

Meeting Tree COMPUTER

Deeply Rooted - Providing You With Secure Hassle-Free IT Solutions



December 2019

Looking Back on 2019

I can't help but think about all the companies that were affected by a data breach; Under Armour (My FitnessPal), Marriott, Capital One, Labcorp, Quest Diagnostic, Yahoo, LinkedIn, Canva, MyHeritage and even the city of Baltimore. In January through June alone over 3,800 publicly disclosed breaches exposing 4.1 billion compromised records!

True, not all breaches were the result of cybercrime and human error certainly played a part in some of them, however the end result for those affected was the same; loss of data, (the threat of) legal action, fines, loss of productivity and customer loyalty, etc.

The year 2020 will have some big changes in store for all of us. The introduction of the SHIELD Act has set a lot of change in motion and over the next few months we will do our best to educate you on what this new cyber security law is going to mean for your business. We are working hard to put together some informative, but hopefully entertaining workshops and webinars. As your go to IT provider we want to make sure that you are aware of the safeguards that you will be expected to put into place by March 21st. It will be a challenge and adjustment for all of us. Don't worry though we're here to help. If you have any questions or concerns call us at 845-237-2117!



Cybercriminals Are Taking Aim At Your Business... Is Your Network Protected?

Cybercriminals love to test your defenses. They love to see how far they can get into the networks of businesses all over the globe. Cybercriminals really love going after small businesses because they can all too often sneak onto a network, copy data and move on. Through the use of ransomware, they can hold your data hostage and refuse to cooperate until you pay them some amount of dollars – and if you don't pay up, they threaten to delete all your data.

But protecting yourself is not as hard as you might think. While cybercriminals and hackers are an everyday threat to businesses, you can take steps to significantly reduce that threat and take that target off your back.

The first thing you need to do is understand why cybercriminals target small businesses and what makes your particular business vulnerable. There are many things small businesses do and don't do that open them to attack and data theft. These may include not having enough (or any) security in place or not training employees on security protocols.

Realistically speaking, the biggest threat to your business does, in fact, come from your own employees. This doesn't mean they are intentionally harming your business or leaving your network exposed to outside threats. It means they don't have the proper training and knowledge to protect your business from a cyberthreat.



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Meeting Tree Computer.

For instance, your team needs to be trained to use strong passwords, and those passwords must be changed periodically (every three months is a good rule of thumb). A lot of people push back on strong, complicated passwords or use the same password for everything, but this is just asking for trouble and should not be allowed at your company.

Once strong passwords are in place, enable two-factor authentication (2FA) on everything you possibly can, from network access to every account you and your employees use. This is an additional layer of security on top of standard password protection. This feature is generally tied to a mobile number or secondary e-mail, or it may be in the form of a PIN. For example, when 2FA is enabled, after you've put in your password, you will be prompted for your PIN for the associated account.

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Another thing you must do to get that target off your back is to get anti-malware software installed. Every workstation or device should have some form of this protection. Not sure what to use? This is when working with a dedicated IT company can come in handy. They can help you get the right software that will meet your specific needs without slowing you down. They will install software that is compatible with your PCs and other networked equipment.



Plus, they will make sure anti-malware software is working and is regularly updated.

On top of this, you want to have an active firewall in place. Every business should have its network protected by a firewall; like antimalware software, firewall security comes with a number of different settings, and you can customize it to fit the needs of your network. Firewalls help keep attackers and malicious software off your network. When paired with a good anti-malware software, your layers of security are multiplied. The more layers, the better protected you are.

Finally, with all of this in place, your employees need to know what it all means. Keep your team up-to-date on your business's security protocols. This includes items like your password policy, malware protection policy and proper e-mail and web-surfing etiquette. The bad guys are never going to stop attacking, but you have the power to protect your business from those attacks.

Planning to video chat with family and friends during the Holidays?



From **WhatsApp** to **Snapchat**, messaging apps provide a free and easy service to communicate with friends, and family. As with any app though not all video apps are created equal and we wouldn't be ourselves if we didn't remind you to keep security in mind while catching up with loved ones this season.

Thankfully, there are several messaging apps that take your security and privacy seriously and that work hard to prevent any (malicious) outsiders from seeing your messages' contents.

When it comes to security your best bet are, iMessage, Wickr Me, and Signal. While iMessage is only available on Apple devices and Wickr

Me and Signal don't have anywhere near the same reach as WhatsApp, these three are definitely the safest way to go. We also highly recommend the "Viber" app though. It is both secure and fun.

Last Minute Gadget Gift Ideas



Black Friday and Cyber Monday may have come and gone, but if you're anything like me you will still have

plenty of people on your list that you need to shop for. Here a list of gift ideas that we at the office can absolutely get behind.

1. FIXD – will help you save \$1000's in unnecessary car repairs. FIXD is a pocket-sized device that plugs right into your car's dashboard and instantly diagnoses your car's issues onto your phone. <https://amzn.to/2OM8mL5>

2. The Photostick

The Photostick is a clever new device designed to protect your photo and video memories and is super easy to use. In fact, all it takes is one click!

<https://amzn.to/2pXiXum>

3. Muama Enence – Speak 43 languages at the touch of a button. The ultimate gadget for every traveler. This device helps you translate 43 languages in real time with just a few button clicks!

<https://amzn.to/2XNQELi>

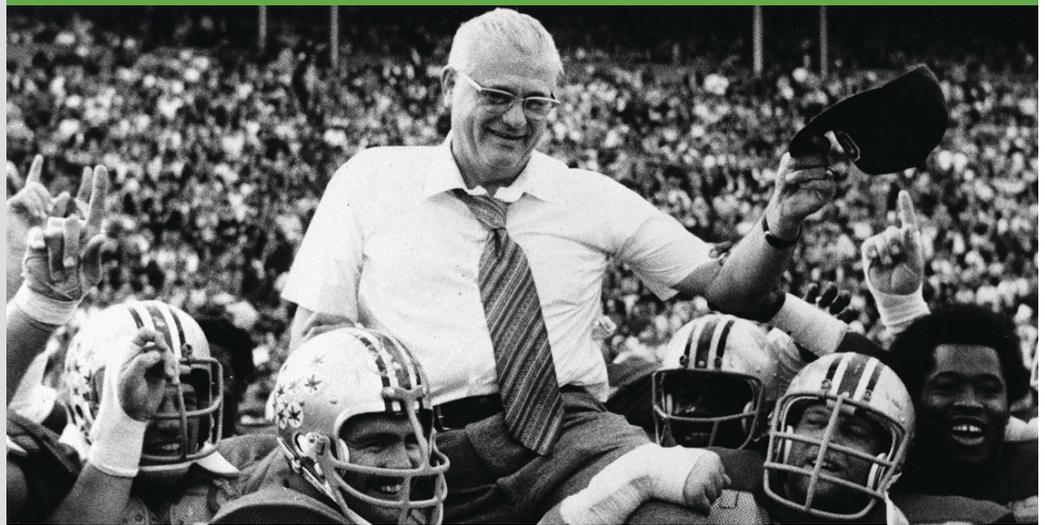
4. KeySmart Pro– The smart keychain with location tracking. Tired of bulging pockets with an unorganized train wreck of a keychain? Then this is the gadget for you. Just press the TILE button on KeySmart Pro and it will ring your smartphone, even on SILENT MODE. <https://amzn.to/2qE8Afp>

5. ScreenKlean – Screenklean works on all different types of screens and is a perfect last-minute stocking stuffer.

<https://amzn.to/37HfH7e>

Happy Shopping!

What A Football Coach Can Teach You About Getting Better



Woody Hayes spent 28 seasons as the head football coach at Ohio State University, and then he was fired after a now-infamous incident in the 1978 Gator Bowl.

With time running down in the fourth quarter and the Buckeyes already in a position to try a game-winning field goal, Hayes called a pass play. A Clemson player intercepted the pass and was knocked out of bounds along the Ohio State sideline, securing the victory for the Tigers.

Frustrated by the play and the opponent's celebration among his troops, Hayes lost his temper and hit the Clemson player.

For most Ohio State fans, however, that's not the legacy of Woody Hayes. Some, naturally, see his legacy in his coaching record – 238 wins, 72 losses, 10 ties, 13 Big Ten titles, and three National Championships. That proved more than enough to land Hayes in college football's Hall of Fame. The OSU Woody Hayes Athletic Center is also named in his honor.

Others, however, see his legacy in a chair

– the Wayne Woodrow Hayes Chair in National Security Studies. In keeping with his wishes, donations made in his honor following his death in 1987 were directed toward academics, which led to the creation of the chair. Hayes, who once grilled Richard Nixon about foreign policy, always took academics as seriously as he did football.

I remember Hayes for all of those things, but I remember him most for something he said during a pep rally when I was a student on the Columbus campus: "You're either getting better or you're getting worse," he told the crowd. "Status quo is a myth."

I used to think that was coach talk, but time and experience taught me the truth in what he meant. In a competitive world, if you stay the same, you get passed by. It highlights the incredible importance of the "innovation imperative": keep making your value better, because your competition keeps getting better.

Regardless of how good you've become, you can't afford to stay the same because status quo is a myth.



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4 Ways Technology Can Improve Your Business

1. It Boosts Productivity.

Technology like task management software can change how you work through a day. Everything is listed out, and you can check it off as you go. You can even make dependent tasks so tasks are automatically created for anyone who may be next in line to work on a project.

2. It's Crucial to Marketing.

You need online and social media marketing. This is where people are. Understanding how social media marketing works can increase the number of people who know about your company, which increases your customer base.

3. It's Essential for Security.

Technology and security go hand in hand. As your business relies more on technology, you need to rely more on security to protect your networked equipment, like all of your employees' PCs and your many servers.



4. You Can't Communicate Without It.

With things like e-mails, VoIP phone services, and direct messaging through social media sites, technology has made communication easier than ever. When you know how to use all these forms of communication, it puts you above the competition.

Pixel Productions Inc., 7/20/2019

10 Easy Ways To Defeat Stress At Work

1. Take a walk. A 15-minute walk will refresh your mind.

2. Work outside. Weather permitting, working in the sun can boost your mood.

3. Meditate. Use a meditation app

like Calm or Headspace to lower blood pressure and de-stress.

4. Take deep breaths. Just 3 deep breaths in and out can help.

5. Make a checklist. Write it out and focus on one task at a time.

6. Talk to a friend. Have a conversation about a problem. Talking it out can change your perspective.

7. Watch an informative video. It can be on anything. Videos are a great distraction for 5-10 minutes, just don't get carried away.

8. Listen to soothing music. Music therapy has demonstrated efficacy for reducing depression, anxiety and chronic pain.

9. Take a 20-minute nap. Nothing does wonders for stress like a power nap — just be sure to set a timer!

10. Trust your instincts. If you feel you need a break, take it. Don't push yourself if it isn't necessary.
Small Business Trends, 7/19/2019



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*Wishing Everyone a
Wonderful Holiday
Season!*

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highest compliment
we can receive.*

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