Executive IT Insider
...The Exclusive Edge to Today's Technology

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Do you know about the **Dark Web**?

The Dark Web is a "secret" part of the internet where underlined criminals and hackers hide. Companies have *a lot* to lose when it comes to data breaches and compromised accounts. Employee login credentials can be **compromised or sold** on the Dark Web, posing a threat to your company.

Want to make sure your company's information is not on the Dark Web? **Give us a call** to schedule an appointment!

Security Alert!
Hackers And Cybercriminals Are Now Concentrating Their Attacks On Your Business. Is Your Cyber protection Up-To-Date?

Technology exists in a state of constant flux. The most popular gadgets turn obsolete within a year or two, the sophistication of the hardware and software we use increases exponentially with each passing month and the digital foundations of modern society are almost continuously supplanted. Every day, there's a new device to contend with, a fresh update and an addendum to the already dizzying array of features at our fingertips.

It's a thrilling world full of possibility and potential, but our dependence on these ever-changing technologies comes at a price. The overlay of the Internet on all aspects of our lives is fraught with vulnerabilities that criminals are eager to exploit. Though new protective measures are developed at the same breakneck speed as the

software they guard, so are new ways to penetrate and circumvent these defenses. It's estimated that 978,000 new malware threats are released with each passing day. It's clear that "up-to-date" can no longer be an accurate descriptor; it always describes a system one step behind the newest development.

Today, cybercriminals are casting a wider net and catching more hapless victims than ever before. We read about the most costly of these breaches in the news each morning, including Equifax, J.P. Morgan, Home Depot, Yahoo!, Verizon, Uber and dozens more.

But these high-profile incidents don't even comprise the majority of attacks. According to Verizon's 2017 Data Breach Investigations Report, 61% of breaches occurred at small businesses,

with half of the 28 million small businesses across the United States succumbing to a digital strike. Even scarier is the fact that UPS Capital reports that 60% of these businesses shut down within six months of a breach.

It's a bleak reality to come to terms with if you're a business owner. The truth is that it's almost a statistical certainty that hackers will come for your data, and when they do, they'll likely be using techniques nearly unrecognizable from today's malicious flavor of the month. How can you possibly prepare for something that is constantly changing?

The answer is sustained attention, vigilance and resources directed toward protecting all that you've worked so hard to build. While it may be impossible to foresee exactly how hackers will try to penetrate your business, it's well within the means of most businesses to implement comprehensive security solutions to give your organization a fighting chance.

It's vital to realize that, unfortunately, security protocols aren't a set-it-and-forget-it proposition. To respond to the evasive and increasingly sophisticated tools being shared throughout the enormous hacker

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community, you need an equally sophisticated and regularly updating security system. For nearly every one of the 978,000 fresh new malwares developed daily, there are patches and updates designed to address them – strategies and techniques to outsmart even the most devious of criminals.

Just because you don't have the resources of a massive corporation doesn't mean you need to be low-hanging fruit for well-funded and highly organized cybercrime rings. Hackers assume that a business like yours is too tiny and ill-informed to prepare for even a simple phishing scam, and they're usually right. But if every business owner put just a little more effort into securing their data, you can bet attacks would be curbed. And if every small business pledged to implement a professionally managed security protocol, we would see the frequency of these hacks diminish drastically.

There's a lot for business owners to think about during a year as chaotic as 2018, but your top priority should be the basic security of your company. Invest your time and resources into building a foundational blockade for potential threats, and you can rest assured that your livelihood is safe from digital collapse.

Technology Spotlight: SNECS Goes to Nashville

Last month, we attended **Robin Robins' 11th Annual IT Sales and Marketing Boot Camp** in Nashville, Tennessee.

This year, boot camp was a pirate-themed event that focused on cyber security! We joined **over 900** IT companies and Managed Service Providers from around the world. We spent the week focusing on how to protect our clients' **booty** — meaning their data, assets, and networks.

For those that don't know, Robin Robins is the IT industry's **most in-demand** marketing consultant, sales trainer, and author.

We had the opportunity to listen to numerous guest speakers like former FBI hostage negotiator **Chris Voss**, infamous hacker **Kevin Mitnick**, and *Shark Tank* star and cyber security specialist **Robert Herjavec**.

As a team, we learned *plenty* of new sales and marketing tactics from Robin Robins. With her tips and lessons, we hope to continue achieving **great feats** as a company. Overall, we had a great time, and we're glad we were able to take advantage of this amazing opportunity!

4 Steps To Finding Your Company's Diamonds In The Rough

Executives are always looking to inject "fresh blood" into their teams. They're on the hunt for shiny new talent to be that secret ingredient their organizations are missing. But in my numerous coaching sessions with entrepreneurs and leaders across the country, I found that an external search should usually not be the first step. Instead, I suggest that businesses look internally for hidden, untapped assets within the company. Here are four steps to start uncovering your diamonds in the rough.

1. Don't hire to fit a title. It may be the way business has been done for half a century, but that doesn't mean it's right. You need to look at the individual strengths of each candidate and determine if he or she is right for your company and culture.

Make sure that you have a process in place to make hiring efficient. And as a part of that process, take time to identify those creative and out-of-the-box individuals you already have on your team. Ask pointed questions of everyone you consider for a given role, because this allows you to get a sense of how they think.

2. Mine for the gems. As you refine your hiring methods, you'll likely discover that the talent you're looking for might be right under your nose. Dig into your roster of existing team members. Create a company-wide survey for those interested in taking on creative or challenging initiatives, and give them the opportunity to be considered. The true innovators know what they can bring to the table, even if they're currently not in a role that's a perfect fit. If you give them the opportunity to shine, they'll come forward.

3. Refine and polish. Once you've identified your gems, spend some additional time with them. Find out what inspires and motivates them. You may decide to modify your team member's role or transfer some responsibilities to others in order to better utilize your talented individual's strengths and unleash their creative prowess. Just make sure to set clear expectations with each person, explain why you're making the change and empower them to do what they do best.

4. Formalize your process to find more gems. This isn't a one-and-done process. It's important to meet regularly with people to find these hidden assets. Consider handing out surveys and holding brainstorming sessions regularly as part of your company culture. That way, new team members will come on board knowing there's an opportunity to shine in new ways, even if it's not what they were originally hired to do.

Focus on embracing and developing internal individuals with relevant skill sets before hiring. I guarantee there is a huge number of underutilized assets within your organization. Give them the space to shine brightly.

As the founder of Petra Coach, Andy Bailey can cut through organizational BS faster than a hot knife through butter, showing organizations the logjams thwarting their success and coaching them past the excuses we all use to avoid doing what needs to be done. Andy learned how to build great organizations by building a great business, which he started in college. It then grew into an Inc. 500 multimillion-dollar national company that he successfully sold and exited.

Expert of the Month: Paul Areson of "Supreme Dairy Farms"

Originally founded in 1932 by Italian immigrant Thomas Bruzzese, Supreme Dairy Farms is one of the **few** family-oriented and locally owned food distributors in New England. Current owner Paul Areson purchased the business in 2006, from the same gentlemen who ran the company in the 1940's. Because he has maintained Supreme Dairy Farms' reputation for quality and service, we've selected Paul to be our *Expert of the Month*!

Having worked in the corporate world for over 30 years, Paul decided it was time to try something new—and that's when he found Supreme Dairy Farms. Paul laughs that he had no "applicable experience whatsoever" in the field, but he was interested in the company. Having always enjoyed cooking and food, Paul kept coming back to Supreme because he thought it was a great opportunity.

Paul *prides* his company on giving the customers what they want, when they want it. Unlike most big companies that only want to sell their brand, Supreme Dairy Farms works to give customers a variety of products, so they can find *exactly* what they're looking for. Paul states that "in the end, if you don't provide value to somebody, they're going to go somewhere else." Paul and his team go the extra mile to help their customers because he knows that everyone "values **what** we do and more importantly **how** we do it." Their dedication to their customers has allowed the company to remain in business, while continuing to grow.

When we asked Paul what he liked about working with us, he admitted that "our relationship with SNECS has been *excellent*." He likes our **responsiveness** and how **skilled** our team is. Working with a variety of companies, Paul places a "high premium on being responsive and making an effort" to help his business. He states, "you guys have been excellent from day one."

He also appreciates that unlike most IT companies, we don't nickel and dime him. Because we focus on helping Paul and his company, he feels that we're "a part of the business, as opposed to being another vendor."

Their warehouse, located at 171 St. Augustin St. in Woonsocket, is open to the public. Unlike most wholesale stores, you don't need a membership to shop there! If you want to learn more about Supreme Dairy Farms visit their website at www.supremedairyfarms.com, or call them at (401) 739-8180.

Ways Technology Can Make Your Business Meetings More Productive — Every entrepreneur knows how difficult it can be to run an efficient meeting. But most of them aren't leveraging new technologies designed to do just that. Rather than treating meeting participants like audience members, use a tool like GoWall to empower your team to contribute without disrupting your meeting's flow, keeping them engaged and on topic. Meanwhile, solutions like ParticiPoll equip any meeting with a poll that can provide useful feedback to implement at your next gathering. This is especially valuable for organizations that frequently host remote events, providing a quick breakdown of your meetings' strengths and weaknesses.

Speaking of remote contacts, Google Hangouts has made it easier than ever to set up video conferences where participants can move from chat to file sharing to video chat with no fuss whatsoever. And if you're unable to stand in front of your team with a whiteboard, consider implementing a whiteboard app like Cisco Spark Board, which uses shared screens to create a cohesive brainstorming session between you and your team. SmallBusinessTrends.com 2/21/18
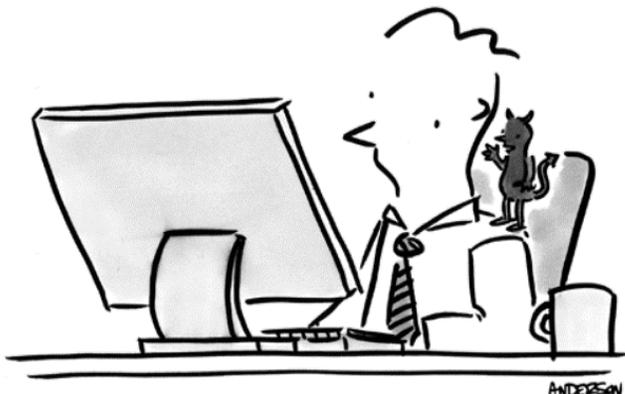
"Do it. Reply all."

Two-Factor What?

Two-factor authentication (2FA for short) is a system in which you must verify your identity in two separate ways to access an account. Sound confusing? It's not. Here's an example:

After enabling 2FA on a Gmail account, you have to enter your password each time you log in. Then you are asked to enter a six-digit code that you pull from your phone, a jump-drive-sized key fob or a program on your computer.

Only then do you have access to your account. That way, if someone steals your password, they still can't get in.

If you aren't currently using two-factor authentication with your most sensitive data and systems, look into whether it might be an option. The extra 15 seconds it takes to pull up that second code is laughably short compared to the time you'd spend dealing with a hacked account.