

This Issue:

3 Innovative Strategies You Can Use to Keep Things Simple

Data Management Tips for the Small Business

There's a New Major Cybersecurity Vulnerability: You

How to Select the Collaboration Tool That's Right for Your Needs

What You Need to Know to Properly Set IT Goals for Your Business

Marketing Guide Part 1 of 4: Your Marketing Budget

There's a New Major Cybersecurity Vulnerability: You



We talk a lot about preventing threats from seeping into your company, and hoo boy, there are a lot of them. From ransomware to zero-day exploits to targeted social media attacks, there are a lot of threats out there that business owners need to be aware of. We're not going to talk about any of those today.

Why? Because you, as the business owner, are likely a threat to your own business...



Read the Rest Online!
<https://dti.io/cybrvuln>

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



3 Innovative Strategies You Can Use to Keep Things Simple



With so many different technologies being used in business, it can sometimes be too much for the people out there who aren't as tech-savvy as others. In fact, some of the people you will work alongside will not be able to grasp some of the simplest technology concepts. Unfortunately, these people don't know a fraction of what they need to know about the technology they use, and it could put your organization at a disadvantage. This month, we thought we'd give you a few pointers on how to talk to your coworkers who aren't as knowledgeable as you are in technology or any other field.

Don't Assume

The first thing you should know is that you can't assume the person has any knowledge about the subject at hand at all. You should conduct a short survey to see exactly what his/her knowledge base is. You'd be surprised to find out how many people don't know anything about your area of expertise. If you go ahead and get into a concept before you know that the party you are speaking to lacks the fundamental knowledge, you could just be speaking gibberish to them.

(Continued on page 2)

Data Management Tips for the Small Business



With the digitalization of the modern business happening rather rapidly, many organizations still don't really understand the major benefits that come with it. These shifts give the average business nearly twice the amount of data to manage (and to use). If you have the feeling that your business is lagging behind in this area, we will describe what parts of business you can improve by utilizing your organization's data.

Comprehensive Data Management

Businesses can't operate on conjecture. They need reliable data to help them make determinations about their business. If you are like many other businesses that have made strides in their digitalization efforts, it brings a fair amount of automation. This automation becomes vital for enhancing a business' overall performance. This data provides in-depth information about every customer, employee, and transaction made in the course of doing business. If your business' data is clearly laid out, it is much easier to analyze. Let's look at a few ways organized data can help improve your business.

(Continued on page 3)



Are Your Employees a Security Liability, or an Asset?

We can help ensure the latter is the case with our training services.

Your Team Members Can Make or Break Your Company's Protections

While we're on the subject, what do you think is the biggest issue in the average company's security? Based on context, you've probably guessed the end users working for that company, and you'd be right. Many modern cyberattacks specifically take advantage of this, targeting your team members with directed attacks that seek to manipulate them into opening the door.

You Need to Ensure that Your Team Understands the Risks they Face

Educating your team members about the risks they pose to your organizational security is critical if you are to reduce the likelihood of these risks. This is where contextual and comprehensive team training becomes important.



Read the Rest Online!
<https://dti.io/cybersecure>

Human Error

Results in 95% of all cybersecurity attacks.

How to Select the Collaboration Tool That's Right for Your Needs



Nowadays, the better your employees collaborate, the better your offering is going to be. This means getting the collaboration tools needed to make it simple for your staff to work together to create something great is critical. This month, we take a minute to discuss some of the problems businesses have with collaboration and how you can circumvent these challenges.

Recently, Corel conducted a study about how businesses use collaboration. The study took a look at 2,000 workers' opinions throughout several nations and found that 54 percent of enterprise employees believe that having to use poor collaboration tools is bad for business. In fact, 70 percent of them thought that if they use these

poor collaboration tools they act to limit productivity. Let's look at some other numbers from the study:

- 27 percent of employees believe that businesses aren't investing in the right tools
- 25 percent of employees believe that their collaboration tools have poor functionality
- 22 percent of employees believe they aren't using the tools they have at their disposal
- 21 percent of employees claim they are not properly trained on how to use their tools

When you consider these to be all valid concerns, despite the small percentage of the surveyed showing concerns, you begin to see a small disconnect in the way that employers and employees...



Read the Rest Online!
<https://dti.io/collabtool>

3 Innovative Strategies You Can Use to Keep Things Simple

(Continued from page 1)

Start Simple

It stands to reason that if someone doesn't know much about a subject, discussing the comprehensive workings of that subject will lead to confusion and frustration. That's why it is important to spread the information out over multiple sessions rather than try to cram it into one. What you lose in efficiency you will gain in understanding.

Stay Local

Chances are that the person that is receiving this information doesn't need to know the entire history and inner workings of your area of expertise. They only need to know enough to get by—in our case, to properly use the technology in front of them. By breaking it down into situations they can relate with, and using perspective as a tool, the information will be passed on more completely. Also, don't just spew data at

people to try to get them to relate. People without the knowledge and experience to understand it are just going to get confused.

Make Sure They Know There is No Judgment

When someone with technical knowledge starts explaining a concept to someone that doesn't, often the recipient will feel like they are being spoken down to. It may just be an ego defense, but one way to help smooth this over is by letting them know that while you may have knowledge about this particular topic, they know things that you don't know. Everyone has their own area of expertise, and no one should feel attacked for not knowing something.



Share this Article!
<https://dti.io/3inno>

Data Management Tips for the Small Business

(Continued from page 1)

Managing Cybersecurity Threats

Security is one of the most important aspects of maintaining reliable data management. For smaller businesses, it can be a challenge in that they typically don't often find the value in their data that larger enterprises do. This is unfortunate as any business can benefit from the strategic benefits of organized and secure data. Part of keeping this data organized is being prepared for the attacks that may or may not come.

Building More Value from Data

Smaller businesses have smaller budgets. This is obvious and means that the tools and strategies used to manage and use data have to be more cost-effective. By intentionally implementing strategies with these budget constraints in mind, a business can find the

solutions they are looking for while reducing or eliminating redundancy, the big money-waster when it comes to digital systems.

Choosing the Right Data to Preserve

For the professional trying to determine what data their small business finds actionable (or valuable), it can be difficult to know which data to prioritize. This is why it is so important to work with IT professionals who have experience with setting up data reporting constructs as well as data redundancy systems to ensure that if something happens, the important data is secure, or at the very least able to be recovered quickly...



Read the Rest Online!
<https://dti.io/dataman>

What You Need to Know to Properly Set IT Goals for Your Business



Businesses often need to add and remove technology to fit their needs, and most of the time these actions

make a marked difference in the way that their organizations are able to do things. One problem you may have is with the identification of the business processes that would be aided by technology investment. Today, we'll briefly discuss how to best identify your business' IT goals.

What Are Your Operational Goals?

The best way to know what technology to spend your capital on is to settle on what your operational goals are. You see, technology can aid a lot of different processes, but without a plan of attack, you can really waste a lot of money trying to deploy unnecessary technology.

The small businesses that fail to capitalize on the strategic value of their IT

often have operational problems that are being ignored and that can have a major impact on their business' success or even its sustainability. That's why it is so important to know what your overall business goals are so that you can fit the right technology into your business.

Let's look at four types of business technology that can help your business get more productive.

Automation

There are plenty of tools available that can automate several business-critical tasks such as paying bills, responding to customer and prospect queries, and scheduling your staff. Additionally, there are even valuable automated programs that can help you better manage your organization's social footprint.

The best part of investing in automation is that the ROI for such technologies typically pays for itself quickly by reducing human error, waste, and spurring...



Read the Rest Online!
<https://dti.io/goalbiz>



CYBERSECURITY TIPS

Five Physical Security Tips

While the focus of cybersecurity is often on technological safeguards, there are also many physical security measures that play an important role in keeping data safe.

We take a look at five physical security tips to protect devices and sensitive information.

<https://dti.io/5sectips>

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



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

Marketing Guide Part 1 of 4: Your Marketing Budget



In this four-part blog series, we're going to talk about what it takes to market and grow your SMB.

Throughout this series, we're going to cover the following topics:

1. How much you should spend on marketing and what to do when there isn't a marketing budget.
2. What's the bare-minimum marketing infrastructure you need to grow.
3. How to budget and effectively launch aggressive targeted campaigns.
4. How to plan and justify the costs of marketing and get a return on investment.

For a lot of SMBs, trying to determine where to allocate your marketing budget to get the best return on investment can feel like herding kittens. We all have limited marketing budgets and don't want to choose a method that isn't going to show a return, so it's easy to feel like we need to be choosy when we pull the trigger on marketing services. Let's talk about how to determine your marketing spend, and what to do if your budget isn't very high (or doesn't exist yet).

How Much Should My SMB Spend On Marketing?

As a general rule of thumb, new and growing companies should plan on putting around 20 percent of their gross revenue into marketing. That number can start to go down for more

established SMBs with massive brand recognition, but if you want to grow, be prepared to put effort into it. This is especially true when word-of-mouth growth starts to stagnate.

What If My SMB Doesn't Have a Marketing Budget?

When times are tight, 20 percent can feel like a major barrier. For small one-man shops, growing your business might mean a lot of hard work and sneaker marketing. Sneaker marketing is where you are spending your evenings going to the chamber of commerce events and taking prospects, clients, and referrals out to dinner. In other words, whatever...



Read the Rest Online!
<https://dti.io/guide1of4>

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

Client Spotlight: Otsego Mutual



It is our pleasure and privilege to work with an assortment of businesses so that they can better serve their customers. Many of these businesses offer some pretty serious and important services, too, like those offered by Otsego Mutual Fire Insurance Company.

Otsego Mutual has operated for over 100 years—actually celebrating its 125th anniversary this year—growing their services from fire insurance to also include homeowner's, renter's, liability, inland marine, and builder's risk insurance. Today, Otsego Mutual has representative agents across the entire state to assist with their clients' respective needs.

Inquire with them for any of your insurance needs—and tell them we sent you! Give them a call at (607) 965-8211, or visit www.otsegomutual.com!



Charlotte Chase
COO

Directive

330 Pony Farm Road
Suite #3
Oneonta, NY 13820
Toll-Free 888-546-4384
Voice: 607-433-2200



newsletter@directive.com



facebook.directive.com



linkedin.directive.com



twitter.directive.com



blog.directive.com



instagram.directive.com

Visit us online at:

newsletter.directive.com

