

## This Issue:

Four Strategies to Help Build Robust Cybersecurity

Get More Out of Your Business' Technology

Big Data, Small Business

Solutions Protecting Your Password-Secured Accounts

Fringe Technologies that Can Benefit Your Business

IT Security Concerns and How to Confront Them

Stop Missing Your Marketing Targets

### Big Data, Small Business



Big data has become an invaluable asset, not just for large corporations but also for small businesses. Using the vast amounts of

data your business creates to help you make more effective decisions is easier than ever. In this month's newsletter, we'll look at how small businesses are tapping into the power of big data:

### Customer Insights and Personalization

Understanding customer behavior is critical for any business. Small businesses can use big data analytics to better...



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<https://dti.io/bigdatasmbiz>

## 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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## Four Strategies to Help Build Robust Cybersecurity

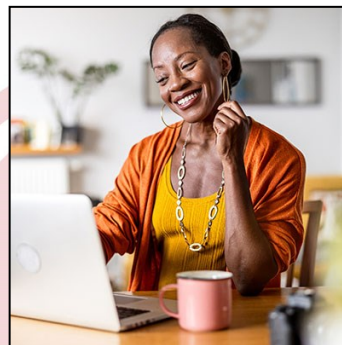


If you spend a little time getting to know any of the Chase family, you'll know we love our motorcycles. Owning a motorcycle isn't just about purchasing an expensive piece of equipment and riding it around town; it's a hobby that consumes your time (and your wallet). In many ways, it's similar to running a business.

Maintaining a motorcycle (or, in my case, constantly modifying and upgrading it) takes up considerable time, but there's something enjoyable about it. There's a sort of sense of pride in tucking Fiona (yes, I named my bike) away for the winter, knowing she'll be tuned up and ready to roll in the spring.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Get More Out of Your Business' Technology



Every business is looking to technology to enhance their ability to support their operations and provide a better customer experience. Maximizing the value you get from your technology involves a combination of optimizing usage, staying updated, and using the tools and resources you've chosen efficiently. Here are some strategies:

### Optimize Device Performance

In order to get your organization's technology to function for your needs, you need to ensure that it works the way you intend it to work. Here are three ways you can work toward that end:

- **Regular maintenance** - Clean up unnecessary files, update software, and perform regular maintenance checks.
- **Battery management** - Use power-saving modes, adjust screen brightness, and close unused apps to extend battery life.
- **Upgrade hardware** - Consider upgrading components like RAM, SSD, or GPU for better performance.

### Stay Updated

Software plays a critical role in business nowadays, and there needs to be a strategy in place to ensure it doesn't ultimately serve as another vulnerability. You have some options to consider:

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Fringe Technologies that Can Benefit Your Business



Fringe technology encompasses innovative and unconventional tech solutions that are not yet mainstream but

can potentially make a significant impact. Small businesses can utilize these technologies to gain a competitive edge, boost efficiency, and enhance customer experiences. Here are some examples of fringe technologies that small businesses can adopt.

### Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality

AR and VR are gaining traction for creating immersive marketing experiences for customers and providing in-depth training for employees, helping them understand their roles better.

### Blockchain

Beyond its use in cryptocurrency, blockchain technology offers businesses secure transaction processing, improved supply chain management, and the capability to provide secure digital contracts to customers.

## Zen and the Art of Proactive IT Management

*(Continued from page 1)*

This maintenance is extremely important, though. Without it, my bike won't last nearly as long, and it could make riding it more difficult and dangerous over time.

Your business IT is the same. You need to keep it well-maintained, or else things will fall apart, and in a lot of cases, before you can even tell that something is going wrong, you risk opening your business up to dangerous threats.

That's where proactive IT management comes in. By taking a proactive

### The Internet of Things

The IoT involves internet-connected devices that add value by automating and optimizing business operations. These devices can monitor goods, components, or equipment, enhancing an organization's data systems.

### Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

AI and ML are increasingly embedded in business software, enhancing customer experiences through better service and support, personalizing marketing efforts, and automating business functions to streamline processes.

### Biometrics

Security is a paramount concern, and biometric technology—such as facial recognition and fingerprint scanning—provides businesses with enhanced security and streamlined authentication processes.

### Edge Computing

Edge computing processes data closer...



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<https://dti.io/fringetech>

approach to IT, businesses can prevent issues before they occur, improve efficiency, and save money in the long run. In this article, we'll explore the concept of proactive IT management and how it can benefit your business.

### What is Proactive IT Management?

Proactive IT management is the practice of identifying and addressing potential IT issues before they become major problems. It involves regularly monitoring and maintaining IT systems, implementing security measures, and...



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## Solutions Protecting Your Password-Secured Accounts

Passwords are some of the most important variables in any cybersecurity strategy. Unfortunately, many people with access to business-run systems don't take the care needed to sufficiently protect these accounts. With the myriad of threats to these accounts, having a comprehensive password management strategy is extremely important.

To help you not only secure your network from unauthorized access, but also train your employees to use a combination of tools and actions to circumvent all attempts to use their login to grant access.

Our team of knowledgeable professionals use our decades of experience to create customized strategies to help keep our clients' networks secure.

Passwords cover most digital accounts and if you don't make clear that much of the security is keeping passwords out of the hands of cybercriminals, employees will leave your organizational...



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<https://dti.io/mngpassword>

## Get More Out of Your Business' Technology

(Continued from page 1)

- **Software updates** - Keep your operating system and applications updated to benefit from the latest features and security patches.
- **New technologies** - Stay informed about new technologies and trends that could enhance your work or entertainment.

### Enhance Productivity

Technology can present a lot of value to organizations to support growth in productivity, but knowing what tools to use may be a little difficult to identify. Let's take a look at some of the tools people are using to improve productivity:

## IT Security Concerns and How to Confront Them



Cyberthreats are increasingly sophisticated, and businesses have to do what they can to address

these issues. Since cyberattacks can have a massively negative impact on your business, it stands to reason that you need a platform in place to enhance your employees' awareness of Internet-based threats. This month we look at the top three IT security concerns businesses face and what should be done to confront them.

### Ransomware Attacks

Ransomware attacks involve malicious software that encrypts a victim's data. The attacker then demands a ransom to restore access. These attacks can cripple businesses, leading to significant financial losses and reputational damage. Let's look at three considerations that can keep ransomware from being a problem for your business:

- **Automation tools** - Use tools, like macros, scripts, or automation software to streamline repetitive tasks.
- **Productivity apps** - Utilize productivity apps for project management, note-taking, and time tracking.
- **Keyboard shortcuts** - Learn and use keyboard shortcuts to save time.

### Increase Your Use of Cloud Services

Cloud tools have become the go-to for businesses that need to acquire...



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<https://dti.io/morebiz>

- **Data backup** - Regularly back up critical data and ensure backups are stored offsite. This minimizes the impact of a ransomware attack by enabling data restoration without paying the ransom.
- **Endpoint security** - Implement advanced endpoint protection solutions to detect and block ransomware. Tools that use behavioral analysis can identify suspicious activities indicative of ransomware.
- **Employee training** - Educate employees about phishing schemes and the importance of not clicking on suspicious links or attachments. Awareness is a critical defense against ransomware.

### Data Breaches

Data breaches involve unauthorized access to sensitive information, such as personal data, financial records, and intellectual property. Such breaches can result in legal penalties, loss of customer trust, and severe...



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<https://dti.io/itconcerns>



## CYBERSECURITY TIPS

### TVs and Scammers

Did you know that Smart TVs are considered IoT devices?

In this Micro Training, explore this connection further, and see how cybercriminals are taking advantage of it.

View this tip and others at:

<https://dti.io/scamtvs>

### 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!**  
<https://dti.io/gettips>

## REVIEW US ON



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

### Stop Missing Your Marketing Targets



Your business' success is heavily influenced by your mar-

keting. Similarly, your marketing's success is heavily influenced by how accurately your marketing reaches who you want to be talking to... your prospects and even your current clients, your target audiences. They need your marketing to show them that your values align with theirs

and that you'll be invested in their success.

Let's talk about how you can make sure it does so.

#### To Reach Your Target Audience, You Need to Know Them

It really is as simple as that. To talk to your target audience, you need to know who they are.

You should know whether you want a marketing effort to talk to your suspects,

prospects, leads, or even existing clients. This is important, but we can do more by just digging a little deeper and defining who it really is that you're targeting.

To do so, knowing your own company from all angles is important. Can you answer the following questions about your company?

#### 1. What do we do to solve...



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<https://dti.io/mrkttarget>

### Employee Spotlight: Matt Stearns



Here at Directive, we have plenty of wonderful people who deserve to be celebrated. This month, we're spotlighting one of our Solutions Integrators, Matt Stearns!

Raised locally in Oneonta, Matt graduated from SUNY Cobleskill and majored in End User Support. From the time he left college, he worked at another business locally, and when he saw a job posting here at Directive, he decided to explore this opportunity.

When not fixing the "unfixable" for our clients, Matt enjoys playing video games, watching movies, and enjoying the outdoors when there is good weather! At home, Matt has 3 cats they are Chip, Shadow, and Mo. While at work, Matt enjoyed our Puppy Tuesdays and our Crock-Pot Thursdays every week! When asked what he likes the most, he stated it is the generosity of the management and the willingness of co-workers to help when he does come across a problem that he is having issues solving.

We're happy to have Matt on our team, going to bat for our clients! Thank you for all you have done for us Matt, by assisting our clients with their technology.

HAVING AN IT ISSUE?

**EMAIL SUPPORT**  
[support@directive.com](mailto:support@directive.com)

**CHAT WITH US**  
[chat.directive.com](https://chat.directive.com)  
 607-433-2200.

**TICKET PORTAL**  
[support.directive.com](https://support.directive.com)

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



Charlotte & Chris Chase

#### Tech Trivia

80% of consumers will share personal data in exchange for deals or offers.

### Directive

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