May 2020

3 Ways To Stop Cybercriminals Cold In Today's Crazy Times

You've seen it. You've probably even experienced it. For what feels like forever now, just about everyone has been forced to modify priorities. As a business owner, you've probably been focused on shifting your business to accommodate this world crisis. You may even be investing more of your time in retaining customers and generating new cash flow. If you're like most people out there, you've barely even had time to think about cyber security and protecting your important data.

Maybe you've heard the saying "Never let a crisis go to waste." It's as if cybercriminals wrote it because that's exactly what they're thinking right now. In fact, they're probably working overtime right now to craft new malware while our lives have been turned upside down. Yes, as you're focused on your business, hackers are finding new ways into your IT network. Their objective is to steal data and passwords, compromise your clients' private information and even demand large ransoms.

Did you know that cybercrime is expected to cost $6 trillion in the US (that's a 6 followed by 12 zeroes!) by the year 2021? But now is when hackers are expected to do their absolute most damage.

Here are three strategies you can use right now to help protect your business data, money and productivity during these unusual times.

1. Guard Your Inbox.
People aren't paying as much attention as they usually do, which makes it the perfect time for cyber-attackers to send emails with dangerous mal-

ware, worms and viruses. Always carefully inspect every email received and make sure you know the sender.

Here's another tip: avoid clicking links in the email unless it's abundantly clear where they go. Also, don't ever download an attachment unless you know who sent it and what it is. While it takes a few extra seconds, double-check by calling the person who sent you the attachment. Better safe than sorry. Make sure you communicate these safeguards to everyone on your team, especially if they are working from home.

2. Secure Your Company-Based Technologies.
During crisis like this one, your passwords are a critical first line of defense. Don't wait for your company's finance data to be compromised. Make a point now to re-evaluate your passwords and direct your team to create stronger passwords. Too many employees are guilty of using the same password across multiple applications. Use a unique password for every single application.

The Healing Powers of Nature

While practicing social distancing we are still trying to stay connected with each other. Whether it is through video chatting with co-workers or face-timing with friends. We know that staying apart from everyone is going to help defeat COVID-19 but it has been difficult and stressful. It is important to remember that we need to practice mental health as well as physical health. Many experts say that humans still have a deep connection with nature, and research shows that if we don't nourish that bond we suffer.

Here are some of the benefits that getting outside can help with:

Disconnection - One of our most basic needs is to feel that we belong, time in nature can result in a sense of belonging to a wider world. It can also restore some basic social behaviors like generosity & empathy.

Anxiety & Depression - Taking a stroll through the park or hike in the woods can provide exercise and a distraction from the thoughts and negative feelings that cause both of these issues.

Brain Drain - Our prefrontal cortex can handle only so much multitasking & daily interruptions before it needs recharging. Nature has been shown to restore mental abilities like short term memory & thought procession.

Inspiration - A change of scenery can get those creative juices flowing again and nature has been proven to rejuvenate problem solving skills by 50%.

We are so lucky to live in Northern Michigan where we can relieve some of the pressure that everyone is experiencing by walking out of our back door. So lets listen to the experts and get healthy mentally and physically. Wear your mask, give each other a little extra space and go connect with nature.

Need Information About Our Services Go To: https://www.gowyant.com/

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Your team may tend to save your passwords in their web browser. Don't do this. A skilled hacker can bypass the PIN required to access your saved passwords. Once they have the password or PIN to access your web browser, they can steal as much as they want – credit card information, customers' private data and more!

We recommend our clients use a password manager. It's convenient, but more importantly, it's far more secure.

3. Secure Your Home-Based Technologies.
With the coronavirus pandemic, far more businesses are encouraging their employees to work from home. That means a lot of people are working from the living room or kitchen without giving a second thought to security. This negligence is an invitation to new cybercrimes.

Here are a few tips to ensure your work-from-home employees are keeping your network and data secure:

make sure your employees and contractors are not using their home computers or devices when they are working from home. Add a firewall to ALL computers and devices that will be utilized at home. Finally, your network and data are not truly secure unless your employees utilize a VPN (virtual private network).

There's no need to invite in more problems by letting your computer and network security slide during these times. We would be happy to help you create or even improve your work -from-home environment.

While this coronavirus scare has negatively affected countless businesses, we are proud to say we are open and continuously servicing our customers. If you need additional security advice or would like to have a consultation to discuss how to keep your data safe or how we can help you work more effectively, simply connect with us today.

Saving Our Economy By Learning From The Past
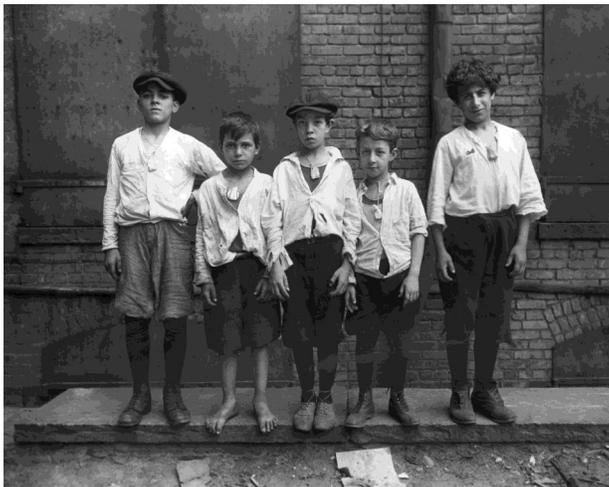
Boys wear bags of camphor around their necks during 1918-19 Spanish Flu—"old wives method of flue prevention" according to Dec.1946 issue of Life Magazine.

There are many conversations going on right now about how we can safely save our economy. On one side, some are arguing that closing business down will be more damaging to our country then leaving them open. Economist have projected that it will cost each American household close to $10,000 if businesses are closed through July. Casey Mullgian, a University of Chicago economist told the New York Times, "that shutting down economic activity to slow the virus would be more damaging than doing nothing at all." Others are weighing projections that the best way to limit the economic damage will be to save as many lives as possible.

The reason for such differing perspectives is most likely the fact that we have never had to deal with this kind of problem. Not since 1918 has America experienced a down turn in the economy due to a pandemic. The

majority of the American workforce was in manufacturing 100 years ago unlike today's economy, which is geared more toward the service industry. For the last 2 decades people working low-wage jobs have become the largest part of our labor force. This population will be the hardest hit, they have little to no health benefits and most live paycheck to paycheck. The stimulus checks and the billions that are supposed to be given to small businesses won't be enough, especially for the cities and states that rely on the leisure & hospitality industry.

What experts do tell us is that, during the 1918 pandemic, Cleveland acted aggressively; closing schools and banning gatherings early in the outbreak. Philadelphia was slower to react and maintained their restriction for only ½ as long as Cleveland did. Not only did far fewer people die in Cleveland (4, 400 compared to close to 12,000 in Philadelphia), but its economy fared better and was much stronger in the year after the outbreak. By 1919 job growth was 5% there, while in Philadelphia it was around 2%.

Michael Greenstone, an economist at the University of Chicago, finds that even moderate social distancing will save 1.7 million lives between March 1 and October 1, according to disease-spread models done at Imperial College London. Avoiding those deaths translates into a benefit of around $8 trillion to the economy, or about one-third of the US GDP. If we let Covid-19 spread tens of millions of people will become sick and die. Not only will our workforce be depleted, but consumers will be too fearful of spending any income they may have. According to a recent survey of leading economists by Chicago's Booth School, 80% of them believe that "abandoning severe lockdowns" too early will lead to even greater economic damage. Lets hope we can stay the course and learn from our past that the economy cannot survive if our citizens do not survive.

Statics & Studies found on technologyreview.com

Having IT Issues? Give Wyant Computer Services a call at 231-946-5969

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

"Quick response and resolution to the problem. Thanks Dustin!"
Renee Youker from Benzie Leelanau District Health Dept. was happy to get help when her email was compromised.

Dan from Voice Motor Sales, Inc. sent a Fast Resolution Time rating for working with GM Tech Support to set up new program on his computer.

Wyant Techs helped many clients get their remote offices set up.
Here a few who sent us some wonderful ratings:
Raymond Minervini II from The Minervini Group
Stacey Bivona from Parker Harvey
Susan Thom from The Minervini Group
Sandra Wilton from Forest Area Federal Credit Union
Art Wasek from Forest Area Federal Credit Union
Dodie Putney from Ben / Lee District Health Dept

Stephanie Studzinski from Parker Harvey was having printing issues and sent a nice comment:
"Great and prompt service! Thanks again Dustin!"

Doug Durand from Benzie Senior Resources gave a Like rating to Nathan Wyant & Dustin Eldridge for Helping him get the wireless going at his home office.

Russ Kelm from Northern Vision Eye Care gave a rating for Accuracy, Proactiveness, Resolution Time, Helpfulness, Knowledge and Response Time when they had no internet connection.

Do These 3 Things To Make Sure You Don't Get Hacked

Train up. Get your entire team trained on IT security fundamentals and best practices. They should know how to create strong passwords, how to safely access the web and how to securely use email – including how to identify phishing scams. They should have a clear understanding of today's threats and how to be proactive in addressing those threats.

Invest in good tech. You should be invested in solid malware protection, including antivirus software and firewalls. All of your data should be backed up to the cloud and expertly secured using encryption software. You should also be invested in threat monitoring.

Establish relevant systems and processes. Have standard operating procedures (SOP) in place to train employees, respond to threats and access networks. For example, are employees connecting with unverified devices from home? Establish rules on what can and cannot happen. Another example: are your cloud backups set up correctly? Is someone checking it? Again, have SOP in place to address these kinds of issues.

Small Business Trends, Feb. 13, 2020

NEW STUDY SHOWS:
EXERCISING DISTANCES ARE DIFFERENT

Bert Blocken and his team of Belgium Engineers say that you must maintain a distance 65 feet while biking at 18 miles per hour, 33 feet while running at a 6:44 minutes-per-mile pace, or 16 feet while walking at a normal pace. This is the safest way to avoid inhaling virus droplets or having them land on your body.

WYANT WORD SCRAMBLE

*Email your answers to me and enter the *Gift Card Drawing!*

April's Answers:
ENCOURAGING, JOYFULNESS, RELAXATION, INHALING, PEACEFUL, CALMNESS, EXHALED, WORRY Bonus: HELPING HANDS

NURNITEPRITO

ZINGREATVILI

JRAEUTENVE

RONUSCEMS

MCOYNOE

ECDAHER

TEVINS

SEWGA

HINT: SEASONAL RAINS

wyant
computer services

1760 Forest Ridge Drive Ste. A
Traverse City, MI 49686

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3 WAYS TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS WITHOUT SPENDING A DIME

1. Follow a thought leader in your industry. Whether you follow them on social media or their blog, keep up-to-date with the issues they're talking about. Then do further research into those issues. This keeps you in the know and more likely to learn something you can easily apply to your own business.

2. Use your best testimonials. If someone posts a great review on Google, for example, reach out and ask about using it in your marketing. Or reach out to customers who you already have a good relationship with and ask if they're willing to give you a testimonial. It builds credibility.

3. Partner up. It pays to develop partnerships with existing vendors or other businesses that are adjacent to yours. That is to say, look for opportunities to share customers. If you have a customer who's looking for a specific service you don't offer, point them to someone who does (your partner). And your partner will do the same. Reach out into your business community and see what kind of relationships you can form.

Business Insider, Feb. 13, 2020

WE'RE MOVING
TO A NEW LOCATION

Wyant Computer Services is moving into a new office! Well, let's rephrase that, we **will** be moving into the new office as soon as the contractors can get permits again and are able to finish the construction. But for now we are moving to a storage unit and will continue to work remotely as we have been for the last month and a half. All of Wyant's services are still available, our email and phone number are the same. The only thing that is changing is our mailing address (temporarily) P.O. Box 153, Acme, MI 49610.

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