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**Is Productivity a Part Of Your Technology Strategy?**



Every business is searching for ways to improve productivity. There are now quite a few methods being used to boost the amount that each employee can accomplish, many of which revolve around technology. Admittedly, some of these methods may not be attainable for the average SMB... yet. However, as technology advances you may find yourself able to leverage some of these productivity-enhancing tools to improve the look of your bottom line.

**Someday, You Could Have Smart Desks**

For instance, smart desks. By connecting to the company's local-area network, these Internet-of-Things workstations can track the behaviors of your employees to help improve their health. We've all heard that it is better for the human body to stand up than sit at their desks, but how many people actually do? A smart desk helps to solve this problem by alerting its occupant when to stand. Furthermore, smart desks can serve as a health monitor for an employee, allowing health issues to be caught preventatively, potentially reducing time out of the office and the amount of missed productivity.

On the topic of furniture, offering employees adjustable office furniture to use will reduce the amount of discomfort employees will experience as they attend to their responsibilities.

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**PASSWORDS** are like **UNDERWEAR**



- 1** Change them Regularly
- 2** Dont leave them on your desk
- 3** Dont loan them to anyone

**A strong password is your first line of defense!** Changing your password is more of a precautionary feature than actual security because, if someone has hacked you, they then have access to your data. Changing your password ends their access: thus by changing it regularly you limit the time attackers have to do damage. **Follow the link for a FREE poster of the above graphic!**

<http://dti.io/underwear>

**How Does Technology Consultation Help?**



Consultation is one of those words that you take for granted because you see it everywhere. Think about it, most businesses that provide a professional service offers some semblance of consultation. For the small business owner, can you really afford to pay premium prices to "experts" for them to give you their so-called professional opinion? Besides, what do service providers mean when they use the term "consultation"?

In the traditional sense, a consultation is a meeting to discuss a contracted issue. To that end the consultation provides the opportunity for a party that is dealing with problems to get a professional opinion about how to resolve that problem. This works wonders when you have a rash and go to the doctor, or if you have a wicked toothache and go see a dentist. These consultations typically result in near instantaneous relief of a problem, but for business owners that are suffering from inefficiencies, cost overruns, and other major operational problems, there is a good chance that there is a way to leverage technology and automation to eliminate any problems your organization could have.

At Directive, our consultants have a strong grasp on the technology the modern business uses to mitigate their inefficiencies. To that end, our consultants will perform a full network and infrastructure assessment that will give us a better idea of what kind of changes need to be made to your process, to your technology, or to your workflow.

Since you want your business to grow, we don't just look at how you can fix the problems you have, we make a comprehensive plan on how you can leverage technology to sustain the growth you want to see and eliminate downtime and other profit-sapping inefficiencies

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## Maintaining Your IT Is Easier With An MSP



Technology maintenance and management is one of the major pain points of all businesses, but it comes more

easily to large organizations that have large budgets. Unfortunately, small organizations are often left out, placing such an important aspect of managing their business on the back burner. How, then, can you take advantage of proactive IT maintenance without breaking your budget?

SMBs often have a lot of work on their plates due to having smaller workforces. Thus, something as important as IT gets put on hold in favor of the day to day responsibilities. The problem with that is if IT is not managed properly, it will result in downtime. One would think that adding a few heads to focus on technology management would be a solution, but adding salaries to your budget can be an expensive endeavor. Ultimately, there's a better way.

Before you consider hiring technical staff, let's have a conversation about

managing your technology so you don't need to put your focus on it. If you've been burned in the past by your regular computer repair person, we get it, which is why do things differently. Ordinarily, a business seeking computer support would suffer from what's known as break-fix IT. This is a type of maintenance that your business seeks out when it's suffering from broken technology.

***"Before you consider hiring technical staff, let's have a conversation about managing your technology so you don't need to put your focus on it."***

When your technology doesn't work properly, you will seek out assistance. The break-fix IT provider will then dispatch someone to resolve your problem. They will finish their work and you'll pay any support fees that you've accrued (sometimes this includes travel time, an hourly budget, parts, service fees, etc.). This type of IT maintenance is more reactive than proactive, as it responds only

when you are currently experiencing problems rather than preventing them in the first place.

At Directive, we pride ourselves on proactive IT maintenance. This type of managed service can remotely monitor and resolve most issues that your organization encounters before they evolve into bigger, more expensive problems. An example of this is actively monitoring your network for signs of hardware failure, then proceeding to assist you with replacing the problematic hardware before you deal with downtime. It's just one way that your business benefits from proactive IT maintenance.

Thus, as long as it's covered in your service level agreement, managed IT expenses will continue to be much easier to budget than the costs associated with break-fix technology maintenance. Outsourced IT services from Directive can be your first step toward optimizing your business' operations and taking the strain of IT management off of your capital budget. To learn more, reach to us!



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## How Does Technology Consultation Help?

*(Continued from page 1)*

over time. This IT roadmap can include hardware refreshes, software deployment, additions to network and physical security, and much, much more.

Our technicians understand how today's most dynamic IT systems can work to build efficiency. We also understand that there are plenty of products on the market to help you. That's why we put you beside some of the industry's best vendors to get you using reliable and powerful technology to benefit your business. Best yet, the problems you have day-in and day-out with your aimless approach to technology will quickly be replaced with a strategic technology plan that works for your business. Aside from our value-based

consultation service, some of the technology solutions we can provide your organization include:

- Full network and server management
- Network security monitoring
- Help Desk
- Hardware repair
- Hosted utility computing (cloud computing, hosted communications, etc.)
- Line-of-Business software (consumer relationship management, enterprise resource planning, etc.)
- Physical security solutions (access control, security cameras, etc.)

If you think you can get more out of your business, you are probably right! Call

Directive at 607.433.2200 today to make an appointment to meet with one of our knowledgeable representatives and get consulted on how to best move your business forward.

***"Best yet, the problems you have day-in and day-out with your aimless approach to technology will quickly be replaced with a strategic technology plan that works for your business."***



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## Is Productivity a Part Of Your Technology Strategy?

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### Yes, Television Can Be More Than a Distraction

If handled correctly, keeping a few televisions in the office can be a benefit to your employee's productivity. After all, they don't necessarily have to be playing an afternoon soap opera or reality show. Use a television to display important company matters, like upcoming meetings, deadlines, KPIs, sales wins, and other business subjects to keep goals and deadline top-of-mind for employees. In fact, these displays can even help to inspire a little friendly competition in the office, as different departments see each other being more productive and feel the need to measure up.

## How to Best Take Advantage of Data Backup



Some organizations want to better understand the process that they use to take backups of their data and re-

store them in the event of an emergency. This is great, because the value of being able to do so cannot (and should not) be understated. A proper data backup and disaster recovery system could be all that stands between prosperity and failure.

Let's consider a hypothetical disaster scenario. Your office is struck by a fire due to some sort of unforeseen circumstance. Maybe an outlet is overloaded and stray sparks start a small fire, which quickly evolves into a raging inferno. You evacuate your building, so all of your employees are safe and sound, but can the same be said for your technology?

Even if the fire is quickly contained, if your networking equipment or server is damaged, you are looking at a major downtime event--especially if you don't have data backup.

The same can be said for any sort of natural disaster. Floods, hurricanes, and

There's also a lot to be said about the value of video conferencing. If an employee needs to be two places at once--like in a critical meeting while also across the country attending an important conference--a video conferencing program can allow them to do both.

### Work Smarter to Work Harder

Of course, there are plenty of other tools available to make being productive a simpler prospect for your employees. Automation can eliminate manual tasks to free up resources. After all, the more time an employee has to spend initiating a data backup or some other day-to-day, critical, but time-consuming task, the less time they can spend producing some benefit for the company.

lightning can all cause irreparable damage to your infrastructure, and unless you're very careful with how you manage your data, you could lose everything that you've worked so hard to retain over the years. What is the best way to make sure that your organization survives not just ordinary circumstances, like hardware failure, but extraordinary ones like the aforementioned natural disasters?

The key is in your data backup and disaster recovery plan. Some small businesses might already have one put into place, but it's likely that they aren't up to par with the current needs of enterprise-level backup systems. Magnetic tape backup--the long-standing industry standard--has plenty of flaws which make it unappealing. For one, they can only be taken at the end of the day, or during a time when office is closed. The reason for this is that they are particularly resource-intensive, and taking them during the workday would have a negative effect on your ability to conduct business. Furthermore, since tape backups are only taken at the end of the day, you'll be losing an entire day's worth of data in the event of a disaster. Consumer-grade USB hard drives aren't a good fit either, because they can easily be lost, stolen, or ignored, and your backup

is only as good as its relevance. It is also crucial that your employees are working with the solutions that will benefit their productivity the most. This means that they aren't dealing with outdated hardware and software that experiences issues and hang-ups, and are equipped with the means to achieve optimal output. Ensuring that your technology is up-to-date and well-maintained can have a big impact to how well they work, and as a result, how well your workforce can do their jobs.

For help with creating a plan that ensures maximum productivity for your entire office, reach out to Directive.



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is only as good as its relevance.

That's not even mentioning what would happen if you stored your tape backups on-site. A fire isn't discriminatory in regards to what it destroys. It will devour both employee workstations and tape backups alike if given the opportunity. Furthermore, a hacking attack on your infrastructure could render any digitally-stored backups useless due to corruption or theft. Therefore, the most logical way to handle this issue is to simply store your data backups off-site. But how can you rapidly restore your backups following a disaster if they are nowhere near your site of operations?

A solution that puts an end to all of these woes is a cloud-based backup and disaster recovery (BDR) solution from Directive. BDR takes smaller backups as often as every 15 minutes to ensure that data loss is minimal, and it accomplishes this by taking backups of only files that have changed since the last backup was taken. This puts less strain on your infrastructure and protects your business' continuity. Furthermore, you eliminate the risk of user error, since BDR takes...



Read the Rest Online!  
<http://dti.io/databackup>

## Solid Vendor Management Leads To Solid Successes



In order to function properly, any business will need to procure certain pieces of equipment. Some of this equipment will be specialized to the business' purpose, while some will be the sort that may be more commonly found in offices everywhere. This equipment must be procured from somewhere, and this is where vendors come in--but who in your

organization is responsible for your vendor management? **A Two-Way Street** While you might consider your vendors to be an asset to your business, providing you with what you need to function, you have to remember that they are businesses as well. As a result, they are trying to profit from your relationship with them. However, the relationship between you and your vendor doesn't have to have nonreciprocal benefits.

Rather than attempting to undercut their businesses by seeking discounts and cost cuts, form partnerships with your vendors. Be open with your needs so that they may better serve them, and contribute resources that can assist the vendor in fulfilling those needs. Instead of looking at your relationship with your vendor as a business transaction, look at it in...



Read the Rest Online!  
<http://dti.io/solidvendor>

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.

## Crock-Pot Thursdays at Directive!

### Red, White and Blueberry Cobbler!



This week we took a little break from standing over the hot stove and enjoyed some cold wraps with side salads and chips (just incase we didn't get enough on the 4th of July). To cap-off our lunch, we all dove into a Brown Butter Blueberry Cobbler that is too good not to share!

Get the Recipes Here!  
<http://dti.io/blueberry>

### CPT—Take a Walk In Our Shoes: Mexican Stuffed Shells



We tried Mexican Stuffed Shells and Cheesy Jalapeno Corn Muffins. Have you ever wondered what it is like to be in our office on Crock-Pot Thursday? Today's video will take you for a walk in our shoes as we celebrate CPT!

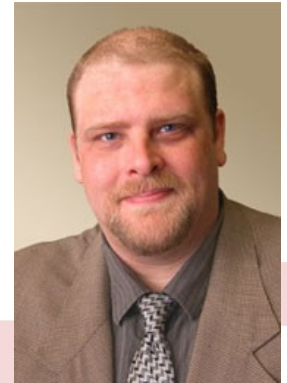
See The Video Here!  
<http://dti.io/tacoshell>

### Pre-Summer Chicken Salad Crock-Pot

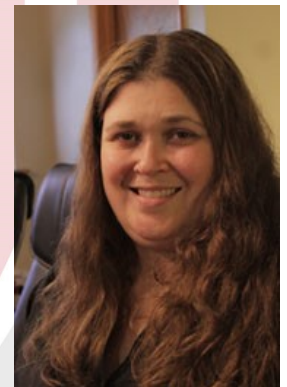


For today's Crock-Pot Thursday we tried our hand at Loaded Chicken Salad Wraps, Corn and Cucumber Picnic Salad, and Fresh Pasta Salad. See the recipes below to try them out for your summer celebrations!

Get the Recipes Here!  
<http://dti.io/chxsaladwraps>



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