



The Tech chronicle

Fighting Quarantine Boredom

We're a few weeks in and boredom is really setting in for most of us. Here are some unique ideas that will lift your spirits and give you some much needed distraction from our current situation.

1. Make a list of things you are grateful for.
2. Make an indoor scavenger hunt for you family .
3. Call your grandparents, parents or aunts and uncles and interview them about their childhood.
4. Set up a tent and camp out with your family in your living room.
5. Have a virtual get together with your friends using Zoom.com
6. Get out that old instrument and see if you still have your skills.
7. Make a new recipe you've always wanted to try.
8. Rearrange your sock drawer. Really.
9. Check out all the virtual museum tours from around the world.
10. Read your favorite book again.



5 Steps To Rise Above The Fear Of COVID-19 And Focus On Growing Your Business

In a matter of just a few short weeks, we have gone from living how we've always lived to changing just about everything we do. Schools are out for weeks if not months. Cruises have stopped sailing, and air transportation may be next. Bars and restaurants are closing, sporting events are nonexistent and so many people are now unemployed. If you watch the news or follow social media and see the number of infected keep rising, you can't help but wonder when (or if) life will return to normal.

As a result of these unprecedented life changes in such a short amount of time, so many people today are frozen in fear. They don't know what they can do and what they can't do. They're numb, fearful and questioning everything.

I believe that the accomplished and determined business owners in our

world are facing a unique brand of fears: Will I lose sales and revenue due to the coronavirus? What if I have to lay people off? How can I keep my team and keep them working hard? How will I continue to provide for my family? How long will this last?

Here are five steps you can start taking now to stop being frozen in fear and move forward with your business, your family and living your life.

Step #1: Communicate Often. You should make an effort to constantly communicate with all of your stakeholders. From your employees to your customers to your partners and vendors, stay in communication with them to share how your business is doing and how you can continue to serve them.

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Did you know?

In 1879 Detroit telephone customers were first in the nation to be assigned phone numbers to facilitate handling calls.

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While in-person visits may not be ideal at this time, you can always resort to the good ol' phone, e-mail, videos or webinars. You can bet that if your customers aren't hearing from you, they are hearing from your competitors.

Step #2: Be a Valuable Resource.

While money is always important, now is the time to be a trusted resource and friend to your clients and prospects. People today need bold solutions. If you're actively bringing solutions to your clients, you become a valuable resource. If they're simply writing a check and never hearing from you - especially in today's environment - you'll be first on the chopping block when they have to cut expenses.

Step #3: Lean on People.

It's ironic that the one time we need people more than ever before, we are supposed to socially distance ourselves and stay in our homes. Through video conferencing and web conferencing, work together with your team, your partners and your Accountability Groups to lean on one another. Because nobody has gone through anything like this before, nobody has all the answers. But as a collective group, you will find most every answer you need.

Step #4: Be MORE Than a Businessperson.

They may be your employees, your colleagues and your clients. But they are PEOPLE first. And just about everyone you interact with in your business world has endless stresses when the workday is done. Their kids are home from school all day getting into who knows what. They're worried about going to the supermarket and if there will be meat and toilet paper. They're concerned about keeping themselves and their family healthy.

When your clients and prospects start to see you not just as an IT services provider, but as a friend and someone who truly

cares, that's when they want to do business with you for life.

Step #5: Be Informed But Not Obsessed.

People were glued to their TVs for weeks after 9/11. As a result, although they were informed, they were also more stressed, depressed and fearful. Don't do that to yourself. Yes, it's prudent to know how to "flatten the curve" and protect your family, but watching too much news or social media right now can dominate your thinking and actions. That can negatively impact your business.

During this otherworldly pandemic, it's good to have a little fear. To keep us safe. To keep us making good decisions. However, if you want to ensure your business is stable and growing, to help your family cope and get through this, you should take these steps to rise above the fear.

If you need immediate IT support or if you need help in setting your business up so your employees can work remotely from home, contact us today.



Help Us Out And We'll Give You A Pair Of Wireless Ear Buds For Your Trouble

We love having you as a customer and, quite honestly, wish we had more like you! So instead of just wishing, we've decided to hold a special "refer a friend" event during the month of April.

Simply refer any company with 10 or more computers to our office to receive a FREE computer network assessment (a \$397 value). Once we've completed our initial appointment with your referral, we'll rush YOU a free pair of Apple Air Pods or Samsung Galaxy Buds, your choice as a thank-you (or donate \$100 to your favorite charity ... your choice!).

Simply call us at (810) 207-3188 or e-mail us at betty@denbeconsulting.com with your referral's name and contact information today!

Cybercriminals Are Counting On You Letting Your Guard Down

The world is slowing down during this COVID-19 pandemic. Wall Street is being hit hard. People are no longer going out. We're told to quarantine or self-isolate and not engage in groups.

You can bet there's one group that's not slowing down at all. In fact, they're probably working overtime while the rest of us have our lives turned upside down. Cybercriminals and hackers know there's no better time to strike than during a global crisis. While you are distracted and spending your time trying to make sense of this new normal, they are finding new ways into your IT network so they can steal data and passwords, compromise your clients' private information and even demand large ransoms. If history repeats itself, hackers will be out in full force throughout this coronavirus scare.

Here are solutions you can implement now to help protect your business data, money and productivity:

1. Be more suspicious of incoming e-mails.

Because people are scared and confused right now, it's the perfect time for hackers to send e-mails with dangerous malware and viruses. At this moment, your in-box is probably filled with "COVID-19" subject lines and coronavirus-focused e-mails.

Always carefully inspect the e-mail and make sure you know the sender. There's a cdc.gov e-mail address out there now that's not legitimate and is spamming in-boxes across the country.

Avoid clicking links in the e-mail unless it's clear where they go. And you should never download an attachment unless you know who sent it and what it is.

Communicate these safeguards to everyone on your team, especially if they are working from home.

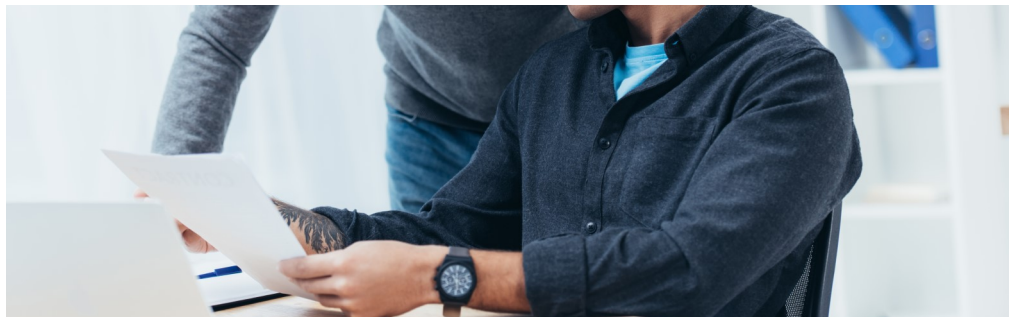
2. Ensure your work-from-home computers are secure.

First, make sure your employees are not using their home computers or devices when working. Second, ensure your work-at-home computers have a firewall that's turned on. Finally, your network and data are not truly secure unless your employees utilize a VPN (virtual private network).

3. Improve your password strategy.

During crises like the one we are all facing right now, your passwords could mean the difference between spending your time relearning how to grow your business and trying to recoup finances and private data that's been hacked. Make a point now to reevaluate your passwords and direct your team to create stronger passwords.

The Benefits Of A Mastermind Group



I believe no man is an island. So, I offer this tip: if you're an entrepreneur, you need to be in a mastermind. Being in a mastermind group is one of the most powerful tools to help you increase profitability in your business.

1. What is a mastermind group?

If you aren't familiar with them, a mastermind is a group in which entrepreneurs can mentor each other and help each other grow their businesses. It can be an important catalyst for growth and shaping your business.

The mastermind I run is called the Edison Collective. We get together face-to-face every quarter to expand our business (and occasional musical) knowledge. We share our ideas, solutions, best practices, successes and challenges as entrepreneurs. Most of all, we motivate and inspire each other.

2. What are the benefits of belonging to a mastermind?

While some mastermind groups run on a digital platform, face-to-face meetings are important if they're an option. What I love about being in a mastermind is the connection. We are truly there to learn from each other. No one walks in with their ego. We gather to benefit ourselves and each other by sharing and learning from other

entrepreneurial experiences.

To benefit from a mastermind, you must be willing to collaborate, share and learn from each other. At times, it's almost like free coaching. You get sneak peeks at how businesses run behind the scenes, and oftentimes, we take those ideas and implement them in our own practices. And remember, trust is imperative. There is total confidentiality, so feel free to not be a boss for a bit.

I have found that meeting with this group has raised the bar for me. My business is more profitable. I find support from my peers as well as education and resources I may not have been exposed to in the past. Even better, I have another venue for accountability (yup, even I need it!) and a place to share my goals. So next quarter when we meet, I better bring the results!

3. Who can be in a mastermind?

The beautiful thing is that you don't have to join an established mastermind. You can start your own. Find like-minded entrepreneurs who are driven to achieve the same goals and vision you are. Get together once a quarter face-to-face, have open discussions about your business and get your insights from each other.



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 Proventus Group. He is also 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

4 Cyber Security Myths Business Owners Need To Know

Myth: Cyberattacks only come from external sources.

Reality: Upward of 60% of data breaches can be traced back to employee error. They may leave sensitive data on unsecured hardware rather than behind digital walls. They may open malicious files that copy and send data to an external location. Employee IT security training goes a long way to fix this.

Myth: Simple antivirus software or firewalls are enough to protect your business.

Reality: Cybercriminals use sophisticated tools to get what they want. The fewer security solutions you have in place, the easier it is. Antivirus software can't do anything to stop a motivated hacker, and firewalls should never be considered a primary line of defense. Web scanning and malware detection software can give you more protection on top of these.

Myth: Your business is too small or

niche to be a target.

Reality: Cybercriminals don't care about the size or type of your business. They target everyone because they know they'll eventually break through somewhere. Small businesses are more appealing because they often lack serious cyber security solutions.

Myth: You don't collect payment or financial data, so you aren't worth targeting.

Reality: They aren't just looking for credit card details. They want usernames, passwords, e-mail addresses and other personal identifying information they may be able to use elsewhere because people have a bad habit of reusing passwords for other accounts, including online banking. *Inc., Dec. 16, 2019*

Top Tips For Making The Most Of Your Small-Business Technology

Embrace mobile. Your customers use mobile, so your business needs to work in the mobile space too.

Optimize your website for a better

mobile experience.

Good copy goes far. From blogs to social media posts, compelling, well-written copy can go a long way. Share personal stories and success stories and create a narrative for your business online.

Instagram it. If your business isn't on Instagram, it should be. Many of your current and future customers are there. It's a great place to share photos, tell stories and foster connections.

Get more out of SEO. Good header tags, for instance, are a must for good overall SEO. Learn how to get more out of headers and you'll be able to drive more traffic to your website or related webpages. *Small Business Trends, Dec. 1, 2019*

Things Mentally Strong People Don't Waste Time Doing

Overthinking - They look at their situation and take decisive actions. Some look at all the available information and go. Others rely more on their gut. Either way, they keep things moving forward.

Regretting - It's natural to want a different outcome than the one you got or to think, "I should have done X instead of Y." But these thoughts can hold you back and lead to second-guessing yourself later.

Complaining - It can be healthy to complain. It gets your thoughts into the open where they can be discussed. But you have to discuss and arrive at solutions.

Complaining for the sake of complaining - or complaining to people who can't help - is unproductive. *Business Insider, Dec. 17, 2019*



“Well, it’s not the worst I’ve seen.”