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**Businesses Have Access to These 3 Powerful Communications Tools**



What kinds of communication tools does your business utilize on a daily basis? Chances are that your communication infrastructure can benefit from some of the latest and greatest solutions on the market. Communication is one aspect of your business that you definitely do not want to skimp on, as failing to implement the proper tools can bleed into other aspects of your organization, including operations and, in return, your bottom line.

Here are three technology solutions that all small businesses should...



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“Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all.”  
— George Washington

**Lessons Learned from the New Normal**



It’s been said that those who don’t learn from history are doomed to repeat it. In business, this is more evident every day as organizations have to deal with all sorts of different problems. How business leaders react to those problems ultimately makes the difference between beleaguered results or success. Let’s take a look at three lessons business leaders should be learning from recent events.

**You Need Your Workforce**

For the small business, the COVID-19 pandemic was filled with lessons to be learned. One of the most valuable was that your staff is extremely important. Not that you didn’t think they weren’t, but for many businesses, the situation changed so suddenly that there wasn’t a lot of time spent focusing on their situations. Every business is made up of people that largely want to do well, regardless of the circumstances. They are people, however. People have problems.

If you just look at the circumstances that a lot of workers had to deal with in the past year, you’d realize that as important as your business is to you, without people that care about

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**Train your Staff on These Four Security Strategies**



Are you one of the countless people who find themselves performing repetitive tasks like moving files around, working with people on the phone, navigating email, or updating information? It’s easy to find yourself in a situation where one wrong click can create a plethora of issues, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the case of network security.

Global statistics can provide key insights into how simple steps can be taken to augment network security. According to the Internet Society’s Online Trust Alliance (OTA), 2018 saw losses exceeding \$45 billion as a result of cyberattacks. Of that \$45 billion, about 95 percent of it could have been prevented by taking simple steps. These numbers are only expected to get worse over time.

To keep your business from becoming a part of this statistic, we recommend that you take multiple measures beyond having a dedicated network and cybersecurity strategy; you also need to train your staff to understand the importance of this crucial component of security. This month we want to focus on some strategies that you can use to take action and get your staff on the same page.

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## Additional Considerations for Your Business' Data Backup Strategy



We routinely discuss the importance of a comprehensive data backup strategy. With so many work-

forces incorporating remote work into their operations, making such preparations is extremely important. Let's go over some of the key steps that you need to take to secure your business' data from loss.

### How to Properly Design Your Backup Strategy

To establish a data backup strategy that works effectively, there are a few different steps you need to take. They include:

#### Specifying Your Recovery Goals

Naturally, you want as much of your data and operations to be restored as

possible, as quickly as possible, but it is important to put definitive objectives in place. How much data do you need to restore to restart your business after your operations are down? How long can you sustain downtime before it becomes too much? Identifying these metrics are crucial to your successful recovery.

#### Training Your Team

Obviously, having a backup in place is a great start, but you also need to know that your team can recover the data if necessary. Backups are obviously only useful when they can be restored from, and that can only happen if your team understands how to do so properly. Taking the time to train your team members to restore from backup is beneficial.

#### Building Procedures

Once your goals are in place and your team is prepared to restore from

backup, you need to make sure the process is documented. This will establish data recovery as a process that can be used should the need arise. You will also want to put in procedures for testing your backup, the recovery process, and any other part of your organization's data redundancy.



Following these steps as you adopt your backup policies and procedures will only help to make them more effective. If you want to learn more about the best practices for data backup and recovery, give Directive a call today at 607.433.2200.



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## Lessons Learned from the New Normal

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their work, you don't have a business. Some people lost loved ones. They had spouses or people close to them lose their jobs or get furloughed. They had children that were home the whole time that they were being asked to work from home. Through all these circumstances they made their home the office and were able to keep your business afloat.

If there is one stark lesson that can be learned from 2020, it is that empathy is required to be the kind of business that people want to succeed in. Business can be cutthroat. Costs need to be slashed sometimes, and that often means jobs need to go. The realities of business don't have anything to do with how employees are treated. If your company treats people with the respect they deserve, most times you will get more out of them.

### You Need to Understand the Power of Digital Tools and Remote Work

Besides the difficulties that businesses

and the people that work for them have had to deal with over the past year, it has been pretty remarkable how many businesses have been able to shift their focus to a remote-only workplace, sustain their ability to provide the services they were contracted to provide, and overall make something good out what is admittedly a bad situation.

One thing that isn't that surprising is that businesses that tended to adopt tech early, or that already had the technology in place, seemed to do better than businesses that scampered around trying to fill in the gaps. Some smaller businesses had to piece together their strategy during the pandemic as they didn't have the capital on hand to alter their whole IT strategy overnight and therefore had difficulty getting up to speed. Regardless of how it was approached, the rollout of digital tools to facilitate remote work has been a bright spot for workers and businesses alike in a time when positive variables are in short supply.

Now that vaccinations are being handed out en masse, businesses are trying to find a fair balance that provides people with the flexibility they've come to depend on, while also utilizing the brick and mortar workspace. Remote work is popular and businesses have to be careful not to alienate their workforce as employee turnover is extremely costly. It will be interesting to see how business owners will be able to compromise their wishes to get their workforce back to normal with employee demands. Businesses that do it right, will stand to prosper dramatically in the coming years.

### You Need to Be Creative to Solve Your Business' Problems

Make no mistake about it, a lot of companies went out of business over the past year and a half. For some, it's going to take a great deal of creativity to get through the rest of the pandemic...



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## Train your Staff on These Four Security Strategies

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### Get Them to Relate

Let's face it; network security isn't exactly the most thrilling topic to discuss at the next staff meeting, especially for young people who don't work in security. Therefore, it's imperative that you get them to relate to victims of cybersecurity issues. Naturally they don't want to be responsible for the frustrations of someone else, so this approach is more likely to yield results. You can use real-world examples in your training. More likely than not, this will give them the perspective they need to prevent negligent behavior moving forward. If you show them what they can do to protect the company, they are in turn protecting their own data.

### Always Promote Security

If nothing else, people are impressionable and tend to adopt what is in their surroundings. If they are always seeing a particular message, then they will

accept that message. This is one way to build a company culture that focuses on security. If you are always encouraging users to stick to secure practices, you can be confident that most of your staff will fall in line.

### Regular Security Training

In addition to pushing security as much as possible, you should also train your employees on the policies and procedures which your business expects of them. Employees must understand the following:

- How to avoid becoming a victim of phishing
- What network resources they have access to
- The importance their role has in protecting company and customer data
- Solid password management and best practices
- What to do if they do make a security mistake

As long as each employee can grasp the above concepts, your chances of experiencing a security breach should be significantly diminished.

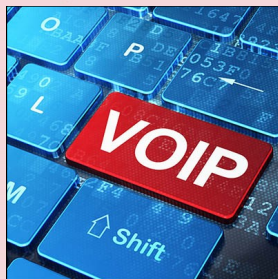
### Be a Security Mentor

Most employees will not default to thinking about network security. If they follow established security procedures, it should not be a problem, but the issue is that many employees don't picture security as their problem, but one for management or C-suite executives. This is largely because solutions like firewalls, antivirus, multi-factor authentication, mobile device management, and intrusion detection are all systems that, similar to digital surveillance, access control, printer management...



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## Installing a VoIP Platform Can Be Good for Your Business



There aren't many technological assets as important for a business as its communications solutions. Today, there are

plenty of different solutions that businesses can use to interact with other people in the company, but for communications with customers and vendors, the telephone is still the best and most utilized. Today, we will look at business telephone systems and why choosing Voice over Internet Protocol simply makes sense for your business.

### Antiquated Strategies and Technologies

If you're still relying on the traditional telephone system of yesteryear, you could be making your job more difficult than it needs to be. Businesses that still use traditional telephone systems have limited ability to grow and expand. Adding new users can mean adding new

telephone lines (running wire) and extensions, a process that's not necessarily easy.

The most logical course of action is to figure out how your business can get away from traditional telephone providers. After all, these are the same organizations that are known to provide bundles filled with services you don't need. Plus, running telephone wires and adding new users or phone numbers can be quite the hassle, one that you don't have to worry about with a more dynamic solution.

### Get a Cutting-Edge Telephone System

The VoIP system utilizes your existing broadband connection to make and receive calls, send messages, and even run video conferences. With great new features that easily outclass the traditional telephone system, VoIP is a sustainable and investment-worthy...



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<https://dti.io/voip4biz>

## Cybersecurity Tips

### Vacation Scams

Whenever you are ready to begin planning your next vacation, it is important to be mindful of some of the common vacation scams that dupe consumers each year.

<https://dti.io/vacationscams>



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# Marketing Ideas & Tips for Your SMB

## Campaigns: Not One and Done



There is a misconception that after developing a campaign, your work is finished. People have the belief that once completed they will have the ability to run the campaign continuously, and continue to get leads. Campaigns are essentially a process of tasks that are carried out with the intent of improving the awareness of goods or services. Just like any process, the campaign will need to be refined, and repaired before being used again. The following is a quick look at the cycle that every campaign, regardless of type or size, should go through:

**Begin and Run the Campaign** - Once pieces have been created, and all of the content has been written it is time to begin sending the campaign to your chosen marketing group. (Make sure your group is composed of well-vetted contacts, or money will be lost). You will want to make sure that goals and metrics are clearly set, as they will be important after the campaign has been completed.

**Review the Success of the Campaign** - After the campaign has completed, you should measure its success by

reviewing your goals and metrics. You should prepare to follow up and move any suspects/prospects further down the marketing funnel toward a sale. Some feedback from your campaign will be explicitly laid out in the metrics set up prior to the start of the campaign. For more in-depth feedback, you should consider a survey. With a survey, you can ask more specific questions about your recipient's perception of the campaign. You can use this information to refine the campaign for use in the future.

**Refine the Campaign** - Now that you've identified the strong, and weaker pieces of your campaign, it can be refined. Changes made should encourage better results the next time it is used. There are three major parts to refinement:

- **Feedback-based** - All of the responses you got from your audience should be considered in this step. At this time, information will be added or removed, content value will be increased, and consideration of any other insights provided by your audience should also take place.
- **Internal observations** - At this step, the processes of the campaign with data will be refined. (Your audience would

not typically notice these). A few examples of internal observations include:

- Did you select the best resources for execution?
- Did you have trouble tracking the campaign with the metrics you'd originally chosen?
- Does printing of marketing collateral require more time for execution?
- Was the venue for your event ideal?
- **List updates/additions** - After each campaign, you should compare the contacts on your marketing list with the potential ROI. Depending on the results, removing contacts from your marketing group may be necessary. If contacts have been added to your groups, it's important to make sure campaign lists are updated. Your company's marketing lists should be constantly evolving.

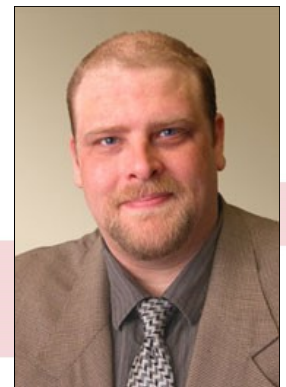
**Run Again** - After improvements are made, the next step is beginning and running the campaign again. This run should achieve better results than the previous.

Your marketing strategy must be adaptable. Without an...



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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.



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