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Is Your Data Actually Safe? With the 3-2-1-1 Method, Yes



Most business owners I talk to have some form of backup. Maybe it's an external drive plugged into a server, or perhaps

everything is saved in the cloud. While these are great starts, they often have a single point of failure. If your office has a fire, that external drive is gone. If a user accidentally deletes a folder and it syncs to the cloud, that data might be gone before you notice...



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

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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newsletter.directive.com

Software is Not a Grocery List



The problem with a lot of businesses is that they certainly don't lack for software; they lack a strategy.

We often see business owners treat software like a grocery list. They realize they're hungry for a solution, they go out and buy the first shiny ingredient they see in an ad, and then they wonder why their kitchen is a mess and they still can't make a cohesive meal. Buying software without a strategy is just expensive clutter. Let's look at how to actually build a stack that helps your team

instead of giving them app fatigue.

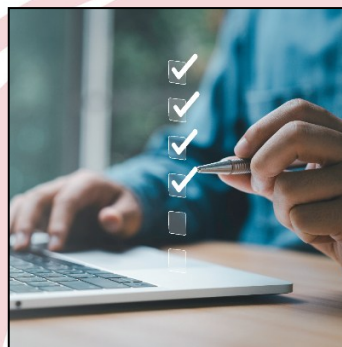
The Inventory First Rule

Before you spend another dime on a SaaS subscription, you need to know what you already have. You'd be surprised how many companies are paying for redundant features. For instance, if you are already paying for Microsoft 365, you have access to Teams, Planner, and SharePoint. Yet, I often see businesses paying extra for Slack or Dropbox on top of that.

Take an afternoon to list every recurring software charge on your business credit card. I guarantee you'll find at least one zombie subscription for a tool your team abandoned months ago.

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The 3-Step Checklist to Protect Your Business



We've all been there. You're in the middle of a proposal, or maybe you're finally clearing out that mountain of unread emails, and a little notification slides into the corner of your screen. Updates are available for your computer.

You look at it, you look at your to-do list, and you click Remind Me Later. Then you do it again the next day. And the day after that. That Remind Me Later button is essentially a Leave the Front Door Unlocked button.

Understanding the Boring Stuff: Software vs. Firmware

I know, I know. Your eyes are already starting to glaze over. You don't care about the technical specs of a patch, and honestly, you shouldn't have to. But to get the most out of your technology, you need to know what's actually happening when you click Install.

- **Software updates** - These are for the programs you interact with. Think Microsoft Word, your web browser, or your accounting software. These updates usually fix bugs (like why the printer won't talk to Excel) or add new features.
- **Firmware updates** - This is the hidden software that lives on your hardware—your

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Is Your Old Tech Holding You Back?

We've all been there, that one "reliable" old server in the closet or that specific software program that requires a secret handshake and a prayer to open. In many small businesses, technology is treated like a kitchen appliance: if it still turns on, it's fine.

Here's the reality: unlike a toaster, technology doesn't just work until it breaks. It slowly decays, becoming a silent growth killer. It doesn't announce its departure with a bang; instead, it quietly nibbles away at your profits, your team's morale, and your security.

The "It Still Works" Trap

The most dangerous phrase in business is: *"But we've always done it this way."*

When your IT is outdated—what we call "Legacy Systems"—it creates a massive drag on your operations. You might not notice it day-to-day, but you'll feel it when your competitor handles three times your volume with half the staff...



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

Why Basic Antivirus Won't Save Your Company from Ransomware



It is tempting to look at your monthly IT bill and wonder if you could be doing more with less. I see it all the time: a business owner tries to trim the overhead by simplifying their technology. Usually, that starts by letting go of a managed security plan in favor of a basic, off-the-shelf antivirus found online for a few dollars a month.

On paper, it looks like a win. You've cleared a line item and the computers still turn on. In reality, that isn't a saving. It is a high-interest loan taken out against your company's future; and you know, the bill always comes due at the worst possible time.

The Myth of "Good Enough" Security

There is a massive difference between

Software is Not a Grocery List

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Instead of looking at the name of the software, look at what it does. Does it communicate? Does it store data? Does it manage projects? If two tools are in the same category, one of them probably needs to go.

Choosing People Over Power

There's a common mistake companies make: buying software for the specs instead of the users. I've seen owners force a high-end, complex project management suite on a small team that really just needed a shared digital checklist. The result is that the team hates the software, they find workarounds—like going back to yellow legal pads—and the owner loses their investment.

having a piece of software installed on a computer and actually being protected. Most people think of antivirus like a deadbolt on a door. You lock it, and you're safe.

In reality, modern cybersecurity is more like a high-end security team. A basic antivirus—the kind you buy for \$60 or download for free—is just a guy with a flashlight. He might see someone breaking in if he happens to be looking at the right window at the right second, but he isn't monitoring the cameras, he isn't checking the badges at the front desk, and he certainly isn't stopping a sophisticated social engineering attack.

When I talk about getting the most out of your technology, I'm not just talking about shiny new laptops or more...



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

Control is important—I'll be the first to tell you that you need to manage who can see what data—but your users are the ones doing the work. Their comfort matters. If a tool is so secure and restricted that it takes ten clicks to do a two-click job, everyone using it is going to check out.

When I'm vetting a new tool, I follow along on my own computer and try to perform a basic task without looking at the manual. If a nerd like me finds the interface clunky or counterintuitive, your office manager; who is already... juggling five other things, is going to find it impossible...



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

The 3-Step Checklist to Protect Your Business

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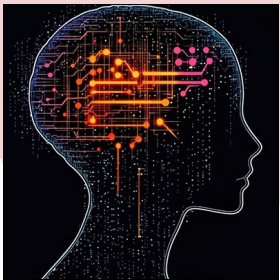
router, your printer, or even your laptop's motherboard.

Why This Is Critical To Your Business

Every day, your business generates data. That data is the lifeblood of your operations. When developers release an update, it's rarely just for performance improvements. Most of the time, they are patching a hole that a hacker has already figured out how to crawl through.

If you are running outdated software, you are essentially using a map from 1995 to navigate a city that has changed entirely. The bad guys know where the old roads are, and they know which bridges are broken.

How to Use AI as a Specialized Business Tool



I've been playing around with these tools a lot lately, and I'll be the first to tell you: most of the AI

content out there is just noise. It's generic, it's soul-less, and it usually starts with some variation of "In today's fast-paced digital landscape..." (Which, let's be honest, is an immediate signal to stop reading).

AI doesn't have to be a waste of your time. If you stop looking at it as a content generator and start looking at it as a specialized tool for your business, you can actually get some real value out of it.

Here are three ways you can use AI right now to actually make your workday easier, without turning your brand into a robot.

By the numbers, here is why you can't wait:

- Over 60 percent of data breaches involve a vulnerability where a patch was available but not applied.
- Hackers can often write exploit code (the digital crowbar they use to get in) within 48 hours of a security flaw being announced.
- The average cost of a small business data breach is now well over \$100,000 when you factor in downtime, lost trust, and recovery.



Read the Rest Online!
<https://dti.io/3steplist>

Use It as a High-Speed Research Assistant (Not a Writer)

One of the best ways to use AI is to have it digest large amounts of information that you don't have time to sift through. If you have a 50-page PDF manual for a new piece of software or a long transcript from a recorded meeting, don't waste your afternoon reading the whole thing.

- Feed that document into an AI and ask it specific, granular questions.
- What are the three steps to configure the user permissions?
- Did we ever agree on a deadline for the server migration during this meeting?

It's about getting to the meat of the information faster. You're still the one making the decisions; the AI is just holding the flashlight so you can see...



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



CYBERSECURITY TIPS

Wearables: Retire Yours the Right Way

Many of us have wearable devices that we use every day, but eventually these devices will have to be retired.

In our Micro Training, we'll go over techniques like account delinking, cloud data purging, and more, making sure that you stay protected even after you part ways with your wearable device.

View this tip and others at:
<https://dti.io/retirewearables>

Get our Cybersecurity Tips directly to your inbox!

Sign up to receive our **FREE** cybersecurity tips to help you to avoid a data breach or other compromise. These tips can be used to educate yourself and your employees on security best practices.

Sign up today!
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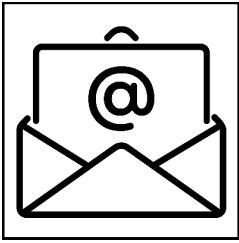
We would *love* to hear your feedback, and would be incredibly grateful if you could take a couple of minutes to write a quick Google review for us. This will allow us to improve our service and let others recognize the value we provide.

Thanks in advance!

<https://directive.com/review>

Marketing Ideas & Tips for Your SMB

Direct Mail Isn't Dead... It's Just Gone Phygital



AI-generated spam has significantly contributed to the volume in our inboxes, further tarnishing their reputation as digital junk drawers. As such, the physical mailbox has become the most exclusive real estate in B2B marketing. While the competition is busy fighting the lure of the spam folder, the most successful small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) are finding that a tangible,

high-quality postcard or letter is the ultimate pattern interrupt.

Of course, this isn't your grandfather's direct mail. In 2026, direct mail is "phygital"—a seamless blend of physical touchpoints and digital automation. For modern businesses, it's no longer about "blasting" a ZIP code; it's about precision, psychology, and persistence.

Why Physical Marketing Still Outperforms Email, Even in a Digital World
Direct mail response rates are

holding steady between 4% and 10%, while email click-through rates continue to hover around a measly 1% or less. Why the massive disparity?

It ultimately boils down to human psychology and sensory engagement.

The Power of Tangibility
When a prospect holds your mailer, they aren't just looking at it; they are engaging their sense of touch...



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



HAVING AN IT ISSUE?

EMAIL SUPPORT

support@directive.com

CHAT WITH US

chat.directive.com
607-433-2200.

TICKET PORTAL

support.directive.com

MANAGED RESOURCES

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

Spotlight: Vets for Pets



The Vets for Pets Motorcycle Run is an annual community event organized by the American Legion Riders Post 259. This initiative brings together local motorists to raise essential funds and awareness for animal welfare organizations.

The event directly benefits three regional groups: the Susquehanna SPCA, Super Heroes Humane Society, and

Friends of the Feral. These organizations provide critical services, including animal sheltering, adoption programs, and medical care for homeless and feral populations.

All are invited to participate in the upcoming ride on June 6 or contribute through the onsite auction and raffle. You can also support the cause by bringing physical donation items to the American Legion in Oneonta to assist with daily shelter operations. Visit the event online at alrpost259.org/vets-for-pets-run for registration details and more information.



Charlotte & Chris Chase

Tech Trivia

63% of consumers prefer to find information about brands and products on mobile devices.

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