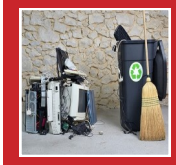
directive

TECHMinutes
March 2020
Your Small Business Technology Information Source!

This Issue:

Safely Dispose of Your Old Technology!



eWaste is a big problem for the environment, which is what makes recycling your old electronics so important. In 2019, we recycled a total of 1432 lbs. In 2020, we want to do more -- and you can help! Do your part to help the environment by bringing in your old and unwanted electronics for us to recycle. Learn more about our recycling program (and why it is so important) today!

Learn More Online!
https://dti.io/recycle

25+ YEARS IN BUSINESS est. 1993

Privacy Laws Are Changing Compliance

Most companies have some sort of regulation they need to stay compliant to, and 2020 seems to be a landmark year. This year, companies have to deal with end-of-life upgrades, the development of new privacy laws, as well as the existing regulatory landscape. Let's take a look at why compliance is important and what to expect in the year ahead.

Before we get into regulatory compliance, we should mention that compliance with company-wide regulations (that presumably you've set up for a reason) are not exempt when considering your business' compliance responsibilities. Knowing what mandates you need to adhere to provides a business the ability to build processes that work, manage their team's output more comprehensively, and promotes compliance with regulations that you don't have any say in.

Regulations to Meet

Most times, when we talk about needing stay compliant, we're talking about compliant with the ethics-based regulations that help define fair enterprise in society. Since organizations create, collect, and use data, and people are often greedy, regulations are an in place as a deterrent. They often come with the type of penalties that responsible managers want to completely avoid.

These regulations are governed by federal, state, and industry legislative bodies; and, if not met, can present major problems for an organization. Businesses can be fined, and depending on the regulation, worse.

(Continued on page 2)

Taking a Look at the Current Cybercrime Statistics

Organizational cybersecurity has to be a priority for every business. These days, companies are getting hacked left and right and being exposed to some of the very worst malware ever created. Today, we will take a look at some cybercrime statistics that will put in perspective just how damaging cybercrime is.

Ransomware Attacks

Ransomware is the kind of malware attack where the malware locks down files or whole computing systems while the perpetrators demand payment to unencrypt them. Victims are given a deadline to pay the ransom by. If no payment is made, ransomware-encrypted files will be destroyed. Some of the worst ones include Cryptolocker, WannaCry, and Petya.

In 2019, we saw businesses fall victim to ransomware once every 15 seconds, to the tune of $11.5 billion in losses. 66 percent of companies that were affected by ransomware cited spam and phishing as the predominant manners of deployment. What's remarkable is that nearly half of surveyed companies (48 percent) had been affected by ransomware in some way in 2017.

Denial of Service Attacks

Denial of Service (DoS) attacks and their more popular cousin, the Distributed Denial of

(Continued on page 3)

Promoting Profits: Collaboration

With most businesses looking to control costs, their decision makers need to find innovative new ways to do business. One way that many firms can increase productivity without raising costs is to promote a culture of collaboration. Today, we'll take a look at some of the useful technology that businesses can leverage to improve their output.

Of course, a small amount of collaboration is necessary for a business to run. Different departments control different aspects of a business' operations, and since each department collects useful information, by passing on said information to benefit another's ability to serve the company, you are collaborating. What we'd like to highlight today are some technologies used to promote project and service collaboration. Mastering these will make business more efficient and effective at meeting goals.

Demand

The demand for collaboration tools is quite possibly the most important concept when discussing them. What purpose do you have to think that collaboration improvements would alter the value that output has to your business? Many businesses have a lot of moving parts and few resources in which to accomplish them. They need to collaborate just to have viable products to offer their customers.

With more and more businesses hiring remote employees and outsourcing some of their work to non-employees, there needs to be tools in the center that can allow remote and gig-economy workers to work with the staff that is on hand to produce the desired product or service. Let's take a look at some of the technology that small and medium-sized business decision makers are looking at to help fuel necessary collaboration:

Integration

One major trend you are beginning to see organizations take advantage of is integration. Integration is the act of paying development teams to create software bridges with other software in order to promote efficiency. Software has been a big part of business for decades, but today, the pure supply of software development professionals makes it viable for an organization to create integrations with core pieces of line-of-business software in order to take full advantage of their technology investments...

Read the Rest Online!
https://dti.io/collab

Privacy Laws Are Changing Compliance

(Continued from page 1)

Your Rules

Staying compliant with your internal regulations may not carry with them the penalties that failing to remain compliant with federal, state, industry, or local regulations do, but since presumably your organization's decision makers came up with the regulations for a reason, not staying compliant can have a negative effect on your business' operational effectiveness.

Push For Data Privacy

Over the past few years, consumers have become more active in their attempts to take control over their personal information. Most regulations have been concocted to protect against abuse of power. In the case of individual data privacy, there is now a pretty consistent push by regulatory bodies to circumvent the misuse of individual data. This has been met with resistance from major technology companies that have been using personal information to improve their products for years.

The first main data privacy regulation was enacted in the European Union a couple of years back. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) basically just shifted the power of data to the European consumer for the very first time. Today, its prevalence is forcing businesses, that typically used consumer data with impunity, to make serious adjustments in the way that they manage their consumers' data.

Additionally, the establishment of the GDPR has brought the issue to the forefront in many other parts of the world. In the United States, for example, there are currently several proposed regulations that would shift the way that companies can use an individual's data. The Customer Online Notification for Stopping Edge-Provider Network Transgressions (CONSENT) Act is currently a proposed law in the U.S. that would grant stronger privacy rights to individuals. If the Act passes, any business website or app would have to get consent before using, sharing, and selling individual's data with opt-in agreements rather than the standard opt-out clauses you find on websites today. They'd have to enhance their systems for monitoring the type of data they collect on website visitors; and, best yet, they'd have to provide a detailed list of data collected and its use to the company.

While the CONSENT Act would be a major shift in the ways that companies in the U.S. would be regulated online, it's not the only proposed law. Another proposed law, the Data Acquisition and Technology Accountability and Security (DATAS) Act would create a federal standard for breach notification. Currently, each state has its own version, but under the DATAS Act, if you were a victim of a corporate data leak, they would have a mandated responsibility to notify you...

Read the Rest Online!
https://dti.io/makeover

Taking a Look at the Current Cybercrime Statistics

(Continued from page 1)

Service (DDoS) attack are extremely common. In fact, they are the most common type of cyber attack. To carry out a DDoS attack hackers will use automated resources to flood a target with the aim to take them down. Today, with the amount of Internet of Things devices that are present, the DDoS attacker can gain access to these devices and have them all access the same webpage at once. The amount of traffic takes down the website.

March 5, 2018 saw the biggest DDoS attack in history, which was clocked at a whopping 1.7 TB/s; and, fortunately for the ISP that was being hacked, wasn't successful at taking the company offline. The average cost of a DDoS attack averages between $20K-to-$40K per hour, or slightly less than what the average American worker makes per year. More than that, DDoS attacks cost UK businesses over £1 billion in 2019.

Man-in-the-Middle Attacks

When you are a victim of a Man-in-the-Middle, the integrity of any communications you are having with another entity has been compromised. This means that any personal data, financial information, or business correspondence can be intercepted, redirected, or changed and sent through. The negative situations of this type of hack are about limitless; and, since the man-in-the-middle attacks are comparatively simple to conduct, more and more are taking place each day.

Most servers are still vulnerable to this kind of hack. In fact, as of 2016, 95 percent of HTTPS servers were still under threat from MitM attacks. The main reason they are deployed is to get personal or business information that isn't readily available. This includes log-in credentials, bank transfer information, or payment card information.

Email Spam (Phishing)

Today, the biggest threat to any company is the phishing attack. A phishing attack is a form of social engineering where hackers create correspondence of some sort (email, instant messages, social media posts, etc.) with the aim...

Read the Rest Online!
https://dti.io/cybrcrime

Vendor Management Saves You Time and Money

The small businesses that rely on technology typically logs a lot of phone time with technology vendors. Decision makers that may not know more than the average person about IT can be left making important technology decisions when they think they are just making financial decisions. Today, we're going to explain how they are different and what your next step is.

For the SMB, investment in IT fuels growth in productivity. That demand is exactly why there are so many vendors looking to call small business owners to offer their products and services. Unfortunately, all that time spent on the phone or shooting emails back-and-forth is costing your business plenty. What they need is someone that knows IT and knows the ins-and-outs of your business. Enter the Virtual CIO.

What is a Virtual CIO?

The Virtual CIO service provides a business a professional point-of-contact for technology vendors. Using their expertise with business technology as a guide, a Virtual CIO makes deals that can save your business thousands; and, since it's outsourced, it does so without taking any resources away from business operations.

The value of a Virtual CIO is that your business gains the technical expertise needed to make smart (and strategic) IT investments, and you get the insulation that comes from not being bothered by dozens of different vendors all the time. The service allows business owners to focus on their business, not their IT.

Vendor Management By the Pros

Have you been bamboozled by a vendor into a lengthy agreement? Are you paying too much for utilities or bandwidth? A Virtual CIO service provides comprehensive vendor management that could work to save your organization thousands on unnecessary costs.

At Directive, our vendor management service will help you:

- **Consolidate vendors:** Often times businesses will test products by working with multiple vendors. If they are comparable, you should consider moving to one vendor rather than several, making the process of handling all of your products much easier as a whole.
- **Measure vendor performance:** It can take time to measure vendor performance, but the time you spend will easily be made up when you eliminate vendors that aren't providing adequate services.
- **Implement a vendor management service:** When you have a single point of contact for all of your vendors, you'll find that it's easier and more effective to work with them. We can handle your contracts, performance analyses, relationship management, and vendor risk to keep your technology working as intended.

Why not stop wasting time and money and call the IT professionals to take control over your technology and utility vendors with our vendor management service. Call Directive today at 607.433.2200 for more information.

Share the Article!
https://dti.io/vendormgmnt

Employee Spotlight: Richard Purdy

Directive is proud to count Richard Purdy as one of our own! We here at Directive would like to shine a spotlight on Richard Purdy and thank him for all that he has done for us at Directive.

Mr. Purdy is one of Directive's gifted web designers. He grew up in Chazy, New York, a small town just shy of the Canadian border on the northern end of Lake Champlain.

After completing his secondary schooling, Richard ventured south and attended college in Directive's hometown of Oneonta, New York.

He graduated from SUNY Oneonta; obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Arts with a Minor in Creative Writing in 2016. Just before his graduation from SUNY Oneonta, Mr. Purdy put in an application for Directive, and we are glad he did as he has become a valuable member of our team.

Outside of work, Richard enjoys games of every nature and watching anime. He also helps run an entertaining Dungeons and Dragons podcast. He also enjoys reading and recommends Kotaku publications as they are full of game-related news and interesting articles.

Before he gets too old to truly enjoy it, Richard hopes to travel somewhere exotic, somewhere that wouldn't usually come to mind when considering vacation destinations.

Directive is glad to be able to create such positivity and satisfaction in Mr. Purdy and hopes that he continues to enjoy his time as an employee of Directive!

Simple Practices to Secure Your Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi has swiftly become one of those amenities that we just expect to have, including in the workplace. While it does make work around the office more convenient, it should not be at the cost of your security. To help prevent this, we're reviewing a few key Wi-Fi security considerations to keep in mind.

Don't Rely On It For Your Security

Regardless of how secure your network purports to be, it doesn't hurt to continue subscribing to best practices when it comes to maintaining your security -- in fact, it could very well hurt you not to do so. Wi-Fi in particular isn't the most secure method to use out of the box, so you should always be sure to support what you use with additional protections and security measures. For example, you should always incorporate encryption to help protect your traffic, something that you need to make sure is done, because your traffic won't be secure otherwise.

You should also follow general browsing best practices at all times, just as an added precaution. Avoid websites that lack the 's' in https, as that 's' stands for secure.

Protect Your Wi-Fi With Good Passphrases and Practices

At this point, most people are at least aware of what makes a bad password: the usual suspects, including:

- Simple and common words and letter combinations being used...

Read the Rest Online!
https://dti.io/towwifi

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.

Chris Chase
Solutions Integrator

Charlotte Chase
Solutions Integrator

Directive

330 Pony Farm Road
Suite #3
Oneonta, NY 13820
Toll-Free 888-546-4384
Voice: 607-433-2200

Visit us **online** at:
newsletter.directive.com

newsletter@directive.com
facebook.directive.com
linkedin.directive.com
twitter.directive.com
blog.directive.com
instagram.directive.com