February 2019

Ransomware: To Pay or Not to Pay?

Ransomware is a scourge that's been plaguing businesses and organizations over the past few years. It's a form of malware, malicious software that encrypts your files or system, denying you access to them. The attacker demands money—a ransom, if you will—in exchange for restoring access to your data. These crimes are more common than you might think; according to cybersecurity provider Symantec, there were more than 1,200 ransomware detections each day in 2017.

Because the cost of system downtime is exorbitant, many organizations believe it's much cheaper to just pay the ransom and get back to work. However, according to law enforcement agencies and security professionals, when you fall victim to ransomware the last thing you should do is pay the ransom.

Why shouldn't you pay hackers the ransom?

There are four good reasons why the experts believe you should never pay a ransom:

• Paying the ransom is not always the end of your problems. While a hacker may provide you with access to your files, they'll likely leave malware behind, making it possible for them to re-infect your system or steal information.

• Some hackers may not have the ability to decrypt your files even if they wanted to because their malware is poorly coded. This makes decryption impossible, and you will never get your files back.

• There's no guarantee you will be given access to your files if you pay the ransom. According to the CyberEdge Group's 2018 Cyberthreat Defense Report, only 19 percent of ransomware victims who paid the ransom actually got their data back. Those aren't good odds. Therefore, by paying a ransom you'll run the risk of losing both your files and your money.

• Finally, hackers will use the money extorted from you to finance their ongoing criminal activity, making it possible for them to target other innocent people and organizations.

When you take all of this into consideration, it's easy to see why the experts try to dissuade organizations from giving in to a hacker's demands by paying a ransom. This decision is much easier if you're prepared for a ransomware attack by backing up your data, so the hacker doesn't have the upper hand. Contact us today to learn more about how to mitigate the threat of ransomware and other security risks for your organization.

Laugh It Up at Work—It's a Good Thing

While the office should be a serious environment, laughter has a positive impact on the workplace. Here are some of the reasons why businesses benefit from employees laughing:

• Laughter relieves stress and anxiety by reducing levels of stress hormones, increasing the efficacy of employees and decreasing absenteeism.
• Laughing improves problem-solving skills. When we laugh, serotonin is released in our brain, increasing focus and objectivity.
• Laughter lifts our spirits and improves our mood. The act of laughing releases endorphins, which makes us happy.
• Studies show laughing boosts creativity. Laughter makes us more relaxed and willing to think outside of the box, while less likely to self-censor our ideas.
• Laughter increases engagement by making the workplace light, fun, and positive. An upbeat environment will result in greater employee loyalty.
• Laughter is beneficial to team building. Being relaxed helps facilitate camaraderie and team interaction.

When it comes to improving employee productivity and the overall environment of your workplace, laughter may be the best medicine.

Different Colors: How Come Your Prints Don't Match Your Monitor?

Images on a monitor are composed of light-emitting diodes in the form of pixels. However, printers work with paper, which is not made up of light and pixels. Printers are forced to work with dyes and pigments to replicate colors on paper. Each device uses different technology to create the finished product, sometimes resulting in the mismatching colors.

Computer monitors use RGB color modes to create colors on the screen, while printers rely on CMYK color modes to put these colors on paper. RGB mixes the colors red, green, and blue in different quantities to create the colors on your screen. The RGB gamut is composed of every color that exists in light; therefore, the pixels on a monitor can each display almost 17 million colors. CMYK, on the other hand, creates color by combining four base colors: cyan, magenta, yellow, and key (black) in varying degrees. This limits the distinct colors that can be created using CMYK to only a couple of thousand. Colors from your monitor are being converted from RGB to CMYK during the printing process. Because of the technology they rely on to print, printers cannot replicate all of the colors a monitor can display. CMYK's limited color options oftentimes yield duller and darker colors than those you see on your screen.

Benefits of LinkedIn for Business

LinkedIn company pages serve as an important recruitment tool, with which businesses can find candidates and fill positions within their company. Company pages also offer organizations the opportunity to post targeted, engaging content to help communicate with their followers. By posting content via your company page, you'll provide exposure and visibility for your business.

In addition to its role as a professional networking tool that enables users to make business contacts and build their personal brand, your LinkedIn profile is essentially an online resume. It presents users in a professional way, showcasing their education, employment history, skills, and career achievements. Your personal profile also allows you to take advantage of LinkedIn groups, which makes connecting with other professionals even easier while providing you with a platform to build your credibility.

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Professional Diplomacy: Talking Politics in the Office

Religion and politics have long been considered taboo topics in many settings, with the workplace being one of them. However, it's getting increasingly more difficult to keep politics out of the office. In a 2018 survey by Zety, 83 percent of respondents admitted to having political discussions at work.

Statistics also show it's wise to avoid these conversations in the office. According to a survey from Randstad USA, more than 40 percent of workers said they felt excluded at work because of their political views. In a similar survey by Robert Half, 15 percent of respondents said their productivity suffered as a result of talking politics at work. Finally, the American Psychological Association found that 24 percent of people avoid certain co-workers because of their political views.

These numbers make it clear there is a downside to talking politics in the office. You're more likely to change the way someone thinks about you than his or her stance on a political issue.
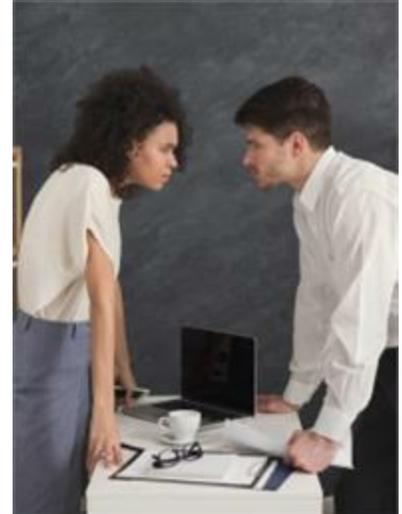
Why Your Business Should Switch from Landline to VoIP

Here are a few of the advantages of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP):

Lower Costs – Perhaps the biggest reason most businesses opt for VoIP over landlines is the notable cost difference. VoIP is significantly cheaper due to lower set up/installation, equipment, monthly service, and maintenance fees. Such an impact on a company's bottom line makes VoIP an enticing option to cost-conscious organizations.

Mobility/Portability – The mobile workforce can be better accommodated with VoIP than old-school phone lines. Employees no longer have to be at their desk to access their office phone, as an internet connection or mobile device are all you need to make and receive calls via your business number.

Increased Functionality – VoIP solutions are feature-rich services that provide functionality landlines do not. This includes auto attendants, voicemail to text or email, video calling, automatic call redirection, and more.

Scalability – Businesses need to be able to accommodate growth and change in order to survive. VoIP is a scalable communication solution that makes it easy and inexpensive to expand or contract to evolve along with your company.

Working Remotely is a Win-win Scenario

Why are so many businesses allowing their employees to work remotely? Because it's a win-win situation for everyone involved, as both sides benefit from remote work.

Increased Productivity: Studies show that remote employees are actually more productive than their counterparts in the office. Remote workers have fewer distractions to deal with, are more comfortable, and are more inclined to work outside of normal business hours.

Improved Morale: Eliminating commutes and incessant distractions lowers employee stress levels. Working from home also leads to better work-life balance, lower absenteeism, and reduced burnout rates. Research reveals that remote work leads to increased engagement.

More Eco-friendly: Telecommuting naturally reduces pollution and fuel consumption by eliminating trips to and from the office, while working from home results in less electricity, paper, and plastic used than in the office.

Less Costly: Happier, healthier employees lead to less turnover, which will save businesses the money it costs to hire and train new workers. Having fewer employees in the office also reduces overhead and operating costs through reduced monthly rent, utilities, and supply costs.

Why Your Business Should Embrace Managed Print Services

By outsourcing the management of your printing devices through Managed Print Services (MPS), you'll experience:

Lower costs. An MPS solution will save you money by identifying and eliminating unreliable, inefficient, and unnecessary devices. These machines will be consolidated and replaced by fewer, more efficient and reliable devices, reducing the overall size of your printer fleet without sacrificing productivity. Further costs savings will be realized through features such as high-quality draft modes and duplex printing, combined with curbing wasteful printing practices.

Reduced downtime. In addition to replacing unreliable machines, MPS will maximize uptime through preventative maintenance, real-time monitoring, and the auto-replenishment of supplies. In the event you do have a device go down, you can count on a qualified professional to swiftly respond, diagnose, and resolve the issue.

Increased security. MPS will protect your devices with the latest security updates, patches, and firmware, while providing you access to the latest, greatest security measures. You also can secure your printed documents through pull printing, which will prevent sensitive data from being left in the output tray.

Hot   Products

RICOH C7210X

Go beyond CMYK with Ricoh's 5th Color Digital Production Systems to produce high-value, premium applications that stand out from the competition with the ability to print clear, white, neon yellow, neon pink and invisible red toner.

- Print Speed: up to 95 ppm in Color and B&W
- Network Ready
- Standard Duplexing
- Max Paper Size: 13" x 49.6"
- Max Paper Capacity: 16,200 sheets

CANON imagePRESS C750

CANON imagePRESS C850/C750 digital color production presses offer end-users outstanding quality, productivity, and versatility in a compact, scalable footprint.
Designed for small-to-medium commercial, franchise, in-plant, transactional and quick printers.

- Network Ready
- Print speed: up to 75 ipm
- Maximum paper size: 11" x 17"
- Maximum paper capacity: Up to 7,650 sheets
- Automatic Duplex

HP PageWide Managed E77660dns

Quality printing for a great value is a smart choice for any business. Produce premium, professional-quality documents at a competitive low cost with the HP PageWide E77660dns, built to make your work—and your business—look its best.
Blurb 2 Text Here

- Print Speed: up to 60 PPM in Color / 80 B&W
- Network Ready
- Standard Duplexing
- **Max Paper Size: 11" x 17"**
- ENERGY STAR Qualified