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Password Protecting a Word Document



The funny thing about some documents is how the data written on them can strongly influence how important they are. If, for instance, there were two pieces of paper on a table, there is objectively no difference between the two, and so they are objectively equivalent in value.

When Documents Aren't All Created Equally

However, if one sheet has a picture of a cat on it, and the other one has the coordinates to the lost city of El Dorado, one page suddenly has...



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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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Onboarding Remote Workers to Build a Better Business



The funny thing about entrepreneurs is that they have to be very detail-oriented in order to find any modicum of success. This often leads them to inevitably becoming controlling people overall. For years the technology has been present to utilize remote workers, but only recently has the practice become commonplace. This is largely because businesses have begun to seriously consider reducing costs as a strategy to gain profits.

Remote workers now are a massive part of the modern economy and are growing by the day. In fact some estimates suggest that we're only a few years away from half of the workers that work full time will be remote workers. Up until today, one problem was that the technology that facilitates access to this new workforce didn't allow for the type of oversight many business owners want to have over their staff. That said, it's hard to argue with the overall cost reduction of having a remote staff.

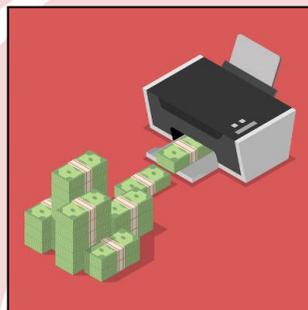
Today, as the technology has improved, and costs keep rising, remote workers are being brought on more and more by all types of businesses. Today, we will look at the onboarding process of remote workers and the technology involved in making this work.

How to Determine Remote vs. In-House

The first thing we'll take a look at is the determining factors that lead businesses to utilize remote workers more today than ever before. The first one is expertise. You'd think it would be cost, and that is a defining characteristic to be sure, but the number one consideration whether or not to onboard remote workers is definitely a lack of direct access to a specific expertise.

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Need More Capital: Consider Cutting Printing Costs



When looking to cut costs in the workplace, one of the best places to start looking is at your printing costs. While paper documents were once incredibly important for businesses (they still serve a function), no one can deny that they take up a considerable amount of space in the workplace, as well as take up precious assets that could be better spent elsewhere. What's the best way to minimize the resources you spend on printing?

Before getting into how to cut costs, it's prudent to look at all of the costs that are associated with printing in the workplace. Consider this; your business not only has to acquire printers according to your needs, the paper and ink or toner required to do the printing (including color ink/toner when necessary), and filing cabinets to keep everything you print out stored in a secure location--and this doesn't even mention the time spent maintaining and managing these devices.

We'll help you determine some solutions you can use to cut down on the amount of waste your business suffers from due to printing costs.

Upgrade Your Printers

Depending on how outdated your printing infrastructure is, your organization could benefit from a hardware refresh. For example, if your business is still using old ink-jet printers,

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Cloud-Based Communications Helping Businesses Boost Productivity



The cloud is the perfect outlet for businesses to improve productivity, but the degree to which this

statement is true depends on the business and how much it leverages the cloud. If you're not sure if your business can be utilizing the cloud in a more efficient way, perhaps we can help you make this determination and improve the way you take advantage of this technology.

Cloud computing is most effective when it is being used to collaborate, and productivity can increase substantially with the proper solutions in place. For example, you can access your business' productivity suite right in your web browser or a specific application on your mobile device, allowing for any-time-anywhere data access. This makes

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In a loose sense it's a lot like the outsourcing we do. Essentially a person has a very specific expertise and that skill set is in demand. Having access to that type of expertise, even if the relationship is forged over the Internet, can really move your company's initiatives ahead.

The other, as previously mentioned, is cost. It's expensive to buy hardware and run networking, and rent a building, and power it, and heat/cool it, and all the other expenses most businesses roll into their monthly or quarterly budgets. By lowering capital costs (and in this case also operational costs), you'll have more capital to reinvest in your business; or, you could take a vacation.

By onboarding remote employees, you might just be confronted with all types of abnormal variables. Firstly, your new staff won't cost you as much money, so

for a much more accessible solution, but the real value of cloud-based applications and assets comes in the form of the integrated collaboration options that are built into them.

Depending on the cloud solution you're using, it might have some built-in collaboration features that are great for working with others. For example, some cloud-based word processors allow multiple people to work on the same document in real time, allowing for a more collaborative situation than would be possible otherwise. Some even have instant messaging components built in that give the workers a chance to chat about particular aspects of the work they are doing.

Even if there aren't communication solutions built into your cloud-based offerings, you can supplement them with other cloud-based communication applications that can provide a similar level of collaboration for your employees. By this, we mean a voice chat or

you'll have more capital. Secondly, your new staff will be happier. It's been proven that people that have flexibility to work from home tend to be more engaged and hold a more positive opinion of their job. Lastly, with the combination of saving money on commuting and other expenses, with their happiness of their job, employee turnover is reduced significantly.

How to Onboard a Remote Worker

If you have found a worker that you would like to bring into the fold, but they cannot commit to being in the office either due to distance or some other reason, there are a few guidelines that you should stick to and document. The best way for you to efficiently and successfully hire outsourced workers is to have a plan in place in which to do so effectively.

The first consideration you have to make is to ascertain if you have the resources to make it easy for a remote

worker. Your organization will have to have some hosted solutions in place. Having cloud-based communication, productivity, and management applications makes it much easier to onboard workers that aren't working locally. With solutions such as productivity suites, Voice over Internet Protocol, and other cloud-hosted options, a business has to have the resources in place to make remote working possible before conducting any interview.

video chat system, as well as instant messaging and multi-user platforms. There are tons of solutions out there that can give your employees a single point of contact for all of these assets, reinforcing their ability to get as much work done as possible. Chat rooms for specific departments or teams, collaboration tools, and various other resources can all be made available through certain cloud-based platforms like Slack.

Simply put, the cloud gives your organization several resources that all have collaboration tools built into them, many of which enable more effective communication. Does your business want to leverage these solutions for a better, more efficient workflow? Directive can help. To learn more, reach out to us at 607.433.2200.



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During the interview process, you should attempt to have a face-to-face interview. This will get you on a first name basis and help you feel out your new hire's experience and professional goals. If for whatever reason they can't meet you, you can utilize your video conferencing solution to perform the...



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perhaps you could benefit from an upgrade to a laser printer. The reason for this is that laser printers are often more efficient with their print jobs, and they can cost you less money over a period of time due to their comparative longevity.

Manage Your Resources More Efficiently

While it might seem like cutting out printing entirely is too much, this doesn't mean that you can't control



how your resources are spent. By closely monitoring your printing resources, you can more efficiently store what is needed and cut down on waste. Simply changing settings on your computers or printers could eliminate some of the waste, and storing just the right amount of surplus without risking running out is key to success here.

Going Paperless

If you find your business suffers from having too many loose papers, or just has too many physical documents to

keep track of, you can implement a document management software that can give your organization the means to securely store

your documents in a digital environment. This means you don't have to worry about bulky filing cabinets any longer, and you can easily search for documents you need at any point in time, further cutting down time wasted trying to find something in particular.

If you want to cut your organization's costs of printing, Directive can equip your business with tools to both minimize the need for printing and methods to keep track of just how much waste you suffer from.

We can even help you out with a hardware refresh for your printing devices. To learn more, reach out to us at 607.433.2200.



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Technology is Helping to Build Better Employee Engagement



An engaged employee will be invested in the future of your company, as well as their own future that

they can see within your business. Unfortunately, research showcases that the numbers don't look so bright for employee engagement in the workplace. According to a 2015 poll from Gallup, only about 30% of employees find themselves engaged in the workplace, while about 50% say they aren't engaged with their work, and 20% claim to be actively disengaged by their workplace.

Employee engagement in the workplace has always been a tricky thing to master, and no business can get it done perfectly, as not all employees react the same way to stimulating factors. However, we can point you in the right direction. Here are three kinds of technology you can use to build employee engagement in the workplace, as well as foster

an attitude that will help them stay as productive as possible while working.

Digital Signage

Perhaps you've been to an office recently where there are monitors on the wall filled with all kinds of statistics, reminders, or directions to certain locations within the office. You might even have seen them in restaurants displaying a menu or current deals. These monitors are a type of digital signage which can be used to help your employees stay on track with certain projects, be aware of deadlines or specific dates, and take note of important key performance indicators throughout the workday.

In particular, it might be helpful to inspire your employees to perform more efficiently. It can be just enough to create a little bit of friendly competition. You can then use this to offer incentives to employees who meet certain thresholds or levels of productivity.

Bring Your Own Device

It's a fact that some employees just work better when they are using their own devices. This could be for a

plethora of reasons. Perhaps they are using technology they are unfamiliar with because it's offered by the company. Maybe they simply don't like to use devices provided by the company because their own devices are seen as superior. Regardless the reason, you can create a Bring Your Own Device policy to help your employees stay engaged and efficient with their time.



Of course, you'll also be facing the downsides of this concept in the potential for wasted time and security issues. It's up to you to build out a policy that doesn't become a detriment to your business...



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Prioritize the Protection of Your Google Account



Chances are you have a Google account, whether it's for business

or personal use. It's more accessible today than ever before and provides a solid way to gain access to several important features and accounts. Considering how much can be done with a Google account, users forget that they can put their security and personal data at risk. Here are some ways that your Google account is at risk, as well as what you can do to fix it.



Why Is Your Google Account so Valuable?

The Internet has always been a tool to keep those who use it connected, and data stored on it shared and accessible. However, like any tool that evolves and changes over time, its purposes and uses change with it. The idea for what would become the Internet came from J.C.R. Licklider of MIT in 1962, who intended it to be a system of interconnected computers used to

share information and programs across the entire world. This idea would become the World Wide Web with the help of Sir Tim Berners-Lee, who had this to say:

“Had the technology been proprietary, and in my total control, it would probably not have taken off. You can't propose that something be a universal space and at the same time keep control of it.”

These ideals are still retained by today's Internet; if anything, you might say it's reached its peak. Social media use and network collaboration is at an all-time high, generally free of control by any central entity. These ideals have led to a demand for the preservation of net neutrality and open-access information, and while these are largely upheld, there are always exceptions to the rule.

While the Internet grew in capability, it also grew in utility. These utilities depend on security and privacy. Since so many people began to use the Internet to deal with confidential information, this increased the importance of security from both the perspective of an everyday user and a business. One of the companies that has helped shape this perspective is Google, a company that offers

a plethora of services on both a user level and a business level.

You can't discredit the importance of Google services for business, such as its G Suite applications and Gmail. Even on a general consumer level, many users find Google services helpful and important to their daily routine, to say the least. With Google security so important, take a moment to ask yourself how many online accounts have access to your Google account. What are you risking if your Google password is stolen by hackers looking to make a quick buck?

What You Risk

You can use your Google account to create other accounts, either by using your associated Gmail address or linking it directly, but what does that mean for security standards? It's important to remember that this convenience comes at a price; linking an account to your Google account inevitably ties that account's security to your Google account. This means that if your Google account is compromised, any accounts associated with it could also be at risk...



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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.



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