This Issue:

Holiday Hours!

We will be closed Wednesday, December 25 and Thursday, Decmber 26. We will also be closed Wednesday, January 1 and Tuesday, January 2. We will reopen on Friday. January 3 with normal business hours.

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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Seasons Greetings

The 4 Fundamentals to IT Security

At a recent security event, VP of Gartner Neil MacDonald broke down the fundamentals of IT security into four categories, "Information security was never about device lockdown, or dictating applications, or building firewalls. It was always about protecting the confidentiality, the integrity, the authenticity, the availability of information." Here's a closer look at these four security qualities.

Data Confidentiality

One of the biggest roles of IT security is protecting sensitive information, especially concerning the data that needs to be kept confidential. In a company's IT network, sensitive data is exchanged between multiple parties like customers, employees, and even yourself. You will want to have strong protections in place to assure that only the people meant to see the information will be able to access it. For example, only your accounting department should be able to view your employees' bank account information. A breach in data confidentiality will put victims at risk of identity theft and make your business liable for damages.

Here are six examples from Cornell University of data that your business needs to keep confidential.

- Data used to uniquely identify people.
- Data used to pay or reimburse people.
- Data used to provide employment benefits.
- Data used to support business-related travel and lodging.
- Data used to understand the financial status of a person.
- Data used to fulfill obligations to the government.

Data Integrity

Data integrity doesn't refer to the truthfulness of information, but rather, data integrity is about maintaining and assuring the accuracy and consistency of data over its life-cycle. An IT network that's been properly maintained and upgraded will have no problem accessing a file created back when the company was running Windows 98. Poor network security is shown when files are lost and unintended changes happen to the data during an upgrade, hardware failure, situation of malicious intent, or regrettably, human error.

Protect Your Business with Intelligent Surveillance Cameras
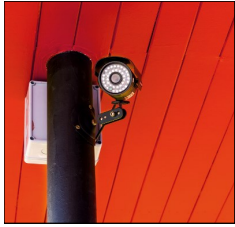
The world you do business in is a pretty dangerous and messed up place, and things always seem to be getting worse. Thankfully, security technology is improving, which helps offset the risks of living in a perilous world. You can take advantage of these security improvements by installing intelligent surveillance cameras for your business. Here are four intelligent surveillance camera features that will help you sleep better at night.

Motion and Light Detection

One of the biggest advantages of using digital surveillance is that you don't have to record 24 hours of useless footage, followed by having to waste time fast forwarding it in order to find anything relevant. By having an event trigger the recording, intelligent surveillance cameras have the ability to only record what's important.

Two convenient actions that can trigger an intelligent surveillance camera to record are motion and light. Many intelligent cameras will allow you to set parameters in the viewing area so that only the movement within the important area of the frame is captured. This can come in handy if you only want to record the cars pulling into your parking lot, and not the traffic on the street. Light detection is another handy feature that can trigger a recording, which is a great way to record people walking into a dark room or burglars using flashlights.

Timer Settings

Because digital surveillance cameras tie into your computer network, you can take advantage of software that gives you a bounty of customizable surveillance options. One convenient option is to program your cameras to automatically record during certain time periods. This saves you the hassle from having to manually hit record before going home for the night. Additionally, by taking advantage of cloud computing services for your company's network, you can even

access the surveillance software away from the office. This will allow you to adjust the timer settings and even view live footage from the comfort of your safe home.

Alarm Detection

With intelligent cameras protecting your property, you can set up your surveillance system to only record when the security alarm is triggered. This option will appeal to business owners that already have a great security system in place and are looking for a way to capture the events causing your security system to go off (like locking yourself outside the building), instead of having to record hours of uneventful footage.

Facial Recognition

It sounds like a technology out of science fiction movie, but now you can use intelligent surveillance cameras to equip your business with facial recognition security. Digital cameras have enough resolution that they can pick up distinguishable facial features and match them to faces

3 Ways Homeownership and Your IT Infrastructure are Similar
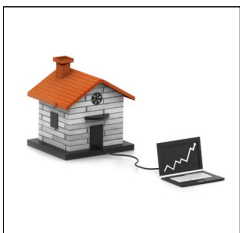
Your company's technology infrastructure is made up of several complex systems that all work together in order to keep your business running smoothly. Your IT infrastructure functions much in the same way as another type of infrastructure, your house. It's surprising how much you can learn about computer networking by looking at "This Old House."

One Infrastructure, Many Systems

If just one system of your house is out, then your day is ruined. For example, a building is made up of different systems like plumbing, electrical, heating and cooling, and more; if one of these sys-

tems were to go down, like plumbing, then you would technically be able to live in your house, but you would be highly inconvenienced having to use a chamber pot until the plumbing issue is resolved.

Your company's network is also made up of several different systems. The Internet gives your business a window to the world, and then you have the intranet that provides internal communications. Your network may also include other great systems like a fax and print server, a security solution, VoIP, and more, and while your business would be able to get by if one piece of your network were to go down, you would be highly inconvenienced and operations would be hindered--just like having to empty a chamber pot every morning.

The Different Systems are Interconnected

Your business might be able to limp along if one of your IT infrastructure's systems went down, but like the infrastructure of a house, the worst problems are the ones that take out the hubs where different systems interconnect. These problems can disable operations. In a house, this can be an essential piece of equipment like a boiler unit because it uses a home's different systems like water, electrical, and heating fuel, and if a home loses heating capabilities, then living in the home would be unbearable and you would risk having the pipes freeze and burst.

With an IT infrastructure, a central piece of equipment that keeps the entire network operational is your server unit. A

The 4 Fundamentals to IT Security

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Data Authenticity

Software isn't meant to be modified. If a program is hacked or messed with by a user for any reason, then it's no longer guaranteed to work in the future. A software modification can really come back to bite you when you're not able to complete an operation due to broken code, or data becomes damaged or lost. Also, a user that's in the habit of modifying their software may be in direct violation of the software's licensing agreement. If a software manufacturer were to find out that someone in your organization modified their code, your business would be liable and in for a world of legal hurt.

Data Availability

If your data isn't available when you try to access it, then your network protection policies have failed, but data availability goes beyond data integrity. Data availability means that your data is available no matter the circumstance. This includes accessing your data during peak network traffic, and even in the event of, or shortly after, a major disaster. Having a Data Backup and Disaster Recovery plan (BDR) is one of the fundamental components to having solid IT security for your business. Directive can cover your data availability needs with our BDR solution. BDR will virtualize all of your network's data in the event of a disaster, meaning you can access it and keep working even if your in-house network is down.

Whether you store and manage your data in-house, or if you take advantage of a cloud data storage service, it's vital for your business that these four IT security categories regarding data management are covered. You will achieve this by properly managing the data usage and storage policies on your network, along with having a strong security solution in place like a Unified Threat Management tool. Directive can help you with all of your data management responsibilities to ensure that your business is protected from security threats. Call us today at 607.433.2200 to learn more!

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Businesses Still Prefer Windows 7
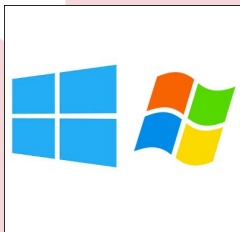
We are in a unique time of Windows OS transitions. The redesigned Windows 8 has been out for one year, and the first major update to it (Windows 8.1) was just released. Additionally, the popular Windows XP expires in April, forcing everybody to upgrade and choose between Windows 7 and 8. Which OS will your business go with?

Windows 8 is an intuitive OS that uses a tile layout, which strays from the traditional Windows look, and it's not getting a warm reception from the business world. Here's one telling evidence of Windows 8's unpopularity; in a recent interview with ZDNet.com, Cindy Zwerling, Toshiba's B2B product marketing manager, estimated that, "From a business perspective, I would say 99 percent of our sales are Windows 7."

Figures like this do not bode well for Microsoft's enterprise aspirations; see-

ing that their new Office 365 productivity suite, along with the rest of their new business solutions, are designed for the Windows 8 format. The truth of the matter is that Windows 8 is a very capable operating system for doing business, and may even be superior in some areas, yet sales of Windows 8 are still sluggish for businesses. Why is this?

Mobile Business is Still Trending

Windows 8 will appeal most strongly to businesses that utilize devices like tablets and smartphones. This is because Microsoft designed the OS to allow for seamless integration between a workstation and a mobile device that are both running Windows 8. While many businesses are taking advantage mobile devices in the workplace, it's still a relatively new trend that the bulk of businesses are slow to adopt.

The International Data Corporation is projecting tablets will outsell PCs for the first time in Q4 of 2013. This means mobile devices are here to stay and will slowly catch on in the workplace, and they may even replace PCs in the future.

In light of the tablet-rich work environment of the future, Microsoft has positioned itself to take advantage of this major business technology trend with its Windows 8 OS.

Upgrades from Windows XP

With the mighty Windows XP set to expire in April 2014, Microsoft is in the midst of experiencing hundreds of millions of XP users worldwide upgrading their OS. Funny thing about XP users, the ones that have been running the same operating system for 12 years are obviously not overly concerned about running the latest software; therefore, Windows 8, with all of its new bells and whistles, may not appeal to them. Instead, a Windows XP user will be attracted to Windows 7 because it has excelled in something they obviously care about: Reliability.

Additionally, anybody that has held on to Windows XP for this long is doing . . .

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3 Ways Homeownership and Your IT Infrastructure are Similar

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server is like the brains of a network because so many different systems depend on it. If a server went down, your profits would become as cold as a frozen water pipe. This is why it's important to take care of your server units with preventive maintenance because maintenance will stop an issue from developing into a major problem that can freeze business operations. Preventive server maintenance is a remote service that Directive can provide for your company with our managed IT services.

The Need to Expand
A third way that a home and IT infrastructure are similar is when it comes to expansion.

With houses, most people will buy a home that's within their means and move to a larger house as their family grows. An IT infrastructure works the same way. You will want to provide your business with a network that's both economical, meets your needs, and gives you room to grow, while keeping in mind that one day you will outgrow your technology.

Like buying a new house, upgrading your entire IT infrastructure is a major expense. You will want to invest the same time and care into upgrading your network as you would when shopping for a new home; and because expanding your IT network is such a major project, Di-

rective is here to help you plan your network with our IT roadmapping service. This is a service where we assess your technology needs, and then create for you an affordable IT plan providing your business with the latest solutions. An IT roadmap is a gradual plan that will update your entire IT infrastructure piece-by-piece. This way, you won't be hit with a giant bill when upgrading becomes a necessity; and the best part about our IT consulting service is that it's much easier to sign up for than it is to get approved for a home loan.

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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.
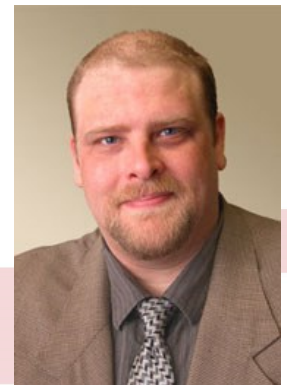
Chris Chase
Solutions Integrator

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in a database. This information will then be saved over your network and fed into analytics software, allowing you to track the movements of all the people recognized by your cameras. Facial recognition technology is just one of the many analytics tools available with your digital surveillance system. By loading your surveillance foot-

age into your security software, you will be able to play CSI by analyzing people's behaviors and patterns using advanced technology.

Digital surveillance technology can be scaled to the size and security needs of your business, and it's easy to add more cameras to your security network as your company grows. To get started with

your own digital surveillance system, you will first want to reach out to your IT company because digital surveillance uses the hardware infrastructure of your company's computer network. Call Directive at 607.433.2200 to learn more about using your network for digital surveillance.

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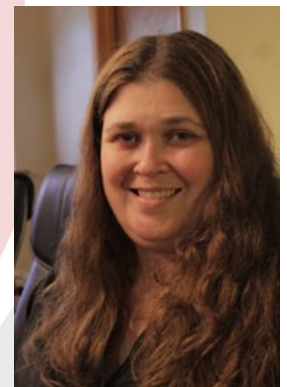
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