The Ultimate Remote Setup for Users with Work-Provided Laptops

Working from home isn't as simple as it sounds for many users. There are a lot of things to consider, ranging from comfort to security. Considering that a lot of people first started to think about working from home two years ago under duress, it's worth looking at your current situation and determining how you can improve it.

Personally, my office at home has always been pretty tricked out. The first purchase I made for myself...

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https://dti.io/ultremsetup

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

I Changed All My Passwords and It Was a Nightmare (But Totally Worth It)

Nobody wants to spend their weekend doing paperwork. Nobody wants to spend several evenings in a row sitting over a laptop and slowly digging through every online account they have, resetting every password and carefully documenting everything in a secure password manager. I know this better than anyone, because I forced myself to do it.

Here's the thing though, EVERYBODY should do it. As soon as possible.

Digital Housekeeping is the Pits!

Over a month ago, I took it upon myself to fully audit and change every single personal password I have. I had been using a password manager for many, many years, but after a while, it started to get a little messy. There were plenty of duplicate entries with older passwords, generated passwords that weren't clearly labeled, and old accounts that didn't exist anymore.

Inspired by the LastPass Data Breach

Triggered by my desire to tidy up my password manager, I was also inspired by the recent announcement that **last year's LastPass data breach included unauthorized access to customer password vaults**. I won't bore you with the technical details—essentially the password vaults are encrypted, and the only way to get access to the passwords is by knowing the individual user's LastPass Master Password, but that means just one single password separates your passwords from cybercriminals, and with the password vaults

Is the Internet of Things Right for Your Business?

There has been a lot made about the Internet of Things (IoT) recently. The IoT is basically technology that connects to the Internet or your network and offers some sort of specialized task. Think smart light bulbs, mobile devices, monitoring tools, and other appliances that traditionally aren't connected to the Internet. For today's businesses this can bring several pros and cons to the table. This month, we thought we would take a brief look at some of the pros and cons of deploying IoT technology in the workplace.

IoT Benefits

New technology can bring a lot of benefits to a business and IoT technology is one of those innovations that some people may not even realize they are utilizing. One of the most important benefits of IoT is that it can help automate certain tasks. For any business, the more uniform the quality of any task, the more consistent the workflow. IoT can present a lot to a business in the way of enhancing the machine-to-machine presence, thus taking some of the more mundane responsibilities off of human resources. This enhanced automation sets up most of the other benefits IoT can bring to your business, including:

- **Enhanced communication -** IoT devices are ubiquitously connected which improves company-wide communication and results in better quality service and product delivery.
- **Cost realignment -** One of the biggest benefits IoT can bring a business is to optimize

What Every Business Owner Needs to Know About Security Training

The effectiveness of your business' IT security is largely contingent on how your IT operates. As a result, it is extremely important to ensure that your staff understands the role they play in protecting your business' assets. This month, we discuss what you should prioritize when putting together a security training platform; an essential part of any business' attempts to keep their IT secure.

Security Posture

One term you may have heard is "security posture". This speaks to how aggressive a person is in protecting themselves online. Much of today's computing is done through cloud-based apps and many companies have embraced remote workforces and need their staff to actively participate in their organizational cybersecurity efforts. This means tightening up their security practices.

Every person that uses computing systems needs to actively participate in cybersecurity efforts if the organization is going to maintain data and network security. Here are four considerations that can help you plot…

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Simpler Business Technology is Often Better Business Technology

While there are some aspects of business technology that are quite simple, there are other parts that are complicated and difficult to understand, even for experienced users. In this month's newsletter, we want to go over how you can keep the complexity of your IT to a minimum so that you have as few headaches as possible.

Over time, a business' infrastructure will get more complicated by virtue of adding systems upon systems, all of which are interlinked and reliant on each other. If you try to change one system, it might negatively influence the others. This leads to a vicious cycle of responding to issues over and over again, only to create and address more of them. Keeping your IT simple will lessen the impact this has on your company.

What Does a Simple IT Infrastructure Look Like?

Some organizations might not have a problem with paying more for exactly what they need out of their technology infrastructure, and while this is completely legitimate, it will make hardware refreshes and implementing new technology more complicated as the business's needs change over time.

Most of these systems will be managed to a certain extent, but they are all complex and difficult to keep track of on their own, especially after the web…

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I Changed All My Passwords and It Was a Nightmare (But Totally Worth It)

(Continued from page 1)
stolen, all a criminal needs to do is use software to continuously guess passwords until it breaks through.

In other words, it's a bad situation, and if you have been using LastPass, we recommend you immediately change your LastPass Master Password and audit all of your accounts within and change passwords.

I had over 400 entries in my personal password manager, so if I were to find myself in a situation where I needed to scramble to change passwords and try to gain control over my online identity, I would have to set aside several days. So even though I wasn't personally facing any urgency (my accounts were mostly secure and set up with two-factor and I always use strong passwords), I felt a strong need to get my personal cybersecurity in check.

It sucked, but I'm so glad I did it. So here's what I did. Get yourself a drink and a snack, cut up a charcuterie board, and get ready to sit still for a while.

Step-by-Step Guide for Cleaning Up Your Online Cybersecurity Hygiene
Before we get started, let's go over the goals of this.

Password Rules to Live By
- **One Email to Rule Them All.** Generally, most of your accounts should be tied to one particular email address. If you use multiple email addresses, you need to document it and make sure you maintain control and security over these accounts. Your email accounts are the backbone of your cybersecurity.
- **Unique Passwords, Every...**

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Is the Internet of Things Right for Your Business?
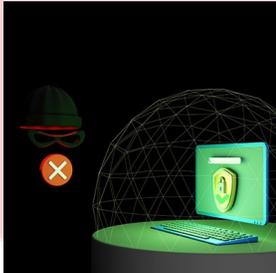
(Continued from page 1)

resource utilization, improving over-all efficiency and reducing costs.

- **Reporting -** IoT devices create data that can be used to identify further inefficiencies and improve workflow performance and service and product delivery.

Detriments of IoT

Unfortunately, any technology comes with some type of detriments. Whether it is cost, the high price of management, or some other issue, it is important to have a clear view of any technology before you jump in with both feet. The largest detrimental characteristic of IoT technology is the less-than-stellar track record of network security that comes with having so many endpoints on your network. That's not to say that the IoT, when deployed correctly, is a risk, it is just that there are some IoT devices that might be problematic if integrated without planning. Other cons include:

- **Compatibility issues -** Since there is no standard to go by for IoT devices, it can be difficult to get every IoT device to play nice with your current computing environment or even IoT devices from the same manufacturer. It can be an enigma.
- **Increased complexity -** As we mentioned earlier in this article, when something goes wrong with a single mission-critical endpoint on your network, it can be a catastrophe...

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Two Ways to Ward off Hackers

Has your business been targeted by hackers? Do you even know? Let's face it, small businesses don't typically worry all that much about cybersecurity. To many small business owners, they might see it as a luxury for their perceived risk. Unfortunately, the reality of the situation is that hackers and scammers are targeting small businesses more regularly than they have in the past and without some kind of dedicated cybersecurity strategy, there could be a good chance that your business could run into some problems because of it.

If you are like us, you're sick of hearing about these hackers. They just are fraudsters and thieves that are trying to get over on hard working people running legitimate endeavors. Here are two things you can do as a decision maker at a small business that will help you control your business' data and computing infrastructure.

Improve Your Password Practices

Most computing systems require a login and password for access. There are several things you can do on this level to improve your chances of securing your network and infrastructure. The first is to ensure that your staff knows how to construct a secure password. If you were to outline the fundamentals of cybersecurity, it would start with a password strategy that works to protect a business. This has three levels. They are:

- **Password creation -** Learning how to construct a secure password will go a long way toward protecting your business' digital assets. Some strategies include creating a passphrase that is easily remembered, but hard to guess. Couple this strategy with use of different cases, numbers, and symbols and you've got a system to create passwords that work for end users and administrators alike.
- **Password management -** Every user has dozens of accounts that they need to remember passwords for. Without a password management...

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https://dti.io/repelhackers

CYBERSECURITY TIPS

Spotting a Phishing Landing Page

Phishing landing pages are commonly found after a user clicks a link in a malicious message or by being redirected during a web browsing session.

But how can you spot these sneaky sites? Learn the difference between a phishing landing page and the real deal 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!

https://directive.com/review

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Marketing Ideas & Tips for Your SMB

How to Optimize Your Google Business Profile: Part 5

If you've made it this far into our series, good for you, you're on your way to finishing mastering your Google Business Profile. For the last segment of our series, let's continue our discussion on Google Business profiles and how to really make your profile yours, and how to use it for engagement from your audience!

How to Make The Most of Your Google Business Profile

You know the old adage that "less is more?" Well, in this case, forget it. The more specific you can make your Google Business Profile, the more effectively Google can link it to the search queries coming in. Plus, the more information your prospects can find out here, the more likely it is that they'll find a reason to investigate further.

This is what is known as relevance, one of three ranking factors that Google leans heavily on. The other two, distance and prominence, are all combined to create the most practical match for a local searcher's inquiry. How well does your business' profile match what has been searched for, how close is your business to the location of the searcher, and how do your reviews from all around the Internet look? Including the right keywords here can be hugely effective, so don't forget to check your Google Analytics to identify promising ones to use.

Otherwise, there are a few other ways that you can add value to your business' profile:

Customize Your Attributes
Remember the business categories we referenced earlier? Depending on the ones you selected, your GBP can be adapted to even more closely suit your business...

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Community Spotlight: Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce

We've found that, as we operate here, it is always good to develop lasting relationships with our fellow businesses and organizations. However, it would be much, much harder to do so without the Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce bringing us all together.

In their own words, the Central Catskills Chamber is meant to *"advance the economic and community vitality of the many hamlets, villages and towns in our region and promote and foster events, programs and initiatives that will support the Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce members. Collaboration and innovation will inspire community enhancement and quality of life opportunities for all who live, work and visit our communities."* This is a mission that we can get behind, and are happy to contribute to in our own way.

By making it simpler for a business or industry's members to find each other and be found themselves, the Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce has directly benefited members of the community, while also helping to preserve local history.

Visit them online at: centralcatskills.com

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Chris Chase
CEO

Tech Trivia
49% of people think that wearable technology boosts productivity.

GO ON, GENERATE A SECURE PASSWORD!