

Technology Today

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Colonial Pipeline Ransomware Attack

Colonial Pipeline is making international news with its recent ransomware attack that stopped its fuel pipeline that runs 5,500 miles up the east coast. Federal investigators suspect an international crime ring as the hackers. Experts are blaming the aging infrastructure of the pipeline and its computer systems for the sudden stop of fuel flowing to northern distribution centers.

At the time I'm writing this article, there are a few locations experiencing gas shortages. Hopefully the problem will be resolved soon, and the effects of the ransomware attack are quickly mitigated. For me, it's just another reminder that everyone is a potential victim of a ransomware attack. So, I'll once again remind my fellow business owners to take cybersecurity precautions seriously!

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Ryan Haislar, 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!"



SolarWinds hack was 'largest and most sophisticated attack' ever: Microsoft president

A 'Worst Nightmare' Cyberattack: The Untold Story Of The SolarWinds Hack

Wake Up Call For Small Business Owners In The Aftermath Of The Solarwinds Cybersecurity Attack

At the end of 2020 a cybersecurity company, FireEye, made a disturbing discovery. Their systems had been infected with malware. Cybercriminals had maintained access to their systems for at least 9 months, completely undetected. It was the beginning of an unfolding story that continues to rock the nation.

FireEye is a highly reputable cybersecurity company, and they were first alerted to suspicious activity when someone noticed two phones registered to one employee. Their investigation revealed that there was a string of malicious code in their software, Orion, created and maintained by the company, Solarwinds. The software Orion is used by companies and federal agencies to monitor activity on a network.

This malicious code allowed

hackers a "back door" into each private company and federal agency using the Orion software.

Corrupted software update spread massive infection

Through a complex process, Russian (alleged) hackers replicated an Orion software update with the addition of 3500 undetectable lines of malicious code. Solarwinds released this altered and corrupted software update to all its Orion software clients including private companies and federal agencies. The hackers rented space on domestic US servers to fly under the radar of the federal government's international cybersecurity watchdog agencies, the National Security Agency (NSA) and the military's U.S. Cyber Command.

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<continued from page 1> Federal agencies and private sector cybersecurity companies are still collaborating on the investigation for how and why this cyberattack happened, and how to prevent future attacks. Experts agree that the hacker's novel techniques contributed to its devastating impact and the federal government recently warned the private sector of increased cybersecurity threats.

Complacency is the biggest risk

Hackers are continually developing new strategies to gain access to a target's network, servers, and computers. It's a constant threat with lucrative rewards that shows no sign of slowing. There are news stories every few days about another cyberattack wreaking havoc on another business or organization. A school district in Missouri fell victim to ransomware and canceled in person learning for the day. A company operating a huge pipeline ceased operation in the past week due to another cyber threat. You can't help but hear about these stories repeatedly featured on the nightly news.

There's a wakeup call needed for all small business owners in the aftermath of the Solarwinds cyberattack. Complacency is not an option because with cybersecurity it's not a matter of if an attack will happen, but a matter of when an attack will happen. The Solarwinds cyberattack was simple and ruthless in its delivery through a routine software update. No one saw it coming! Federal government agencies and sophisticated cybersecurity companies were oblivious to what was going on in their own networks.

Do you know what is possibly operating on your own network? When was the last time you scanned your network and systems to proactively check your security?

“Complacency is not an option because with cybersecurity it's not a matter of if an attack will happen, but a matter of when an attack will happen.”

***Ryan Haislar
President, Computerease***

What measures do you have in place to protect your network? Do you have a plan in case you have a data breach of sensitive client data or valuable files?

It's tempting to think that these attacks only happen to the “big guys” like Solarwinds, not a small business who has a lot less to steal. In fact, the opposite is true. 95% of all cyberattacks are aimed at small and medium businesses. Complacency is not an option for any small business owner.

The good news is that you're not alone. Every single small business owner is facing a similar uphill battle trying to protect their business from cyberattacks. There's new cybersecurity solutions being developed for the latest threats and tried and true network and endpoint protections available. The first step is to get a baseline of where you are currently with your cybersecurity, and then make a plan to add any additional layers of protection needed.

Free Email Phishing Test & Cybersecurity Awareness Training: Find out who will take the bait and put your company at risk!

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Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Zepp Golf 2 Swing Analyzer

Improve your golf game with a device smaller than a golf ball. The Zepp Golf 2 is a remarkable piece of tech that attaches to the back of any golf glove. It's packed with sensors and delivers real-time analysis of your game.

Using Bluetooth, the Zepp Golf 2 pairs with your smartphone. As the data is analyzed, it's displayed on the accompanying app. It tracks your club speed, backswing positioning, hip rotation, consistency and much more. The Zepp Golf 2 also has a long-lasting battery - up to eight hours - so it will definitely make it through your next game without a hitch. The Zepp Golf 2 is compatible with both iPhone and Android devices. Learn more at Amazon or Zepp.com.

Think On The Known, Not Just The New



Neophilia is an obsession with new things simply because they're new - not necessarily better or improved - or novel. It makes people stand in line overnight for the newest technology release or scour the Internet to find the latest and greatest product, trip or experience.

We often read books and attend seminars to find new things to ponder. Sometimes the influx of new information and ideas is so rapid that we don't use what we've learned or integrate it into our behavior.

So, what if we thought about the important things we've learned or responded to questions we already know we should answer? What is known but not recalled or revisited can shape and improve your life.

Think about these knowns:

Things you think you know because somebody told you? Think independently.

Things you don't visit because they can be frightening? Be courageous.

Things you've only thought about

superficially? Go deeper.

Things you'd like to do? Dream a little.

Things you've stopped doing that used to bring you joy? Revisit them.

Things you need to know? Learn them.

Things related to your values and worldview? Live them.

Things that would improve your health and longevity if you consistently did them? Do them.

The Bible says in Philippians 4:8, "Think on these things," and then lists known and timeless things - what is right, what is true, what is lovely and what is pure. Nothing new in the list, but everything is worth thinking about often and deeply.

Sometimes the known is as valuable - or even more valuable - than the new.



Mark Sanborn, CSP, CPAE, is the president of Sanborn & Associates, Inc., an "idea studio" that seeks to motivate and develop leaders in and outside of business. He's the bestselling author of books like *Fred Factor* and *The Potential Principle* and a noted expert on leadership, team building, customer service and company change. He holds the Certified Speaking Professional designation from the National Speakers Association and is a member of the Speaker Hall of Fame. Check out any of his excellent books, his video series "Team Building: How to Motivate and Manage People" or his website, marksanborn.com, to learn more.

4 Ways To Grow Your Business Without Working Harder

Incentivize Results - According to the Journal of Economic Psychology, people love cash incentives but are often more motivated by specific noncash rewards. It could be time off or lunch for a week. All you have to do is tell your team what results you want, offer a creative incentive and, chances are, those results will be met!

Prioritize Time - Use the "80/20 rule" as a guide. Also known as the Pareto principle, it states that 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes. Going by this principle, 20% of your time spent on tasks should yield you 80% of the results. If you have to put in more effort to achieve results, reevaluate your approach (or take on fewer projects).

Evaluate Technology - Are you using outdated technology and software? You could be slowing your business down and harming

productivity - not to mention putting your business at serious risk of data loss or a data breach. Look at what you're using now and compare it to what's on the market. There have been major improvements, even in the last five years, that can boost productivity like crazy.

Open Communication - Open-door policies go a long way. Have weekly team meetings and a company-wide chat (such as Slack or Google Hangouts). The easier it is for individuals and teams to communicate, the easier it is for them to collaborate, and that can help things move very smoothly. *Inc., Feb. 13, 2020*

3 Ways Successful People Turn Adversity Into Success

1. They say, "Bring it on." They want adversity. It's what helps them grow. Without adversity or something pushing back at us, we can stagnate. We need to be challenged!

2. They make bold decisions. Successful people make decisions knowing they may be taking on a lot of risk, but if they don't push ahead, they won't get the results they want. And if they make the wrong decision, it's a learning experience.

3. They embrace the learning experience. You can't grow and find success without continuously learning. You have to solve problems and collaborate with others, so when the next challenge comes along, it's easier for you to adapt. *Business Insider, Feb. 13, 2020*

Use These Apps To Get More Done Each Day

Productivity: Evernote - Take notes, clip info from the web and save select e-mails for quick access and organization.

Time Tracking: RescueTime - It gives you a breakdown of how you use your time on every app and website. It also allows you to set productivity goals. The premium version (\$6/month) even lets you block sites during certain times.

Project Management: Asana - Create task lists, prioritize tasks, assign due dates and monitor progress. Asana even integrates with other apps, like Evernote and Google Drive.

Communication: Slack - Communicate with individuals, teams or other specific groups. Everything is saved, so you'll never lose a key piece of info. *The Simple Dollar, Feb. 3, 2020*

