ransom in Bit Coins.

What we're seeing more of is this Malware, known as FAKEAV, showing up disguised as ANTI-Malware solutions. This is a 'Wolf in Sheep's Clothing' ruse, akin to the Fire Department rolling up and setting your house on fire., then charging you to put it out.

DO NOT click on any 'FREE' offers of Anti-Virus protection that pop up online or show up in your mailbox. A business should only avail themselves of new security programs through a reputable IT provider, or a respected download site for 'do-it-yourselfers'.

We've spoken at length about 'spoofing' as well – fake UPS or FedEx emails with links to Ransomware.

We can show you how to protect yourself from these Worldwide Web Wolves. Contact us at 818-797-5300 or online at www.itsupportla.com. There are no 'strings' or obligations for our FREE security consultation.

Social Entrepreneurship Could Be Your Solution

As a business owner, it can be easy to throw on the blinders and focus exclusively on profitability. But what if becoming permanently profitable and supporting the causes closest to your heart could go hand in hand? Social entrepreneurship can actually boost your employee retention rate and their productivity at the same time.

Nowadays, people (especially young people) want to do meaningful work, something that translates into more than just a 9-to-5 job. When you blend your company's for-profit goals with larger societal aims, your employees will feel more accomplished and satisfied with how they're using their time.

Still, your mission doesn't have to be solely about donating money. Here are some creative ways for you and your team to incorporate humanitarianism into your day-to-day work life.

1 Teach classes at your local community center. Everyone on your team has some specific skill related to your industry. Equipped with this knowledge, your team can run a workshop at a nearby community center. You might be surprised how many people will find this useful.

2 Switch from paper to digital. Not only will this minimize your environmental impact, but you'll save money on printing costs. This extra change could be donated to charities that combat the effects of deforestation, such as the Jane Goodall Institute or Plant a Billion Trees.

3 Buy locally. If you want to support your fellow local businesses, take part in Small-Business Saturday. As a team, make a list of the businesses you want to patronize and take turns leaving them reviews. This also encourages cross-promotion between your company and these other businesses.

4 Referral program. This strategy is a win-win. If you want to boost your number of customer referrals, advertise a deal in which your company donates \$30 to a charity of your choice for every referral. This will quickly build your reputation, not only for a quality service or product, but for your socially conscious practices.

5 Offer your services. Or, you could always go with classic pro bono work. Offer your services to one or two potential clients who are lower income or otherwise disadvantaged. Create teams to tackle these cases each quarter, on the clock. Although you'll lose a bit of money to opportunity cost, the inspiration and enhanced productivity your employees will experience will more than make up for it.

Don't underestimate the immense impact socially responsible entrepreneurship can have on your office culture, employees and the world at large. For your team, it can be the extra motivation they need to truly tap into their passion and drive. Denise Blasevick saw these results firsthand in her own company, and we've seen them at Profit First Professionals in our mission to eradicate entrepreneurial poverty. It could also be the solution for you.



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, a consulting firm that ignites explosive growth in companies that have plateaued; 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 www.mikemichalowicz.com.

■ **Do These 3 Things BEFORE Your Next Trip Out Of Town** One of the worst things that can happen in this age of cell phone addiction is going out of town and losing your phone, iPad or laptop. But it happens all too often. Here are a few common-sense security tips that can reduce the sting if you misplace a device or two.

First, make sure you back up your phone to iCloud, your computer or whatever method your particular phone supports. Then, ensure it has a passcode. If you can change the settings to set a passcode that incorporates both letters and numbers, that's even better. Also be sure to enable "Find My iPhone," or

your phone's equivalent, as this will allow you to wipe the data if it gets into the wrong hands.

If you travel with your laptop, it's a good idea to encrypt your hard drive. This is an easier process than it may sound – typically, all you'll need to do is enter a password immediately when booting up the computer.

■ **Stop These Habits Immediately To Become More Productive**

1. Put your phone away. Phones may be an incredible way to stay in touch with friends and family and the world at large, but they're also a massive distraction when you're in the middle of important work.

2. Close those extra tabs.

According to the American Psychological Association, only a measly 2% of people are actually good at multitasking. Don't have everything open at once – make a to-do list and stick to it.

3. Don't chatter during meetings.

Unless you really have something vital or new to share, save it for a one-on-one communication.

4. Avoid reply-all e-mails. When you need information urgently, it's better to pick up the phone and call; then, if you need to, follow up with an e-mail.

5. Maximize your efficiency.

A cluttered desk, a lazy morning routine, a stressed-out body or really any obstacle that jams you up daily will slow you down. Pay attention to the things that stand between you and making the best of your time, then work to alleviate them over time.

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■ **Business Technology Trends In 2018 To Help You Run Your Company More Efficiently**

Telecommuting is the industry standard. Today, remote working is more prevalent than ever, thanks to modern software and technology. Take advantage of this shift to reduce overhead and improve employee happiness.

Cloud services continue to dominate. Ninety-two percent of modern businesses are using one or more cloud-based programs, a number that only continues to climb. The productivity and ease-of-access fixes that the cloud offers are simply too powerful to ignore. Live video improves business-customer relations. With live chat utterly pervasive, we'll see a shift to live video chat to further improve the customer experience. Face-to-face interactions, even through the Internet, provide a level of connection impossible in years past.

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