

April
2016

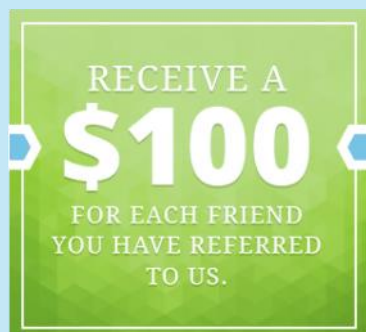
Technology Update

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

by B4 Networks

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Know Someone That
Needs Computer Support?
See Page 8 For More Details!



“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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Ransomware

In the past I have written articles discussing Ransomware. While the threat was fairly big then, it's even bigger now. Not only for big businesses, but also for many folks at home with little to no protection in place.

What Is Ransomware?

Ransomware is a type of malware that restricts access to the infected computer system in some way, and demands that the user pay a ransom to the malware operators to remove the restriction. The most notable of them is the Crypto variety that encrypt your documents, databases, and other important files rendering them useless unless you have a recent backup.

Biggest Threat Of 2016

Trend Micro, and other security companies predicted that ransomware was going to be 2016's BIGGEST threat. And they were spot on. Already there have been waves of infections including hospitals across North America (Yes, even here in Canada.) In many of these cases, the victims resorted to paying the fines to get their data back (one of them paid over \$10,000.)

Trend Micro reports that “More than 4 million samples of ransomware were identified in the second quarter of 2015, indicating an upward trend, as in the third quarter of 2013, fewer than 1.5 million samples were analyzed. It follows that as 2016 progresses, that number is only going to up.”

Evolving

Crypto-Ransomware is evolving quickly. Recent varieties now encrypt everything connected to the system at the time of infection. Hard drives, network drives, thumb drives, even cloud access drives such as Dropbox and Microsoft OneDrive. Which means those relying on backups to external drives can be in for a shock if they get infected.

Disclosing Personal Data

Newer varieties such as Chimera crypto-ransomware encrypts files and then threatens to release them to the Internet if the ransom isn't paid. Not only is access to the computer restricted, but now the personal data found in them could potentially spread to the wind if he or she doesn't pay the ransom amount. This is very bad news for the health industry and others with sensitive data.

What Can Be Done To Protect Yourself?

As with many different viruses and attacks, you can work towards avoiding them. We recommend taking the following steps

1. **Back up often:** The number one thing you can do to protect yourself is to backup

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Get More Free Tips, Tools and Services At Our Web Site: www.b4networks.ca

The Selfishness of Modern Advertising

By Ryan Trinder – Creative Director, Symetric Productions Inc.

Admittedly, I'm a bit of a traffic snob; certain things bother me a little more than they should. None more than in the brief moments well past the yellow light, milliseconds before the red, when that one car tries to sneak by. As a result, leaving themselves in the middle of the intersection causing delays for the "law abiding" citizens on the opposite side now unable to turn. A decision made to benefit ourselves at the direct expense of others – selfishness.

Hundreds maybe even thousands of times, we are inundated with brands, advertising, and subtle reminders of what society says we need. Our complex brains are constantly taking in data whether we realize it or not. There is just no way our minds are capable of comprehending this many figures without short-circuiting, although I'm sure that is the plotline of some 80's unwatched blockbuster VHS in my basement. In the real world our defense mechanism against this bombardment is a personalized filter system that sorts out most of what is and isn't relevant to our current lives. Two things override that filter - change and importance.

Change is obvious; bright colours, flashing lights, movement, essentially all of the things our traffic system employs to get instant attention. These sudden differences let your brain know "Hey, look here now."

Ever hear your name in a conversation across the room amidst your own discussion? That's importance. Your brain was listening all along taking in all the information on a subliminal level but you only became aware of it when that news was suddenly relevant to you. Humans are inherently and unintentionally selfish - we filter out all this data simply because



it doesn't relate to us right here, right now.

This concept of importance takes on a whole new level of meaning when considered from an advertising perspective.

Going back generations, the approach for announcing specials, new products or big changes seemed to be more of a blanket strategy. Taking out a full page ad in the daily printed newspaper or a billboard in a busy intersection among other methods. While these age old principles can still be effective, they may not be overriding any importance filters. In a publication like this one, the content is tailored to Niagara's business owners who are more likely to be keeping close tabs on local developments. Events such as networking opportunities, social engagements or not-for-profit fundraisers are sure to peak interest. Instead of frantically trying to connect with every Niagara resident in hopes that they are your next client, try to find

avenues which will capture your target market exclusively.

It has been said that customers need to have 5 impressions of your company before they are ready to buy. Each time they have an impression, even subliminally, it builds credibility. Every positive

experience builds upon the previous one and when the buyer is ready to make their "selfish" purchase they know exactly where to go. This is why we need to use more avenues to establish who we are and what we are selling. This may seem like Advertising 101, but it often gets lost when putting marketing strategies into action.

Enter stage left, Social Media.

Much like your mother, Facebook knows where you've visited and what's on your mind. She, I mean they, just won't tell you exactly how.

Pieces of information are stored on websites everywhere and this anonymous data is kept - allowing advertisers access to a pool of "people who might be" interested in your product. Simply put, they know your potential audience better than you do.

Talk about an unfair advantage, and what business owner doesn't love having an edge on the competition. Even business owners can be "selfish" after all.



Ryan Trinder
Creative Director
Symetric Productions

SYMETRIC
SPCAN.COM

Is it time for you to re-evaluate your website or marketing efforts? Email info@spcan.com or call **905-933-4910** to speak directly to someone at Symetric.

196 King Street, St Catharines, Ontario

Need Help Right Away? Call our team 24/7 at 905.346.4966.

News From The Web

More glitches ahead.

Software bugs have been around for a while now. But with so much new technology going online – often without sufficient testing – the interactions are getting harder to predict. A glitch grounded 5,000 United Airlines planes for two hours. Other glitches have halted trading at the New York Stock Exchange. And a glitch at Netflix caused this odd summary: “This Disney film follows a gentle, crippled bell ringer as he faces prejudice and tries to save the eyes of individual dinosaurs.” Unlike software bugs, which can be tested and corrected, glitches happen when technology breaks in unexpected ways. Bottom line? No need to abandon technology – just monitor systems and communicate with IT managers more frequently.

-Harvard Business Review

Naturally successful people "sprint," then relax.

An American schoolteacher who moved to Finland in 2014 was skeptical of the Finnish practice of giving students 15 minutes of free time every hour. Until he tried it. He was astounded when they went from dragging their feet to having a bounce in their step and more focus in their studies.

The makers of DeskTime, a software that tracks employee time use, studied the habits of the most productive 10% of their 36,000-employee user base. The surprising results? They work for 52 minutes then break for 17 on average. They treat the 52 minutes like a sprint. During the break they tend to go for a walk or tune out, rather than checking e-mail or Facebook.

-Reader's Digest

Your tech: Productive...or distracting?

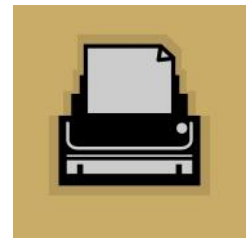
With constantly evolving technologies, it's getting harder to know where your time is best spent. To help you stay on track, here are three questions to ask about any situation in your business where technology is involved.

- 1) *Who's the right person to handle this?* For example, let your IT partners help employees with tech support questions.
- 2) *Will this save us time and money?* Cloud-based productivity solutions, for example, can give your firm access to the resources of big IT without the need to build it yourself.
- 3) *Is this making your job easier or harder?* Syncing devices, for instance, could free you and your sales force from the desk to meet with customers.

-Entrepreneur

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

New Printer Fits In Your Pocket



So, what's about the size of a deck of cards and prints instant photos from your smartphone – with no ink needed?

Yes, there is such a thing, and if you guessed the new Polaroid Zip, you'd be right.

Selling for \$129.99, it prints full-color 2x3-inch prints with an optional peel-off sticky backing. Each print costs about 25 cents and they look okay, all things considered – just don't expect ink-jet print quality.

How does it not need ink? It uses Polaroid's Zink zero-ink paper, embedded with cyan, yellow and magenta crystals. They turn into the appropriate colors when activated by a heat process. And since there's no ink, there's no stickiness, smearing or waiting for photos to dry.

Connect to your smartphone via Bluetooth, then just shoot and print!

Tek Tip of the Month

Microsoft Word - Quick Key Reference Cut Out

Close the active window / document	CTRL + W
Undo an action	CTRL + Z
Redo the last action or repeat an action	CTRL + Y
Save a document	CTRL + S
Print a document	CTRL + P
Copy selected text or graphics to the Office Clipboard	CTRL + C
Paste the most recent addition to the Office Clipboard	CTRL + V
Applies or removes bold formatting	CTRL + B
Applies or removes italic formatting.	CTRL + I
Applies or removes underline formatting.	CTRL + U



Alex Vandersteen
Network Administrator

Need Help Right Away? Call our team 24/7 at 905.346.4966.

ENCRYPTING RANSOMWARE



(Continued from page 1)

often. If you are running a business, then backup your server at minimum once a day, and make sure that backup is taken offsite (either via external media or preferably automatically via the internet to a secure 3rd party.) If you use an external backup drive, make sure to unplug it after backing up to ensure the drive is out of reach of any ransomware infections.

2. **Verify Backups:** Conduct periodic TEST restores of the data you're backing up to ensure they are working properly.
3. **Antivirus / Antimalware:** I'm sure you've heard this advice hundreds of times, yet some businesses are still using "FREE" antivirus tools to protect their businesses. Not only is this not allowed per the terms and conditions of using free software (meant for personal usage), most of those are not up to the task of protecting against these type of threats. It's important to use a reputable vendor, with up to date subscription.
4. **System Updates:** Microsoft and other vendors have come a long way in ensuring security updates are installed automatically especially on desktops. It does require end users to reboot every so often to install them. For other software, we've found many times, end users just don't know or don't have the time to perform their own updates leaving systems vulnerable. For **servers**, updates have to be installed manually. Many business owners don't know this, and as such their servers are not updated at all or very infrequently.
5. **Be cautious:** It goes without saying, but I'm going to say it anyway: exercise caution when doing anything online. Cybercriminals have been known to send "Applications" for employment or "invoices and receipts" to companies, with an attachment. The resume/invoice/receipt happens to be sent compressed in a "zip" file, which contains the virus. Some have

even been known to come in via fake UPS delivery notifications. Essentially cybercriminals play on human curiosity to infect your system.

6. **Multiple layers of protection:** While this step may be too costly for residential users, businesses, especially those dealing with sensitive information, are encouraged to put in place multiple layers of security, this includes desktop AV, Server AV, Firewalls, content filters, and intrusion detection systems. This is where the assistance of an IT Professional is key. These systems can rarely be effectively installed and managed by someone who's not a full time IT Professional / Security Professional.

We Are Covered, Our IT Company Handles This

That may very well be, but do you really know 100% that everything is being done properly? Do you receive a monthly report proving your systems are updated, secured, and backed up? If not, you should take the time to ask yourself and your IT provider the following questions

1. Are all our desktops and servers up to date with the latest patches and security updates? How about your router/firewall?
2. Are all our servers and critical data backed up? Including any data located on workstations that might not make it onto the server?
3. When was the last time a TEST RESTORE of your data was performed? Is it at LEAST once a month? Can you get a report to validate all the data can be restored?

If you aren't 100% sure you can answer YES to each of those questions, I urge you to give me a call. We can give you a second opinion to put your mind at ease. No sales pitch, no stings attached, just a honest assessment of your current status.

Bryan Lachapelle - 905.346.4966 - bryan@b4networks.ca

Need Help Right Away? Call our team 24/7 at 905.346.4966.

If You're Using Any Of These Passwords, Stop

Since 2011, a company called SplashDash has posted a "Worst Password List" based on data mined from hacks and data breaches. What's remarkable about the annual list is how little it changes from one year to the next. In the age of weekly, high profile hacks, in the age of rampant identity theft, one would think that it would start to be apparent how important choosing passwords might be. Making passwords more robust, harder to guess and ultimately harder to crack is part of basic computer security.

By now, everyone should understand the importance of data security. The simple fact of the matter is that your passwords are your first line of defense against having your identity stolen or your data breached. It's not the only defense, obviously, but if you fail in this regard, by having a password that is easily guessed, then the rest of the defenses you have deployed are largely meaningless. In simple terms, a well-chosen, robust password is

the best chance you've got of protecting yourself from hacking attacks.

So what are the worst passwords on the planet? The list is as follows, and if you're currently using any of these, or even anything closely resembling these, you should stop immediately. Keep using them, and it's just a matter of time before you pay the price for it. Here they are:

- 123456
- Password
- 12345678
- Qwerty
- 12345
- 123456789
- Football
- 1234
- 1234567
- Baseball
- Welcome
- 1234567890
- Abc123
- 111111
- 1qaz2wsx

- Dragon
- Master
- Monkey
- Letmein
- Login
- Princess
- Qwertyuiop
- Solo
- Passw0rd
- Starwars

So having outlined the worst of the worst, what constitutes a "good" password? It's a fair question. The answer is that your password should be long (a minimum of 12 characters), random, and containing a mix of character types, including upper case, lower case, numbers and special characters. Finally, it should be changed regularly – preferably every thirty days for maximum security.

Yes, it's a pain, but the consequences of doing less are vastly more painful. Is your current password on the list above?



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The B4 Networks Comic Strip



Meet *After Stuff Happens Networks*

After Networks is a fictitious computer company that provides terrible customer service, does everything wrong, takes days to respond to service requests, are very arrogant, talk down to clients, and are anything but helpful. In fact they are downright lazy.

This company does not actually exist. No one we know of is this bad at delivering their service. But we've all at one time or another run across a company that has one of these poor traits. If you struggle with your IT firm, call us for a second opinion. 905-346-4966

IT Drama

This comic is just for fun. It's our last comic in the series, we hope you enjoyed them.



Do you want an IT company that's will treat you with the respect that you deserve?
Call us today @ 905-346-4966 - www.b4networks.ca

Testimonial From A Great Client



Threats such as business interruption, cyber hacking, and disasters are obviously worse case scenarios when it comes to running a business.

Most businesses likely don't think that they will ever be faced with these challenges – and they probably won't. That absolutely does not mean that they should be ignored.

These are very important considerations for our business, however, on the list of priorities, they often fall to the bottom of the list in terms of time and resource

allocation. I don't want to have to think about them day-to-day.

In developing a DRP (Disaster Recovery Plan) with B4 Networks, it forces me to be proactive and put measures in place (once) so that should an emergency take place, I'm just flipping a switch and putting a plan in motion. I consider this an invaluable "insurance policy". This peace of mind allows me to focus on the more important aspects of running the business.

Jordan Sherlock,

General Manager, North America Traffic

www.northamericatrafic.com

Guest Article: Forget Something?

A while back I did a huge favor for someone and never heard anything from them... Zip, zilch, nada, nothing. Just a simple "thank you" would have been nice...but they acted as if it was expected of me. To say that I was disappointed is putting it mildly.

To me, *disappointed* is a very powerful and scary word. You see, *disappointed* can turn into other "dis" words, such as *disgruntled*, *discouraged*, *disenthralled*, *disillusioned*, *disheartened* and possibly even *dissatisfied* with our current personal or business relationship. I might start noticing that this relationship (business or personal) is really all about YOU and how YOU can benefit; the words *reciprocation* or *gratitude* don't seem to be in your vocabulary.

Everyone likes to be remembered, thanked or appreciated for doing favors, going above and beyond, being courteous, considerate, thoughtful or kind. Being "taken for granted" stinks. Forgetting to show any kind of appreciation for someone who did something for you...that they didn't have to do...can end up causing you problems later on. You will never know when someday you may need a helping hand, and all those people you took for granted and/or never thanked might NOT be so readily available to help you out.

Francesca Gino, an associate professor at Harvard Business School, did some research on gratitude and looked at 41 fund-raisers at a university, all receiving a fixed salary. The director visited half of the fund-raisers in person, telling them, "I am very grateful for your hard work. We sincerely appreciate your contributions to the university." The second group received no such expressions of gratitude. What was the impact of the director's thanks? Gino said that "the expression of gratitude increased the number of calls by more than 50%" for the week, while fund-raisers who received no thanks made about the same number of calls as the previous week.

Organizations and leaders who miss chances to express gratitude lose opportunities to motivate people that actually cost them nothing. Simply stated: gratitude is free and profitable. People may not show that they are upset about not being thanked...but when the time comes for them to help YOU out again, they may just be a little too busy that day. You can transform your relationships, business and personal life with the Power of Gratitude! Never underestimate the power of a thank-you and never pass up on the opportunity to say those two words.

"It is not happy people who are thankful. It is thankful people who are happy." – Anonymous



Robert Stevenson is a highly sought after, internationally known speaker. He is the author of the best-selling books *How to Soar Like An Eagle in a World Full of Turkeys* and *52 Essential Habits For Success*. Robert is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) and is a former All-American Athlete. He started his first business at 24 and has owned several companies. Robert has international sales experience dealing in over 20 countries, and his client list reads like a Who's Who in Business. He has shared the podium with such renowned names as Generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf, Former President George H.W. Bush, Anthony Robbins and Steven Covey. www.robertstevenson.org/

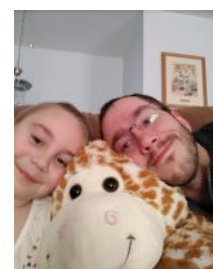
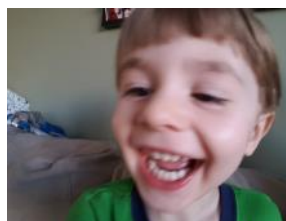
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Do You Know Someone That Needs Computer Support?

Did you know we have a referral program where you can earn \$100 for each referral you send us. See www.b4net.ca/referral for more details. **You don't have to be a client to benefit either.**



Random Images From The B4 Networks Families



Client Spotlight

King's Court Estate Winery is a seven-generation, family-owned and operated winery situated in Southern Ontario, with its roots in Germany. Ours is a family that loves making wine and loves making people smile when they taste our wine. Our superb selection of Ontario wines is available to you to enjoy all year long. You can take advantage of the complete portfolio of Southern Ontario wines by ordering right from this website..

According to legend, in the year 1723, Kaiser Wilhelm, a German King, rested with his entourage in the little German hamlet of Guldental (Heddesheim as it was known back then). He was served wine from a local vintner, a Joseph Zimmermann, our great-great-great-grandfather. The Kaiser was so impressed by the quality and flavour that he immediately ordered a barrel to be sent to his residence. Since this historic event, the Zimmermann family has been making wine in the Nahe region under the name of "Königswingert," translation "King's Vineyard".

The family estate is located in Germany's Nahe wine region, just off of the Rhine River. The Nahe Valley is well known for growing excellent Spätleses and Ausleses from the majestic Riesling grape.



Grapes have been grown in this area since the time of the Romans. The family estate is operated by Linus Zimmermann and his successor Gregor Zimmermann, who represent the 6th and 7th generation of Zimmermann vintners respectively in Germany today www.koenigswingert.de

In 1990 the youngest descendant of the Zimmermanns, Josef and his wife Siglinde, started a winery with an 11 acre farm below the Niagara Escarpment in Ontario, Canada. Since then, we have grown to a family operation known as King's Court Estate Winery. We now cultivate 30 hectares (60 acres) of grapes to produce wine from various noble varieties including Riesling, Baco Noir, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir.

We are best known for our distinctive Icewines made from Vidal, Riesling, Gewurztraminer, and Cabernet Franc. Our range of wines is extensive; please browse through our wines to explore the royal delight. Savour seven generations of history in every glass!

King's Court Estate Winery is located at 2083 Seventh Street Louth, St Catharines. You can also phone King's Court Estate Winery at (905) 687-8965. email: info@kingscourtestatewinery.ca.

Services We Offer

- Fixed Monthly Fee Worry Free IT
- Peace of Mind Security Services
- No Hassle Backup and Business Continuity Solution
- Disaster Planning and Prevention
- Network Design & Implementation
- Server Planning and Deployment
- Project Management
- General Computer / Network Repair and Troubleshooting



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