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### Ransomware Attack on NY Medical Billing Firm Impacts Nearly a Million People



We keep hearing about major ransomware attacks and data breaches, but it never feels good when

something is hit close to home. Unfortunately, that's the case as a recent cyberattack hit a New York medical billing company that impacted more than 942,000 people and 26 healthcare organizations.

The NY-based billing company Practice Resources, LLC (PRL) had to...



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## 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.

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## What Every Business Owner Needs to Know About Security Training



The effectiveness of your business' IT security is largely contingent on how your IT operates. As a result, it is extremely important to ensure that your staff understands the role they play in protecting your business' assets. This month, we discuss what you should prioritize when putting together a security training platform; an essential part of any business' attempts to keep their IT secure.

### Security Posture

One term you may have heard is "security posture". This speaks to how aggressive a person is in protecting themselves online. Much of today's computing is done through cloud-based apps and many companies have embraced remote workforces and need their staff to actively participate in their organizational cybersecurity efforts. This means tightening up their security practices.

Every person that uses computing systems needs to actively participate in cybersecurity efforts if the organization is going to maintain data and network security. Here are four considerations that can help you plot out your cybersecurity strategy.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Collaboration is More than Just Meetings



Most business owners are looking for a way to cut their costs. One way that many firms can see some cost reduction is to increase productivity through solid collaboration. Today, there are many digital tools designed to get more eyes on a project, but they may not completely fit your strategy. Let's look at some strategies that are used to promote collaboration, and some tools that can fuel these enhanced collaborative efforts.

Every business needs some small amount of collaboration to operate. After all, most people wouldn't get paid without some collaboration. People from different departments always need to work together to make workflows move efficiently, get projects done on time, and create reliable revenue streams. Therefore, the demand for tools that integrate collaboration options is extremely high.

### Video Conferencing

Some of the most helpful (albeit insecure) apps during the COVID-19 era and beyond were the video conferencing apps. They effectively allow teams to meet at the click of a button. This technology was valuable for businesses that had remote workers before, but since over 20% of businesses moved from onsite workers to having completely remote workforces basically overnight, businesses know how to better leverage it now. Additionally, many VoIP platforms come with video conferencing functionality.

Some of the most important features of a video conferencing solution include:

- Screen sharing
- Instant messaging and group chat features

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## IT Help Desk Can Be Incredibly Valuable

Every business has the occasional computer problem. Like any other machine it needs constant maintenance to work as intended. When you are working in a productive environment, IT problems can really damage your business' ability to conduct business. One solution to what seems like endless computer issues is the presence of an IT support help desk. Let's take a look at a couple of benefits that having a help desk solution in place can have for a small business.

### Improved Efficiency

Every business wants to run efficiently. In order to do so there has to be a campaign to minimize obstructions. If your staff is forced to stop and start and wait for IT support to come, you are not only paying more than you should for IT support, you are paying for downtime. A help desk eliminates those problems by allowing staff to have direct access to around-the-clock technicians that can help mitigate any technical computer issue they may encounter. More than that, there is a record of all transactions to ensure transparency of what is going on with your company's hardware and software...



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## New Tech Making Business Tools More Dynamic



For all the events that have made business more difficult over the past several years, you probably wouldn't be

surprised to learn that businesses have been more open to change the way they do things if it means that they can meet the demands placed on them by the market. These days, there are some technologies that will be a big part of business headed forward, but you may think that they are out of your business' price range. Think again. Let's take a look at three robust technologies and how you can use them in your business.

### Artificial Intelligence

If there is a technology that is synonymous with the future it is artificial intelligence. The question is: what business wouldn't want to automate the things that don't help pull in revenue? The fact is that up until recently people handled a lot of the tasks that today's

AI-integrated software is more than capable of handling. This can not only significantly cut your costs, it can put your business in an advantageous position going forward.

Of course AI, being the top industry buzzword, covers a lot of ground. There are AI-based solutions that work for any type of business. For manufacturers that depend on creating quality products, there are AI systems that can scan and evaluate their work, rather than paying a team of quality assurance specialists to do it. As flaws are reported, the software learns more and more about the products, providing terrific QA without the massive expense.

Many different types of businesses lean on their supply chain and another way artificial intelligence is being used is to control inventory and track resources. By automating resource-intensive processes, your business can focus more...



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## What Every Business Owner Needs to Know About Security Training

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### Get Employees to Relate

Educating a bunch of people (who don't work in security) to learn about something as yawn-inspiring as network security isn't impossible, but it takes a little creativity. If someone can relate to a victim, it's easier for them to do things they wouldn't typically do because they don't want to be responsible for another. Use real world examples in your education materials. Chances are some of them have been the victim of identity theft or they've had their data leaked as a result of negligent behavior. Show them that many of the things they can do to protect the company are things that they already do to protect their own data.

people, it is that people are impressionable. If they are constantly surrounded by a certain message, they will typically accept that message. Creating a company culture that is rooted in security will do a lot of the heavy lifting for you. If your company consistently pushes the need for comprehensive security, you better believe that most of your staff will get the message loud and clear.

### Provide Consistent Training and Test Regularly

Pushing security can go a long way, but without training that is designed to educate around exactly the problems being addressed by the procedures that are put in place, the whole thing is...



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### Continuously Promote Security

If history has taught us one thing about

## Collaboration is More than Just Meetings

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- HD Video
- Recording
- Multiple-webcam options
- Encrypted file sharing

Video conferencing may be the tool your business has been waiting for without even knowing it.

### Collaboration Apps

There are new collaboration apps that have been developed with so many integrations that you can basically pick the tools you use inside the collaboration app itself. These apps are part online forum, part instant messaging platform. The combination of the two—and the addition of dozens of integrations—make available a centralized communication platform for project and service management, alike.

### Productivity Suites

The productivity suite has been around

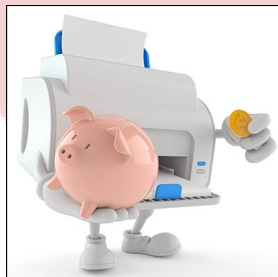
for decades. Today's productivity suite isn't your dad's platform, however. The modern productivity suite provides secure cloud storage, sharing, and sync; email; collaborative word processing, spreadsheets, presentation creation; and more. These productivity suites are generally managed by the provider, which adds useful benefits.

The modern productivity suite is the epitome of collaborative innovation for the modern business. If your business would like to learn more about how to build more collaborative processes, or if you simply want to talk to one of our knowledgeable consultants about getting the technology you need to be more successful, call us today at 607.433.2200.



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## How to Determine the Costs Associated with Your Printing



Sad to say, but for the foreseeable future, cost control is going to be the number one priority for almost

every business. With the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic still lingering, and revenue streams interrupted, many businesses are still being extremely cautious with their capital. One place where most businesses can cut back is on printing. Let's discuss how to cut your organization's printing costs.

### Outlining the Metric That Will Save You Money

If yours is a business that typically relies heavily on printing, you probably pay a lot for ink/toner. It makes up for a large portion of any business' printing costs. If your business uses color printers, this cost skyrockets. A metric that can help you ascertain exactly what your printing

costs are is cost-per-page. It basically takes all your print-related costs and divides it by the number of prints you can get with all your printing resources.

### How to Calculate the Average Cost-Per-Page

To calculate the average cost per printed page all you need to do is divide the price of your ink/toner by the cartridge yield rating. This can be found on the packaging.

\$22 on a cartridge of black ink with a yield of 518 pages, your formula would look like this...

$$22/518 = 0.042$$

...giving you a cost of about 4 cents per page.

Of course, not all ink cartridges you use are the same. Your organization may...



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## CYBERSECURITY TIPS

### Gaming Security Tips for Kids and Parents

Online gaming is wildly popular and should be a fun experience for people of all ages. While gaming is intended for harmless fun, scammers are using online games as another avenue for their tricks.

<https://dti.io/gamesec>

### 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.

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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 3



Your business' online web presence is directly related to how extensive your

SEO strategy is. As you by now know, a good way to improve and manage your SEO is your business' Google Business profile.

We're further exploring what you'll need to keep in mind when setting up your Google Business Profile so that you are utilizing it to the fullest.

#### A Google Business Profile Gives Businesses a Lot of Utility

In setting up a Google Business Profile, you can use it to throw information at the people who are most likely to be interested in what you have to offer, or you can inform your audience of changes in your hours.

#### Your Google Business Profile

gives you another place to share information and events. Your customers can also share their impressions of your business—including pictures—which hopefully helps to motivate you and

your team into providing the highest possible standards of customer service to ensure that any social proof generated on your GBP is positive.

On the functional side of things, the GBP also gives you another place to shape your business' branding the way you wish. You will have full control over the messages you share and have the benefit of improved traffic...



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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.

### Employee Spotlight: Ken Echard

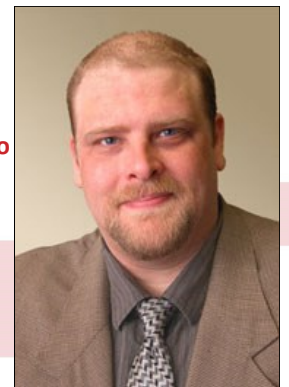


We aren't exactly quiet about the fact that our success as a managed service provider is largely due to the talents of the people we've assembled to form our team. We're always happy to brag about these talents, highlighting the people behind the services we provide. This time, we wanted to focus on our Lead Software Developer, Ken Echard.

As our lead software developer, Ken is often dealing with programming challenges—relishing these challenges and savoring the feeling of accomplishment that solving them brings. He also enjoys the fact that the company is built to be flexible with his hectic personal life, and that the care that Directive has for its employees as an organization is so apparent.

When he isn't working his magic for Directive, Ken can be found using his skills on personal projects, designing and programming games based on his own experience with new releases and market research. Otherwise, he's plenty busy spending time with his family, taking his kids to the playground, watching plenty of Disney movies (he's personally a fan of science fiction, fantasy, and horror), or treating them to some ice cream confections.

Someday, Ken wants to put some of his more complicated ideas for a game into practice. We'll be the first to say that it's a game that some of us would certainly like to play! Thank you, Ken, for all you do for us!



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