

# TECHNOLOGY TODAY

## TWOFER!!!

IT Support LA is proud to announce that, for the second year in a row, we were awarded 'BEST IT' by The Small Business Expo in a nationwide vote.

This award is bestowed upon MSPs who demonstrate the strongest commitment to maintaining and improving a standard of excellence that far exceeds the normal demands of the marketplace.

We share this honor with our valued clients, whose trust and continued faith in us has allowed us the resources to continue improving our service while maintaining our measured rate of growth. Our sincere thanks to all. (Woohoo!)

**February 2020**



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Yuri Aberfeld, CEO of IT Support LA.

IT Support LA creates the possibility of focusing on business goals and priorities by providing a trusted technology partnership to small businesses.



## Top 3 Ways Hackers Will Attack Your Network – And They Are Targeting You RIGHT NOW

You might read the headline of this article and think, "That has to be an exaggeration." Unfortunately, it's not. Every single day, small businesses are targeted by cybercriminals. These criminals look for vulnerable victims, then attack.

This is the world we live in today. It's one where cybercriminals regularly take advantage of small businesses. Why small businesses? They're the favorite target of hackers, scammers and other cybercriminals because small businesses have a bad habit of NOT investing in cyber security.

Hackers have many methods they use to break into your network, steal data or put you in a position where you have to pay them money to get your data back. They use a combination of

software and skill to make it happen. Here are three ways hackers and cybercriminals attack your network in an attempt to get what they want.

### 1. THEY GO THROUGH YOUR EMPLOYEES.

That's right, they'll use your own employees against you, and your employees might not even realize what's happening. Let's say a hacker gets ahold of your internal e-mail list, like the e-mails you have posted on your website or LinkedIn. All the hacker has to do is send an e-mail to everyone at your company.

The e-mail might be disguised as a message addressed from you asking your employees for a gift card, which is becoming an increasingly common scam. Another e-mail tactic is making a message look like it's from a fellow employee, asking everyone else to

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open an attached file, which is likely malware or ransomware. A third e-mail scam is directing people to a phishing website, which is a website that scammers have designed to look like popular websites in order to get login information to hack accounts. All it takes is a single click from any employee to let the bad guys into your business.

### 2. THEY ATTACK YOUR NETWORK DIRECTLY.

Some hackers aren't afraid of forced entry. Hackers and cybercriminals have access to black market tools and software that helps them get into networked devices – particularly *unprotected* networked devices.

For example, if you have a PC that's connected to the Internet and your network doesn't use any firewalls, data encryption or other network protection software, a hacker can break in and steal data from that PC and potentially other devices connected to that PC, such as portable hard drives. This method of entry isn't necessarily easy for hackers, but the effort can be worth it, especially if they can walk away with sensitive financial information.

### 3. THEY HOLD YOUR DATA HOSTAGE.

Hackers are relying on ransomware more and more to get

what they want. Hackers rely on e-mail, executable files and fraudulent web ads (such as banner ads and popups) to attack networks with ransomware. It goes back to the first point. All it takes is someone clicking a bad link or file and the next thing you know, you're locked out of your network.

This has happened to dozens of businesses and even city governments in the last year alone. The thing is that even if you pay the ransom, there is no guarantee the hacker will restore access. They can take the money and delete everything, leaving your business high and dry! This destroys businesses!

All of these points are why you need to take a hard look at IT security solutions *and use them*. For instance, if you had all of your data *securely* backed up to the cloud and a hacker came in and tried to hold your data hostage, you wouldn't have to worry. They don't really have your data. You can tell them "no," then all you'd have to do is work with an IT team to get your network back up and running while scrubbing it of any malware or ransomware. Then, it would be a simple matter of restoring data from the cloud. Sure, you might be out of commission for a day or two, but in the grand scheme of things, it's *much* better than losing your business to these jokers.

Hackers are just looking for easy targets and, sadly, a lot of small businesses fit the bill. Just because you haven't had any major problems yet doesn't mean you won't in the future. The threats are out there and they're not going to go away. Invest in security, partner with an IT security firm and protect yourself. This is one investment that is truly worth it!

**"Hackers are just looking for easy targets and, sadly, a lot of small businesses fit the bill."**

## 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.
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## The 3rd Certainty

Ben Franklin said, "In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes." While some may argue about the latter, wherein certain massive corporations like Amazon, IBM and Netflix reportedly pay no Federal Income Tax, there's no arguing against the former.

The proliferation of the new, upcoming '3rd Certainty' grows at amazing leaps and bounds. Call it Identity theft, data theft, Ransomware or any of the other scams, cons and outright attacks, cyber criminality takes on many guises, and it's touching the very small to the very large and everybody in between.

We always say, "**It is not a matter of IF, but of WHEN**", and the "WHEN" is coming at a much faster pace than ever before. No surprise: When crooks find an easy crime with big rewards, everybody gets into the game.

The odds against you becoming a cyber victim grow thinner every year, and frankly, what are you doing about it? Is what you're doing really protecting you? How quickly can you be back in action after Catastrophe breaks down your door?

Call on us for your FREE Cyber Security Assessment. 818-808-0909 or reserve your assessment at [www.itsupportla.com/free-stuff/free-network-security-assessment/](http://www.itsupportla.com/free-stuff/free-network-security-assessment/)

Be prepared for a rude awakening.



## The First Mistake Bad Leaders Make In A New Job

The first mistake bad leaders make in a new job is subtle, common and avoidable: they come into an organization and they don't narrow the priority list.

In our research for *Power Score*, we found that only 24% of leaders are good at prioritizing. And when a leader is bad at prioritizing, 90% of the time it's because they let too many priorities stay alive.

In short, great leaders **prune priorities**.

What does priority pruning look like?

It looks like taking a weed whacker to the overgrown mass of useless priorities that grow inside organizations.

It looks like what Steve Jobs did when he returned to Apple and trimmed the number of products from hundreds to under 10.

It looks like what In-N-Out Burger (for those of you who have enjoyed this delicious West Coast treat) does in only

giving you a menu of burger, fries and a drink.

It looks like what Scott Cook, founder of Intuit, did in making QuickBooks as easy as using your checkbook.

There are so many leaders I see who lack the analytical horsepower, the courage or the decisiveness to prune priorities, so they just let dozens, hundreds or even thousands of priorities live on in their organizations and distract people away from the small set of things that matter most.

If you want a simple way to prune priorities, use the one-page discussion guide straight out of our *Power Score* book. Have your team rate your priorities 1-10. If you are scoring a nine or 10, keep doing what you are doing. If you score less than a nine, then it's time to get out the weed whacker!



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.

## ■ Top Ways To Protect Your Remote Employees From Cyberthreats

Allowing employees to work remotely comes with its share of benefits, like increased productivity and employee happiness. But it comes with challenges as well, including staying ahead of cyberthreats. Here are three ways to protect remote employees who work from laptops, tablets and smartphones.

1. **Avoid unsecured public WiFi.** It may be convenient, but cybercriminals can use unsecured networks to steal data. Instead, remote workers should utilize a virtual private network (VPN). Personal hotspots are another option.
2. **Require endpoint security,** such as firewalls and malware protection, installed on remote workers' devices. All remote employees should use the same endpoint security so you know everything is up-to-date.
3. **Develop 'cyber security best practices'** for your business.

Everyone, including remote workers, should be on the same page when it comes to cyber security. Make sure your employees know the threats and how to stay vigilant online. *Inc., Feb. 12, 2019*

## ■ 6 Ways To Make Your Business More Efficient

1. **Cut the clutter.** Have any outdated systems and processes that are cluttering up your business? Get rid of them. Look for inefficiencies or redundancies you can eliminate, then do it!
2. **Block interruptions.** When you need to work, it's okay to put up barriers. Block out your calendar when you don't want calls. Turn off all phone notifications. Only check e-mail twice a day. Set limits!
3. **Look to automation.** Whether you're scheduling e-mails or social media posts, look at what you can automate to avoid wasting time.
4. **Balance tech and traditional.** It's okay to rely on texting, e-mail and online chat to communicate with

customers, but don't forget the power of real, face-to-face communication.

### 5. Say no to multitasking.

Multitasking is a myth. You can either do several things at once and deliver mediocre results or do one thing right the first time and deliver stellar results.

### 6. Invest more in cyber security.

There are countless threats out there, so don't get caught without good IT security across the whole of your business. Don't risk it! *Small Business Trends, Nov. 4, 2019*

## ■ 3 Simple Ways Introverts Leverage Their Strengths To Thrive In The Workplace

Introverts can be drained by social interaction and stimulation. They need to recharge regularly, so days off are important in order for them to be at their most productive. Here are three ways introverts can be at their best in the workplace:

- **Manage energy more than your time.** When you feel most energized, that's the right time to focus on creative work that requires more brainpower. Structure your days around your energy.
- **Cultivate the right environment.** Work in a space that calms you and energizes you. Set the right light (such as natural lighting) and invest in noise-canceling headphones.
- **Say what needs to be said.** Introverts constantly think but don't always speak up. Don't let communication fall to the wayside. Remember, we're all working together. *Business Insider, Nov. 19, 2019*



"Do you mind if I call you back? I can't talk right now."