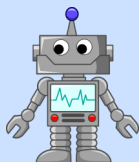## 3 Ways The Digital Transformation Is Changing Our Everyday Lives

1. Artificial intelligence has gone mainstream. Amazon Echo, Siri, Google Home and other personal assistants would have seemed like science fiction even 10 years ago. But now they're just another facet of our contemporary reality.

Read More Here:
www.palmtech.net/3-ways/

This monthly publication provided courtesy of Chuck Poole, President of PalmTech Computer Solutions.

Our Mission

To equip small and midsized businesses in the West Palm Beach area with a smooth running and seamless IT platform that enhances productivity, improves efficiency, and creates a competitive advantage.

This Is The #1 Security Threat To Your Business

... And It WILL Happen To You

Would you leave the front door of your business wide open every night? Of course you wouldn't. When nobody's at the office, you've got to protect your assets, usually behind locked doors, a complex security system and often even a network of CCTV cameras. There are procedures in place in case a thief ever wriggles their way into your facilities. And you've got insurance if the worst ever happens.

But what about your digital assets? According to a report from Kroll, digital theft of small businesses overtook physical theft in 2017, for the first time ever. As surprising as it may seem, today your business is more likely to be penetrated by hackers than for a

disgruntled ex-employee to boost a few PCs in the dead of night.

Despite this, data shows that the vast majority of small businesses are seriously underprepared for cyber-attacks. The 2018 Verizon Data Breach Investigations Report states that a full 58% of malware strikes were on small businesses over the last 12 months, a number that continues to climb. The average cost of these attacks has climbed in turn, now exceeding $1 million between efforts to recover data and restore daily business operations. Yet, according to a 2016 survey by the National Center for the Middle Market, less than half of midsize US businesses have an up-to-date strategy to address

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cyber security concerns and almost a third have no plan at all.

In effect, business owners are leaving their digital front doors unlocked, complete with a neon sign saying "Rob me!" flickering above. While it's easy to assume you're safe from the kinds of large-scale digital breaches you read about in the news every week, that false sense of security will eventually come back to haunt you. With more than half of small businesses targeted for digital attacks every year, it's practically inevitable that you'll end up in the crosshairs of cybercriminals. Without the proper security measures in place, that $1 million bill is going to hit your desk one day, and it may even shutter your business for good.

Luckily, with even a modicum of proper, proactive stewardship of your digital assets, you can turn that open door into a bank vault in no time. First, start with your employees. A full 51% of data breaches occur due to the negligence of hapless team members, according to CompTIA. Establish comprehensive security policies, lay them down in crystal-clear print and have your employees sign off on them. Build a thorough education program to school your employees on the risks and signs of digital crime. Topics should range from "How to spot a phishing e-mail" to the proper construction of company passwords.

While your employees are learning the ins and outs of

> ## "In effect, business owners are leaving their digital front doors unlocked, complete with a neon sign saying 'Rob me!' flickering above."

basic cyber security, invest in multilayered protections for your network. This must go beyond a simple, free antivirus, and should include platforms to keep all your patches up-to-date, security measures seamlessly integrated with company e-mail and, preferably, the watchful eye of a managed services provider. If you're not a professional, it's easy to miss security holes that would be glaring to criminals, even if you do your research. Better to get the experts involved and keep them patching those holes as they arise rather than risk missing something that flips your company belly-up down the road.

Thousands upon thousands of other small-business owners are leaving their digital door wide open day in, day out. As a result, cybercriminals have begun to consider companies like yours to be easy pickings, vulnerable fruit ripe for harvest. Don't be one of the millions of businesses that succumb to cyber-attacks every year. Invest in adequate protection and give yourself the peace of mind you need to focus on what you do best: making money. Contact PalmTech at 561.969.1616 for a FREE Cybersecurity Assessment before December 31st*!

(Offer valid to qualified businesses with a minimum of 20 users)

Tips For A Successful Holiday Season

The holiday season isn't much fun for the typical small-business owner, but with the right approach, you can capitalize on the associated spending spree and come out on top. Skip the trite, impersonal holiday e-mails, and instead opt for handwritten (or faux-handwritten) personal cards, maybe even accompanied by some pastries. Use decorations to turn your drab office into a festive wonderland and watch morale soar. Instead of overdoing it downtown with some office party at a fancy restaurant, throw a party in your own facility, with nice catering and a carefully thought-out plan. Give your employees genuine rewards for their hard work throughout the year, and if you can, give them some time off in addition to Christmas and New Year's Day. *Inc.com, 12/19/2012*

SHINY NEW GADGET OF THE MONTH

PetChatz HD Pawcall: FaceTime With Your Dog!

When a product is advertised as "more than a pet-treat camera," you know we are living in 2018. PetChatz HD PawCall is a two-way, interactive camera to connect you to your furry friends while you're away from home. With a camera secured to the wall and a treat-motivated interface for dogs and cats to master, the device allows you to say a quick hello to your pets, see how they're doing, and dispense treats or essential oils to calm them down and keep them happy. The device even lets you monitor your home for any intruders or problems that may arise during your pets' home-alone time. A silent mode enables you to observe your pet in their natural habitat, while a two-way "chat" feature allows you to connect in real time. It's the perfect gift for any pet enthusiast!

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.
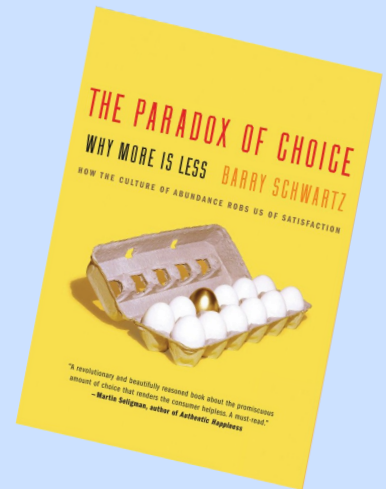
Top Tips You Can't Afford To Miss From a CEO Who Survived a Ransomware Attack

Years back, A1Care owner Percy Syddall upgraded his business with a state-of-the-art system for storing all the company's records and customer data in a single place. The network was a massive boon to both his customers and employees. But when his entire organization found themselves locked out of the data by ransomware, with the hackers demanding a price too steep to pay, the company had to act fast. They learned how to respond to an attack the hard way.

The first step was to evaluate the threat. They decided not to pay the ransom (which they couldn't afford, anyway) and instead thoroughly documented the issue. Then, they got the authorities involved and alerted their customers about the breach. In the end, the attack cost thousands of dollars, but they weren't about to let it happen to them again. They began looking for more powerful solutions that would prevent future attacks and started asking more pointed questions to determine exactly what vulnerabilities their system might have. Most importantly, they began to back up their files and trained their team to recognize threats before they became full-on crises. You live and learn. *SmallBizTrends.com, 7/14/2018*

Why A Technology Business Assessment Is Vital

Identifying opportunities in all areas of business is vital for growth, but one area that's often overlooked is technology. Although it's easy to adopt an "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" attitude with IT, conducting a regular technology business assessment is a must.

What is a technology business assessment?

A technology business assessment reveals the strengths and weaknesses of your company's IT framework. It's often performed by a third-party IT consultant who will give an objective assessment of your technology and provide recommendations to help meet your goals. If done properly, a technology business assessment allow you to:

Save money

Every review starts with a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether a solution you've implemented is worth the continued investment. If there are technologies costing you a fortune in management and maintenance fees, consultants will advise you to cut them from your budget. The best ones will even recommend cost-effective alternatives so you can do more with less.

Increase productivity

System-wide reviews of your IT infrastructure show you what processes are hindering operations and propose solutions that let you work faster and smarter. For example, if employees are mainly sharing files via email, consultants might suggest cloud collaboration platforms like Office 365 or G Suite that store data in a centralized location for seamless file sharing.

Enhance security and compliance

Technology business assessments also uncover security risks within your business. Consultants scan for missed patches, poorly configured networks, and other software vulnerabilities that make it easy for cybercriminals to hack your systems.

They'll then compile their findings to create a more robust defense strategy, usually one that involves implementing advanced solutions like intrusion prevention systems, file access restrictions, and patch management software.

If you operate a business that's subjected to data regulations like HIPAA or PCI-DSS, consultants will also pinpoint IT practices and solutions that are noncompliant and customize a strategy that ensures the privacy, integrity, and availability of your data.

Implement technologies that fit

Considering that new technologies are released at a breakneck pace, it's important you pick the ones that make sense for your operation, its goals, and the bottom line. A Technology business assessment keep you up to date on the latest technology trends and gauge the impact of implementing them, so you can make informed decisions.

Whether your goal is to increase profits, productivity, security, or all of the above, technology business assessments can put you on the right track. Our seasoned IT consultants can conduct these assessments for you and develop a strategy that gives you an edge over the competition. Just give us a call at 561.969.1616.
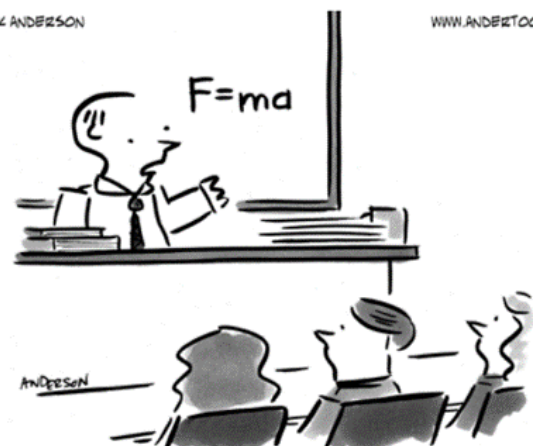
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"It's not a text abbreviation, it's a formula."