

The Tech chronicle

What's New

DenBe Consulting is celebrating 16 years in business this month!! When we look back at where we started we are humbled and grateful for the trust you have placed in us as your MSP provider. This industry is ever changing- that's one of the things about it that we love. When we started in 2004, we installed a router at a hotel. The capacity was 50 devices and the manager said to us "We'll never have that many people who need to connect to the internet at the same time, this is all we need." Most people (ourselves included) couldn't have imagined the growth our industry would see. We have loved growing, learning and surviving the ups and downs of this industry but mostly, we've loved serving our clients. You're the reason we come to work every day and we're so excited for the next 16 years of partnering with you!

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Dennis Jock of DenBe Computer Consulting.

Did You Know?

Grand Rapids is home to the 24-foot Leonardo da Vinci horse, called Il Galvallo, it is the largest equestrian bronze sculpture in the Western Hemisphere.



Clear Signs You're About To Get Hacked ... And What To Do NOW To Prevent It

Do you use the same password for everything? If you do, you're not alone. We all have bad cyber habits, whether it's reusing passwords or connecting to unsecured WiFi. These habits can make it easy for hackers to steal our personal information and use it for their own purposes - or they can sell it on the dark web for an easy profit.

These are habits you have to stop right now - and habits your employees need to stop too. After all, good cyber security practices are a group effort! But using the same password for everything or using simple passwords aren't the only things that are going to get you into trouble. Here are three more clear signs you're setting yourself up for a breach.

Sharing Your E-mail

Countless websites want your e-mail address. Sometimes it's not a big deal if you're sharing it with a vendor or e-commerce site. You want to ensure you receive invoices and shipping confirmation. But other websites just want you to sign up for special offers, notifications, e-mail newsletters and other inbox clutter. It sounds mostly harmless, but what they fail to tell you is the fact that they're going to sell your e-mail address to advertisers and other third parties.

To make matters worse, you have no idea where your e-mail address will end up - or if it will fall into the wrong hands. Hackers are constantly on the lookout for e-mail addresses they can take advantage of. They use e-mail for several different kinds of cyberscams - most notably phishing scams. Hackers can even make it look like an

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e-mail is coming from a legitimate source to get you to open it.

Whenever possible, avoid using your work or personal e-mail. If you need to sign up for something and you don't completely trust the source (or just want to avoid spam), create a "burner"

e-mail address you can use. It should be something different from your work or personal e-mail and not associated with business or banking.

Not Using HTTPS

Most of us are familiar with HTTP. It's short for Hypertext Transfer Protocol and is a part of every web address. These days, however, many websites are using HTTPS - the S standing for "secure." Some web browsers, like Google Chrome, even open HTTPS websites automatically, giving you a more secure connection. Of course, this only works if the website was made with an HTTPS option.

Why is visiting an unsecured HTTP website dangerous? Any data you share with an unsecured website, such as date of birth, passwords or any financial information,

"Many password managers are designed to suggest new passwords to you when it's time to update your old passwords."

may not be securely stored. You have no way of knowing that your private data won't end up in the hands of a third party, whether that's an advertiser or a hacker. It isn't worth the risk.

When visiting any website, look in the address bar. There should be a little padlock. If the padlock is closed or green, you are on a secure website. If it's open or red, the website is not secure. You can also click the padlock to verify the website's security credentials. It's best practice to *immediately* leave any website that is not secured. And never share your personal information on a webpage that is not secure.

Saving Your Passwords In Your Web Browser

Web browsers make life so easy. You can save your favorite websites at the click of a button. You can customize them to your needs using extensions and add-ons. And you can save all your usernames and passwords in one place! But as convenient as it is, saving passwords in your browser comes with a price: low security.

If a hacker gets into your saved passwords, it's like opening a treasure chest full of gold. They have everything they could ever want. Sure, web browsers require a password or PIN to see saved passwords, but a skilled hacker can force their way past this hurdle if given the chance.

Use a password manager instead. These apps keep all of your passwords in one place, but they come with serious security. Even better, many password managers are designed to suggest new passwords to you when it's time to update your old passwords. LastPass, 1Password and Keeper Security Password Manager are all good options.

Referral Palooza!!!

Are you aware of our referral program? As you probably know- advertising is expensive. We would much rather pay you to obtain a new client than to write a check to Google Ad Words or invest in the next new marketing gimmick. Since we love to show our gratitude- with every business referral you give us, we'll reward you with a \$25 gift card to the restaurant of your choice. The business you refer will receive two free hours of service so they can get to know us and see if we're a good fit. If that referral becomes a Managed Services client, we give you a check for \$200. There is no deadline for this program and no limit to how much you can earn. Contact Dennis or Betty if you have a know of a business that could benefit from our services and we'll get your reward out to you right away!

Windows 10 Tips & Tricks

Windows 10 has been around since 2015 and it has a lot of keyboard shortcuts that make life easier.

Here are a few of our favorites.

Windows Snapping

If you've never used Windows Snapping, you're missing out on one of Windows 10's key features. Known as Aero Snap on Windows 7, the snapping feature allows you to snap windows vertically on top of each other. You can even snap windows to a 2x2 grid for better multitasking. Simply use these keyboard shortcuts:

Windows Key + Left – Snap current window to the left side of the screen

Windows Key + Right – Snap current window to the right side of the screen

Windows Key + Up – Snap current window to the top of the screen

Windows Key + Down – Snap current window to the bottom of the screen

You can also combine these shortcuts to snap your current window into a corner like top left, top right, and more.

Task Views

This window management feature allows you to see all your opened windows so you can quickly return to a specific program or document. This is particularly useful if you have multiple windows open at once. In addition to clicking the Task View button on the taskbar to open it, these keyboard shortcuts will do the trick:

Windows Key + Tab – Open a new Task View interface with windows from your current virtual desktop appearing in the Task View list. To switch between virtual desktops, simply use the virtual desktop switcher at the bottom of the screen.

Alt + Tab – While not a new keyboard shortcut per se, it allows you to switch between open windows on all virtual desktops.

Ctrl + Alt + Tab – This is similar to Alt + Tab but the thumbnails stay on the screen even after you release all the keys.

Are You Working SMART?

Rubbermaid thought they needed more products to be the leader in their industry. So, they set out to invent a new product every day for several years, while also entering a new product category every 12-18 months. *Fortune* magazine wrote that Rubbermaid was more innovative than 3M, Intel and Apple; now, that is impressive.

Then Rubbermaid started choking on over 1,000 new products in less than 36 months. Innovation became more important than controlling costs, filling orders on time or customer service. They ended up closing nine plants and laid off over 1,100 employees before Newell Corporation came in to buy (rescue) the company.

I had a mentor who once told me, "Rob, I don't care how hard you work. I care how smart you work." Rubbermaid was working hard, putting in time, money and effort while at the same time destroying their own company. How did that work out for them?

Eli Lilly thought they needed to hire 2,000 PhD researchers to create more products to keep Wall Street happy with their growth. The only problem was they didn't have the funds to hire them. So, they had to come up with another way to solve this problem – in other words, they had to work smarter.

They decided to take all their molecular problems, post them on the Internet and tell all molecular PhD researchers that they would PAY for solutions. Instead of having to pay the salaries and benefits for 2,000 new researchers with money they didn't have, they had thousands upon thousands of researchers all over the world sending in their suggestions for solutions to their molecular problems, and they only had to pay for the ones they used. Now, that is SMART!

Do you see SMART opportunities in these statistics?

- About 66% of employees would take a



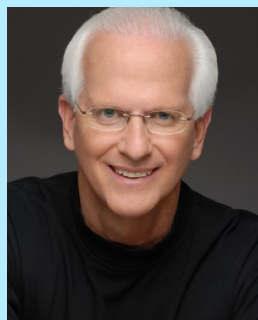
lower paying job for more work flexibility.

- About 62% of employees believe they could fulfill their duties remotely.
- About 60% of employees believe they don't need to be in the office to be productive and efficient.

Could you lower overhead and expenses by having some people operate from home? Some managers will immediately say, "That won't work; you won't have control of your employees. They won't get things done." If that is your argument, my statement to you is this: you have hired the wrong people.

JetBlue has hundreds of reservation agents operating from their own homes. Their home-based agents save, on average, up to \$4,000 on their commuting expenses, not counting the savings of lunch, day care and wardrobe. JetBlue found they had a 25% increase in productivity once employees were allowed to work from home; they figured out a different, more productive, less expensive, more profitable ... *SMARTER* way to operate.

To survive in this competitive marketplace, you must change, adapt, modify, challenge, innovate, transform, revise and improve, but what's paramount to your success is to be working SMART!



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 country, including former President George H.W. Bush, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, Tony Robbins, Tom Peters and Stephen Covey. Today, he travels the world, sharing powerful ideas for achieving

These 6 Hobbies Will Make You Smarter

Play An Instrument - Learning to play an instrument - or playing an instrument you're already familiar with - keeps the brain sharp. It's an "active" hobby that creates new neural pathways in the brain, which is linked to good brain health, including improved memory and problem-solving.

Read Constantly - Reading helps reduce stress while boosting cognitive abilities, like interpreting data and emotions. Interestingly, it doesn't matter what you read as long as you read often.

Exercise Daily - Exercise promotes the release of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) within the body, a protein that promotes healthy brain activity, including better mental acuity.

Learn A New Language - Like playing an instrument, learning a new language creates new neural pathways. Research shows that people who learn a second language

are better at solving puzzles and

problems.

Play "Brain Games" - Activities such as sudoku, puzzles, board games and problem-solving video games can be beneficial to the brain. These activities increase brain neuroplasticity, which improves cognitive ability and reduces anxiety.

Meditate - It's also important to quiet the brain. Meditation improves focus and can improve your mood significantly, which can boost confidence. *Business Insider, Dec. 17, 2019*

Beware At The Gas Station...

If you use a credit card at the gas pump, you increase your risk of having your credit card information stolen. At the end of 2019, Visa warned a number of its customers that hackers are actively stealing credit card information by hacking into gas stations' point of sales networks. These networks, it turns out, are not as secure as they should be.

Hackers also use phishing scams. All

the gas station employee has to do is click a malicious link and hackers can install software that steals credit card information from the station and sends it back to the hacker.

What can you do to protect yourself? Make sure your credit cards are up to date with the latest chip technology. Never use your card's magnetic strip, if possible. If you're still using your magstripe, ask your issuer for an updated card or find a new credit card provider. Cash is also a great option. *Inc., Dec. 16, 2019*

4 Ways To Improve Business In 2020

Automation - Boost efficiency with automation tools. Think accounting and financial management tools like FreshBooks and QuickBooks or project management tools like Trello. You can also use e-mail marketing apps like Mailchimp.

Accessibility - Make it easier than ever for customers to book your services. Online-scheduling software streamlines the process, allowing customers to schedule times that work for them and you. You can have customers book times on your website or Facebook page.

Employee Engagement - Delegate more, encourage more communication through apps like Slack and celebrate more achievements.

Customer Service - Chatbots and other types of similar customer service-based artificial intelligence are bigger than ever. Use them on your website or direct customers to Facebook Messenger. HubSpot's Chatbot Builder is a good tool to try when getting started. *Small Business Trends, Dec. 1, 2019*

