

Technology Today

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

Becoming A Pirate For The Day



Ahoy mateys! A few weeks ago I dressed up like a pirate for the Northwest Chamber Of Commerce Business Expo to educate my fellow business owners about the risks of the Dark Web. Why did I choose to be a pirate? <continued page 3>

June 2018



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!"



The 6 Greatest Benefits Of Keeping Your Operating System Up-To-Date (Besides Microsoft Saying "I Told You To")

Doesn't it seem like Microsoft and other giant technology companies (some named after fruit) are ALWAYS trying to get you to buy the latest, upgraded technology for a pretty penny?

I decided to write this article to clear up a few things on this subject.

Microsoft's reasons for updating their operating systems don't include the following:

- Lining the pockets of the higher-ups of the company
- Helping resellers of technology stay in business
- Tricking consumers into spending money on the latest "shiny and new must-have technology"

In fact, there are real and significant benefits keeping your operating system up to date that include increased productivity, security and added features.

The 6 Greatest Benefits Of Keeping Your Windows Operating System Up-To-Date

1. Avoid nasty viruses and keep hackers at bay

Hackers are constantly working to find new vulnerabilities within a operating system. Microsoft is continuously updating and patching their operating systems and sharing updates to fix those vulnerabilities to help keep your system and data protected.

2. Stay compliant with regulations

Businesses that need to adhere to industry or federal standards such as HIPAA, PCI-DDS and Sarbanes-Oxley are required to update their technology and maintain updated security patches to maintain compliance.

3. Ability to use and be compatible with newer products and services

Software and hardware companies design their products <continued Page 2>

Get More Free Tips, Tools and Services At: www.computer-service.com
(314) 432-1661 (MO) or (618) 346-8324 (IL)

to be used with the latest operating systems and not for all the operating systems of the past

4. Latest features available

Microsoft has been listening to the needs of it's consumers. There are new features and innovations that unlock both powerful functionality and a streamlined user experience.

5. Better (stay) 3rd party compatibility

Do you use specialized software to help you run your business? Do you use specialized equipment in your day-to-day operations? The hardware and software that you rely on to operate your business will also be updated to integrate with the latest Windows OS.

6. Continue to receive important updates

Microsoft hates the "blue screen of death" as much as you. They continually release important updates that both fix and prevent problems that contribute to costly downtime.

What does end-of-life (EOL) mean?

End-of-life indicates that a vendor considers the product to be no longer useful or advantageous for enterprise level end-users. The vendor intends to stop marketing, selling and supporting this specific product.

When an enterprise level end-user tries to use unsupported and out-of-date hardware and software (including operating systems) they will ultimately experience lowered productivity, increase downtime and increased security risks.

On the other hand, new and updated hardware and software are optimized for both productivity and security protections.



JOHN SWISTAK JR. /Herald
Ryan Haisler, manager of Computerease in Collinsville, experiments with Windows 98.

Clamor over Windows calmer than in 1995

A much younger version of myself was featured in a local St. Louis paper over 20 years ago when Windows was transitioning the operating systems from Windows 95 to Windows 98.

Countdown To Windows 7 and Server 2008 End-Of-Life

Since 1984, Computerease has provided IT services to St. Louis area small and medium businesses. I personally repaired and configured computers running Windows 3.1 and remember the hullabaloo around the Windows 95 & 98 upgrade. There was even a story in the local paper about this HUGE event in technology!

Now, Microsoft has announced that they will stop supporting Windows 7 and Server 2008 on January 14, 2020.

This date is only 15 months away.

That's only 5 fiscal quarters away.

Plan ahead.

Don't be the business that waits until last minute – because the rush to upgrade your operating systems will be WORSE than Black Friday shopping.

Plan for and schedule your Windows upgrade NOW.

I am currently scheduling meetings with our clients to discuss

their overall IT strategy and to ensure that their technology supports the growth of their business. We are working together to strategically plan the upgrades and budget for the Windows 7 and Server 2008 end-of-life WELL BEFORE the deadline.

Is your company running any workstations on Windows 7 or a server running Server 2008 (this includes Windows Small Business Server 2011)?

Schedule your FREE Microsoft Migration Assessment and I will personally work with you to create a simple, painless and budget friendly Action Plan to get your systems up-to-date. Visit www.computer-service.com/plan-ahead or call (314) 432-1661 (MO) or (618) 346-8324 (IL).



How To Take The Pain Out Of Financing Your Necessary Upgrades For Your Windows Operating Systems

- Plan ahead and get your upgrade project scheduled and worked into your budget while avoiding the last minute scramble (and potential additional labor costs)
- Spread out the cost of the project over time by replacing a few computers at a time . This is easier on your budget and your sanity compared to replacing ALL your computers at the same time.
- Finance any larger expenses and spread the cost out over time - with very low interest rates!
- Utilize Cloud Solutions which have lower up-front costs

Get More Free Tips, Tools and Services At: www.computer-service.com
(314) 432-1661 (MO) or (618) 346-8324 (IL)

<continued From Page 1>

I dressed up like a pirate because...

Pirates of the Internet are selling your passwords on the Dark Web!

Digital credentials such as usernames and passwords connect you and your employees to critical business applications, as well as online services. Unfortunately, criminals know this — and that's why digital credentials are among the most valuable assets found on the Dark Web.

The Dark Web is made up of digital communities that sit on top of the Internet, and while there are legitimate purposes to the Dark Web, it is estimated that over 50% of all sites on the Dark Web are used for criminal activities, including the disclosure and sale of digital credentials.

Far too often, companies that have had their credentials compromised and sold on the Dark Web don't know it until they have been informed by law enforcement — but by then, it's too late.

How can you tell if your business credentials are on the Dark Web?

Our 100% FREE and 100% **confidential** Exclusive CEO Dark Web Scan is your first line of defense. Simply fill out the form on this page with your name and company email address (yes, it has to be your company email), and we'll perform our Dark Web analysis.

Get more details about the Dark Web and get your FREE Dark Web Scan at:

www.computer-service.com/scan or call us at 314.432.1661 (MO) or 618.346.8324 (IL).

5 Practical Ways To Learn Something New In Business

Based on my experience interviewing and advising over a thousand successful business leaders, I've come to the conclusion that great leaders aren't smarter, more hardworking or luckier than the rest of us. Most of their success comes down to the fact that they simply learn better than the rest of us.

The truth is that without too much cost or hassle, we can bolster our confidence and expertise to move toward the top of our field. Here are five practical ways to learn something new in business.

1. READ 10 BOOKS.

It's easy to start down the road toward mastering a topic. Go to Amazon, type in your chosen topic and read the 10 bestselling books that come up. Pay attention to the words and concepts that seem to matter the most. The total cost? About \$200.

2. GO TO THE BEST WORKSHOP ON THE TOPIC.

When I was learning about predictive analytics, I bought the book *Predictive Analytics* by Eric Siegel. I soon learned that the author hosted a huge conference on the topic under the same title, so I went to it as soon as I could. These meetups are an invaluable source of information no matter what you want to learn. The total cost is \$1,000 – \$15,000.

3. INTERVIEW 10-100 EXPERTS FOR ADVICE.



Geoff Smart is chairman and founder of ghSMART. Geoff is co-author, with his colleague Randy Street, of the New York Times bestselling book, *Who: A Method for Hiring*, and the author of the No. 1 Wall Street Journal best-seller, *Leadocracy: Hiring More Great Leaders (Like You) into Government*. Geoff co-created the Topgrading brand of talent management. He is the Founder of two 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations. SMARTKids Leadership Program™ provides 10 years of leadership tutoring and the Leaders Initiative™ seeks to deploy society's greatest leaders into government. Geoff earned a BA in Economics with honors from Northwestern University, an MA, and a PhD in Psychology from Claremont Graduate University.

A year ago, I decided I wanted to learn more about digital marketing. Many of our clients at the time were struggling with the increasing digitization of demand creation. Rather than interview 10 experts, I made a target list and used referrals to interview over 100 experts on the topic. People are happy to have a 30-minute discussion about their favorite subjects to help you learn and get oriented. You know you are beginning to grasp a topic when you start to hear the same buzzwords and pieces of advice. The total cost is \$0 if you interview by phone.

4. HIRE SOMEONE AS A MENTOR OR PARTNER.

You probably know a topic that an expert in another field would love to learn. Consider doing a "mentor swap" where you agree to exchange advice and pick each other's brains a couple times a year. The only thing better than having an expert mentor is hiring an expert full-time. The total cost for a mentor swap is \$0, but it costs much more to hire an expert full-time.

5. LEAD A PROJECT.

You've heard the expression, "The best way to learn something is to teach it." It's always a good idea to run a project in an area of interest. When I see clients dive into these, they're often an expert from the beginning, but running the project boosts their expertise significantly.

*Get More Free Tips, Tools and Services At: www.computer-service.com
(314) 432-1661 (MO) or (618) 346-8324 (IL)*

■ 3 Big Trends Businesses Need To Adopt Now

The fate of your business is intimately entwined with the way your organization utilizes technology. If you fail to stay abreast of the latest trends, you're letting the competition pull ahead. As we close out Q2, you need to keep an eye on the shifting digital landscape to give your business an edge.

One of the best ways to do that is to latch onto the continuous growth of your mobile market. According to Statista, more than 51% of web traffic now comes from mobile users. With this in mind, you need to start mixing up your marketing strategies to accommodate this newly mobile-centric world, no matter your industry.

But even as you do, you need to be aware of the growing prevalence of online threats to your business. According to an article published

in the Guardian, 90% of US SMBs don't use any safeguards to protect against the data breach of key customer info, and most assume they simply won't be the target of a cyberattack. It's important for you to realize that 70% of cyber-attacks are aimed at small businesses today, and you need to act accordingly.

One more way to take advantage of technological trends is to master augmented reality in the coming years. You can create virtual environments to promote and explain how to use your products and services so customers can engage with them wherever they are. *StartUpNation.com*, 2/27/18.

■ How To Boost Your Productivity

Everyone wants to be more efficient at work, but few people actually know how. One way to motivate an entire team to get more done is to throw an "MVP" into the mix – the kind of person

who elevates everyone around them. Another is to avoid political discussions in the office; though engagement is critical in today's world, it only serves to derail conversations and induce conflict at work. Another option is to try standing up. Studies show that implementing standing desks throughout the office can improve productivity and health. Oddly enough, decorating your business with a few plants can have the same effect. *SmallBizTrends.com*, 3/13/18.

■ Back To Basics

Everyone worries about the newest scams and cybercrimes, but if you and your team can remember the basics, you'll have a big head start. Document your security policies, such as strong password requirements, requiring a VPN to connect remotely and Internet usage guidelines, and make them a part of every employee's training. You also should include strict penalties for violating this protocol.

A couple more basics: It's not a good habit to save files onto your computer if there is a location on the network or server where they can be saved. If you use websites or software that does not require regular password changes, set a calendar reminder to change the password yourself every other month. As with anything, a little prevention goes a long way. Remembering the essentials is the best thing you can do to protect yourself and your company.

