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You Won't Get This Kind of Personalized Care From Break-Fix IT



It's nice to do something and feel good that you're the one doing the work. This DIY

approach provides you the satisfaction that you're doing the job yourself, and that you're doing it right. If you're the kind of...



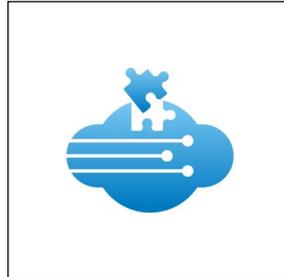
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About Directive

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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How Can a Virtual Network Help Your Business?



Your network is arguably your business's most valuable asset. It keeps your team connected to critical information and applications that are imperative to the continued success of your company. With complex cabling, however, your workstation and network infrastructure can quickly grow uncontrollable. Isn't there an easier way to manage your network components that can help your business grow, unhindered by physical infrastructure?

One of the best ways that you can improve your business's infrastructure is by implementing a virtual network. Basically, this process entails taking your current physical network infrastructure, virtualizing it, and migrating it to the cloud, making the deployment and access of data much easier. Doing so allows you to tie all of your IT components together without having to go through the painful process of cabling. Furthermore, a virtual network provides the following benefits:

- **Mobility:** Most notable is the fact that virtual networks allow business owners and their employees to access data from anywhere with an Internet connection. This is particularly helpful while out of the office. If you're at a trade show or on a business trip, you can access data while on the road. Or, if you have a team of remote employees, they can access files that are critical to your company's success.
- **Flexibility:** Playing off of mobility, adding new network users can be a huge pain, especially when cabling is involved. Instead of physically being connected to a network,

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3 Common IT Shortcomings and How You Can Overcome Them



Business owners expect a lot out of their IT network, and rightfully so. However, technology isn't perfect and can sometimes get in the way of these expectations. To overcome these technology shortcomings, IT administrators and business owners can benefit by outsourcing these expectations, especially when it comes to these three crucial aspects of IT.

IT Maintenances

IT administrators are often given lofty goals to improve the overall performance of their company's network and infrastructure. Yet it can be a struggle for them to actually get around to achieving these goals if they're tied down with routine IT maintenance, like applying security patches and upgrading software. What's worse, when your IT department is stretched thin, their work suffers, fatigue can set in, and morale can deteriorate.

How Directive Can Help

When Directive co-manages your IT, we work with your current IT staff to take care of the routine maintenances that are often responsible for tying them down. The beauty of this approach is that we're able to take care of these maintenances remotely. Essentially, we work behind the scenes so that your IT staff can have the support they need and be the rock stars you hired them to be.

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Be Sure to Consider the Pros and Cons of Allowing Personal Devices in the Workplace



Bring Your Own Device, or BYOD, has grown significantly in the business environment. You might even

have a couple practitioners of BYOD in your own office; people who use their personally-owned devices for work purposes. However, just like any potential benefit, it also has drawbacks that need to be considered. How can you implement BYOD without experiencing too many of its drawbacks?

Ownership

The Pro: If your business wants to save money, you can allow your team to use their own personal devices for their daily duties. This can be helpful if you don't want to purchase new devices and the required network attachments. For example, an employer and employee might be able to reach an agreement where some part of a smartphone's data cost is covered by the business. In this situation, both parties save money, making it an appealing choice.

The Con: If you can reach a decision on the ownership of the phone, that's great. However, can you answer who owns the data that's stored by the device? If an employee were to leave the company and take sensitive data with

them, does the employer have the right to delete files from their personal device? What about the integrity of the device itself? Is the owner responsible for fixing the device, or is the employer? On top of that, who's responsible for private data?

"If your business wants to save money, you can allow your team to use their own personal devices for their daily duties."

Selection

The Pro: Under a BYOD policy, employees can select the technology that they feel most comfortable working with. This makes it easier to work than if you were to provide them with an operating system or a suite of applications that they're not familiar with. Giving them the ability to take initiative and upgrade their device as they see fit can be both empowering and helpful, as they won't have to jump through hoops with IT to get the devices they need.

The Con: When an employee is in control of their device selection, your IT department will probably be thrown into a frenzy. What level of responsibility and maintenance will they have over

pain points like data access and security? If you let your team implement devices on a whim, it will be, more or less, impossible to standardize the applications and solutions you'll need to properly manage their devices.

Availability

The Pro: Employees using their mobile devices for work purposes can potentially use their device while away from the office to get more work done, or to receive important phone calls. This provides the opportunity for quicker response time, which can make all of the difference in the heat of the moment.

The Con: If communications are bound to the office, there are more clear boundaries between your employees' personal lives and their work duties. What's stopping the employees from receiving phone calls from needy clients in the middle of the night, when they're trying to rest up for the next workday?

Implementing a solid BYOD policy is no easy task, but it doesn't have to be difficult, either. We can help your business fully leverage mobile devices through a mobile device solution. To learn more, contact us at 607.433.2200.



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How Can a Virtual Network Help Your Business?

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anyone with an Internet connection and proper credentials can access the network. This makes adding new users and connecting new workstations to your company's network much easier.

The Main Problem: Security

Of course, the biggest problem that faces virtual networks is by far security. If you're accessing your network through a local wireless signal, you're placing all of your faith on the wireless Internet con-

nection to be secure. Particularly in public places, doing this can put sensitive data in the way of hackers. You need a virtual network solution that's capable of encrypting your data while it's in transit; otherwise, any hacker on the network can grab your data, which makes using public networks a liability.

A virtual private network (VPN) from Directive provides a quality solution to this problem. A VPN encrypts data that's transferred along your business's virtual network, protecting it while it's in trans-

it. This allows your business to send and receive information from your virtual machine without fear of it being compromised by hackers. It's an absolute must-have technology for business owners that are constantly on the move for work purposes. To learn more about VPNs and other virtualization services, give Directive a call at 607.433.2200.



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3 Common IT Shortcomings and How You Can Overcome Them

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IT Budget

In the same way that it's impossible to squeeze blood out of a turnip, an IT administrator can't implement the solutions they need if the money just isn't there. For those tasked with overseeing technology, working with a budget passed on to them by their employer is often a major source of frustration. After all, they're trained to work with technology, not spreadsheets.

How Directive Can Help

Directive's managed approach to IT actually frees up money for IT budgets. By taking IT expenses that would normally be categorized as a capital expense and turning them into an operating expense, money will be freed up in the capital

column. This means that your IT department will end up with more money to spend on the equipment they need to do their jobs and meet your expectations.

Security Breaches

Nothing can derail an IT objective quite like a security breach, hack attack, or computer virus. The worst thing about security breaches is that they always seem to happen at the worst possible time, like when progress is being made on an important IT project, or when you're up against a deadline. Anybody who's ever dealt with a security breach knows firsthand how frustrating it can be to resolve.

How Directive Can Help

When it comes to protecting your

company's data, you can benefit from having an extra set of eyes. Even if you already have an IT department in place, they would benefit from incorporating Directive's assistance, expertise, and security solutions. One way that we can help is by remotely monitoring your company's network for any inconsistencies and fishy behavior. This is a surefire way to catch a security threat before it breaches your network and does any damage. To have a conversation about how we can help meet your expectations and IT goals, pick up the phone and call 607.433.2200.



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Scammers Use Whaling Attack Emails to Pose as Upper Management



The average business owner may already be aware of what are called phishing attacks - scams that attempt to

deceive and trick users into handing over sensitive credentials. However, not all phishing attacks are of the same severity, and some are only interested in hauling in the big catch. These types of attacks are called "whaling," and are often executed in the business environment under the guise of executive authority.

Whaling attacks are designed to mimic the behaviors of CEOs or other members of upper management. This could be in the form of a manager, a COO, or even a CIO. Whaling attacks are often successful because they appear to come from a legitimate source; nobody expects their boss to get hacked, and naturally they will want to do as they say. It appeals to the nature of the office worker to want to avoid conflict with upper management, and the fear of getting in trouble for insubordination. In addition to looking like an official business email,

some whaling schemes may even resemble documents from the FBI or other government institutions.

Once this fear has been instilled in the hearts of the average office worker, it's only a matter of time before one of two things happen: 1) The hacker gets what they want, be it sensitive credentials, a fraudulent wire transfer, or otherwise, or 2) The office worker realizes that they've been duped, and deletes the email. Unless the worker knows what to look for in a phishing message, however, the more likely scenario is the former.

In the face of any type of phishing attack, be it a spear-phishing attack or a targeted whaling attack, it's important to remember that you should always think with your brain first before immediately reacting to a message like this. Take a moment to consider how much sense it makes to follow the instructions in the email that you've received. By simply taking a deep breath and calmly analyzing the email, you could be saving yourself a lot of pain and frustration.

As is the case with any phishing attack, look for irregularities in both the mes-

sage itself, and the address that the message came from. Does it come from a legitimate sender? If so, what's the email address? Look it over carefully and try to spot anything that's out of place. Are there any numbers or letters that are trying to mask the true email address? Is there anything suspicious about the contents of the email? Look for curiously repetitive or urgent requests. Hackers like to use time-sensitive language to rush users into making a decision.

In dangerous situations like this, wouldn't it be great if any whaling attacks and other phishing schemes stayed out of your inbox in the first place? With a spam blocking solution, your business will have little to fear from dangerous or fraudulent messages by eliminating them from your inbox entirely. We offer powerful enterprise-level spam blocking solutions that are designed to keep your business free of malicious or wasteful messages. To learn more, give us a call at 607.433.2200.



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Tweak These 5 Mobile Apps to Consume Less Data



Chances are that if you're using a smartphone, you'll have your WiFi turned on as often as you possibly can. This helps to keep data hogs (applications that use a ton of your monthly allotted mobile data) at bay. However, not everyone has the convenience of an Internet connection at all times, particularly while you're out of the office. Here's how you can limit the damage done by your favorite smartphone apps.

Many of the most common mobile apps include social media applications like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, while others are media-streaming services, like YouTube or Spotify. Social media apps are good for browsing here and there, while media-streaming is good for some quick entertainment while on the move. How can you effectively use these apps without sacrificing precious bytes of your mobile data plan?

Facebook

If you check Facebook consistently throughout the

day, you'll notice that you might see videos in your news feed. These videos will automatically play if you don't do something about it, and they will use even more of your mobile data. You can turn off autoplay, or limit it to WiFi only, by going through the settings. The path to this will vary depending on your device and mobile OS, but a good key feature to check for is either App Settings or Account Settings, and look for Autoplay. Then, make your...



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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

Directive's Employee Highlight: Jeremy Jones



Raised in Worcester, NY, Jeremy Jones was a

natural adventurer. Active and energetic, he would spend his childhood hours exploring his surroundings and learning about animals. When he wasn't engaging himself with the wonders of nature, young Jeremy would be wrapped up in a book.

It wasn't until his later teens that his innate fondness for

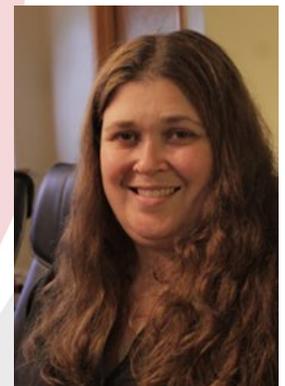
technology developed, along with his skills.

Foregoing college, he worked part-time at his church, which in turn directed him to an organization that the church was a patron of: Directive. He applied, and the rest is history.

When he isn't working his IT magic as an IT technician, he enjoys watching television shows, movies, anime, as well as the YouTube channels Linus Tech Tips, NCIX, and SourceFed.

He enjoys the variety Directive offers him in his employment, as he is able to interact with a wide variety of industries from one day to another. One of his first memories of his job stands testament to that variety, as he assisted clients in their attempts to clean up, rebuild, and reorganize their IT after Hurricane Irene flooded the area. Wow!

Celebrating over 5 years with us, we'd like to thank Jeremy for being a part of our team here at Directive!



Charlotte Chase
Solutions Integrator

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