

# Technology Today

"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably"



## Thanks for Voting Computerease One of the Best IT Firms in the Greater St. Louis Area!

Thanks to our clients and the readers of St. Louis Small Business Monthly for voting Computerease as one for the Best IT Firms in the Greater St. Louis area for the second year in a row!

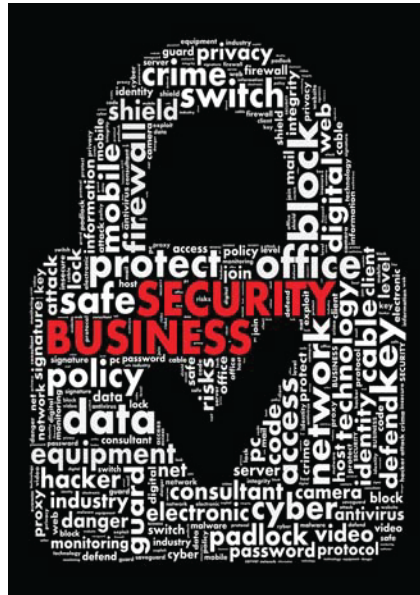
We take pride in serving our clients and local businesses with technology and service that is backed by our money-back guarantee. Our priority is to help your business succeed by designing a customized IT blueprint to maximize the value and potential of your technology.

## December 2016



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Ryan Haislar, Vice President of Computerease.

"As a business owner, you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we shine! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"



Efficient Escrow of California was forced to close its doors and lay off its entire staff when cybercriminals nabbed \$1.5 million from its bank account. The thieves gained access to the escrow company's bank data using a form of "Trojan horse" malware.

Once the hackers broke in, they wired \$432,215 from the firm's bank to an account in Moscow. That was followed by two more transfers totaling \$1.1 million, this time to banks in Heilongjiang Province in China, near the Russian border.

The company recovered the first transfer, but not the next two. They were shocked to discover that, unlike with consumer accounts, banks are under no obligation to recoup losses in a cybertheft against a commercial account. That meant a loss of \$1.1 million, in a year when they expected to clear less than half that. Unable to replace the funds, they were shut down by state

## \$1.5M Cyber-Heist Typifies Growing Threat

regulators just three days after reporting the loss.

Net result? The two brothers who owned the firm lost their nine-person staff and faced mounting attorneys' fees nearing the total amount of the funds recovered, with no immediate way to return their customers' money.

### Avoid Getting Blindsided

While hacks against the big boys like Target, Home Depot and Sony get more than their share of public attention, cyber-attacks on small and medium-sized companies often go unreported, and rarely make national headlines.

Don't let this lull you into a false sense of security. The number of crippling attacks against everyday businesses is growing. Cybersecurity company Symantec reports, for example, that 52.4% of "phishing" attacks last December were against SMEs - with a massive spike in

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November. Here are just a few examples out of thousands that you'll probably never hear about:

- Green Ford Sales, a car dealership in Kansas, lost \$23,000 when hackers broke into their network and swiped bank account info. They added nine fake employees to the company payroll in less than 24 hours and paid them a total of \$63,000 before the company caught on. Only some of the transfers could be canceled in time.
- Wright Hotels, a real estate development firm, had \$1 million drained from their bank account after thieves gained access to a company e-mail account. Information gleaned from e-mails allowed the thieves to impersonate the owner and convince the bookkeeper to wire money to an account in China.
- Maine-based PATCO Construction lost \$588,000 in a Trojan horse cyber-heist. They managed to reclaim

some of it, but that was offset by interest on thousands of dollars in overdraft loans from their bank.

**Why You're A Target - And How To Fight Back!**

Increasingly, cyberthieves view SMEs like yours and mine as easy "soft targets."

That's because all too often we have:

*"Require two people to sign off on every transaction."*

1. Bank accounts with thousands of dollars.
2. A false sense of security about not being targeted.
3. Our customers' credit card information, social security numbers and other vital data that hackers can easily sell on the black market.

If you don't want your company to become yet another statistic in today's cyberwar against smaller companies, and your business doesn't currently have a "bullet-proof" security shield, you MUST take action without delay - or put everything you've worked for at risk. The choice is yours.

Here are three things you can do

right away:

1. Contact your insurance agent to get cybercrime coverage
2. Make sure everyone with a device in your network NEVER opens an attachment in an unexpected e-mail.
3. Require two people to sign off on every bank transaction.

**How Do We Protect You?**

We implement multiple layers of security to give you the protection you need, making the same security solutions used by larger corporations available to our clients at affordable prices.

**Let Us Help**

When it comes to defending your data, whether it's bank account information, customer and employee records or proprietary intellectual property or processes, Do NOT take chances.

We are offering our Cyber Security Assessment at no cost through the end of December to 10 companies in the St. Louis area. Call me at 314-432-1661 or e-mail me at ryan@computer-service.com TODAY because we can only offer this valuable service to the first 10 companies that apply.

**FREE REPORT: "The Ultimate Guide To Choosing The RIGHT VoIP Phone System For Your Small Business, Call Center Or Multi-Location Office"**

The Ultimate Guide To Choosing The RIGHT VoIP Phone System For Your Small Business, Call Center Or Multi-Location Office



**Read This Report To Discover:**

- What VoIP is, how it works and why the phone company may force you to switch to a VoIP phone within the next 3-4 years.
- 4 different ways to implement VoIP and why you should never use 3 of them for a business phone system.
- Hidden costs with certain VoIP system that can negate any cost-savings you might gain on your phone bill.
- 7 revealing questions to ask any VoIP salesperson to cut through the hype, half-truths and "little white lies" they'll tell you to make the sale.

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# Advice On Strategic Business Growth From A 4 Star Army General: Meeting General Stanley McChrystal



At a recent presentation about business growth, General Stanley McChrystal, a retired 4 star Army general, shared this thought, "If you want to stay humble, get married." This anecdote is very true, but I also realized that trying to keep up with the rapid advance of technology and cybersecurity is very humbling for myself as an entrepreneur.

Just as I think I have a good handle on a problem or solution, the situation changes or the hackers develop new cyberthreats (up to 1,000,000 per day). Thank goodness there are new advances in technology that, when used properly, can prevent and eliminate most cyberthreats!

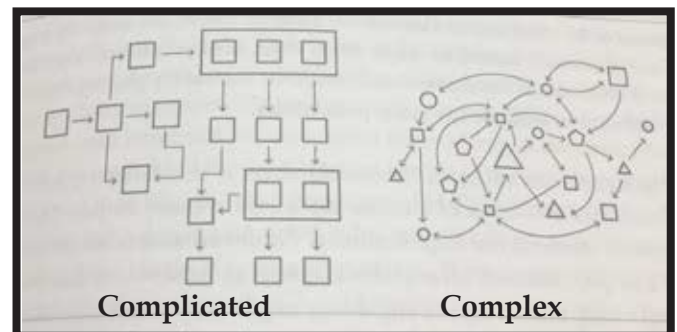
Most notable for his role in taking down Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, in the mid-2000's, General McChrystal also published a book, Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement For A Complex World, which I had the pleasure of reading. **He recounts that he went into Iraq with the most sophisticated technology, the most well trained soldiers and the practical experience to accomplish a quick victory. All of these advantages turned out to not be enough to win victory against the insurgents.**

The traditional chain of command, top-down mentality of the Army was too cumbersome and slow to be effective against the de-centralized, yet completely interconnected insurgent organization that flourished in a technological age - this was a new kind of fight!

Only when General McChrystal and his forces changed their mindset and how they used the technology available to them did they begin to accomplish their goals - to take out the insurgents. **Similarly, the way that businesses used technology 5 years ago compared today is almost unrecognizable!**

Just like the military, a business can have the best computers, software and the smartest employees, but even the best technology and employees will not function to their full potential without the proper context and goals of an organization in mind.

What used to be a complicated process in providing IT support to a business is now a complex process with interdependent components, meaning that one small issue can create a compound effect of crippling losses in productivity, time and money. **The ability to discern and manage a complex technological set-up compared to a complicated one comes with practical experience of what works and what doesn't work, backed by proven and repeatable results.** Computerease ONLY uses enterprise level products configured into a customized IT blueprint to maximize the value and potential of your technology to help you achieve your business goals!



## **Risk Adaptation: The Most Advanced Cybersecurity Protection To Stay Ahead of Hackers!**

With 1,000,000 new cyberthreats being released every day and 50% of all cyberattacks target small and medium businesses!

Computerease offers a suite of products and tools to create multiple layers of protection including Sentinel One, a product that can anticipate new cyberthreats and even roll-back the encryption damage done by Ransomware-**You Don't Have To Pay A Ransom!**

## “Smart Cities” are adding a whole new layer of complexity to data protection.

Driverless cars, cloud-based services and networks of sensors are driving rapid change... Yet along with great benefits, the smart city revolution adds new threats. For instance, since it relies heavily on interconnectivity, weak links make the whole system vulnerable to cyber-attack. Yet a study by Kaspersky Labs estimates that 57% of smaller companies underinvest in security. With deeper connectivity to these “weak links,” encryption of your own data becomes more critical than ever. Using secured websites (the “https” vs. “http” protocol), for example, not only secures data, it also creates trust among your customers and vendors. Clearly, the smart thing to do is to be ready for smart city challenges.

-HarvardKennedySchoolReview.com

## With Google’s new Daydream VR platform, reality will never be the same.

While it isn’t as pixel-rich as PC-tethered systems like Oculus Rift, Daydream is fully mobile. That means, for instance, you could navigate through a museum and get way more interactive with the exhibits. Google’s “View” headset with clickable touchpad controller is just the first of many to come, as other developers jump into mobile VR. As for apps, Google says there will be at least 50 in the Play Store by the end of December. Daydream has been deeply integrated into the new Android Nougat OS. If Nougat isn’t on your phone yet, be patient – or buy a phone, such as Google’s Pixel, that already has it installed.

-TechRadar.com

## Stop wasting your time and costing your company money.

No company is 100% productive 100% of the time. But talk of last night’s game, social media check-ins and long lunch breaks aren’t the only time thieves. Without realizing it, you may be asking your team to do things that frankly hurt the bottom line. For instance, do you hold meetings that take longer than necessary – or don’t need to be held at all? Consider holding meetings only when critical. And when they are, use an agenda to keep everyone on track. Another big time killer is trying to fix a problem via multiple e-mails or chat. Often a simple phone call could resolve the issue with a lot less back and forth.

-Entrepreneur.com

## Want better collaboration at work? Play these tunes.

Research has already shown that teams who listen to music together at work feel more bonded and collaborate better. Yet that begs the question – what type of music do you listen to? It’s a topic likely to end up in wrangling and conflict. However, a recent study at Cornell University offers a scientific answer. And, while metal fans may not be thrilled with it, the results weren’t exactly shocking. The study found that people who listen to happy music were more likely to cooperate, regardless of age, gender or academic major, than those who listen to unhappy music. Interestingly, they found it was not the vibe, but the bouncing beat, that gets teams in sync.

-Inc.com

## Who Else Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card?

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is Cathy from Mascoutah, IL! She was the first person to answer my quiz question from last month correctly:

Who was the 38th President of The United States? a) Herbert Hoover b) Gerald Ford c) Ronald Reagan d) Richard Nixon  
The correct answer was b) Gerald Ford.

### Now, here's this month's trivia question.

The winner will receive 4 FREE tickets to Wild Lights at the St. Louis Zoo.

What year was Computerease founded?

a) 2013 b) 1984 c) 2001 d) 1992

*Email your answer to [answer@computer-service.com](mailto:answer@computer-service.com).*

Individuals are eligible to win a prize only one prize every 6 months.