preferred IT group

TALK NERDY TO ME

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

We love technology and we love helping people.

Give me a call today for a quick (non-salesy) chat to find out whether my team and I can help you better secure your data and get more out of your existing technology!

- **Jason Horne**
CEO

DON'T SKIP IT! WHY YOU SHOULDN'T SKIP VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS

Cyber threats are a perpetual reality for business owners. Hackers are constantly innovating. They devise new ways to exploit vulnerabilities in computer systems and networks.

For businesses of all sizes, a proactive approach to cybersecurity is essential. One of the most crucial elements of this approach is regular vulnerability assessments. A vulnerability assessment is a systematic process. It identifies and prioritizes weaknesses in your IT infrastructure that attackers can exploit.

Some businesses may be tempted to forego vulnerability assessments. They might think it's too costly or inconvenient. Small business leaders may also feel it's just for the "big companies." But vulnerability assessments are for everyone. No matter the company size. The risks associated with skipping them can be costly.

Why Vulnerability Assessments Matter

The internet has become a minefield for businesses. Cybercriminals are constantly on the lookout for vulnerabilities to exploit. Once they do, they typically aim for one or more of the following:

- Gain unauthorized access to sensitive data
- Deploy ransomware attacks
- Disrupt critical operations

Here's why vulnerability assessments are crucial in this ever-evolving threat landscape:

- Unseen Weaknesses: Many vulnerabilities remain hidden within complex IT environments.
- Evolving Threats: Experts discover new vulnerabilities all the time. Regular assessments ensure your systems are up to date.
- Compliance Requirements: Many industries have regulations mandating regular vulnerability assessments.
- Proactive Approach vs. Reactive Response: Identifying vulnerabilities proactively allows for timely remediation. This significantly reduces the risk of a costly security breach. A reactive approach is where you only address security issues after an attack.

The High Cost of Skipping Vulnerability Assessments

- Data Breaches – Unidentified vulnerabilities leave your systems exposed.
- Financial Losses – Data breaches can lead to hefty fines and legal repercussions as well as the cost of data recovery and remediation.
- Reputational Damage – A security breach can severely damage your company's reputation. It can erode customer trust and potentially impact future business prospects.

- Loss of Competitive Advantage Cyberattacks can cripple your ability to innovate and compete effectively. This can hinder your long-term growth aspirations.

The Benefits of Regular Vulnerability Assessments

- Improved Security Posture: Vulnerability assessments identify and address vulnerabilities.
- Enhanced Compliance: Regular assessments help you stay compliant with relevant industry regulations.
- Peace of Mind: Knowing your network is secure from vulnerabilities gives you peace of mind.
- Reduced Risk of Costly Breaches: Proactive vulnerability management helps prevent costly data breaches.

- Improved Decision-Making: Vulnerability assessments provide valuable insights into your security posture.

Investing in Security is Investing in Your Future

Vulnerability assessments are not a one-time fix. Your business should conduct them regularly to maintain a robust cybersecurity posture.

By proactively identifying and addressing vulnerabilities, you can:

- Significantly reduce your risk of cyberattacks
- Protect sensitive data
- Ensure business continuity

Remember, cybersecurity is an ongoing process.

Mindsight Timed Lock Box

Featuring the Mindsight Timed Lock Box– your new secret weapon for productivity. It's designed to lock away those pesky distractions that keep you from reaching your full potential.

Can't resist the siren call of social media when you should be working? Pop your phone in the box. Once that timer's set, there's no turning back. No cheat codes, no secret unlock. It's just you, your work, and a blissful, distraction-free environment.

4 WAYS SMALL BUSINESSES CAN LEVERAGE COPILOT FOR MICROSOFT 365

Microsoft has expanded the availability of one of its most dynamic tools to SMBs. A tool that can be a real game-changer for growth.

Copilot for Microsoft 365 is a powerful new addition to the M365 suite. It was first offered to enterprise customers only. But Copilot is now open to businesses of all sizes as long as they have Microsoft 365 Business Standard or Business Premium.

How Copilot Streamlines Workflows

• Effortless Content Creation
Copilot can suggest text responses and complete sentences. It can even draft entire emails and presentations based on your initial input.

• Enhanced Productivity
Copilot automates repetitive tasks and streamlines workflows by offering intelligent suggestions.

• Improved Communication and Collaboration
Clear and concise communication is vital for any successful business.

• Reduced Learning Curve for New Technologies
Copilot provides context-aware guidance and suggestions. All while you work with your familiar Microsoft 365 applications. This can significantly reduce the learning curve for new employees.

REAL-WORLD APPLICATIONS OF COPILOT WITHIN YOUR SMB

• Marketing and Sales Teams
Generate compelling marketing copy for social media campaigns.

• Customer Service Representatives
Respond to customer inquiries with increased efficiency and accuracy. Use Copilot's AI-powered suggestions for crafting clear and concise responses.

• Project Managers
Develop comprehensive project plans. Automate progress reports with a few text prompts.

• Content Creators
Overcome writer's block and generate fresh ideas for website copy.

• Finance and Accounting Teams
Automate data entry tasks and improve data analysis with Copilot's intelligent features. Generate reports with prompts for enhanced clarity. Gain valuable insights from data faster.

GETTING STARTED WITH COPILOT FOR MICROSOFT 365

Here's how you can empower your team to leverage this powerful tool:

1. Ensure Compatibility: Copilot is currently available for businesses with Microsoft 365 Business Premium or Business Standard.
2. Activate Copilot: Buy the Copilot add-on to your subscription.
3. Explore and Experiment: Microsoft Copilot offers intuitive features. Start experimenting with its capabilities.
4. Invest in Training: Copilot is user-friendly, but you should still consider providing brief training sessions for employees.

WHAT WERE THE COOLEST CONSUMER PRODUCTS SHOWCASED AT CES 2024?

The annual Consumer Electronics Show (CES) was an exciting one this year. It left us with a mind-blowing glimpse into the future of technology. CES 2024 showcased a smorgasbord of cutting-edge gadgets to get excited about.

Beyond the Screen: Immersive Entertainment Takes Center Stage

- Samsung's S95D OLED TV: This TV is designed to enable gamers to react faster than ever. It delivers glare protection and has 20% higher brightness than last year's model.
- LG's 4K Transparent OLED TV: Imagine a TV that lends in perfectly with any decor. This futuristic marvel from LG redefines the concept of a home theater.
- TCL's Mini LED TVs: TCL introduced the "world's largest" mini LED TV. The 115-inch device is designed to exceed the highest performance standards. It has 20,000 Local Dimming Zones to bring otherworldly depth and detail.

The Wellness Revolution: Gadgets for a Healthier, Happier You

- Evie Ring: This sleek ring is a game-changer for women's health tracking. It monitors sleep patterns, heart rate, blood oxygen levels, and menstrual cycles.
- BMind Smart Mirror: This AIpowered mirror attunes to your energy levels.
- LIPCURE BEAM: Sensors incorporated in the tool offer liprelated diagnosis and treatment.

The Future is Here: Unveiling the Unexpected

- Samsung's Self-Driving-based Home Buddy: Move over, Roomba! Samsung unveiled a Self- Driving-based Projection System.
- Mymanu CLIK Pro Immersive Translation Earbuds: The product enables users to communicate in over 50 languages.
- ORo Dog Companion: Ogmen Robotics introduced ORo an autonomous robot to keep your pets company.

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7 COMMON PITFALLS WHEN ADOPTING ZERO TRUST SECURITY

Zero Trust security is rapidly transforming the cybersecurity landscape. It moves away from traditional perimeter-based security models. In this approach, every connection attempt is continuously verified before granting resource access.

56% of global organizations say adopting Zero Trust is a "Top" or "High" priority.

Zero Trust isn't a magic solution you can simply buy and deploy.

Here are some missteps to avoid:

- Treating Zero Trust as a product, not a strategy
- Focus only on technical controls (not employees)
- Overcomplicating the process
- Neglecting user experience
- Skipping the inventory
- Forgetting legacy systems
- Ignoring third-party access

SMART TIPS FOR BUILDING A SMART HOME ON A BUDGET

Imagine a world where your lights turn on automatically as you walk in the door. Your coffee starts brewing before you even crawl out of bed. A simple voice command adjusts the temperature to your perfect setting.

This is no longer just something out of a sci-fi movie. Today's smart technology seamlessly integrates with your daily life. It can create a more convenient, comfortable, and even secure living space.

Here are some tips to transform your humble abode into a tech-savvy haven affordably:

1. Start small and scale up
2. Think beyond the big brands
3. Embrace the power of DIY
4. Repurpose what you already have
5. Get crafty with automation
6. Leverage free smartphone apps
7. Explore open-source options
8. Think security first
9. Consider subscription services

GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR COMPANY'S DATA MANAGEMENT

Data is the lifeblood of modern businesses. It fuels insights, drives decision-making, and ultimately shapes your company's success. But in today's information age, data can quickly become overwhelming.

Here are some strategies for effective data management:

• Conduct a data inventory
Identify all the data your company collects, stores, and uses. Understand the purpose of each data set and how the organization is using it.

• Invest in data management tools
Technology can be your ally in data management. Explore data management solutions.

• Develop data policies and procedures
Document your data management policies and procedures.

• Foster a data-driven culture
Encourage a data-driven culture within your organization. Emphasize the importance of data quality and responsible data usage.

• Embrace continuous improvement
Data management is an ongoing process. Regularly review your data management practices.

BONUS TECH TIP:

If you're searching for something on Google and keep seeing irrelevant results, try putting quotation marks around your search! Google will only show results that exactly match whatever you have written in quotes. This makes it much easier to find what you're looking for and eliminates extraneous search results.

Google !tip

SULLY IS READY FOR SUMMER!