

# Technology Today

"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably"  
Since 1984



## A Very Special Microsoft Office - Office Christmas Tree



What we lack in Christmas decorations as an IT company, we make up for with copies of Microsoft Office and spare computer parts.

**Happy Holidays from the Computerease Team!**

## December 2017



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!"*



## Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Business Program Graduation

I am proud to say that I successfully completed the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Program as a member of the Fall 2017 cohort. The classes and coursework built on my undergraduate business education and the interactive nature of the program was all the more meaningful now that I have over 20 years of practical experience running my IT support company!

The entire goal of the program is to facilitate growth of it's participants businesses. Each scholar goes through specialized education segments in areas like HR, finance, marketing, legal and business strategy that culminate in presenting a Growth Plan to your fellow scholars.

### What is involved in developing a Growth Plan?

Everything!

The program helped me to think in concrete terms about details of my business to answer the following questions:

- What are my goals?
- What am I striving to accomplish?
- Why am I wanting to achieve these goals?
- What are the reasons that this Growth Plan will be successful?
- What are the potentials risks, opportunities and rewards?
- How does this plan fit with your clients and your company?
- What market research do you have to support your plan?
- How are you practically going to implement your plan?
- What elements do you currently have and what additional <continued Page 2>



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elements do you need to achieve your goal?

- What do your competitors do that is similar and different from your company?
- Is there something that your competitors offer that your company should also be offering?

I found the entire process challenging but also helpful because it made me think about the strategic business strategy questions that all too often get left unanswered. As a small business owner there are so many demands for my attention that I never seemed to have the time to devote to thinking about these broad and strategic questions.

Another benefit of participating in this program was the access to the diverse network of both my fellow business owners and faculty, all of whom are also successful business professionals. During one particularly interesting bonus session, a panel of 4 attorneys presented information on legal concerns for business owners including human resources, mergers and acquisitions.

After the presentations there were several breakout Q & A sessions where the attorneys answered questions from myself and 12 other scholars. Normally, asking legal advice from 4 attorneys for an entire hour would cost a business owner \$1,000+ but thanks to the 10,000 Small Businesses Program I had access to this amazing resource for FREE!

As a small business owner I think it is not only beneficial but also essential to have a group of peers. An IT guy, an HR guy, an insurance agent, a construction guy and the owner of a security company went out for seafood...this



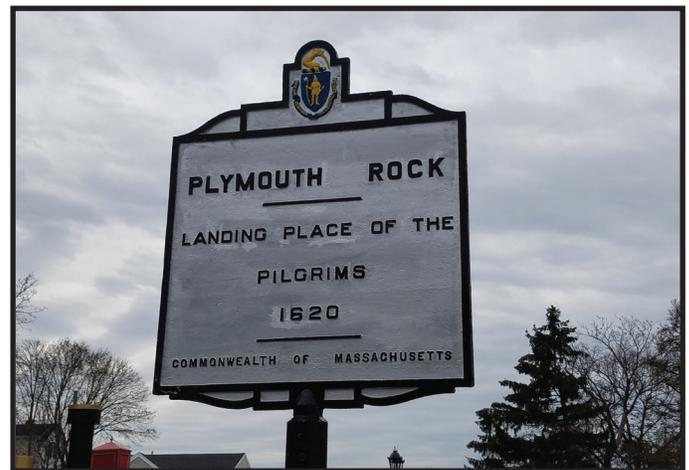
*The seafood in Boston is amazing! Scallops and lobster (or "lobstah" according to the locals) were delicious. And, yes, I ate the entire thing!*

sounds like the beginning of a joke but while we ate our "lobstah" we also shared our successes and challenges with our businesses. While I already participate in a peer group of IT service providers, a group of fellow business owners from different industries helps when I need a question answered or if I need their perspective on an issue relevant to my business.

Overall, participating in this program was extremely valuable because it helped me critically examine my business on both a detailed level and a comprehensive level. I was encouraged to be bold, new and different in the strategies I chose to grow my business. And most importantly, I wasn't trying to do this all on my own. I had the support and encouragement of the Babson College faculty and my fellow scholars.

At the end of my final week in Boston, my family joined me for some fun and sightseeing. We attended the Thanksgiving Parade in Plymouth, MA where the first Thanksgiving was celebrated in 1621, visited some nearby family and discovered many interesting historic sights. We even saw the movie set for the latest Denzel Washington movie, The Equalizer 2.

I am bringing back these fond memories of my time in Boston in addition to the new skills and business growth strategies I learned during the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Businesses Program. A major goal of my participation in this program was to learn as much as possible for my own business and to share the insights and advice with my clients as they strive to build their own businesses. I look forward to sharing some of these strategies throughout 2018!



*The Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620 and one year later they celebrated the first Thanksgiving feast when 90 members of the Wampanoag tribe shared their provisions with the struggling Pilgrims.*

# Tax Bills Burning Up Your Profits?



Thanks to a special tax deduction for small businesses titled “Section 179 election”, the Federal Government allows you to buy up to \$500,000 in computers, software, VoIP phone systems, office furniture or other tangible goods and **REDUCE** your taxable income on your current year’s tax return instead of spreading the tax savings over multiple years.

**You Have To Act FAST...**

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Computerease does NOT provide professional tax advice-please consult your tax professional to confirm how Section 179 applies to your business!

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## ■ Become A Better Public Speaker With This App

Americans are terrified of public speaking. In fact, in most surveys about our fears, talking in front of a crowd far outranks even our fear of dying. But if you, like millions of others, break out in a cold sweat when you imagine giving a speech, you're in

luck. There's an app for that.

Developed during the Disrupt San Francisco Hackathon, Vocalytics is a comprehensive project dedicated to building an AI that will teach you to be a better public speaker. The ultimate goal is to develop a virtual trainer that can give feedback even better than what you'd get from a professional speaking coach.

The app - called Orai - uses machine learning to analyze your body language as you speak, ensuring that every word hits home. When paired with speech analysis project SpeechCoach.ai, you can take concrete steps toward killing it in front of any crowd.

*TechCrunch.com 9/17/2017*

■ **Top Tech Accessories To Make Your Life Easier** The best gadgets help us navigate our lives with ease, making particular processes that much more hassle-free. With technology, it's often the little things that make all the difference in the world. Take AUKEY's car phone mount, for instance. At only \$7.99 on Amazon, there's no reason you should be fumbling with your iPhone while you're using Google Maps on a road trip. The clip attaches directly to any air vent, putting your phone front and center for easy viewing and reducing the need for dangerous fiddling.

Or, pair an Amazon Echo with the Tp-Link Smart Plug Mini (\$29.99), which allows you to activate all kinds of devices with your voice or your phone. It's the perfect first step toward a smarter home and a world of convenience.

If you've got a phone that's always dying, hook it up to an Anker battery case, which can extend the battery life of most phones by as much as 120%.

For more small-scale tech solutions, check out Business Insider's list of "50 must-have tech accessories under \$50." *BusinessInsider.com 9/28/2017*



## Who Else Wants To Win A Fun Prize?

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is Karen from Clayton, MO! She was the winner from the drawing of people who submitted correct answers for my quiz question from last month.

Which president is believed to have been the first to pardon a turkey?

a) President Lincoln (1863) b) President Wilson (1920) c) President Roosevelt (1939) d) President Harry Truman (1947)

There turned out to be many correct answers and this is a much-debated subject - so everyone who answered was entered to win!

Now, here's this month's trivia question. The winner will receive 4 tickets to the Wild Lights at the St. Louis Zoo!

Which Christmas carol made it's debut in the musical Meet Me In St. Louis? a) I'm Dreaming Of a White Christmas b) Silent Night c) Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas d) Jingle Bells

***Submit your response to [answer@computer-service.com](mailto:answer@computer-service.com)!***  
***Everyone who answers correctly will be placed in the drawing to win our fun prize!***