

The Tech chronicle

Happy New Year!

It's January, it's cold- we get it. You still should get out and see what's going on in our state. Fun events are all around us. Check out these cool ideas!

Mt. Clemens Ice Carving Show, 70 Macomb Place, Downtown Mt. Clemens. January 4-6, 2022. Kids Face painting, yummy popcorn, hot Cocoa (Pop's Candy Shop), ice sculptures & live demonstrations.

Wilderness Sleigh Ride and Dinner, The Treetops Resort, Gaylord, Jan 08, 15, 22, 29, 2022, 5:00 pm - 9:30 pm. Reserve your space. Perfect romantic winter getaway or romantic sleigh rides in Michigan!

World of Winter Festival in downtown Grand Rapids - January 7, 2022 through March 6, 2022. Experience Grand Rapids during the cold-weather season during its annual World of Winter Festival! See art, performances, play games and enjoy the downtown area. Perfect family adventure. And it's free!

Zehnders Snowfest in Frankenmuth, MI- January 26-31, 2022. Bring the whole family to enjoy snow sculpting and ice carving competitions. There will be a warming tent, entertainment, children's area and fireworks.

Tip-Up Town USA-Houghton Lake, MI, January 22, 23,29, 2022. Beverage tent, fishing contest, entertainment tent, carnival rides, petting zoo, antique snowmobiles, ice slide, vendors, snowmobile drag races and a Polar Bear Plunge! Check their website for times of events. The festival is held at the southern DNR boat launch, off of M-55 near the Pines theater and Pineview Golf Course. Free parking is available at the High School and library with free shuttle service to and from Tip Up Town. Are you brave enough to

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Did You Know?

Michigan is first in the United States production of peat and magnesium compounds and second in gypsum and iron ore.



3 Great IT Resolutions For The New Year

As the new year kicks off, many business owners and entrepreneurs are making their New Year's resolutions. Most of these business owners will be focused on increasing profits or expanding growth, but it would be wise to focus on some IT- or tech-related resolutions as well. Making sure that you are up-to-date on the most recent tech and security measures can go a long way toward growing and protecting your business.

While many companies make goals or resolutions that they hope to achieve in the new year, plenty of businesses fail to meet these goals because they do not take the steps necessary to achieve them. It often takes time and determination to make these resolutions a reality, and business owners should not quit when the situations become stale or difficult.

Here are our three best IT and tech resolutions for business owners to make for the new year, and how to make sure you achieve them.

Employee Security Training And Creating A Security Safe Culture
If your employees have not had any security awareness training, you should make it your focus to ensure that everyone is informed about potential information security breaches. Research suggests that human error is involved in over 90% of security breaches. By providing security awareness training to your employees, you will teach them how to avoid mistakes that could leave the business at risk. Not only will this help your employees be more aware of security, but it will make your customers feel more comfortable and confident when working with your company.

There are other benefits to holding

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security awareness training for your team, and one of the best is that you will be taking your first steps in creating a culture based around tech security. You will be introducing your team to the importance of information security, which they will effectively use to fortify your defenses. When new employees are brought in, set aside some time for them to have security awareness training so they are enveloped in the culture from day one. By putting together a plan where every employee is introduced to information security awareness, your company will be less at risk for breaches and threats made possible by human error.

Utilize A Managed Services Provider

The MSP industry has seen immense growth over the past five years. The market was valued at over \$152 billion in 2017 and is expected to rise to \$257 billion by the end of 2022. MSPs allow for predictable monthly costs and better security practices, but they truly have a plethora of benefits.

If your computer breaks or shuts down, MSPs have the ability to not only fix it but also go above and beyond the usual tech support. Some MSPs will work with your business to understand your goals and find better ways to achieve them. MSPs are also raising their tech game. Yes, they can help with problems related to e-mail, web

“MSPs allow for predictable monthly costs and better security practices, but they truly have a plethora of benefits. ”

and file searching, but they are also available for more advanced needs, like cloud infrastructure management. If you're still working with a basic IT service, look into using an MSP instead. They will help with your usual tech problems while also providing you with the resources needed to achieve your goals.

Back Up Your Data

Data is an essential part of any business, and it's imperative that every business owner makes an effort to back up their data. If important files are damaged or deleted or a disaster causes your business to lose important data, data backups can prevent business interruptions. It becomes even more important when dealing with clients' information.

Imagine that you're a customer who has been making transactions with a business for years. They may have your address, phone number, e-mail address and sometimes even your Social Security number, but one day, you call and they no longer have your information on file. You probably wouldn't feel too secure giving this company that information again if they already lost it the first time. This is how your clients will feel if they have to provide their information again after data loss that could have been prevented by backing up your data.

As you plan out your goals and resolutions to incorporate in 2022, don't forget to include IT and tech goals as well. Not only will they save you money in the long run, but they will also grant you peace of mind. Make a plan, overcome any obstacles and don't lose hope if it looks like you need more than a year to accomplish your goals.

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- We can design your new website or transfer your existing site to our infrastructure
- We'd love to grow your business by handling your Search Engine Optimization
- Who has time for all that posting- we'd love to create content and handle all your Social Media Management
- DenBe Consulting can take all this off Your plate so you can run Your business

How To Achieve Those New Years Resolutions!

You're probably painfully familiar with New Year's resolution statistics, if only because you're one of them: Whether it's a small, (seemingly) easily achievable goal or a huge, life-changing goal, people tend to fail at the same rate: Approximately 80 percent of people who make New Year's resolutions have dropped them by the second week of February. Many don't make it nearly that long. Research conducted by Strava using over 800 million user-logged activities in 2019 predicts the day most people are likely to give up on their New Year's Resolution is January 19. (Strava calls it "Quitter's Day.") While it's certainly harder to achieve a huge goal than a small one, the difficulty of the goal you set isn't nearly as important as whether or not you develop the kind of habits that allow you to achieve that goal. Otherwise, you're just wishing and hoping. Your intentions are great, but unless you develop new habits... your chances for success are basically nonexistent.

So let's fix that. Here are some simple steps you can take that will not only help you actually stick to your New Year's resolutions, but more importantly achieve any goal you set.

First, turn your resolution into a specific, measurable goal.

Maybe you've decided to get in better shape this year. That's a great goal, but what does "get in better shape" actually mean? Basically, nothing. What's a better goal? Maybe "lose 10 pounds in 30 days." That's a specific, measurable goal. Not only do you know what you want to accomplish, but you can create a process guaranteed to get you there. Set your workout schedule, lay out your diet plan... then just follow your plan. Here's another example. "Expand my business" sounds great, but what does it actually mean? "Land six new customers a month" lets you to determine the steps you should take to meet that goal. The key is to set a goal so specific that it's easy to work backwards to create a process you can use to achieve it.

Then, piggy-back on current habits.

This year, one of my goals is to be able to do a muscle-up. Since I regularly go to the gym – working out is a long-established habit – I don't need to create a new habit. I just need to piggy-back on an existing habit. So I've started tacking on five minutes, three times a week, of exercises specifically designed to develop the strength I'll need: Clap pull-ups, weighted dips, weighted pull-ups, box bar pull-ups to start to learn the motion. I don't have to force myself to go to the gym; I'm already there. I don't need to create a totally new habit; instead, I just have to modify an existing one. Say your resolution is to drink more water, and your goal is to drink two additional 8-ounce glasses a day. Simple: Keep a glass on your bathroom sink, and after you brush your teeth – a habit already well established – drink a glass of water. Do that when you wake up and before you go to bed and boom: You'll stick to your resolution. Whenever possible, piggy-back on an existing habit. It's a lot easier than trying to introduce and adopt a new habit.

Finally, make sure you engineer your environment

Introducing a little choice architecture can make it a lot easier to develop new habits – and overcome your natural resistance to doing difficult things. Say you want to exercise first thing in the morning. Great: Place your workout clothes by your bed. That way when you wake up, you'll have to actively choose to ignore those cool Lululemon tights... instead of having to actively choose to get them out of the drawer. Want to eat more fruit? Great: Keep a bowl of apples on your desk. Want to eat less ice cream? I do: So, I make sure ice cream never makes it into our house. Want to get off to more productive start each day? At the end of every workday, decide what you'll do first tomorrow, and then lay out everything you need to immediately start. That way you won't have to summon up the willpower to get started – you can just sit down and go!

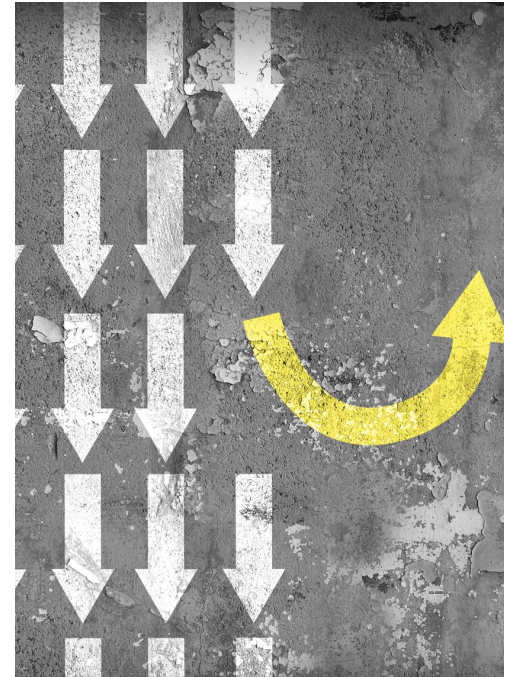
Reimagining Your Business

The pandemic has changed the way that many small businesses operate. They have had to pivot and adapt in order to survive in a time of immense change. Many have had to implement new strategies, while some have even had to adopt a new environment. The change has not been easy for anyone.

When the pandemic first hit, many small-business owners were faced with two choices. They could wait it out and hope that everything would return to normal before long, or they could create a better future at that moment and attempt to continue to grow. Sometimes changing your marketing isn't enough and you need to bring your business into a new light.

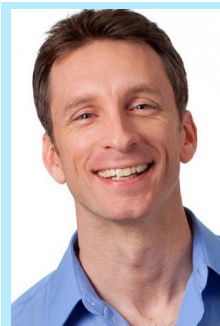
I have a friend named Jacob Limmer who owns Cottonwood Coffee, and he found a way to pivot his business and succeed during the pandemic. As the owner of a coffee shop business, Jacob knew that people would not be busting down his door at the beginning of the pandemic. Jacob owned two storefronts and an online store, so he knew that he would need to make some changes to survive.

He sent out a survey to his mailing list that asked what Cottonwood Coffee could offer to best support its patrons during this unprecedented time. The results came back, and it was astounding how many people requested something for "immunity." Jacob took this idea and ran with it by creating the Immune Booster Cold Brew. This allowed his customers to still get their coffee, but with an added bonus of a healthy supplement.



Even though Jacob had to close one of his storefronts, he is seeing success because he found a way to reimagine his business. He didn't wait around for things to get better. He took a risk that paid off and allowed him to stay in business.

If your business has faced difficulty and you're wondering if you should pivot and make a change to stay afloat, remember that you did not get this far only to get *this* far. You want to continue to grow and expand your business to its full potential. In order to get there, you may have to make some necessary



Mike Michalowicz has always believed that he had the formula to success and has proved it on multiple occasions. He is the creator of Profit First, which is used by hundreds of thousands of companies across the globe to drive profit. He is the author of multiple books, including Get Different and The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur. Mike is a former small business columnist for The Wall Street Journal and served as a business makeover specialist for MSNBC. Mike currently leads two new multimillion-dollar ventures as he puts his latest research to the test. He also is a highly sought-after keynote speaker

■ New Year, New Problems

More businesses are returning to on-location work, and hybrid meetings are becoming more prevalent. As meetings start to occur that host both remote and on-location employees, you may be wondering how to keep everything managed.

Thankfully, there are a few things you can do to ensure that everyone feels heard and respected.

Instead of having everyone on-site use one camera, have them use their individual laptops or computers. This will reduce chaos and allow everyone an opportunity to speak without interrupting others. If this is not feasible with your company, you could assign someone to monitor the remote workers and pass along any questions or information to the employees working on-site. Having one-on-one meetings with remote workers and developing a

connected culture both go a long way toward making everyone feel comfortable and appreciated.

It will take time to perfect hybrid meetings, but with patience, understanding and a desire to improve, your meetings can run smoother than ever before.

■ Choosing A VPN This Year?

Virtual private network (VPN) technology is essential for securing the Internet safely, whether it be for work or pleasure. VPNs are one of the only ways you can have end-to-end safeguard encryption that keeps your information secure while browsing the Internet. If you don't currently use a VPN, you absolutely should. Here are a few things to consider before deciding on a specific VPN.

The VPN market is growing fast. It reached \$31 billion in 2021 and

is slated to grow to \$90 billion within the next six years. When choosing a VPN, you want to consider server locations, speed, security policy, whether the VPN has reliable encryption standards, device compatibility and so much more. Choosing a VPN should not be a half-second decision. Take your time and do your research before deciding on a service.

■ E-commerce Is The New Marketplace

If you're looking to start a new business or grow a current business that sells a particular product or service, you need to have a solid online shop. A new report from Digital Commerce 360 took a deep dive into e-commerce and the features that users think are necessary.

About 76% of respondents said that a detailed description is important if they are going to make a purchase. It was also reported that most customers want a convenient and speedy checkout procedure. The pandemic has made finding many products difficult, and 68% of respondents said that they would like websites to mark their products as out of stock when applicable.

There are many things that you can do to make online shopping a better experience for your customers. When deciding what features to include, look at it from the consumer's viewpoint and decide from there.

Good intentions last a month on average

