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Manufacturing

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### SFCU Scams: What Can We Learn By Looking at a Continuing Trend of Localized Phishing?



Back in November of last year, we shared the news that Sidney Federal Credit Union members were being

targeted by a phishing attack, and we have evidence that such phishing attacks have continued. As such, let's review how phishing like this works and (more importantly) how to prevent it from working.

To begin, we'll examine the situation as it is playing out now, which is...



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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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## Good Communication is Critical, Incredible Communication Leads to Innovation



Innovation is important to businesses because there are advancements in technologies and strategies that are made all the time that help to improve these businesses' processes. Although there are several niche business communication strategies to consider—which may apply to your business—we've listed the top five universal strategies that all businesses should regard as critical:

### Strategy #1: Focus on Clarity and Conciseness

**Purpose:** To ensure the message's intent is clearly communicated to the audience with minimal confusion and misunderstanding.

### Benefits:

- Provides a better chance for the message to fully land as intended
- Avoids confusion and misunderstandings that can lead to interpersonal issues between employees, lost business from dissatisfied customers, and missed business opportunities
- Creates an easy-to-follow pathway for readers' next steps
- Reinforces the message author as a thought leader who has a clear vision and plan

**Internal example:** To illustrate the reasons behind an upcoming company restructure, a CEO wants to share their company's mid-year health report. Rather than emailing employees the report and having them decipher information (perhaps incorrectly) for themselves, the CEO should condense the information into small bites of key information, calling out key statistics and clearly stating what they mean and why they support the decision to restructure.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Industrial IoT is Bringing Big Data to Manufacturing



By now you've heard of the Internet of Things. It consists of all of the Internet-connected devices found on a given network. Different types of businesses have different ways that they can use the IoT. This month, we thought we would discuss the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) and the ways modern manufacturers use it to make big changes to their businesses.

### What is the Industrial Internet of Things?

Before we get into use cases of IIoT technology, we first have to define it. IIoT is part of a manufacturing plan's digital transformation. It effectively installs sensors and actuators in places that can collect accurate and actionable data, giving large scale organizations the ability to automate processes and reduce costs and environmental harm.

### IoT vs IIoT

Generally, IIoT is a type of IoT. The former is a form of the Internet of Things that connects hardware and software components. The latter is more flexible and allows for greater integration of different devices and software into one system. In the case of IIoT, the technology is an integral part of the overall operating process. It provides real-time information and is crucial for manufacturing and other industries.

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## Do's and Don'ts for Remote Access

As remote access has enabled more and more people to work from home, a business' security has become harder to reinforce. After all, while you can control the solutions you have protecting your business, you don't have much control over the solutions that your employees have at home. Here, we've provided some of the best practices that you should reinforce when your team is working remotely.

For simplicity, we've arranged them into a list of "don'ts" to avoid, followed by a list of "dos" to enact.

### Don't...

...allow your staff to use unauthorized personally-owned devices. - One of the benefits of having an in-house staff is that you have much more control over the solutions that they are able to put to use, and can therefore ensure that their tools are secured properly. When they are working remotely, however, you lose some of that control. As an alternative, consider keeping a supply of laptops on hand for your staff to bring home when working from home. Doing so will allow them continued productivity, while still...



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## Three Considerations That Can Save You Money on Your Technology



If you are on the purchasing end of software, you know it can be pretty expensive and it can cost just as much or more to maintain over its lifecycle. You know what is more expensive? Not having a plan for either thing. This month, we thought we would discuss some topics that can help you not waste money on technology.

### You Are Overpaying for Software

Studies show that nearly one-third of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) applications go unused over any given month. This is a lot of wasted money. Why does it happen? Most of the time businesses will buy SaaS applications to try and get advanced software to help run their

company, give employees the tools they need to succeed, and better promote their products and services.

The thing is, if you have SaaS applications (user accounts) that aren't being utilized, it is just flushing money down the drain. You need to regularly assess your cloud computing spend and ensure that you are paying for the software your business needs and not more of it.

### Not All Users Need High End Workstations

It would be nice to be able to buy top-of-the-line workstations for everyone in your organization. Unfortunately, the better the computer, the more expensive it is. Most of the workers in your organization don't need high-end...



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## Good Communication is Critical, Incredible Communication Leads to Innovation

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**Customer-facing example:** A marketing leader is planning to roll out a campaign in the next few weeks detailing the company's new and improved makeup line. Instead of announcing the new line with just images and product names, the marketing team should ensure that benefits, key improvements/differences, and product information (i.e., price, ingredients, availability, etc.) are explicitly stated in a way that ensures consumers will have all the information they need upfront to make a purchase decision.

### Strategy #2: Keep Communications Consistent

Purpose: To ensure alignment across all communication channels so that the brand image is focused and customers know exactly what kind of experience to expect.

### Benefits:

- Reinforces brand strategy

- Provides rules for consistent content and design
- Aligns your teams for unified brand outreach across your business
- Ensures consumers have the same experience with your brand no matter which employee they're communicating with

**Internal example:** Marketing employees at Brand X struggle with the discrepancies they see between the brand voice they are asked to use and the brand experience they live every day. To improve morale as well as promote a more cohesive brand identity, the team lead can use employee feedback as well as customer communications to create a new brand style guide. This will facilitate both consistency and authenticity. They can then implement a digital writing assistant like Grammarly or ChatGPT...



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## Industrial IoT is Bringing Big Data to Manufacturing

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The difference between the IoT and the IIoT is essentially how the underlying devices are deployed. While IoT is genuinely inexpensive and typically used for end-user convenience, the IIoT is a more sophisticated platform that has specific use cases for business purposes. While all of these devices bring a layer of functionality and reporting capabilities that are simply not possible without them, IIoT platforms are developed to provide enhanced transparency, superior automation, and advanced analytics platforms.

Many IIoT devices are designed for more physically demanding conditions in manufacturing and other industrial environments, such as shipping, and organizational supply chain management. The main benefit is the reliability

of the device in their reporting and the ability for administrators to build in automations that can save businesses a lot of time and effort. What's more, because they can be monitored from remote locations with very little human interaction, they can be deployed in situations that traditional IoT devices simply can't. This makes the technology robust, but also costly to implement.

### IIoT Data and Integration

Since IIoT systems are built to streamline processes and circumvent the need for substantial manpower, it can pay dividends almost immediately if implemented correctly. Unfortunately, it requires an organization to make a...



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## Four Things to Keep in Mind When Upgrading Your Organization's Technology



It is the right thing to do to use technology in your business' attempt to be more productive and efficient, but it

can also be a giant headache if you don't deploy new technology proficiently. It can be expensive and really a hindrance to the way that you run your business, your staff's ability to meet your productivity guidelines and more. In this month's newsletter we want to give you four things you should consider when planning out any new technology additions.

### Build Your New Tech Securely

One of the most important parts of adding any new technology is to make sure that the new additions don't hurt your business' ability to maintain strong security. Obviously, the more everyone depends on technology, the more criminals flock to online environments to try

and siphon data and money from unwitting organizations. Businesses that have the best technology avoid this. A lot of it is setting up different types of encryption especially if you have any distributed members of your workforce. On top of that, you need to add in protections for your new technology, including considerations to manage data flow, the definitions of modern threats, and more.

### Prioritize Efficiency

What other reason do you have to make major upgrades to your business' technology? You want to build more effective operations and that is done by streamlining things. One of the best ways to build better efficiency in your business is to identify the bottlenecks that keep it from being efficient and address them with your tech investments. Consider for a minute the immediate problems your business faces...



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## CYBERSECURITY TIPS

### Removable Devices

While the ways to store data are ever-changing, removable media remains a top option for many.

Freshen up on USB drive best practices, and learn about how cybercriminals are using tiny tech in big ways in this Micro Training.

View this tip and others at:

<https://dti.io/cybersecuritytips>

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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!*

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## Marketing Ideas & Tips for Your SMB

### Has Your Website Traffic Dropped?



There are a lot of reasons that website traffic can fluctuate. Sometimes, it has little to do with your actual website, and more to do with outside forces. Let's take a look at some of the things that can cause major ebbs and flows in your website traffic and analytic reports.

#### Traffic Bots Can Easily Skew Your Marketing Data

We'll start with one of the more annoying sources of data noise out there—traffic bots. Bots aren't people, they are typically automated software that crawls

the web, indexing and noting content, gathering information, or simply looking for very specific types of code. Most bots aren't actually bad. Google itself uses web crawling bots in order to observe and index the vast Internet. Most social media sites utilize bots, as do other search engines, analytic tools, and other entities. You actually want these bots visiting your website, and while they can cause some trouble for you (they can inflate traffic, chew up computing resources on the server, etc.) they are generally benign.

Not all bots are good, however. Some spam bots will overinflate

your analytics, and try to send you down a rabbit hole while looking into where that traffic is coming from, and potentially lead you to a dangerous site. When you get spikes in your analytics that look like this, and it's referral traffic, it's worth being a little cautious.



If you see odd behavior in your traffic, understanding what source the traffic is coming from will help determine whether it's legitimate or fake...



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HAVING AN IT ISSUE?

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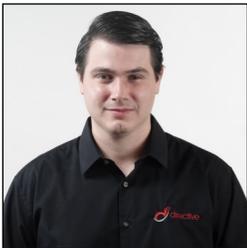
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Use the icon in your desktop system tray for support options, quick links!

For more support options scan the code!



### Employee Spotlight: Sean Dever



We're firm believers in the idea that behind every solid business, there is a solid team of unique individuals working together. We're no exception to this rule, with plenty of characters contributing to our success. Every so often, we like to put the spotlight on one of our team members so you can get to know them like we have, and this time around, we wanted to highlight Sean Dever, one of our IT technicians.

Raised in Merrick, down on Long Island, Sean came upstate to study in the SUNY system, earning his associate's degree in Information Technology from SUNY Delhi and his bachelor's in Computer Science from SUNY Oneonta. After deciding to put down roots upstate, he found the job listing on our website. After his first interview, Sean thought that he and Directive would be a good match. Clearly, we agreed!

When he isn't working on our clients' networking needs and embracing the challenges, Sean spends his time working on his own home network and programming. He is also an avid hiker, and would like to complete the Adirondack 29er challenge. Someday, he aspires to visit every state in the U.S... provided he survives the attacks of his cat, Sir William Wallace, in the interim. For now, we're more than happy to have him stick around here. Thank you so much for everything you do, Sean!



Chris Chase  
CEO

**Tech Trivia**  
Over 30% of North Americans access the dark web regularly.

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