directive

# TECHMinutes

**April 2022**

*Your Small Business Technology Information Source!*

## This Issue:

Growth of Artificial Intelligence is the Next Big IT Trend

IoT Strategies that Won't Put Your Business at Risk

Is Chrome Slowing Down Your Computer?

Computer Parts and Hardware are Getting Harder to Get!

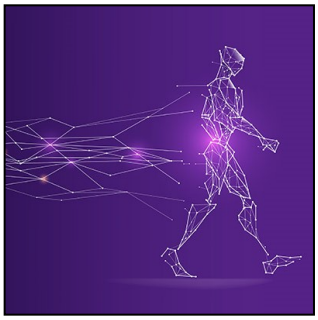
Technology That You Don't Need to Pay Attention To

How to Optimize Your Google Business Profile: Part 1

Employee Spotlight: Brian Bickos

March 21st was World Down Syndrome Day. To show their support, our techs each wore their own pair of crazy socks. The #LotsOfSocks campaign helps get people talking. Together, we can help organizations like Pathfinder Village advocate and strive for greater inclusivity.

## Growth of Artificial Intelligence is the Next Big IT Trend



For better or worse, the way information technology is being used has come to define the way that businesses run. The most noteworthy companies are the ones using their data to their advantage and utilizing cutting-edge tools to facilitate efficient processes and productivity while managing their costs. One technology is giving more and more organizations the freedom to accomplish their goals and automate more of their mundane processes: Artificial Intelligence

### AI Explained

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the incorporation of technologies that learn as they are used. Today's AI aren't sentient cyborgs ready to serve (or exterminate) human beings, but that doesn't mean the current AI isn't useful—It can do a lot for a small business, but it usually comes in the way of a feature rather than a whole platform.

For the enterprise business, AI is now a fully-fledged option for a lot of tasks, but for the small and medium-sized business (SMB) there is less to be done. Why? It's simple, AI, as

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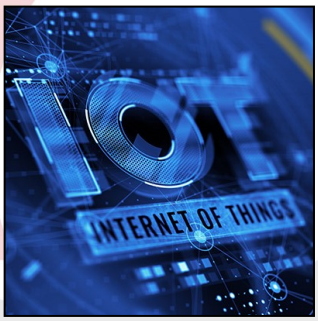
## IoT Strategies that Won't Put Your Business at Risk




The Internet of Things is growing at a rapid pace, and you have to take it into account if you want to maintain a safe and effective office infrastructure. Thankfully, you don't have to do this alone; we're here to help you with three key tips to help you get the most out of your Internet of Things devices without putting your organization at risk.

### Consider Their Functionality

When it comes to the Internet of Things, there are countless opportunities to implement new solutions for your organization. Many appliances, for example, would now be considered Internet of Things devices, as they can connect to the Internet to make controlling them much easier and more efficient. Certain tasks can even be automated through the use of Internet of Things devices. Whatever you decide to use the IoT for, be sure that it is contributing to your operations in a meaningful way.

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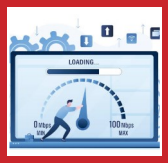
### Is Chrome Slowing Down Your Computer?



Are you having issues with your computer slowing down, yet you cannot solve the problem despite all of your trouble-shooting? Before you throw your PC out the window and purchase a new one, there may be an unexpected culprit causing your computer to be sluggish: your Chrome browser. Here's how you can tell if Chrome is the cause of your computer woes and what you can do to manage it better...

**Read the Rest Online!**
**https://dti.io/chromeslow**

## About Directive

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:
**newsletter.directive.com**

## Your Business Can Do More With the Right Managed IT Services

Your business adds more and more technology every year and if you don't have the support you need for all that new technology, sooner or later it will cause some serious problems for your business. Improperly managed technology is the number one cause of lengthy downtime incidents that can cause inefficiency and cost your business a lot of money.

At Directive, we offer value-rich Managed IT Services that can significantly reduce technology-induced downtime, give you access to certified IT technicians, and provide the peace of mind that allows you to keep your focus on your business, rather than the resilience and reliability of your technology.

**Managed IT Is More than Computer Repair**

Proactive services keep your technology running as it should

One of the largest causes of inefficiency for a business is operational downtime; and it costs you much more than you may think. We keep Upstate New York businesses up...

**Read the Rest Online!**
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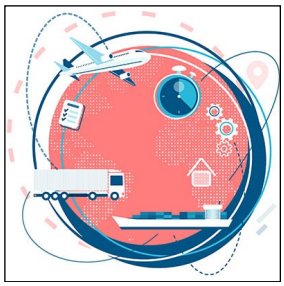
# Computer Parts and Hardware are Getting Harder to Get!



Prices are going up and it's taking longer to get the hardware you might need for your business. Here are some things that might help. Prices are going up and it's taking longer to get the hardware you might need for your business. Here are some things that might help.

The latest obstacle for small businesses isn't exactly new, it's been a growing issue since the start of the pandemic, but it's definitely catching up to local businesses in a big way now; the global chip shortage.

### Pass the Chips, Please

Call it supply chain issues, call it a chip shortage, either way, it's starting to interfere with everyday life for a lot of people. Because of this massive phenomenon, ordering new PCs, laptops, and network equipment has gotten a little bit trickier, especially if you aren't willing to wait several weeks or months for the device you need.

**So how did this happen?**

It's complicated, but to sum it up, there was already a bit of a semiconductor shortage back in 2020. This isn't even the first semiconductor shortage we've seen historically. You can look all the way back to the late '80s and see that this sort of thing can happen from time to time.

Unfortunately, the complexities of COVID-19 accelerated the shortage. Suddenly hundreds of millions of people were buying or upgrading their home computers and manufacturing plants were outputting less product. This led to a huge deficit for a complex system that was already having a hard...

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**https://dti.io/chipsplease**

# Growth of Artificial Intelligence is the Next Big IT Trend

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useful and efficient as it is, is really expensive. Not only do you need strong hardware that runs AI, you also need support for it, meaning you need coders and other technicians that understand the ins and outs of how the technology works. There simply isn't a breadth of affordable and knowledgeable technicians available today. This is sure to change though.

### How Can My Business Utilize AI?

As mentioned previously, if a small business is going to utilize AI, it will likely do so as a
feature in another product. For the small business there are four places AI makes sense right now. They are:

**Customer Service/Support**

The development of chatbot technology using AI-integrated customer service representatives can not only save your business a lot of money on its support costs, it can build support availability that is difficult with human customer service representatives and can engage as well or better than many human customer service professionals. Chatbots are set up using frequently asked questions and typical answers and can learn how to interact with customers and give them the most appropriate response.

**Cybersecurity**

More people are utilizing digital means to make purchases today than ever before. This gives hackers and other threat actors the environment to take full advantage. AI can be used to review behavior patterns for users on all platforms of the digital construct...

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**https://dti.io/growai**

## IoT Strategies that Won't Put Your Business at Risk

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### Work to Optimize Security

One effective way to protect your infrastructure from IoT devices is to partition off a portion of it specifically for these types of devices. The reasoning for doing this is simple: IoT devices are typically not the most secure devices, and because of their nature, they tend to share data with each other. By setting up a network where they can thrive, you can protect the other, more important assets that your business holds. Furthermore, we recommend implementing some sort of access control for your IoT devices or protocol for bringing them to the workplace. This helps to limit the damage they can do should something happen.

### Are They Necessary?

Finally, the million-dollar question; are the IoT devices you want to implement even necessary for your business to thrive? The answer to this question is not always obvious and may take some diving to figure out, but the long and short of it is that the more connected devices are on a network, the more at-risk that network will be. It also means that the network will gradually grow and become more complicated as time wears on, and more complicated networks tend to experience greater numbers of problems. You should only be implementing IoT devices on your network if they are providing you a real return on your investment or are sufficiently streamlining operations.

Directive can help your business ensure that the Internet of Things doesn't sink your business in any sense of the word. Whether you are simply trying to protect your infrastructure or streamline operations, we can help you determine the best path forward for your business. To learn more, reach out to us at 607.433.2200.

**Share this Article!**
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## Technology That You Don't Need to Pay Attention To

The most successful businesses are those that are always seeking to improve what they offer—oftentimes, taking a successful element and simply making it more efficient to deliver. In the past, this basically meant that businesses needed to have their employees work more quickly. However, today's improved technology and the automation that it makes possible have delivered a much more consistent option.

Automation is the strategy that many modern solutions incorporate to assist them in being more productive. Basically, rather than relying on the user to carry out a (usually rote, but necessary) task, software kicks in to activate the process without any additional input. As our technology has improved, the capabilities that these solutions offer have increased and allowed greater and greater processes to be automated. As you can imagine, this helps businesses see a better return by optimizing how their time is spent, freeing up their employees to work on revenue-generating tasks.

### Automation in Action

The kind of tasks that are being automated are the kind that aren't the most effective way that an employee could spend their time. Applied to save time, automation can be beneficial to your entire company, with benefits that build consistency, efficiency, and even the job satisfaction of your workers. It really is no wonder that automation has seen the growth it has...

**Read the Rest Online!**
**https://dti.io/autotech**

## CYBERSECURITY TIPS

### Cloud Jacking

As more data and sensitive information are being kept in the cloud, the security risk of cloud jacking is something we all need to be aware of and protect against.

In this Micro Training video, learn about Cloud Jacking:
**https://dti.io/cloudjacking**

### *Get our Cybersecurity Tips to your inbox weekly!*

Each week we send an email with **FREE** cybersecurity tips to help you to avoid a data breach. These tips can be used to educate yourself and your employees on security best practices.

**Sign up today!**
**https://dti.io/gettips**

## REVIEW DIRECTIVE ON Google

We would ***love*** to hear your feedback, and would be incredibly grateful if you could take a couple of minutes to write a quick Google review for us. This will allow us to improve our service and let others recognize the value we provide.
***Thanks in advance!***

**https://directive.com/review**

## Marketing Ideas & Tips for Your SMB

# How to Optimize Your Google Business Profile: Part 1

When it comes to your business' visibility online, your search engine optimization (SEO) strategy plays an absolutely critical role. While SEO is influenced by a lot of different factors, we wanted to focus on one way you can boost it: your Google Business profile.

Let's go into how you can really shape your Google Business Profile listing to make the most use of its many available features.

### What is a Google Business Profile?

A Google Business Profile (GBP) is a business listing that you provide to Google to share in the search results and Google Maps. Previously known as Google My Business, and Google Places before that, your GBP enables you to share all of your business' most pertinent information and react to customer and client feedback—all in a convenient place for your audience to find you.

However, that's just the start of what makes a Google Business Profile—and a good one, at that—so important for your business to have...

**A QUICK DISCLAIMER:** A Google Business Profile is only available to a business that actually has contact with its clientele, whether that's in its own location or as a consultant that may visit a client's place of business. So, while your MSP consulting business shouldn't have a problem using this tool, it won't work if you want to publicize a property you have available for rent, or some other similar purpose.

**Read the Rest Online!**
**https://dti.io/googop1**

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
CEO

## Employee Spotlight: Brian Bickos

We offer a lot of services, not the least of which are our content services. In order to fulfill these blogs, we rely heavily on our content team, particularly Brian Bickos. This month, we wanted to recognize Brian for his efforts, and let you get to know him a little better.

Brian grew up in Bainbridge and Unadilla, NY, and attended Broome Community College and Binghamton University. We managed to get him on our team just as we began offering our syndicated content services, after he had spent a few years writing for the local publication The Daily Star. Now, he's one of the talented copywriters we have on our team, and serves as the coordinator of our syndicated content. It is largely through his efforts that our current content services exist.

When he isn't writing for us, Brian enjoys a variety of hobbies that range from golfing to cooking (and eating what he cooks) to history to the cinema. Otherwise, he spends time on his own writing projects, and with his two dogs—11-year-old Isabella and two-year-old Persephone—and cat, Murphy, age five. In addition to publishing some of his personal projects, Brian would like to travel, seeing Paris, Venice, and Istanbul, and hitting the links at St. Andrews in Scotland.

In the meantime, however, we're glad to have Brian here with us as a part of our makeshift family. Thank you for everything you do for us, Brian, and for being yourself the entire time!

Charlotte Chase
COO


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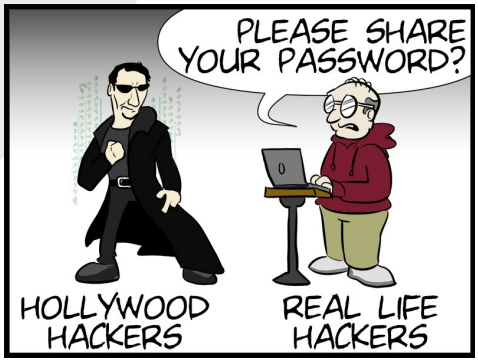
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