



5 New Year Resolutions for Businesses

As the new year approaches, you might be thinking about the goals you would like your business to achieve in 2019. By entering the new year with specific goals in place, you can help make 2019 your best year ever. From building a five-star team of healthy employees to protecting your data, your new year resolutions should feature goals that make your business a safer, more secure place to work. Below are the top five new year resolutions for businesses.

1) Engage more with your customers

Bolstering customer engagement is important because it shows your customers that you value them. Additionally, by remaining in regular contact with your clients, you may help prevent them from exploring your competitors' services. Here are a few ways to boost engagement with customers in 2019:

- Consider launching a live chat if you do not currently offer it
- Invite local customers to visit your offices for a personalized tour
- Develop a targeted and personalized e-mail marketing campaign

2) Hire and retain top talent

"Attracting, retaining and energizing employees appears to be a primary goal for companies of all sizes this year, as the study revealed that 43 percent more C-Level executives said employees would receive the bulk of their attention..."

- Jon Gingerich, Senior Editor of O'Dwyer's monthly magazine

Hiring and retaining top talent will prime your organization for stardom in 2019. The hiring and retention process begins with a targeted recruiting strategy. If you do not have in-house staff with the skills to prepare a top-notch recruiting plan, you can outsource this task to a trusted talent acquisition agency. This strategy will also help you save money, as you will only pay for services that are used instead of paying a full-time salary.

3) Create a disaster recovery plan

Researchers with Richmond House Group indicate that 20% of small to medium size businesses will suffer a critical data loss every five years due to a major disaster. Having a sound disaster recovery plan in place is the best step you can take to protect your business against critical data loss.

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Upcoming Events

6 Things to Help You Quickly Recover from an IT Disaster Webinar
January 9, 2019

How to Protect Your Business from Cyber Attacks Lunch & Learn
January, 17, 2019

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As you dive into preparing a plan, make sure that you choose a trusted provider who can offer the following:

- A comprehensive backup system evaluation to assess your organization's risk level
- A total solution that will reduce server downtime through specialized backup
- A plan that is both outstanding and cost-effective
- Encrypted data that will not be accessible to anyone without the passkey
- Complete and ongoing monitoring of all elements of your plan

4) Conserve energy and resources

Kicking off the new year with a plan to conserve energy and resources will benefit the environment and business owners alike. By taking steps to save energy, you can reduce overhead expenses and help your business become eligible for tax credits. Here are a few simple ways you can conserve energy at your business:

- Upgrade your lighting to LED lights
- Switch to electronic billing to reduce printing and paper costs
- Use eco-friendly cleaning products

5) Introduce an employee wellness program

"Wellness programs are clearly a win-win, especially at a time when employers and their employees are more budget conscious. Employers benefit by retaining top talent, energizing their employees and reducing the number of sick days. Employees benefit from improved physical health, reduced stress in the workplace and the financial benefits of a healthy lifestyle."

- Lee Dukes, President of Principal Wellness Company

An employee wellness program is a great means of showing your employees that you value their health and quality of life. The first step to designing a winning employee wellness program is to establish a planning committee that features employees from different departments to provide input. Here are some other tips to help you launch an effective wellness program:

- Establish realistic goals that are motivating yet attainable
- Secure the buy-in of your leadership team and department heads
- Recognize employees for their participation and acquisition of goals

The Bottom Line

Attracting top-notch employees and keeping them safe and healthy will help your organization thrive. And by updating your technology and disaster preparedness, you will be able to enjoy the peace of mind that comes with knowing your business is ready to handle unexpected challenges. By following the steps above, you can create a safe, secure, and more profitable than ever.

Reasons Why Your Business Should Already Be in the Cloud

For those of us that remember when the Internet worked in a less sophisticated fashion than it does today. First, we used a computer to computer connection that split sent information in half till it came back together clear on the user's computer. As this became outdated, everyone switched to servers, a clunky mass of plastic and metal that took up room in offices' everywhere. Then, suddenly five years ago the Cloud appeared.

This mysterious Internet connection was unknown to nontechnical people for years. However, all of this is changing. The Cloud is becoming more ubiquitous, "according to a study by the Cloud Security Alliance, 33% of organizations have a 'full steam ahead' attitude toward cloud services and 86% of companies spend at least part of their IT budget on cloud services". If you are wondering why so many people are using Cloud for business, here are the top seven reasons that may just change your mind.

Cloud Solutions for Small Business

Savings

One of the reasons companies move to Cloud is the reduced IT cost. Unlike buying hardware, paying for the Cloud is usually, if not always, on a pay-per-use basis. This means you are not paying for more than you used. As the Small Business Connection so eloquently puts it, "...you are not 'buying' the whole package, but 'renting' what you need". Essentially, this will make it easier for your company to plan and budget IT services for an extended period.

Also, systems are expensive and include a regular cycle of upgrades. The Cloud does not have hardware nor upgrade costs. You may reduce the cost of your total energy consumption. However, as a disclaimer, this might not be accurate if you have slower Internet speeds, in which case you may have to increase your bandwidth and therefore reduce your savings.

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Flexibility

When you think of servers and hardware, you should think of inaccessibility. What do I mean by that? Well, if a company's information stored on in-house servers then their employees cannot work at home or a local coffee shop unless they have information stored on a computer that travels with them. However, the Cloud makes this possible since everything uses Internet storage. This helps companies access their information anytime at any place, which allows them to respond to customer's needs quickly and efficiently.

Increased Collaboration

Projects at work can seem daunting for companies that do not use the Cloud. The employees need to be in the same space or meet all at once to get work done efficiently. With the Cloud's simultaneous syncing process, everyone's work can be accessed and edited from different locations. That would give a company the possibility to have virtual meetings at home- so that everyone can only wake up, brew a cup of coffee, and sit in their flannel pajamas while finishing an important project in the comfort of their home.

Reduced IT Work

Many companies allocate huge percentages of their budget to their IT staff, who must continuously apply patches and complete upgrades. With the Cloud, IT staff would spend minimal time on such problems because of outsourced software maintenance and upgrades. This again goes back to saving money, but it also allows IT personnel the opportunity to work on strategic planning instead of everyday tasks.

Security

This is understandably the biggest concern for most people that are considering the move from server to cloud. However, most people do not realize their information will be stored on remote servers, which have the best security systems available to date. Also, with the server's constant updates it makes it harder for hackers to access their Cloud.

We also cannot forget that one of the top reasons for a company security breach is user misuse. Therefore, security will be an issue whether a company uses a server or the Cloud.

Business Continuity

Every company's journey is comparable to the perfect roller coaster metaphor- a company always has its emotional ups and downs. So, when a crisis hits your organization, you may need a backup of company records, data, client lists and more. With the Cloud, you will always have a backup on the Internet. Mostly, you will prepare for the worst, but consistently have the best productivity.

The Fast Switch

New servers can take a long time to get up and running because five steps must be completed before it can be used, including the purchasing, ordering, delivering, installing, and configuring the server. However, Cloud migration takes only a few hours to get up to run. This nearly seamless migration will prevent unnecessary downtime.

These are seven reasons why your business should already be in the Cloud, yet not every business may feel the switch is suitable for them. If you are wondering if your company should make the switch, Total Computer Solutions' offers a free Cloud consultation to ensure your decision is valid.

TCS Spotlight: Tim Hicks



Congratulations to our Network Analyst, Tim for passing the Cisco Networking Devices Part 1 Exam! Way to go Tim.



6 Things to Help Your Quickly Recover from an IT Disaster

Join us for our upcoming webinar!

Date: Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Time: 10:00 a.m. ET

Cost: Free

Registration: Visit landingpages.tcsusa.com/bdr or call us at 336.804.8449.

Key Topics for Discussion:

- Disasters that can interrupt your business operations
- Consequences from lack of access to data
- Potential solutions for small or medium size businesses
- How to develop a well designed backup strategy

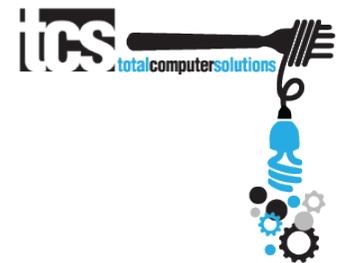


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Lunch & Learn: How to Protect Your Business from Cyber Attacks



Presented by Barry Utesch

Date: Thursday, January 17, 2019

Time: 11:45 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

Location: Firebirds, Wintston Salem, NC

Cost: FREE

Registration: Visit landingpages.tcsusa.com/cyber-attacks or call 336.804.8449

A cyberattack can do much more than slow your business down, it can bring it to a grinding halt. 60% of companies are out of business within six months of a data breach. There is not one simple solution to keep your company safe from cybercriminals, it takes an understanding of their methods to protect your business.

Key Topics for Discussion:

- Who is at risk?
- How do cybercriminals get information?
- What can minimize the risk of data breaches?

This event will begin with a meal, provided by TCS. While lunch is served, we will present valuable information on what industry leaders are doing to create a layered approach to securing their networks.