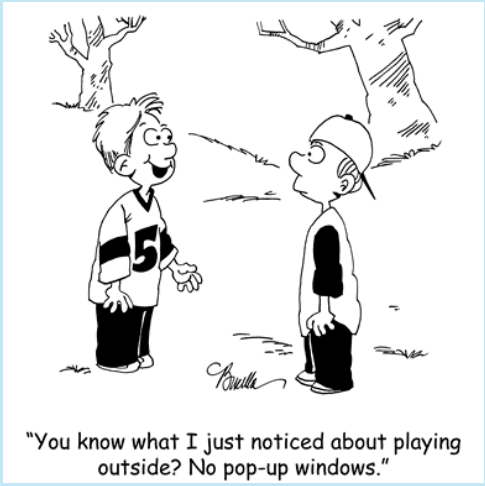
March 2015

Technology Update

by B4 Networks

"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably"

Inside This Issue…



"You know what I just noticed about playing outside? No pop-up windows."

"As a business owner, I know you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we *shine!* Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"

Bryan Lachapelle, B4 Networks Inc.

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Luck Is For Leprechauns — Is Your Business Prepared for Future Security Threats?

This might sound harsh, but it's the truth. **Just Because You've Been LUCKY Enough To Avoid A Cyber-Attack Doesn't Mean You're Not At Risk.**

If your business hasn't been the target of malicious intruders or cybercriminals, consider yourself lucky. Hackers are a relentless bunch and **they want your digital gold**: information and access they can use to exploit loopholes in your business's Internet security. The last few years have been hard on companies all across the globe. And these cyber-breaches aren't going to stop simply because the "damage has been done." In the US and Canada, reported incidents have affected over 215 million consumers and over 7 million small businesses. And that's only counting the attacks that authorities have uncovered.

Imagine walking into your office one morning to discover your computer network was breached by a hacker, exposing not only YOUR company's data, but also all of your client records and private communications. Imagine the embarrassment of having to notify your clients and vendors that, because of you, their private and possibly personal information may now be in the hands of cybercriminals. And hopefully that's the only damage done…

Your operations could be halted or severely limited for days, possibly weeks. Your data corrupt to the point of being useless. Clients lost. Potential lawsuits. Exorbitant emergency IT fees to get everything restored to working order fast.

For cybercriminals, there is no end game. All too often, small business owners assume they are outside the firing line and hackers aren't interested in them. While the media focuses on the big cyber-attacks, there are countless other stories playing out at small businesses everywhere. Cybercriminals are constantly in search of loopholes and weak security. And, unfortunately, small businesses often have the weakest IT security.

Security industry analysts predict that 2015 won't be much different from 2014 when it comes to cyber-security. There are going to be more data breaches. It's just a matter of where and when. It's also a matter of being prepared.

With St. Patrick's Day this month, I want to take a moment to remind you that just because you've been "lucky" enough to avoid an incident like this in the past doesn't mean you're not at risk – in fact, that's a very dangerous way to think.

During the month of March, we are offering local businesses a FREE Cyber-Security Audit to help uncover loopholes in your company's online security. At no cost or obligation, our highly trained team of IT pros will come to your office and conduct this comprehensive audit. And after we're done, we'll prepare a customized "Report Of Findings" that will reveal specific vulnerabilities and a Prioritized Plan Of Attack for getting any problems addressed fast.

Because of the intense one-on-one time required to deliver these Cyber-Security Audits, we can only extend this offer to the first seven lucky companies who request it by March 17th—St. Patrick's Day. All you have to do is call our office at 905-346-4966.

What is Social Engineering And How To Avoid It?

What is a social engineering?

Social engineering is where an attacker uses human interaction (i.e. social skills) to acquire or compromise information about an organization or its computer systems. An attacker may seem unassuming and respectable, maybe claiming to be a new employee, a repair person, or researcher and even sometimes offering credentials to support that identity.

By asking the right questions, they may be able to piece together enough information to infiltrate an organization's network. If an attacker is not able to gather enough information from one source, he or she may contact another source within the same organization and rely on the information from the first source to add to his or her credibility.

Some attackers are even so bold as to ask you for access to your system to "fix" an issue you may perceive to have, by sending you to a website, and installing a remote support tools (back doors).

Another form of social engineering used by attackers are Phishing Attacks.

What are Phishing Attacks?

Phishing attacks, typically come in the form of an email, in combination with a malicious website, and are used to gather personal information by posing as an organization you know and trust.

As an example: You receive an email appearing to come from your bank, or credit card company, indicating you need to update you information on their portal. In this email, they conveniently place a link to what appears to be the bank's website for you to click on. When you as the victim click the link, you are brought to an exact copy of the website, where you enter in your login name, and password. Most often, the login will fail, and then redirect you to the right website, where you'll just assume you entered the wrong info, and try again, which of course this time will work. Guess what? You have just provided the criminals with your login details. You've no doubt already received many of these types of attacks, even if you don't know it.

How to Protect Yourself?

- Do not provide personal or financial information about yourself, or your organization unless your are 100% sure the person has authority to have the information.
- Be suspicious of any unsolicited phone call, physical visits, or email messages from people asking about employees or other internal information.
- Pay attention to the URL of a website. Malicious websites may look identical to a legitimate site, but the URL may use a variation in spelling or a different domain (e.g., .com vs. .net).
- Do not reveal personal or financial information in email, and do not respond to email solicitations for this information. This includes following links sent in email.

If your business would like to schedule a one on one to evaluate your business security, please call 905.346.4966 and ask to speak with Bryan.

Tek Tip of the Month

Cyber Security Tips

- Set strong passwords, change them every so often, and don't share them with anyone.

Do not include your name, your kids' or pets' names, or other well-known information about yourself in your password;

Avoid using common words in your passwords or passphrases. Instead, break up words with numbers and punctuation marks or symbols. For example, @ can replace the letter "A" and an exclamation point (!) can replace the letters "I" and "L" and use a combination of Upper Case and Lower Case letters.

Use different passwords for different sites. Website operators *may* have access to your password, so it's best not to reuse passwords, especially your banking and email passwords, those should be 100% unique.

- Keep your operating system, browser, and other critical software optimized by installing updates.

- Maintain an open dialogue with your friends, family, colleagues and community about Internet safety.

- Use privacy settings and limit the amount of personal information you post online.

- Be cautious about offers online – if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Steve Lamarre

Service Manager

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

The Withings Activité Pop

Lately, it seems the tech world has been inundated with wearable devices, from fitness trackers to smartwatches. They offer a number of useful features, but they also lack in elegance. They are often bulky, ordinary, complicated and—in the case of smartwatches—have less than desirable battery life.

This is where the Withings Activité Pop comes in. It looks like a classy watch on the outside, but on the inside it's a very different story. It's an activity tracker, verging on expressing itself as a smartwatch.

From the smartphone app, you control everything, from the analog dials to your activity goals. The watch face features a secondary dial that tracks your activity—from 0% to 100%—for the day. It's simple and straightforward. It's water-resistant up to 30 meters and available in three colors: azure, sand and shark gray. It's currently available at Best Buy, in-store and online.

Client Spotlight

Treschak Enterprises, a Welland based Auto Body Supply Specialist, has been servicing Auto Body Shops throughout Niagara, Hamilton-Wentworth, Burlington, Simcoe, Delhi, and Brantford regions for the past 30 years. They have built a solid reputation with their customers and strive to work with them as partners in their business.

The only thing they pride more than their service to their customers is the quality of the products they stand behind.

B4 Networks has recently begun working with Treschak Enterprises providing them with backup and security services.

905-732-3803 - info@treschak.com - www.treschak.biz

Guest Article - by: Mike Michalowicz
Marketing Through Your Customers

Word of mouth—the better-than-anything-you-could-pay-for form of spreading the word about companies and products worth supporting. Your customers do your marketing for you, and you simply continue delivering the high-quality product they're raving about.

But how do you get your customers to do it?

On May 9, 2013, an article was published by a journalist who'd stopped in Dominique Ansel Bakery in New York City and asked what was new. The staff offered the journalist a taste of a new product that would launch to the public on the day after the article was published. On May 10, 2013, the Cronut™ was born. There were customers waiting outside the little bakery, lined up to sample the delectable baked good they'd read about.

By the end of the week, the line outside the bakery was 100 people long. People stood in line to sample the Cronut™ they'd heard about from their friends. And they didn't just buy one Cronut™; they bought lots of them—as well as all of the other unique, handmade pastries the shop produces.

The Dominique Ansel Bakery is a small business. They don't have a big marketing department who dreamed up the Cronut™ as a publicity stunt. They simply embrace the creativity inherent in baking, and word of mouth pulls customers from all over the world into the little shop. It's organic. It's natural. It's the power of word of mouth.

Another great example of a company whose customers are ardent fans is a well-known jewelry store (whose name I can't share with you). Their policy for purchases of engagement rings is pure genius. A couple selects a ring—say a diamond of one full carat. The jewelry store has a secret upgrade policy, and they supply the client with a stone that's just a little larger than the one they paid for. When customers take their one-carat ring to an appraiser, they discover that it's a carat and a quarter. The customer—stunned at having received more than they paid for—returns to the jewelry store, at which point the jeweler thanks them for their business, tells them about the secret upgrade and—here's the genius part—asks the customer not to tell anyone about the secret upgrade.

But the customer does tell. The customer tells everyone he can think of about the spectacular customer service he received and about the exceptional value the jeweler provided. That customer ropes in hundreds more customers, and the jewelry store doesn't do anything except make customers happy and wait for new customers to pour in. It's brilliant.

Whether customers are sharing a Cronut™ with a friend, or whether they're swearing a coworker to secrecy about the jewelry store's secret upgrade they swore not to divulge, if you can get your customers talking about you, your company and your brand, then you're starting a marketing trend that can not only become self-sustaining, but can also bring more customers than you'd ever dreamed of—right to your door.

MIKE MICHALOWICZ (pronounced mi-KAL-o-wits) started his first business at the age of 24, moving his young family to the only safe place he could afford—a retirement building. With no experience, no contacts and no savings, he systematically bootstrapped a multimillion-dollar business. Then he did it again. And again. Now he is doing it for other entrepreneurs. Mike is the CEO of Provendus Group, a consulting firm that ignites explosive growth in companies that have plateaued; a former small-business columnist for The Wall Street Journal; MSNBC's business makeover expert; a keynote speaker on entrepreneurship; and the author of the cult classic book The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur. His newest book, The Pumpkin Plan, has already been called "the next E-Myth!" For more information, visit http://www.mikemichalowicz.com/.

The Lighter Side: Employee's and the Lamp

A sales rep, an administration clerk, and the manager are walking to lunch when they find an antique oil lamp. They rub it and a Genie comes out.

The Genie says, "I'll give each of you just one wish" "Me first! Me first!" says the admin. clerk. "I want to be in the Bahamas, driving a speedboat, without a care in the world." Poof! She's gone.

"Me next! Me next!" says the sales rep. "I want to be in Hawaii, relaxing on the beach with my personal masseuse, an endless supply of Pina Coladas and the love of my life." Poof! He's gone.

"OK, you're up," the Genie says to the manager. The manager says, "I want those two back in the office after lunch."

Moral of the story: Always let your boss have the first say.

The Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is ***Ina Kaestner*** from ***Cooperman Chapman***

This months winner will receive a $50 Gift Card

This month's trivia question is:

According to Irish lore, St. Patrick banished all the snakes from Ireland. What other island nation is also devoid of snakes?

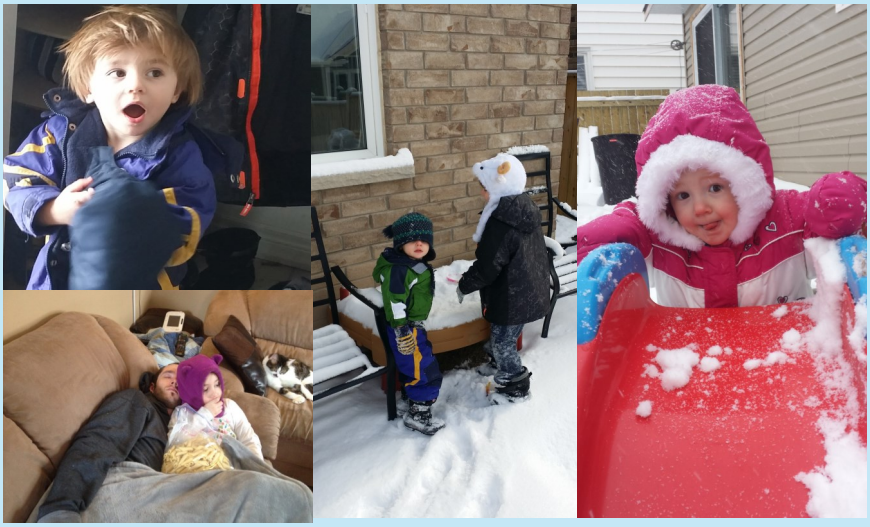
a) Cuba
b) Madagascar
c) New Zealand
d) Jamaica

To enter email me your answer: **bryan@b4networks.ca** or visit the site below

www.b4networks.ca/trivia

Submit your entry by the 25th of the month, and if your answers are correct, your name will be added to the draw for a $50 Gift Card.
*See website for full trivia rules

The B4 Networks Family



In this months edition we're going to focus on some of the B4Networks children

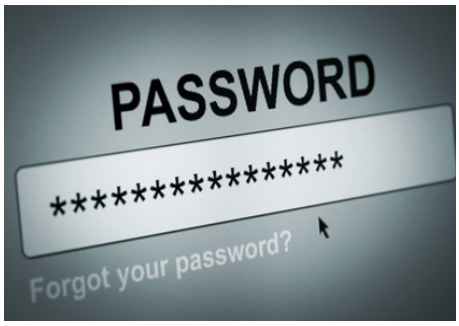
Top Left To Right: Aiden preparing to go outside, Nate and Aiden playing in the "snow box", Sera enjoying her snow covered slide!

Bottom Left: Alex and Teegan enjoying a nap on the couch.

Never Forget A Password Again With A Password Manager

We all have a number of passwords for all the online services we use. You name it: banking, online bill payment, e-mail, social networks, shopping and more. You know it's incredibly easy to lose track of them all—unless you are committing one of the greatest online security offenses by using one password for everything. One of the best—and most secure—ways to handle your passwords is with a password manager.

It's not uncommon for password managers to get overlooked when it comes to online security. There is a lingering—and false—concern that keeping all of your passwords in one place can potentially open up all your protected accounts to intruders—if they are able to break into the password manager. It's a legitimate concern, but password managers use powerful encryption to keep your passwords safe.



They are specifically designed to keep you even more secure than you otherwise would be.

Many password managers—including Last Pass, KeePass and 1Password—do much more than simply "remember" your passwords. They also offer password-creation assistance. They will tell you if a password is too weak or just right. Some managers offer the option to generate a secure password for you. Since you don't need to remember it, it can be more complex. They are compatible with a number of platforms and they are packed with customizable tools to keep you safe.

Services We Offer

- General Computer / Network Repair and Troubleshooting
- Network Design & Implementation
- Backup and Business Continuity Solutions
- Anti Spam & Email Solutions
- Virus and Spyware Protection
- Network Security / Firewall Solutions
- Commercial Wireless Networking
- Fixed Cost Monthly Managed Services
- Remote Monitoring and Diagnostics, Troubleshooting and Repair
- Project Management
- Technology Consulting
- Hosted Exchange Service
- Cloud Services

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We Make Technology Work!