

## A Note of Gratitude:

Our clients are the BEST part of our work. We thank you for another great year.

Happy Holidays to you and yours from our team at PalmTech Computer Solutions!



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

### Our Mission

To equip small and midsize 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.



Online shopping has become more popular than ever before. In 2020, more than 2 billion people bought products or services online. Whether they're shopping online because it's more convenient or they're avoiding going to brick-and-mortar retailers during the ongoing pandemic, more people are turning to online retailers every day.

It's not just the convenience or health safety that's drawing people to shop online; shopping this way has become more secure than ever before. That doesn't mean all retail websites are created equal when it comes to safety and security. Hackers and scammers are still out there trying to get your information, but by taking the proper precautions, you have no reason to worry while shopping digitally.

If you plan on buying online this holiday

season, here are five tips to ensure your information stays protected.

### **Use Well-Known And Secure Sites**

When looking to purchase a product or service online, you have thousands of options to choose from. To avoid having your personal information stolen, it's best to use familiar sites such as Amazon, Walmart or any of the other major retailers. If you search for a product on a search engine, you may be presented with prices that are extremely low. There's a good chance these are not trustworthy sites. When it comes to online shopping, if it seems too good to be true, something is wrong.

Pay attention to the security of the site where you're trying to make a purchase. Look for a lock icon in the browser bar. If the website has one, then you should be safe on their site.

*continued on page 2*

Another way to tell is by looking at the beginning of the web address. If it begins with “https” instead of “http,” you are in good shape, and you can continue using the site. Secure websites help protect your financial information as well as passwords. Shopping at unsecured sites can put your personal information at risk.

### Create Stronger Passwords

A strong password can make all the difference between your information remaining secure and someone stealing it. You need to make your passwords as difficult as possible so that hackers and thieves can't hack into your accounts. It's best to use a complex mix of uppercase and lowercase letters while including special characters and numbers. Avoid using common spellings of words and personal information in your passwords because these can be easier to crack.

If you're worried about not remembering a complex password, use a password manager. This tool will remember the passwords for your accounts while also keeping them protected. Utilizing password managers is the best way to create complex passwords since you won't have to personally remember them, and they will still be protected.

### Keep Track Of Your Statements

**“In 2020, more than 2 billion people bought products or services online.”**

You should always be watching your finances, but it becomes even more important when shopping online. It's a good habit to form and will help you catch overcharges or purchases that you did not make. It's also a good idea to only shop with a credit card when shopping online. If someone hacks into your account and steals your debit

card information, they will have direct access to your money. Most credit cards have protections in place for fraud, so you won't be at fault for any errant charges on your account.

### Protect Your Information

When entering a new website, you should be wary if they ask for any personal information upfront. No online retailer should ever ask for your Social Security number unless you are applying for a credit card on their site. Be cautious if they ask for your birthday as well. Hackers can use this info in conjunction with your credit card number to wreak havoc on your life.

### Don't Shop On Public WiFi

While it might seem like a good way to keep yourself entertained while enjoying a coffee at a local café, shopping on public WiFi can leave you at risk of being hacked. Public WiFi is often not very secure, and entering your personal information while using it can give hackers easy access. It's much safer to bookmark the item and wait until you're home or no longer using WiFi to make the purchase.

Shopping online can be as safe and reliable as shopping in a store – as long as you take the proper precautions. Take some time to ensure that you are following the right security measures before making purchasing or entering any information.

Hackers dedicate time **EVERY** week to keeping up with security news, trends, and technologies

Are your employees doing the same to stay one step ahead?

Call us about Security Awareness Training for your staff! (561)969-1616



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# UPS: A MUST FOR NETWORK EQUIPMENT

Power outages can happen anytime and for a number of reasons, including accidents and natural disasters such as fires and hurricanes. While there's little your business can do to prevent a power outage, you can mitigate its impacts on your operations by deploying an uninterrupted power supply (UPS) for your computers and networking equipment.

## UPS For Network Equipment

Also known as a battery backup, a UPS provides backup power in case of outages. It also protects against power surges, which don't just damage computers, but also make you lose unsaved work.

Deploying UPS units for Wi-Fi routers and modems allows you to stay connected to the internet when the power goes out unexpectedly. This strategy works particularly well if your employees use laptops, as that means you only need power for your Wi-Fi gear.

UPS-supported modems or routers help you stay online for as long as 90 minutes, which should be enough time to get your bearings before power finally runs out. With a UPS, you will still have a fast, reliable Wi-Fi connection so you can perform your tasks, save important files, and keep serving customers.

Without a UPS, your staff may have to rely on cellular data to do their work, which is not only less reliable than Wi-Fi, but also more expensive. You may even incur additional telecom costs resulting from over reliance on cellular data.

## UPS Systems vs. Generators

Although generators are indispensable for certain businesses, they also require greater upkeep. If you invest in generators, you'll need to employ an entire team to manage these pieces of high-maintenance equipment. This may not be something that a small- or medium-sized business can afford.

That said, generators can prove useful during extended blackouts, but UPS systems should be enough to keep your business running in the event of an emergency.

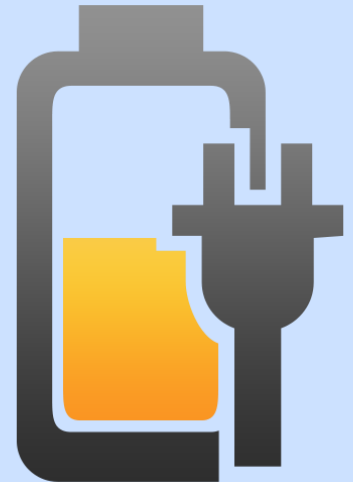
What's more, misusing or mishandling generators can result in fatalities. On the other hand, if you misuse a UPS unit or if it breaks down, the worst that could happen is you lose a day's work; it's unlikely that you'll experience anything life-threatening.

## Plug In Your Network Gear Now

If your business doesn't have locations in disaster-prone areas, you probably haven't given much thought to installing UPS systems for your desktop computers, let alone your modems and routers. But accidents and emergencies are inevitable — and when they happen, you'll find that having internet access is one of the most important things you need to ensure business continuity.

Think of a UPS as an investment that not just protects your systems from data loss, but also keeps your network equipment functioning in emergency situations.

To learn more about UPS systems and network equipment as well as backup and disaster recovery planning, give our team of IT experts a **call today at 561.969.1616**.





# PalmTech Tech Bytes

## Netflix Reveals The Formula That Led To Its Success



For the past 20 years, Netflix has steadily taken over the home entertainment industry. It went from a struggling DVD-to-home mailing company to an entertainment powerhouse that produces its own big-budget shows and movies in addition to its large library of third-party releases. Netflix co-founder Reed Hastings attributes the company's success to three areas: building talent density, increasing candor and reducing controls.

Hastings was forced to lay off a third of his staff during the dot-com burst in 2001. This left him with the highest-performing employees who truly loved their jobs. He encouraged these fantastic employees to openly speak their minds so they could make the best possible decisions to boost business and loosened his control by creating a more relaxed environment that would inspire innovation. Previous procedures delayed action, so he threw the rule book out and creativity began to surge. By gathering the best possible staff – and allowing them the freedom to do what they did best – Netflix's stock and popularity grew to unprecedented levels, where they remain to this day.

## The Real Reason Your Team Isn't Ready To Work



The pandemic caused many employers to allow their employees to work remotely. As we enter the second winter during COVID-19, fewer people have returned to the workplace, and

many wonder if they will ever return to the pre-pandemic work environment. The truth is that the virus has caused many uncertainties for people.



There's no telling if there will be more mandates in the future that will cause employees to stay working remotely. Many have changed how they handle childcare and would need time to make new arrangements if asked to return to work. Microsoft recently dealt with this, announcing a "return to work" date for its employees to eliminate any uncertainties. The company wants to find ways to ease people's minds before bringing them back into the workplace. The more comfortable your employees are, the better they will perform and the more likely they will be to stay with the company.

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