The US Military Plans to Bring Biometric Passwords to the Public

Humans are always trying to improve security protocols that can protect against increasingly advanced online threats. Unfortunately, the threats only grow stronger in response, and the war against malicious online activity rages on. Biometrics are security measures that are growing in popularity, but are expensive and difficult to integrate. Now, the US military is funding a campaign to make it more readily available to end users.

Read the Rest Online!
http://bit.ly/1Hmutg7

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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4 Scenarios Where Backup and Disaster Recovery is Optimal

There are a number of disasters which could hamper your business's continuity, but the most dangerous ones occur when you least expect it. Despite this, it's not always clear that your business needs a data backup and disaster recovery solution until it's too late. You stand to lose everything your business has worked so hard for by ignoring potential threats, many of which can be prevented by simple proactive measures.

At Directive, we're all about taking advantage of technology to protect businesses like yours from crippling disasters. Our Backup and Disaster Recovery (BDR) solution is designed to help you stay in business even when you think you can't go on.

Hardware Failures

The most glaringly obvious disaster that could happen to your business is a hardware failure. Technology isn't meant to last forever, and it can be difficult judging when its time is up. If a server were to bite the dust due to lackluster maintenance practices or simple old-age hardware failure, you could lose countless files in the process. That's not even men-

How Managed IT Services Improve Your Company's Customer Service

One common characteristic about small-to-medium sized businesses is that they're often stretched thin. When your company is pulled every which way, certain aspects of it begin to suffer. One area that should never suffer is customer service. Managed IT service can make things easier on your staff so they can focus on what's important, like better serving your clients.

If your SMB is growing, you probably have a computer network that's experiencing growing pains. If these technology pains and challenges aren't addressed and maintained, they will only get worse and spread across your system. If you don't have a dedicated staff member to oversee these technology needs, then by default, the responsibility will fall on the shoulders of your staff using the technology that don't likely specialize in it, or worse, you.

When people on your sales team are managing network security, or your marketing staff is overseeing your IP communications, then two things will happen:

1. Their job performance will suffer.
2. They will do a poor job managing your company's technology.

As a business owner, you may think that a move like this is the way to go because it will save you money, but when looking at the big picture, it will cause other areas of your busi-

Should You Cut the Telephone Cord?

Modern businesses prioritize in improving communications because they understand it will lead to more coherent operations and greater profits. Therefore, your business needs a communication solution that's customizable to meet your unique needs. The one-size-fits-all approach just doesn't work for business-to-business telecommunications, and your company should not be subjected to this outdated approach.

This is why businesses are embracing the feature-rich and customizable VoIP solution that empowers companies to do more with their phone system. VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol), utilizes your company's Internet connection to send and receive data packets, which is a more affordable and economical way than depending on traditional phone systems.

One way that traditional phone systems fall short of serving the needs of small-to-medium sized businesses is by limiting companies to communication packages that provide more phone features than they may need, while making it expensive to upgrade to a different package that includes features that a business would like to have.

> *"Not surprisingly, the traditional phone companies that once dominated the telecommunication industry are looking elsewhere for profits, like mobile technology."*

This limited-options approach to telecommunications is the same strategy used by cable companies, which are notorious for not listening to their customers. In fact, the cable television industry is seeing a dramatic decline as more customers are wising up and "cutting the cord."

Instead of depending on broadcast television, more consumers are turning to their Internet connection and streaming their entertainment. One reason for this is because the Internet allows a viewer to simply select which television programs they want to view, instead of having to upgrade to a next-level entertainment package so they can watch their favorite program--not to mention all of those dang commercials!

Notice a correlation here? The appeal of saving money while gaining access to one's preferred television programs is fueling the cord-cutting trend, and the television industry is taking a huge hit for their oversight. With VoIP, all of the most essential features are offered in the basic package (unlike the dozen-or-so-useless channels offered with basic cable), and upgrading to a more feature-rich package is easy to switch to and easy on the budget. As IDC Research Manager Amy Lind explains to Processor magazine:

In the basic host VoIP tier, the following features are standard: unlimited local/domestic long-distance calling, auto-attendant, call waiting, call forwarding, caller ID, voicemail, and voicemail-to-email. The availability of other features varies widely depending on service provider and what type of advanced features the provider might bundle together such as simultaneous ring, sequential ring/find-me follow-me (receiving calls according to location and on any number of devices), and more.

How Managed IT Services Improve Your Company's Customer Service

ness model to suffer, which in turn, will hinder growth and cost you much more in the long run.

Laurie McCabe, vice president of small and medium-sized business insights and solutions for the research firm AMI-Partners, explains this to Information-Week: "A lot of small businesses think it's cheaper to do everything themselves, but employees can get overloaded, and they may not be in a good mood when interacting with your customers."

McCabe goes on to make a point that should make every DIY business owner reconsider their ways: "And if you're not doing a good job at something, your competition probably is." Translation, if your team is too bogged down with technical responsibilities that they can't focus on providing your clients with outstanding customer service, then your clients will eventually interact with your competitors that have the ability to better serve their needs.

By outsourcing your company's IT needs to Directive, we're able to remotely take care of IT maintenances, network security, and more, so that your team doesn't have to. This will allow them to focus on what's important, doing exactly what you hired them to do, and doing it well. When your staff is able to reach their full potential and provide your customers outstanding service, your business will soar because it won't be tied down by technology problems.

To optimize your company's technology so that it will meet the unique needs of your business, give Directive a call at 607.433.2200.

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4 Scenarios Where Backup and Disaster Recovery is Optimal

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tioning the amount of cash you'll fork over for a new unit, and the downtime left in its wake is the icing on the cake.

This is why it's so important to utilize a BDR solution. In the event of a hardware failure, the BDR solution can act as a temporary server for your business. This lets you focus on acquiring a new server unit, or migrating your infrastructure to a virtual server in the cloud, without worrying about the immediate downtime following a disaster. A big project like this should be handled by professionals, so make sure to give Directive a call to find out how you can take advantage of virtualization.

Natural Disasters
Believe it or not, natural disasters do happen, and they can be detrimental to your business. Floods, fires, earthquakes, and tornadoes can all destroy expensive equipment which is vital to your business's operations. If this equipment is destroyed, you'll be stuck in a position akin to hardware failure, where

you'll be forced to deal with excessive downtime and loss of data.

That is, if you're not using a BDR solution. With this device, your business's data is backed up externally and internally, multiple times a day, making sure that your data is always redundant. Following the disaster, you'll be able to use these backups to get back in business with minimal data loss.

Hackers
One of the more likely disasters for your business could be the result of a hacker either infiltrating your network or throwing malware your way. Viruses and malware have varying degrees of damage, with the worst potentially disabling your technology and making it unusable. Sometimes it's easier to get rid of a problem like this by wiping your system completely. However, this solution also wipes out any data that was being stored on the system.

The only true solution to this issue is to use the BDR to recover your lost infor-

mation from the last clean backup taken. This helps you recover from a machine-wiping disaster fairly easily, again, with minimal downtime and data loss.

User Error
Just when you thought you had all of your bases covered, a staff member can go in and save over an important file or corrupt a critical spreadsheet. Whether this is an act of malevolence or an honest mistake, it's important to have your data backed up so a simple restore can save your day.

These are just four common scenarios where Directive's BDR solution is helpful. For more information on how to take advantage of a BDR for your business's data infrastructure, give us a call at 607.433.2200. You'll know that in the event of the worst, your data is being handled by the best.

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3 Mobile Myths to Consider

Mobile is all the rage nowadays. Industry giants such as Microsoft and Apple claim to have mobile devices that make the PC obsolete. It makes for great marketing, but do mobile devices have what it takes to keep employees productive inside and outside of the workplace? The statistics say no, but the gap is closing. Here are three mobile myths all CIOs should consider.

Mobile Users Aren't So Mobile
Device marketing has created an aura around the smartphone in particular that the world opens up when you buy

their product. While it is super convenient to be able to contact people while you're on the go, according to a study by the University of Virginia School of Engineering and AOL Networks, nearly three-quarters of all smartphone use takes place within the friendly confines of the user's own four walls.

"Not all is bad or good about mobile devices in the home and the workplace. For work, mobile should be left as an accoutrement or subsidy designed for consumption."

If you consider that you spend a lot of your life in a limited amount of places,

this study quickly makes sense. The use of mobile devices has expanded from a go-to device when you're on the go, to a subsidy of a user's entire life. Over 50 percent of television users admit to using a mobile device while they are watching television. With this kind of steadfast connectivity, users reap the benefits of mobile in all aspects of their lives, creating the second myth…

Mobile Devices Are Good for Work
As an extension of yourself, your mobile device acts as your onboard computer. This leads to marketers blatantly suggesting that since you have access to a powerful computer, on an easy to use device, that you can be more efficient and productive because of it. That's a wonderful theory, and the world would

Should You Cut the Telephone Cord?

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Not surprisingly, the traditional phone companies that once dominated the telecommunication industry are looking elsewhere for profits, like mobile technology. In fact, many industry experts are even predicting that, in the not-too-distant future, land-line phones will be a thing of the past as Internet-based communication solutions like VoIP take their place. This VoIP revolution is already well underway, with 79 percent of American businesses using VoIP phones at one location (six years ago this figure stood at 42 percent).

Like any service, VoIP offers additional features for your business to take advantage of if you want to upgrade to a more feature-rich package. But unlike other services, like cable and traditional landline phones, your company can afford a higher-tier VoIP package because of how much your business can potentially save with VoIP. In many cases, businesses that switched to VoIP from traditional phone services charging for long-distance phone calls have seen savings upwards of 80 percent.

To get an affordable VoIP package that fits the communication needs of your business, call Directive at 607.433.2200.

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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.

3 Mobile Myths to Consider

(Continued from page 3)

be a better place if it were the truth, but it is simply hyperbole. Mobile devices are consumption models. The touchscreen is responsive enough to play games or even write out a list or an email, but using productivity software on a 4½-inch screen is just wishful thinking.

Yes, there are some things a user can do on a tablet that can be deemed "work," but the majority of mobile devices available are being used for consumer information. Smartphones and tablets are great for checking and responding to email, sharing files, setting a schedule, etc., but the real work is, for the most part, still being done on the PC. There has been a push to integrate mobile device technology into retail as a point-of-sale system, or health care as a ePHI (electronic Protected Health Information) dissemination conduit. While these uses are still technically consumption-based, they go above and beyond watching the NFL on your phone.

Mobile Isn't Safe
Mobile devices have a perception of being less secure than their PC brethren. In fact, 71 percent of respondents surveyed by Forrester on this very topic said that they somewhat or strongly agreed that your typical PC is more secure than a mobile device. Most modern mobile devices come equipped with secure operating systems and they are operated by users that are extraordinarily proficient, as where PCs are more complex machines and have a larger virtual surface area to protect...

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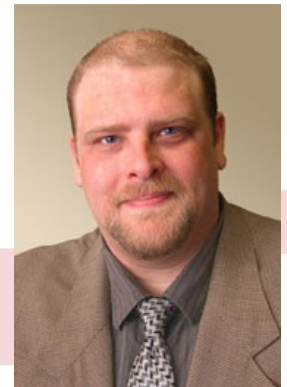
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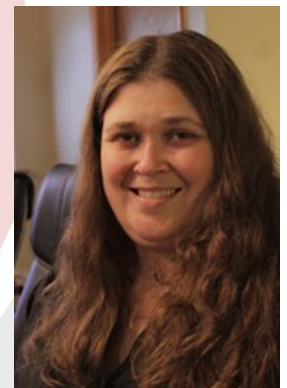
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