This Issue:

Google as the Technology Culture Curator

Google is so entrenched in the culture of the planet that we no longer say, "Search for it", instead, we say, "Google it." Most of us use Google products on a daily basis that go beyond its search engine. From tablets and smartphones running Android, to Google's Chromebook running Chrome OS, Google is directly competing with Microsoft and Apple for the world's business and affection.

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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 Giveaways that Your Email is Trying to Trick You
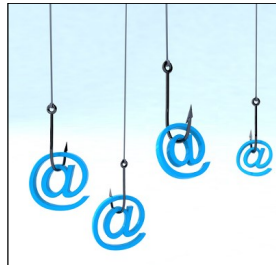
One of the most common ways computer viruses spread is through email. Most of the malware-carrying messages are caught in your account's spam filter, so you don't have to worry about those. It's the malicious emails that make it to your inbox that you need to be mindful of, and phishing emails are by far the most dangerous.

What makes phishing emails so effective is that they use trickery to get a user to open the message and download the virus-ridden attachment. Even the brightest PC user can fall victim to a phishing email, especially when the scam touches on a topic that you care about, like issues with your bank account, an expected package in the mail, starving children, or perhaps even your dating success.

A phishing email will disguise itself as originating from a trusted source and great lengths are taken by the hackers to make the message look like the real deal. Unless you know specifically what to look for in a phishing scam, it's easy to fall for one. Here are four things to look for in a phishing email that will save you from downloading a virus.

The Email is Unsolicited

A legitimate organization would never send out an unsolicited email asking users for personal information. Likewise, a real company would never send out an unsolicited email asking you to download an attachment. Even if the message looks real, understand that, if it's unsolicited and is asking something of you (or even threatening you), then it's a scam. If you think there's a chance the message is from a trusted organization, then you can double check by calling the company about the email with the phone number from your records, not the one provided in the email.

The Email Contains Phony URLs

A legitimate email will contain URLs pointing back to the company's official website, and a trusted website will often have a name that's straightforward, like www.directive.com. A hacker may go so far as to make a malicious website using a URL that looks similar, like Di-

Data Backup: The Bad, Good, Better, Best, and Redundant

It's good to backup your data, but can you have too much of a good thing? While this may be the case for several enjoyable activities like partying and buffets, this isn't the case with data backup. In fact, the more layers of data backup you have, the more secure you will be. How good is your data backup solution?

Bad: Zero Data Backup

If you don't have any data backup solution in place, then you're not alone. In a recent survey of small businesses, only 13% of respondents believed their business to be susceptible to a disaster resulting in data loss. This means there are many companies risking it because they don't see the value of backing up.

Do More by Outsourcing the Technical Stuff to a Trusted Partner

One of the purposes of technology is to help your business grow. The best way to achieve this goal is to be intentional with your technology. Sometimes running a business can be so hectic that keeping up with your technology becomes an afterthought. Neglecting your technology can eat into your organization's profits; therefore, it makes more sense to outsource your IT.

Maintaining an IT Network Takes Technical Knowledge

Running and maintaining an IT infrastructure for a business is a complex and involved job. It takes much more attention than a basic technology chore like updating your antivirus definitions on your personal computer. This is primarily due to the sheer scope of a business network. For example, a network for even a small business will include multiple server units and workstations, rout-

ers, mobile device management and network security tools, and more--and this is just on the hardware side of things. There's an additional level of complexity when it comes to managing your businesses' software, which includes performing tasks like keeping your applications and antivirus software upgraded, adjusting and managing security settings, ensuring that your software licenses are current, managing user permissions, and much more.

The Value of Technical Expertise

To lead your business to the level of success that you've experienced takes a lot of brains and gusto, but as savvy of a manager as you may be, having a knack for business doesn't always translate to having technical knowledge with computers. When it comes to running your company, you're able to do great things with your resources because it's your specialty. The more experience that you have in your field, the more of an expert you become, which means the more valuable your time is. Therefore, the last thing you will want to do as a leader is to

break away from doing a job requiring your expert knowledge just to take care of an issue with your computer.

At Directive, we too are experts in our field, and it's taken us a lot of time and training to arrive at this point (just like you in your respective field). Sure, you can try and fix a computer issue yourself in an attempt to save some money, but if you lack the required technical knowledge to fix the problem, then spending time troubleshooting it on your own will cost you more than what it would take to hire us to do it, or even to hire another fixit PC repair service that works slowly and is overpriced.

Combining Technical Knowledge with Caring Service

One advantage that comes with outsourcing your IT services with Directive is that we are more than a computer repair shop. We too are a business with our own set of challenges; many of these challenges are the same ones that you face. This means that we understand the

5 Essential Questions to Ask When Buying Mobile Devices for Your Business

Remember back when buying mobile devices for your business meant choosing between a handful of laptops? Thanks to the increased proliferation of devices like smartphones, tablets, netbooks, and the development new hybrid models, it's become quite the task to pick out the right make and model. Here are five questions to consider when picking out mobile devices for your organization.

What Technology do Managers and Employees Need?

Communication is fundamental to the success of any project. To successfully

pick out the best devices for your business, you will need to actually talk with the people that are going to use them in order to understand what they need. As a busy business owner, it's easy to bypass communication because you may have wanted to take advantage of a time-sensitive sale, but if you go with a cheap product, then productivity will suffer and offset any savings from the sale. This is also the case if you overpay by going with the latest gadgets because you want your business to be trendy. While it's always nice to have the latest toys, your business may be able to get by just fine with older models.

By making a comprehensive list of what to shop for after talking with your staff about their needs, you will reap the rewards of equipping your workforce with

efficient tools. A few questions you can ask are: How many hours per day will they be using the device? Will they be using the company-provided device as their primary personal device? Are they more proficient with Android or iOS? You may be surprised to learn what an employee needs in a device and what you had in mind may be totally different.

What is the Best Platform for the Tasks they Undertake?

In line with the advice of asking employees what they prefer is to ask, "What kind of platform will best suite your company's needs?" There's a variety of different mobile devices on the market. For example, Forrester Research said that with touchscreen devices there are ten distinct categories which include

4 Giveaways that Your Email is Trying to Trick You

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rective.ComputerVirus.com, so be sure to take a hard look at the URL before clicking on it. When in doubt, type the URL into a search engine. If it's a scam, then there will be red flags all over the first page of search results.

The URLS are Mismatched

Another URL scamming technique that you will want to look out for is if the URL displayed in the message matches the actual URL. Hackers will often type a legitimate URL in the message, and then hyperlink their malicious website to it. You can check what the URL really is by hovering over it with your cursor. Depending on which browser you use, you should see the linked URL display on the bottom of the screen. If the address doesn't match, then it's likely a scam.

The Email Contains Poor Spelling and Grammar

It's not difficult for a hacker to make a fake email that looks real. A common tactic is to manipulate a screenshot from an official email originating from a trusted source, like your credit card company. It's making the phishing email sound real where hackers fall short in their deceptive objective. A large and professional company will hire educated people to handle communications, and even have an editing process in place to catch grammatical errors. Hackers will often lack writing skills, especially if English isn't their first language.

These are four of the biggest giveaways that you've got a malicious email on your hand. There are several other traits of a scam that you need to be on the lookout for, you can give Directive a call at 607.433.2200 to learn more.

It's vital that every employee in your company is trained to know how to spot an email phishing scam. For example, CryptoLocker (one the Internet's most wicked viruses) is most commonly spread through phishing emails. This is a ransomware that encrypts all of your data, locks you out of your PC until you pay the hackers ransom money, and deletes your data if you don't pay up.

Directive can help protect you from nasty attacks like CryptoLocker and other phishing scams by arming your company's network with a Unified Threat Management (UTM) tool, and your email inbox with a spam filter. These solutions can provide your business with a strong firewall that will filter out phishing emails and block malicious websites, but even the best security solution will fail if users are uneducated about how to spot a scam. Contact us today to learn more about how to keep your business safe from the web's worst scams.

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Data Backup: The Bad, Good, Better, Best, and Redundant

(Continued from page 1)

A business not backing up their data is missing out on a really good thing. Backing up data isn't a frivolous expense, and no business is immune to a disaster causing data loss. Quite the opposite actually, data backup is essential to the continuity of your business. Whatever your reason is for not backing up, understand that it's not worth the risk of losing your data and going out of business. Statistics show that small businesses hit with data loss have a 40% chance of never reopening.

Good: A Local Backup Solution

Having a local data backup solution in place is better than having no backup solution at all. Whether you're backing up your data using tape, or you save your work to an external hard drive, this puts you in a much better position to survive a data loss disaster than being totally unprepared. Having a local back-

up solution is a good thing, but it's not the best thing.

There are many disasters that can destroy your entire office building, like a fire, flood, earthquake, hurricane, and several other disasters that you've seen played out in high-budget movies. What makes disasters like these so devastating is that they will destroy your local backed up copies along with your servers and your office building. Therefore, while backing up your data locally is good enough to protect you from some disasters; it's not good enough to protect you from every disaster.

Better: Backing Up to the Cloud

A cloud-based backup solution is a much better way to backup your data because it keeps your files safe if your office is destroyed and you lose your servers and your local backup solution. When backing up your data to the cloud, it will be

stored safely in a data center and you can rest assured that your files will be safe from any disaster striking the walls of your business. Additionally, backing up to the cloud is an automatic process that's much more convenient than changing out and storing tape every day.

Best: Backing Up to Multiple Data Centers

As good as it is to backup your data with a cloud-based solution, backing up to just one data center is not good enough because you are basically transferring your risk from one egg basket to another. Granted, backing up to one data center is 1,000 times better than not backing up at all, but information stored in a data center is still at the same risk as your office when it comes to...

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5 Essential Questions to Ask When Buying Mobile Devices for Your Business

(Continued from page 2)

new devices like touch-plus hybrids, convertibles, and miniature tablets. You will also want to look at the technical specs to see if your business critical applications are compatible. Out of all of the different devices and platforms on the market, one is perfect for your business. You will have to do your homework (or lean on Directive) in order to find this perfect device.

What Accessories will You Need?

Mobile device accessories are easy to forget about when you're focused on comparing features. Accessories play an important role in the use of the device and can turn into a significant expense if overlooked. For example, if the work you do is very physical, then you will want to include a heavy duty protective case with each device. A quality case will start at $50, which can really add up if you're buying a bundle of smartphones. There are also some devices like tablets that sell critical accessories like keyboards separately. Be sure to ask the device retailer what accessories you're getting with the purchase of your device and what you're not.

### What Kind of Support is Available for Your New Device?

Another critical question to consider is what kind of support comes with your mobile device? It's a bonus if your new device has solid backing from a reputable vendor with good service and support capabilities. You will also want to look at the mobile device management capabilities of your network and go with a technology that your IT infrastructure can support. You can have Directive provide IT support for your mobile devices with our managed IT services. If you're planning on taking advantage of our remote services for your phone, then you will want to...

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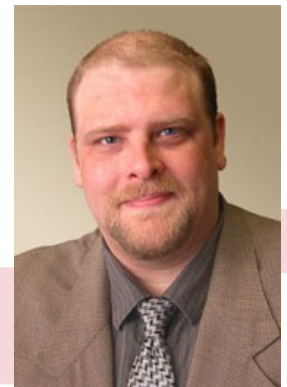
Chris Chase
Solutions Integrator

Do More by Outsourcing the Technical Stuff to a Trusted Partner

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value of your time and won't yank you around in order to get you to pay more than you should. Exploiting customers using technical knowledge is a tactic that some businesses are known for. Take for example, auto mechanics; if you don't know a tire from a seatbelt, then you're going to be at the mercy of the mechanic when it comes to diagnosing and fixing your vehicle's problem. If you own a car, then you better have a mechanic that you can trust. The same is true for computer repair.

We view our service as a partnership, which means that we have your best interest in mind and want to see you grow. In a partnership, our success is determined by your success, which means that we will do whatever we can to save you money in order to set you up for growth, even if it means not making a huge sale on our end.

We have found that working in a partnership based on trust is a much more satisfying way to do business than selling goods and services for the sole purpose of maximizing profits. Give us a call at 607.433.2200 to outsource your IT services to a partner that has both technical knowledge and your best interest in mind!

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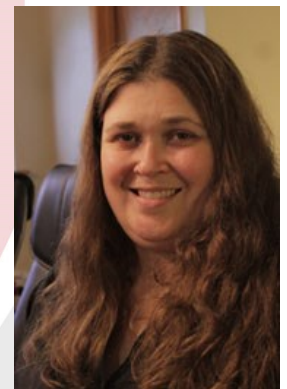
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