

TECHNOLOGY TIMES

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

Last night I started out of bed in a cold sweat, heart racing, with fear running through my mind....and you were the reason for my panic.

Was I having a nightmare? No – it simply occurred to me that you might not have a Unified Threat Manager (UTM) deployed in your office yet!

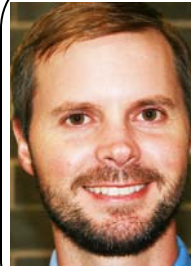
You may have noticed over the last several months that there have been a LOT of stories in the news about a new type of computer virus called ransomware. These viruses, like Cryptowall, etc....represent a new and serious threat to your network and your data. It's called ransomware because once you get infected, your data is encrypted and unusable until you pay the bad guys a ransom, or have some great backups from before the attack. As is always the case with new threats, Anti-Virus software is proving to be insufficient to protect your environment.



To combat this new threat level, we've developed a UTM solution that can be deployed in our clients' networks. These devices add a significant new level of protection and control to your network traffic, and have been very successful in preventing these new ransomware attacks from getting through. In addition, we can filter email and block harmful or bandwidth-sucking network traffic.

Our UTM's are offered as part of our Managed Security Solution. If you are interested in learning more about our UTM devices or our Managed Security Solution please call Amanda today at 228-284-4951 to schedule a consultation. We will review your needs and make the best recommendations to keep your office safe and protected from these new viruses.

To sweeten the deal we are waiving all setup fees for this service if you contact us before December 31, 2015.



“As a business owner, 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!”

- Ryan Giles, AGJ

December 2014

Gulf Coast

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Reducing Distractions In The Workplace

Distractions are everywhere. Our phones, our computers, our tablets, our co-workers, and on and on. When we're trying to get work done, there is always something, and it's getting worse. We're more connected to the Internet than ever before, and there is always one more thing we want to check. It's safe to blame technology for this constant distraction, but we do need to step up and take a little responsibility for ourselves.

It's tempting to give in to distraction and let your mind wander for a few minutes, but a few minutes can easily slip into 20 minutes, then 30 minutes, and before you know it, you're through the first page of Reddit and you've filled your quota of cat pictures for the day. There's nothing wrong with a distraction every once in a while, but when deadlines loom and projects need to get done, it can do more harm than good.

And that doesn't mean missing your deadlines. The more distracted we become, the more stressed out we become. The deadlines aren't going to go away, and the more distracted you are, the less time you'll have to work. Productivity is lost.

What can you do to get productivity back and cut down on distractions? Consider the source of your distractions. Your cell phone? Put it on silent, or better yet, turn it off and put it in a drawer. Out of sight and out of mind. Make sure you cannot hear any notification sounds, whether it's a little ding or jingle or a vibration. This is crucial. Why? You may not realize it, but you've been trained to respond to those sounds, much like a cat to a can opener.

What about the Internet in general? If you're working on a project and you already have the materials or information you need, consider cutting yourself off. If you're connected to a WiFi network, disconnect. If you're hardwired, pull the Ethernet cord out from the back of your computer. It may sound like a drastic step, but it works.

If you work in a busy environment, where people are chattering, phones are ringing, and the printer is printing away, see if you can't track down a different workspace. Look for an empty office or meeting room (don't forget to ask first, just in case someone has a meeting later), and close the door.

It's all about being proactive in cutting down the distraction. There isn't a foolproof way to eliminate them all, but a little adjusting can go a long way.

Canned Food Drive — Success

This year's canned food drive was a huge success. We successfully collected over 300 lbs of food to deliver to Loaves and Fishes. We also collected \$500 in cash donations as well. Without your support this drive would not have been successful. A special thanks goes out to Comvest Properties, Healthcare Education Strategies and MS Gulf Coast Renaissance Corporation for your support. If you are interested in learning more about Loaves and Fishes and the good work they do, or if you would like information about volunteer opportunities, please contact them at 228-436-6172. You can also visit them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/loaves-and-fishes.



The Clock is ticking on Windows Server 2003

The end is near for support of Microsoft's Windows Server 2003. Microsoft has officially announced it will end all support of this operating system on July 14, 2015. It is a fact that migrating from this server technology to a supported version will take considerably more time than moving your pc's away from XP. That is why we need you to take action now. You simply cannot wait until June of next year to decide that you need to begin thinking of replacing your server. In addition, the IRS has extended section 179 (though at a lower level than last year) making it a great time to purchase your new hardware now and reap the rewards of the tax break that may not be around if you wait until next year.



So you may ask "What's the big deal?" Well, as of July 14, 2015 Microsoft will no longer release updates or security patches. In 2013 alone, 37 critical updates were released. You will be exposing your network to all sorts of cyber-security risks. If you belong to an organization that stores sensitive data or fall under regulations such as HIPPA or PCI, you must migrate your servers to be in compliance with the guidelines set forth. After July 14, 2015 you will no longer be in compliance with these guidelines, therefore subject to penalty.

As your preferred Microsoft Partner, and your trusted IT firm, we are committed to helping your company by offering a Windows Server 2003 Migration Plan for no charge. To secure your FREE Server 2003 Migration Plan, call Amanda today at 228-284-4951.

MERRY
CHRISTMAS

From all of us at AGJ



A Technology Rant for the Holidays!

While reading a recent newsletter from a mentor of ours, I came across an article on the importance of disengaging from your electronics that hit a nerve with me. As we are now in the midst of the holiday season that should be filled with family and friends, I wonder how many of us are prepared to put down our electronics and fully engage. We are all guilty...even as I type this rant I am distracted by the buzzing of my iPhone as I receive text messages and notifications from coworkers and friends. Are we preparing our youth to have meaningful conversations instead of three-word text replies?

Since the holidays are usually about getting together with the ones we love and sharing gratitude, how about we actually do it? I wonder how many family dinner tables will be filled with people sitting around the table ignoring one another because we're too busy texting someone or checking our Facebook statuses. Too many of us are NOT where we are.

Here is my challenge to you this holiday season: Put your phone away or turn it off all together. Take time to really have a conversation with your loved ones and enjoy the time you have. We have all lost important people in our lives who we would give anything to talk to one more time. Let's start living that reality and really talking to one another. This holiday season take the time to BE with the people in your lives.

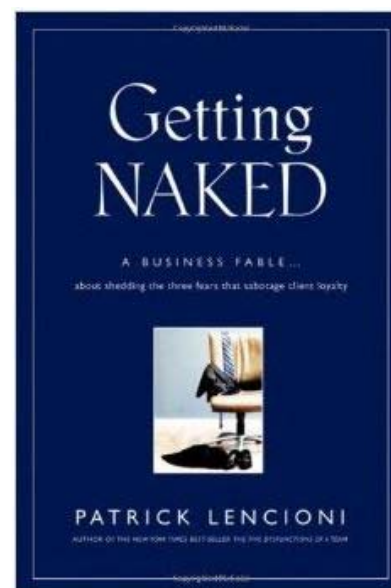
Nerd Herd Book Review: *Getting Naked* by Patrick Lencioni

We're big fans of Patrick Lencioni's fable-style of writing. In this book, *Getting Naked*, Lencioni addresses the "Three Fears" that can hurt client loyalty. He uses the story of two consulting firms, though these principles can be applied to any type of business or even personal relationships, to contrast their approaches to business and serving their clients. During the journey with these two firms, we learn the "Three Fears":

1. Let go of the fear of losing (business)
2. Let go of the fear of being embarrassed
3. Let go of the fear of feeling inferior

By overcoming these fears, we can learn to:

1. Always provide immediate value to those we serve rather than sell ourselves
2. Give away ourselves (the business) without holding back for something else first (fees)
3. Tell the "kind" truth and not sugar coat the obvious
4. Enter the danger, our zone of discomfort, rather than avoid it
5. Ask the dumb (the right) question that no one else ever asks
6. Make dumb suggestions that stimulates thinking rather than suggest the obvious
7. Celebrate our mistakes, our failures, as these are key learnings for growth
8. Take a bullet for a friend (our client) as taking responsibility and sacrificing is the greatest thing we can do for another.
9. Make everything about the client; focus on the "other"
10. Honor the "other's" work
11. Roll up our sleeves and do the dirty work
12. Admit we are human and have our own weaknesses and limitations



4.5 out of 5

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Sony Xperia Z3

Every fall a batch of cool new phones from nearly every major manufacturer hits the market. People are clamoring for the new, larger Apple iPhone or the new Google Nexus phone. This October saw the release of a rather interesting new Android phone from Sony called the Xperia Z3 Compact. What makes Sony's phone remarkable?

Have you noticed how big phones have gotten lately? Not only that, but these big phones require quite a bit of battery power. The Z3 Compact is a premium phone that returns to a more palm-friendly size, with a 4.6-inch display. It also boasts a battery that lasts two days (or more, in some cases) with average use. That's basically unheard of anymore. It also runs the latest version of Android, and it's water-resistant. That's right! The Z3 Compact is certified water-resistant up to one meter for a total of 30 minutes.

Think Through Social Media Actions In A Heated Moment

1. **If you wouldn't say it to your grandmother, don't write it on Twitter.** The oldest test in the book is the grandma test. It still holds today. If she would be appalled, odds are that others will be too. It feels good to blast an opponent, but such outburst can easily be used against you.
2. **Remember that everything you say or do on the web is archived.** Even if the NSA happens to miss it, odds are that Twitter, Facebook, Google and/or other platforms have a way of archiving the information. Consider everything you write these days on the Internet to be permanent. Trolls may delete their comments but they still leave a trail.
3. **Still debating saying it? Sleep on it.** This is familiar but often good advice. If you really feel the need to say something that might be taken the wrong way, consider sitting on it overnight. Waiting until the next day will rarely hurt your point, and it may save huge amounts of embarrassment.
4. **If you do say it...make sure you feel that you could defend it in a court of law.** Falsely accusing someone of something is a big deal and the repercussions could amplify beyond your original intentions.
5. **Remember that your reputation is cumulative.** How you respond to the unfair and uncivil will either enhance or detract from your reputation. Don't let others bait you into ruining your reputation.

How do I react when I am targeted on social media?

1. **Grab screenshots.** If someone truly is going after you, the first move is to gather evidence. Make sure you have copies. Odds are that they will quickly realize what they have done and will try to erase their trail, so the best thing you can do is make sure you have a copy on hand.
2. **Report them.** Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and most other platforms have safeguards against those who harass others. Don't hesitate to put in a report—that's why it's there!
3. **Try not to react.** This goes back to my above points about guarding yourself. As hard as it is, try to remember that once integrity is lost it is extremely hard to recover. The more reaction, the more fuel you pour on the fire.
4. **Remember that the truth is the best defense.** As someone who has been egregiously accused of something I did not do, I took solace in the fact that I was innocent and as such the accusation cruelly asserted could never be proven.

We live in a world where unscrupulous people have migrated to online communities and live among the rest of us. I hope you never have to use the above actions, but that when you do, I hope they serve you well.



Mark Sanborn, CSP, CPAE, is president of Sanborn & Associates, Inc., an idea studio dedicated to developing leaders in business and in life. Mark is an international best-selling author and noted authority on leadership, team-building, customer service and change. Mark is the author of 8 books, including the best seller *The Fred Factor: How Passion in Your Work and Life Can Turn the Ordinary into the Extraordinary*, which has sold more than 1.6 million copies internationally. Learn more about Mark at www.marksanborn.com

Simple Ways to Use E-mail More Efficiently

There used to be a time when e-mail was supposed to increase productivity. Yet, that is often not the case. Many users don't use e-mail as productively as they could, and you may be one of them! Consider these tips to improve the way you use e-mail:

Skip attachments. Find alternate methods of sharing documents, such as Google Drive or AGJ's Secure Cloud (we're not a big fan of Dropbox for security reasons). It makes organization and collaboration more efficient, and it's easier to track who has what. Plus, many e-mail clients are notorious for marking e-mails with attachments and links as spam.

Watch your replies. When you reply to an e-mail, it's too easy to write and send, not realizing who might end up with your message. If you receive a CC'd e-mail with several names attached, be sure to reply only to the sender and not the group, unless it's 100% relevant. It creates useless in-box clutter for others and wastes time.

Use the subject line effectively. When a subject line is vague or difficult to understand, it's frustrating for the recipient. They might not even bother with it. Be clear and concise, while also being descriptive. The recipient should know what the e-mail pertains to before they open it.

Not everything needs a reply. Replying to every e-mail you get, or even a majority of them, wastes your time and the time of the recipient, especially if your reply doesn't say anything meaningful (such as a thanks or acknowledgment of a previous e-mail). Unless it's absolutely necessary to continue a conversation, move on.



"You're out of key, and you've totally picked the wrong number for your vocal range. Face it, you'll never make it as carol singers!"

Happy Ha-Ha-Holidays



Q: If athletes get athletes foot, what do astronauts get?

A: Missile-toe!

Q: What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?

A: Frostbite.

Q: Why was Santa's little helper depressed?

A: Because he had low elf-esteem.

Q: What do you get when you cross an archer with a gift-wrapper?

A: Ribbon hood.

Q: What do you call a bunch of grandmasters of chess bragging about their games in a hotel lobby?

A: Chess nuts boasting in an open foyer!

Q: What do you call a cat on the beach at Christmas time?

A: Sandy Claus!

Q: How do sheep in Mexico say Merry Christmas?

A: Fleece Navidad!

Q: What did Santa shout to his toys on Christmas Eve?

A: Okay everyone, hit the sack!!

Q: What do snowmen eat for breakfast?

A: Frosted Snowflakes.

Q: What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus?

A: Claustrophobic.