Paradigm
Computer Consulting

TechAdvisor Newsletter
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Your Small Business Technology Information Source!

This Issue:

Free Lunch & Learn June 4, 2015

We will be hosting a Free Lunch & Learn on June 4, 2015 from 11:30 am- 1:30 pm. The topic will be "The Paperless Office". The event will be hosted at 40 South River Rd. Unit 64, one of our Bedford New Hampshire locations.

The presenters will be Paul Unger and Greg Bray from Affinity Consulting Group. Please call our office for more details.

To register call 603-647-8614 or email: training@paradigmcomputer.com

About Paradigm

We are a technology consulting firm specializing in technology implementation and management for businesses. We're known for providing big-business, Enterprise-Level IT services to small and medium-sized businesses.

Visit us **online** at:
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The 3 Biggest Ways You Can Help Your IT Department

A reliable and skilled IT department is integral for the success of your business. If your IT team is burnt out, overworked, or dissatisfied, operations will suffer and your network will experience one IT emergency after another. Just as you expect your IT staff to use best practices, as a business owner, you need to manage your IT staff as best as you can in order to ensure that your network will operate at maximum efficiency.

Here are the three biggest things you can do to have a satisfied IT department, doing satisfying work for your company.

Promptly Fill Vacant IT Positions

While there are positions within your company that you can delay filling after someone leaves, IT isn't one of them. It's the responsibility of a technician to maintain your IT infrastructure, and it's likely the case that you've got just enough IT staff hired to perform just enough maintenance. Therefore, if one technician leaves, it's up to everyone else to pick up the slack.

In times like these, a good worker will rise to the occasion and pitch in extra hours to help cover the deficit. However, a worker going the extra mile is a two-way street; they will step up

Smartphones Call For Smart Security

We always talk about protecting your computers and servers from outside threats, but what about protecting your smartphones? There isn't much difference between a smartphone and a computer. They both function in very similar ways with access to a variety of apps, social media, and browsers. Your smartphone could hold much more valuable data than just contacts or text messages.

Fortunately, the average smartphone owner can take some steps toward protecting their data. Here's a list of steps you can take to prevent your data from being stolen right from under your nose.

What's My PIN Again?

More than half of the smartphone users in the United States don't set up passwords or security measures on their phone. Anyone can access a phone they find lying on the ground, especially if there isn't a passcode, or even a PIN. Make sure you use a code that's not easy to guess, or use pattern lock, a security measure which makes the user swipe a certain pattern on the screen before the phone is unlocked. You can also set up a SIM card lock, which will prevent someone from just taking the SIM card out of the system and installing it somewhere else.

Autoconnect? Why Not AutoProtect!

Most smartphone owners will agree that data plans are expensive and their browsing speed could be a bit faster. This is why many people opt for the autoconnect feature, which allows

The 3 Biggest Ways You Can Help Your IT Department

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and do what's needed only if they know that you're investing extra effort in finding an adequate replacement to cover the deficit. If they perceive that you're dragging out the hiring process in order to save money from having to hire a replacement (at the expense of their extra hard work), then they'll quickly become jaded and their work will show it. At the very least, if filling an empty IT position is taking longer than expected, then try paying your IT staff extra for their extra work. This move will help keep them happy and motivated.

Fight for Your IT Budget
As is the case with any position, the right tools are needed to properly do the job. This is especially true for IT. Unfortunately, when it comes time for businesses to make a budget, an administrator who doesn't see the big picture will be quick to cut funds to IT and/or not allocate new money to the department that corresponds with the company's growth. If your IT staff notices that other departments are being expanded (and they will because growth puts more stress on the network), and meanwhile, no new staff or solutions are being made available for IT, they will become demoralized and stretched thin by the increased workload and lack of help.

> *"Funding IT shouldn't be an afterthought. It needs to be a priority."*

Remember, a fully functional and motivated IT department will translate to increased productivity and success for all of your departments. Funding IT shouldn't be an afterthought. It needs to be a priority.

Outsource Short-Term Projects and Routine IT Maintenances
When your IT staff gets slammed with a short-term projects, or when they get bogged down having to do routine maintenances, they won't be able to put adequate time towards your company's technology initiatives meant to improve operations. Implementing new money-saving solutions like this is what motivates IT technicians; few techies signed up for the job because they dreamed of running backups as a kid.

Read more Online!
http://bit.ly/1HNeurk

Smartphones Call For Smart Security

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smartphones to connect to a wireless network in the vicinity. Any device that can send and receive data can have a potential security problem, and smartphones are no different.

That puts this data at risk of being compromised. You might connect to a network you don't want to be involved with, like an "evil twin" hotspot. These wireless connections might seem like legitimate connection spots, but in reality, they are only a connection put into place so hackers can steal your information. If you accidentally connect to one of these with autoconnect, be wary of the questions your connection might ask. If it requests any personal information, it is likely a trap, and you should disconnect immediately.

Bluetooth Got You Feeling… Blue?
Even though Bluetooth has a much shorter range than WiFi does, hackers are a crafty bunch. They've found ways to completely take over your phone, if they can get within range of your Bluetooth signal. These hackers can then proceed to make calls, listen to your conversations, access the Internet, and most important of all, access your data. You can prevent this by setting your default Bluetooth configuration to "non-discoverable," meaning that any devices in range of your smartphone will not be able to detect it. You should be especially careful around busy places with lots of activity, such as coffee shops or train stations, and ignore any unknown requests from devices you don't recognize.

Be Wary of New Apps
You know how excited you can get when dealing with a new app, especially if it's one that you have been trying to find for a long time. In that blissful rush, pay close attention to what your brand new app is asking you to do. Pay close attention to what permissions you are allowing it, and pay especially close attention to whether it asks for personal information or not.

Additionally, be careful while wirelessly accessing the Internet with your smartphone. It works just like a computer - if the URL displays "http" rather than "https://", do not enter personal information into the website. This means that it is not encrypted, and your data could be at risk if you are not careful.

Many companies use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to connect to a secure environment. If you would like to learn more about getting a VPN set up, contact Paradigm at (603) 647-8614. We'll figure out what the best solution is to your smartphone security needs!

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Windows Server 2003 Support Ends this July

July 14th is an important date in the business technology world. Why? Because it's a major land-mark for us-ers of Windows Server 2003. In just a few short months, Microsoft will no longer support this decade-old server operating system. Therefore, you must take steps to upgrade away from this server OS before it's too late.

You might recall the fiasco created by the Windows XP end-of-support date just last year. If you're one of the busi-nesses who waited too long to upgrade away from Windows XP, you know how stressful and irritating running an unsup-

ported operating system can be. We're hoping that you've at least heard about this fast-approaching Windows Server 2003 end-of-support date, but if you haven't, don't panic… yet. There's still plenty of time to upgrade your operating systems. You want to make sure you do so before you're left running with vulner-able and unsupported software.

If you have known about this end-of-support date for a while, you might have made arrangements to upgrade your servers to a more recent OS. In fact, un-like Windows XP, a recent survey by Avandade revealed that a whopping 80 percent of businesses who utilize Win-dows Server 2003 have already consid-ered or made plans to upgrade. This just goes to show that consumers handle technology in a vastly different manner than a business does.

Since the end of support date doesn't arrive for a few more months (on July 14th), there's still plenty of time left to upgrade. Whether or not you've started planning, it's important that you should-n't use Windows Server 2003 past July 14th. Up until the end of its support, Microsoft will provide patches and up-dates to the OS. However, past July 14th, this maintenance will cease to occur, meaning that your servers will be vulner-able to attacks from hackers. These hackers probably consider end-of-support dates as holidays, hoping to reap the benefits of catching business owners unawares.

Large corporations with well-funded in-house IT departments might not have much issue upgrading, but for the small

PDFs are Pretty Darn Fun

Do you want to go green by making your business paperless, or even just make it a goal to use less paper? If you get rid of paper, what are you going to replace your information receptacles with? The best digital alternative to pa-per is a popular file format known as PDF.

What is a PDF and How Can it Benefit My Paperless Strategy?
Despite its popularity, few people actual-ly know what PDF stands for, or what most file extensions stand for. The Port-able Document Format was created by Adobe more than 20 years ago, and over the course of two decades, Adobe's made great strides to improve the for-mat in order to meet the needs of the ever-changing business landscape. On

Adobe's official webpage, they describe PDF as:

An open standard for electronic docu-ment exchange maintained by the Inter-national Organization for Standardiza-tion (ISO). When you convert docu-ments, forms, graphics, and web pages to PDF, they look just like they would if printed. But unlike printed documents, PDF files can contain clickable links and buttons, form fields, video, and audio — as well as logic to help automate routine business processes.

When business owners think about going paperless, the primary goal is often "doing what it takes to go green." Grant-ed, improving the planet is a great moti-vation to replace paper with PDFs, and for the environmentally-motivated busi-ness owner, they may be pleasantly sur-prised to learn just how much more su-perior and efficient PDFs are to plain ol' paper. Here are just a few things that you can do with PDFs that you can't even

dream about doing with paper.

PDFs are Easily Editable
Even though PDF was originally de-signed for printing purposes, it has evolved to include rich editing features. The ability to edit a PDF comes in handy if you spot an important edit that needs to be made before printing. This editing feature can even serve as a word pro-cessor if you're in a pinch. As you know, editing already-written text on paper is much more difficult.

PDFs are Searchable
One huge advantage that PDFs have over paper is that they are searchable. Furthermore, thanks to PDFs being so widely used, virtually every content-generating app of value will allow the user to convert. . .

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Windows Server 2003 Support Ends this July

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and medium-sized business, it might be a problem; specifically, for those who have anywhere between 30-to-100 server units. Ian Stephan, HP's vice president and general manager for servers in EMEA, described this risk to V3.co.uk: For most small companies, it's a relatively simple transition. They are probably buying one or two servers every three or four years and the next server they buy will have an up-to-date operating system version. The customer that worries me is the one that has 30 or more servers, probably of mixed ages, and they may have heard something about the end of life deadline, but they may not be doing anything about it.

Naturally, the companies that are experiencing the most growth will be the ones who are affected most by the death of Windows Server 2003. With a medium-sized company, they likely have a small in-house IT team that takes care of general maintenance and upkeep. This team might be stretched thin and may find it difficult to take care of important tasks, like upgrading the OS. Additional-

ly, Stephan explains that these companies might also be running multiple servers with different operating systems installed on each one, making it tricky for these businesses to upgrade.

Thus, the SMB is "stuck in a rut," so to speak. They might not have the manpower to upgrade right away, and they might not have the luxury of switching out their server every couple of years. When this happens, running software that's over a decade old doesn't sound so farfetched. When an IT department is swamped with work, it's easy for necessary upgrades to be forgotten or pushed to the back burner. This is where Paradigm's managed IT services come in handy. We can handle the monitoring and maintenance of your mission-critical systems to ensure they're operating properly. This means integrating the latest upgrades and patches into your IT infrastructure, without the expensive surprise bill.

Granted, the SMB should understand that upgrading away from Windows Server 2003 is often more complicated than

simply refreshing your software. You might need to replace the hardware itself. After all, a server that's over a decade old isn't reliable, and anything could happen to it. Stephan makes this point to V3: "It probably means a box change for a lot of customers, not simply a reinstall, because the hardware is now so old it is no longer sufficient."

Such a project requires expertise, which is why letting Paradigm in on the upgrading fun is advantageous to your business. We can keep your IT staff caught up by making sure routine maintenances and hardware upgrades occur when they're supposed to. This lets you concentrate more on day-to-day operations, and essentially frees your team up for more important procedures and projects.

If you have any concerns over the upcoming end-of-support date for Windows Server 2003, give Paradigm a call at (603) 647-8614.

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We partner with many types of businesses in the area, and strive to eliminate IT issues before they cause expensive downtime, so you can continue to drive your business forward. Our dedicated staff loves seeing our clients succeed. Your success is our success, and as you grow, we grow.

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