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TECHNOLOGY INSIDER



Your monthly newsletter, written
for humans not geeks



Would your business
survive the 4 beer test
this Christmas?

So it's unlikely you'll be having a traditional office Christmas party this year. Thanks Covid, you party-pooper.

But I'm sure at least some of your team will find a way to celebrate together over a few beers after work one day.

And that's why it's worth asking if your business can pass the 4 beer test.

What's that? We reckon 4 beers is about the stage where people start to "relax" so much, they start to forget the important stuff.

Like picking up their laptop bag when they leave the bar. Or as they're jumping off the train home in a fluster, after a little impromptu nap.

Laptops and mobiles get left in bars and on trains all the time, especially on dark winter nights like these.

Thing is – depending on your IT setup, a lost laptop can either be a minor inconvenience. Or a complete disaster.

How can you tell which?
By asking these 3 questions:

- Is it encrypted?
- Is it password protected?
- Can the data be wiped remotely?

If it's a "yes" to all three, you can relax. It's annoying you've lost your device... but your business's data is safe. No-one can access it.

And if you can't positively answer all three... uh-oh... problem. These days, the loss of data is a much bigger deal than the loss of a device.

If you're not 100% sure you can answer all 3 questions with a big fat YES... then give us a call. We can check for you.

LATEST
TECH
ALERT



Pop this on your
Christmas list

Here's the coolest Work From Home gadget this Christmas – the WonderWorker Newton laptop stand can be used all over the house.

Use it on a desk to create a standing desk. Or on your sofa or bed to make using your laptop more comfortable. A snip for about £60 on Amazon.



Your business could be more productive with one simple change

Most businesses simply wouldn't survive without technology. That's a fact.

When you have the right tools, devices, and network in place, your work is made easier; your team is more productive; and that leads to a more profitable business.

But did you know that many UK businesses are working with an IT infrastructure that simply doesn't meet their needs?

Sure, they have a network that they can access, and they're using tools that help get the job done. But when you look at their plans for the future, or you speak to their team, you'll realise they could be doing so much more.

Does this apply to your business to any degree?



You see, an IT strategy is the foundation to moving your business forward. Improving productivity and profit.

If you're just winging it, you're almost certainly wasting money and holding your business back.

This is why we're offering you an IT strategy review. My team of experts will assess several areas of your IT infrastructure and the way your people use it, to see what improvements you can make.

Ask yourself: When did you last create a formal business IT growth strategy?

If your answer is more than a year or two ago – or worse, never – then you have some work to do. And with a new year just weeks away, there is no better time than now.

They'll also discuss your plans and goals for next 12 months to 3 years, to make sure your system is up to the task.

Before we do this, we'll need to have a quick video call (no more than 15 minutes) to discuss your business, and to answer your questions.

Book your 15 minute video call now:

Visit www.calendly.com/andyhowe/15min

You can see our live diary there and choose the time and date that suits you best

MICROSOFT 365 TIP

Sharepoint's a great way to collaborate on documents. But how do you know when a colleague has made any changes?

Simple. Set up Alert Me. You can select any file, link, or folder for alerts. From the list of options, click the ellipses (the 3 dots ...) and then select Alert Me. It's really as simple as that.



Technology update



It's quite hard to believe we're this close to Christmas, isn't it?

This year has just shot by. I think losing all those weeks and months to lockdown made it seem like the time has gone faster... although I remember the actual days at the time moving quite slowly!

How's your business been this year? And what are your plans for next year?

As tough as it's been for many businesses round here, it's also been wonderful for me to talk to business owners and managers who have really great plans for next year.

I know it's a cliché to talk about adapting and pivoting. But there are some very smart people around with some incredibly ambitious plans. I feel privileged to be working with so many of them.

No wonder people are talking about 2020 having seen 5 years of change and progress.

I wonder what 2021's got in store for us all?



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The Web as I envisaged it, we have not seen it yet. The future is still so much bigger than the past."

Tim Berners-Lee, creator of the World Wide Web



Tech Fact #1

Ever wondered why your eyes sometimes feel dry when using your computer? When you're looking at a screen **you only blink 7 times a minute**. The normal rate is 20 times a minute. No-one knows why this happens

Tech Fact #2

And we read slower on screens too – up to **10% slower than from paper**

Tech Fact #3

The very first computer mouse, in 1964, **was made out of wood**

Tech Fact #4

It's estimated up to **92% of all emails sent are spam**

New year,

With a new year just around the corner, it's time to get everything in place so that you can start the year as you mean to go on.

Does that mean that you could do with some new devices in the business?

- Perhaps you're working on something slow and uncooperative?
- Maybe your device is so old it can remember dial-up internet?
- Or possibly you just need something that has the right spec to allow you to do your job well?

Whatever it is you need, we can help you find the right device, at the right price for you.

Stocks of laptops and other devices have been really up and down this year. Production's clearly been massively affected. So this is one of those things that'll be easier with some advance planning... don't leave it to the last minute.

Get in touch, and we'll tell you what devices we're recommending right now.



Three questions for you

1. Do you currently have an IT support company?
2. How happy are you with them?
3. If the answer isn't "utterly delighted", let's jump on a Zoom

Covid has taught businesses round here just how important proactive, responsive IT support is.

We're now taking on new clients again for 2021.

If you'd like to set up a 15 minute exploratory Zoom, go to

www.calendly.com/andyhowe/15min

OfficeTek

This is how you can get in touch with us:

CALL: 0121 525 0016 | **EMAIL** andy.howe@office-tek.co.uk

WEBSITE: www.office-tek.co.uk

Q

A

QUESTION

Do you recommend Dropbox for sharing files?

ANSWER

Not with work colleagues, no. Security can be an issue when you're sharing files using all sorts of apps. Ask your IT partner to set up a safe and secure way for your team to collaborate.

QUESTION

What's the quickest way to speed up my computer?

ANSWER

This is the question we get asked the most! There are dozens and dozens of things that can slow a computer down. One easy thing you can try is just restarting it every couple of days

QUESTION

How many tabs can I have open in Chrome?

ANSWER

It's believed that the maximum is around 9,000! However your Chrome wouldn't be very easy to use at that stage. We recommend you have no more than 10 to 20 open at one time. The more tabs, sometimes the slower Chrome and your computer can be.