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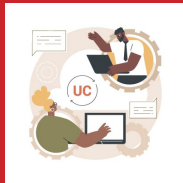
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Six Benefits of Unifying Your Business' Communications



Streamlining communications for small businesses can significantly boost efficiency and elevate overall performance. However,

achieving this isn't as simple as just deciding to implement it. This month, we'll explore some key advantages that a unified communications platform can offer...



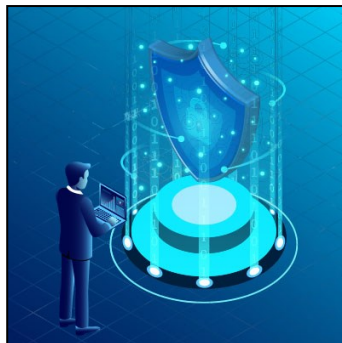
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<https://dti.io/unifiedcomms>

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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It's a Bad Time for Central NY Businesses to Be Lax on Cybersecurity



Local small and medium-sized organizations are commonly targeted by cybercriminals simply because they let their guard down. A lot of local business owners seem to think "Hey, I'm just an accountant in Oneonta, or I'm just an insurance company in Sidney, or I'm just a realtor in Cooperstown, why would hackers want to target me?"

And the answer is right there. On top of that, the sheer number of avenues that cybercriminals have to cause damage to a business is staggering. Let's take a look at some of the more recent threats we've been seeing over the past two months.

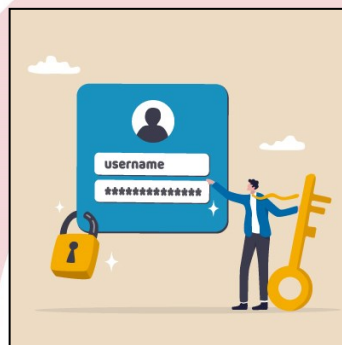
Smartphone Malware Can Steal Your Bank Account

This one doesn't necessarily target businesses per se, but we wanted to lead our list with it, because it's pretty nasty. A lot of people don't really think about their smartphones and tablets when it comes to malware, but these devices are just as vulnerable, and now that a lot of people tend to do the majority of their personal computing (and a whole lot of their professional computing) on mobile devices means there's even more at stake. In 2023, cybersecurity experts estimated that 10 million devices were infected by some type of data-stealing malware.

Let's talk about one type of malware:

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The Passphrase is Better than the Password



Network security is a major issue for any business that relies on password-protected systems—and who doesn't? With so much at stake, it's important that every user uses passwords that are not only complex and secure but also easy to remember. This month, we will discuss how the passphrase is the answer to keeping your password-protected accounts secure.

The Passphrase

Using a passphrase as a security tool is an excellent way to enhance digital security, particularly when protecting sensitive accounts or data. A passphrase is typically a longer string of words or a sentence that is easier for a human to remember but challenging for a machine to crack. The best passphrases are composed of random, unrelated words or phrases that don't follow common patterns, making them more resistant to brute-force attacks. Using a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers, and special characters, a passphrase can be made even stronger, increasing the time it would take for a hacker to guess it.

When creating a passphrase, avoiding easily guessable phrases, such as famous quotes, song lyrics, or common idioms, is crucial. Instead, opt for a string of words

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Building Awareness to Strengthen Your Digital Defenses

Every October, individuals and organizations around the world observe Cybersecurity Awareness Month, a campaign designed to promote the importance of online safety and cybersecurity best practices. Since its inception in 2004 by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the National Cyber Security Alliance, Cybersecurity Awareness Month has grown into a global movement. The goal is to empower all people to protect their digital platforms through the sharing of knowledge.

Why Cybersecurity Awareness Matters

Nowadays, nearly every aspect of our lives depends on some sort of computing. Whether it be online banking or health care services, social media, or shopping, keeping your digital world secure has to be a priority. This isn't always easy. The more people use online resources to work, communicate, and play, the more opportunists will look to get between people and steal and corrupt data...



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Three Security Innovations Designed to Keep Business Networks Secure



Organizational cybersecurity is more important than ever, with an increasing number of threats requiring constant vigilance. To stay ahead of these dangers, cybersecurity experts and network administrators are continuously developing new solutions. This month, we'll highlight three key innovations that are helping businesses navigate the evolving cybersecurity landscape.

Zero Trust Architecture

Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA) is transforming how businesses think about security. Instead of assuming that anything inside the network is safe, ZTA is built on the premise that no entity—inside or outside the network—should be trusted by default. It requires constant verification of every user and device trying to access data or resources, regardless of location. By enforcing strict access controls and ensuring only authorized individuals can reach specific resources, ZTA significantly

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SoumniBot is a tricky variant of malware that targets Android devices, and it's able to deceive security tools, making it practically invisible. Once SoumniBot digs in its claws, it starts sending location data, phone numbers, contacts, text messages, photos, and videos to cybercriminals and can worm its way into banking apps.

The only way to catch it as of the time of this writing is to notice that your phone or tablet is running slower, faster battery drainage, the emergence of suspicious apps being installed, or that

reduces the risk of internal threats and limits the spread of malware, like ransomware, in case of a breach.

AI-Powered Threat Detection

One of the most groundbreaking advancements in cybersecurity is using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning for threat detection. These technologies allow security systems to process massive amounts of data in real-time, spotting patterns and anomalies that may signal a cyberattack. Unlike traditional methods that rely on static rules, AI systems can learn and adapt to emerging threats, offering a more proactive defense. This capability is vital as cyberattacks grow more sophisticated now that hackers increasingly use AI to enhance phishing schemes and circumvent conventional defenses.

The Growth of Cybersecurity Automation

Automation is becoming a central element in modern cybersecurity...



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unauthorized changes to your system settings have happened.

Even Legitimate Antivirus Software Can Be Hijacked

You might remember over a decade ago when there was a trend where malware would disguise itself as antivirus software. We blogged about this way back in 2011. You'd be surfing the web, and a pop-up would alert you to an "infection" on your PC and urge you...



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The Passphrase is Better than the Password

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that are meaningful to you but random to others. For instance, "J@ckJump50verSp@ghetti" is a much more secure option than "password123!" because it is longer, unique, and harder to predict. The length of a passphrase is one of its greatest strengths; even a relatively simple passphrase becomes exponentially harder to crack as its length increases.

To maximize its effectiveness, a passphrase should be used alongside other security measures like two-factor



authentication (2FA). This option provides an additional layer of protection, ensuring that even if your passphrase were compromised, unauthorized access would still require a second form of verification. Using different passphrases for different accounts is crucial, too. It prevents a single breach from compromising multiple systems. By integrating these strategies, a passphrase can be a highly effective component of your...



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<https://dti.io/phrasevsword>

Tip of the Month: Setting Up a Powerful Wi-Fi Network



Every business has to choose how they network their office. Most businesses choose the ease and convenience of wireless networking to allow their employees the freedom to use their mobile devices, IoT tools, and other devices. This month, we look at some of the best tips for setting up your organization's Wi-Fi network.

Setting Up Your Wireless Network

Anyone who has set up a wireless network in their home or for their business knows that it is a pretty simple process overall. Unfortunately, most Wi-Fi networks aren't optimized for business speed. Here are a few best practices for setting up a totally optimized Wi-Fi network.

Choose the Right Router

A high-quality router is the foundation of a strong Wi-Fi network. When selecting a router, consider factors like coverage area, speed, and

features. For small businesses, dual-band routers that operate on both 2.4GHz and 5GHz frequencies can offer better performance and reduce interference.

Optimize Placement

The location of your router significantly impacts Wi-Fi signal strength. Place it in a central location, away from obstacles like walls and large metal objects. Avoid placing it near other electronic devices that might interfere with the signal.

Secure Your Network

Protecting your Wi-Fi network from unauthorized access is crucial. Use a strong WPA3 password and enable network encryption. Regularly update your router's firmware to patch security vulnerabilities.

Manage Bandwidth

Monitor your network's bandwidth usage to ensure it can handle your business' demands. Consider...



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<https://dti.io/powerfulwifi>



CYBERSECURITY TIPS

Putting Cybersecurity First

We are going back to the basics so you can learn how to put cybersecurity first in your work and personal life.

In this Micro Training, learn eight quick and simple tips on how you can put cybersecurity first.

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

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Thanks in advance!

<https://directive.com/review>

Marketing Ideas & Tips for Your SMB

Is Your Website Compliant with Cookie Laws?



It's easy to put your website at the farthest corner of

your to-do list, but smart business owners know that doing so could put them at a disadvantage and even get them in hot water. Let's take a quick look at one key consideration you should make to keep yourself on the

up-and-up: cookies and the laws surrounding them.

DISCLAIMER: We are not lawyers, and this is not legal advice. Seek out representation if that is what you are looking for.

What are Cookie Laws, and Do Businesses in the US Need to Comply with Them?

You've definitely come across websites with a little popup that says, "This website uses

cookies!" and makes you confirm that you are okay with that.

This popup comes from the EU Cookie Law, or the ePrivacy Directive. The first EU cookie law came into effect in 2002 and was amended in 2009. With the release of the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in 2016...



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<https://dti.io/cookieilaws>



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TICKET PORTAL

support.directive.com

MANAGED RESOURCES

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

Community Spotlight: Let Pathfinder Village's Art Gala "Inspire" You!



Enjoy Pathfinder Village's inaugural celebration of its artists!

On Sunday, October 20th, from 2 to 5 PM, Pathfinder Village Gymnasium will be transformed into a gallery to showcase the talents of the Artists of Pathfinder Village!

Entitled "INSPIRE," the hard work and creativity of Pathfinder Village will be on display, and its many talented artists will share their work... each representing their own personality, vision, and imagination. Light refreshments will also be available.

We also encourage you to bring your wallets, as many unique works of art will be available for purchase.

Just don't forget:

The first annual Pathfinder Village Art Gala, INSPIRE, will be held in the Pathfinder Village Gymnasium at 3 Chenango Road, Edmeston, on Saturday, October 20th from 2-5 PM.



Charlotte & Chris Chase

Tech Trivia

The inside of the case of the first Macintosh computer includes 47 signatures of the entire 1982 division.

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