TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

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

May 2019

"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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Are YOU Prepared For The End Of Windows 7?

On January 14, 2020, the world will bid a fond farewell to the beloved Windows 7 operating system. Well, sort of. Microsoft has declared that after that date, it will no longer update or support the system. It's the final nail in the coffin for a trustworthy, oft-touted software package that's been running on fumes since newer versions hit the scene. And, as with any funeral, there are some arrangements to be made for the millions of businesses that have stuck it out to the end. Here's everything you need to know about the coming changes – and what you should do now to prepare.

The End Of An Era

The news of Microsoft closing down

Windows 7 support may come as a surprise to some of us, but the operating system has been on its last legs for a while. In fact, Microsoft stopped adding new features and honouring warranties for the platform back in 2015. When 2020 comes, it will cease releasing patches and updates for good.

This doesn't mean that Windows 7 PCs will suddenly stop working in January; you'll still be able to boot up in the operating system if you keep it installed. But if you value your privacy, your data and your sanity, it's time to upgrade.

Those Microsoft updates that pop up from time to time don't exist just to

annoy you; they patch security vulnerabilities and protect you against new viruses and malware. Without that ongoing support, Windows 7 users will become fish in a barrel to sophisticated cybercriminals looking for a quick buck.

That's why it's essential that you call in the professionals to prepare your business for the switch to Windows 10 – or an alternative operating system – now, not later.

It's A Requirement, Not A Choice

Upgrading your operating system well in advance of the Windows 7 end-of-life date may seem like a decision you should make for your peace of mind, but it's even more critical than that. Of course, as time leaves Windows 7 behind, it's certain that pieces of software will steadily become incompatible with the OS. Programs your company uses day-to-day suddenly becoming unusable will present serious headaches, but the real problem lies in the security of your network.

Windows developers are in a constant arms race with cybercriminals looking to exploit vulnerabilities in their platform. Each patch brings a host of bug fixes and security upgrades, but cybercriminals almost always find a new way in. Thus, the developers hastily put together a new patch, and the cycle continues.

> **"Like maggots drawn to rotting meat, they flock to the abandoned platform and dig into the networks of those stubbornly clinging to the outdated OS."**

When an operating system loses support from these developers, its users are left completely vulnerable to hackers. Like maggots drawn to rotting meat, they flock to the abandoned platform and dig into the networks of those stubbornly clinging to the outdated OS. This process is expected to be especially nasty after Windows 7's end of life, since so many businesses still use the OS and likely will forget (or refuse) to upgrade.

If you value your business at all, it's not a choice. You need to upgrade before time runs out.

Avoid The Crunch

Not only should you enlist your IT experts to facilitate the upgrade, but you should do it ASAP. As the clock ticks down on Windows 7, tech companies are expecting a flood of upgrade requests as businesses scramble to leave the OS behind before it's too late. Many of these IT providers will have a lot on their plate later in the year as they hurry to upgrade hundreds, if not thousands, of individual PCs. If you wait it out, you're likely to find yourself at the back of a long, long line, potentially to the point that you breeze past January 14 without a solution. If you do, you're almost certain to regret it.

Every day, the need for an upgrade becomes more urgent. Give the task the ample time required, and avoid needless stress. Reach out to your IT provider and ask them to start the upgrade process today.

How Does Your I.T. Company Compare?
Our April 2019 Service Key Performance Indicators

74%
8 Business Hour
Ticket Resolution

92%
Client Satisfaction

8 mins
Average Response Time

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month

VIZR Hopes To Revolutionize Your Dashboard

When it comes to driving, the forces that aim to keep us safe seem to be in constant battle with the pull of convenience. We're supposed to keep our eyes glued to the road while trying to navigate through Google Maps without missing a single turn. It's an inherently dangerous combination.

With their new VIZR tool, FIXD automotive hopes to fix that. After selecting the feature you want, you connect the device to your phone and place it on your dashboard, where it creates a transparent display. This way, FIXD says, you can seamlessly navigate without ever glancing at your phone and putting your life in jeopardy.

Though VIZR is a great idea, the reviews indicate it might not be all it's cracked up to be. You might want to wait until all the bugs are sorted out. For now, just keep your eyes on the road the old-fashioned way.

Expect, Inspect, Correct

By Robert Stevenson

It's no coincidence that we have so many ways to say we made a mistake: botched, flubbed, mishandled, misjudged, mucked, messed, screwed or goofed up – just to name a few.

As a leader, you'll hear each of these (some more than others, and likely some more explicit than the ones I've named here) pretty often. When you do, it's important to first try to remember that whoever made the mistake probably didn't mean to.

Put yourself in their shoes. Ask yourself if you have ever made a mistake. A bad decision? Have you ever said something you regret? Ever disappointed your boss? Jumped to the wrong conclusion? Done something foolish or outright stupid? Everyone has. Sometimes a simple reminder of our past failings enables us to be a little more tolerant of others' missteps.

Mistakes don't have to be the end of the world. Mistakes are inevitable and are often essential to learning and progress. They should guide you, not define you, on you and your employees' journey to success. Mistakes show effort, and if you learn from them, they can be some of the best tools for growth.

I've heard it said before that the only people who don't make mistakes are those who do nothing at all. To me, the most interesting part about errors is the gradual evolution in how they're classified. First, they start as mistakes. Then they turn into lessons, followed by experiences and finally as gifts that help us succeed.

Therefore, the only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing. Keep that in mind as you're dealing with your employees or considering your own shortcomings. It's one thing to recognize that mistakes are learning opportunities – it's another to actually implement that concept in your organization.
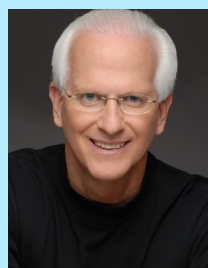
Robert Stevenson is one of the most widely recognized professional speakers in the world. Author of the books How To Soar Like An Eagle In A World Full Of Turkeys *and* 52 Essential Habits For Success, *he's shared the podium with esteemed figures from across the US, including former President George H.W. Bush, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, Anthony Robbins, Tom Peters and Steven Covey. Today, he travels the world, sharing powerful ideas for achieving excellence, both personally and professionally.*

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Read These Top Tips To Avoid Getting Hacked!

Everyone knows how damaging data breaches can be to a business, but few actually realize that 81% of these hacks are not the result of elaborate scams carried out by sophisticated hackers. They happen because of poor passwords.

Do what you can to prevent your business from being targeted. Demand that your employees create strong passwords: between 8 and10 characters in length, with letters, numbers and symbols scattered throughout. Instruct them to avoid real dictionary words and to steer clear of the boneheadedly obvious ones like "12345" or "password." You can test the strength of your password online at Microsoft's Security and Safety Center. If you can, enabling two-factor authentication can go a long way toward your overall security.

Even if you use a secure password yourself, you'd likely be amazed (and terrified) to discover how many members of your team do not. In 2019, a strong password is essential. Make sure every one of your employees takes care to create one.

4 EASY WAYS TO PREVENT GREAT HIRES FROM GETTING AWAY

Today's labor market is tighter than it's been in years. With this in mind, it's essential that you do all you can to attract top talent. One of the best and simplest ways to do that is to improve your hiring process.

First, make sure the job description sounds like a true sales pitch. You should feature the benefits of working in that job above the preferred credentials. Once the applications start coming in, ensure you're keeping in regular contact with your prospects. When it comes time for interviews, make the process as straightforward and comfortable as possible and cater to their scheduling needs. Finally, ask for feedback about your hiring process – checking into reviews on sites like Glassdoor can provide valuable insight. Inc.com, 2/1/2019

Don't take our word for it. Here's what a client is saying about us:

CEM ENGINEERING

Brendan Deraaf
Finance Department

"I'd say that B4 Networks is very knowledgeable and professional. They have been able to handle our IT needs very well during our company's greatest period of growth. If you want to partner with a company that is going to look out for your best interests, don't hesitate to connect with B4 Networks. What surprised me the most is the responses from technicians are very quick and they do a great job of following up to make sure that the issues were resolved.
They make it such that you can focus on your business activities and growing your business while leaving the IT issues to the professionals."

- Brendan

Pour Your Heart Into It
By Howard Schultz

Today, Starbucks is one of the most successful companies of all time, with a horde of loyal customers worldwide and one of the most recognizable identities in the history of branding, but it wasn't always that way. Before it became extremely popular, it was just a humble coffee shop on a Seattle street corner.

In Pour Your Heart Into It, Howard Schultz outlines exactly how this transformation occurred, shifting the coffee shop from another ignorable storefront to a worldwide phenomenon. Few of us may be able to replicate Starbucks' success, but we certainly can learn a thing or two from the man who made it happen.
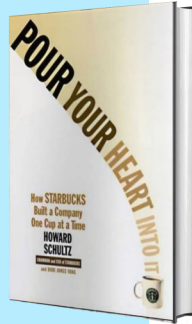
How Runaway Efficiency Stifles Innovation

"The High Price of Efficiency," a new report published by Harvard business Review, might just challenge our ideas of disruption, innovation and business as a whole.

According to the report, we've been looking at megagiants like Amazon, Google and Facebook all wrong. Companies looking to dominate their marketplace see these monoliths as champions of efficiency, lean start ups that transformed their industries. This is undeniable. However, there's a big catch to this disruptive process. In nearly every industry, small businesses are being gobbled up and incorporated into massive, world-dominating corporations. These runaway success stories may be efficient, but at what cost?

This trend results in social unrest, structural fragility susceptible to the slightest problems, runaway corporate welfare and less entrepreneurship and innovation. Today, many businesspeople worship at the feet of the industry gods. Maybe we should put efficiency aside and start breaking up the monopolies that are strangling true

Disaster Planning Essentials Report
# Free Immediate Download

This report will reveal important planning strategies you should have in place now to protect yourself from common data-erasing disasters including natural hazards, human error, cyber criminals, hardware failure, software corruption and other IT failures.

You'll Discover:12 Disaster Recovery Questions You Need To Answer

✓ The 7 Disaster Planning Essentials

✓ 4 Questions About Backups That Business Owners Should Know The Answer To

✓ A Free Disaster Planning Checklist

✓ Don't lose everything you've worked so hard to achieve in an instant! Plan ahead with our Free planning Guide.

Download now at **www.b4net.ca/reports** or email me directly at **bryan@b4networks.ca**, and I'll reply to you with a copy.
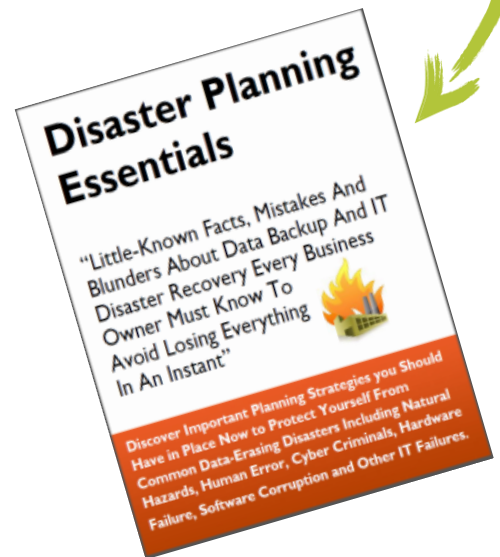
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RECEIVE UP TO
$5000
FOR EACH FRIEND YOU HAVE REFERRED TO US.

In our opinion, referrals from very happy clients and their employees are the greatest form of flattery. We love it when you're so pleased with our services, that you're willing to recommend us to other business owners you have a relationship with!

If you know someone who is looking for computer support for their company, you will receive $100 for every referral you send our way.

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For full details about our referral program and to submit your referral, please visit www.b4networks.ca/referral-program today and get us in contact with your friends to-day!
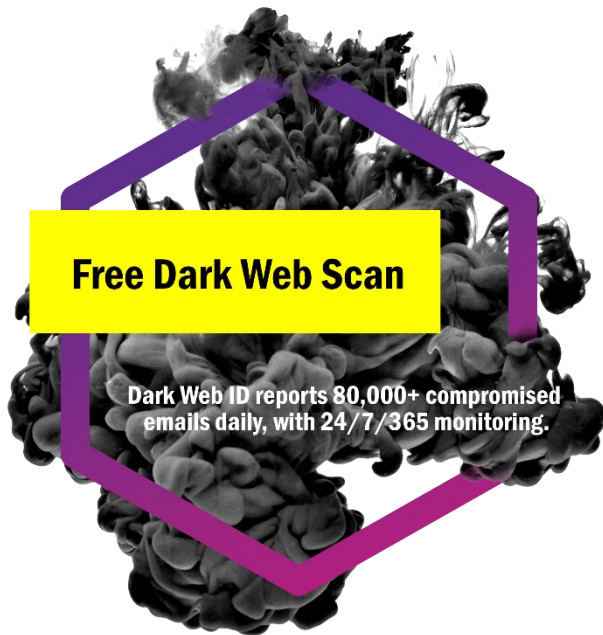
Are Your Company's Digital Credentials for Sale on the Dark Web?

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Dark Web ID reports 80,000+ compromised emails daily, with 24/7/365 monitoring.

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To help keep your critical business assets safe from the compromises that lead to breach and theft, we are offering a complimentary, one-time scan with Dark Web ID™ Credential Monitoring.

Our Dark Web ID Credential Monitoring detects compromised credentials in real-time on the Dark Web and notifies you immediately when these critical assets are compromised, before they can be used for identity theft, data breaches, or other crime. Digital credentials such as usernames and passwords connect you and your employees to critical business applications, as well as online services. Unfortunately, criminals know this — and that's why digital credentials are among the most valuable assets found on the Dark Web.

Far too often, companies that have had their credentials compromised and sold on the Dark Web don't know it until they have been informed by law enforcement — but by then, it's too late. According to National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), small and medium-sized businesses may have more to lose than larger organizations, because cybersecurity events can be costly and threaten their survival.

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