

News

Another Satisfied Customer Has Moved to the Cloud!

"Almost 40 years ago our first location burned down. It is always in the back of my mind that something like that could happen again. It's extremely comforting to know Blue Bay's expert assistance has positioned us so that if something like that happens again we could continue to run our business within hours on a laptop".

Tom Morley, President
D&B Rentals; Sterling, VA

Wondering how moving to The Cloud can help YOUR business increase productivity and solve other issues such as failed hardware downtime, backups, secure remote workforce, lower hardware (desktop/laptop) expenses. Download the free Cloud Report on page 2.

February 2021



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Will Sperow, General Manager of Blue Bay Technology.

OUR MISSION

To provide our clients with the same expert-level of support that we would expect ourselves; provide it in an understanding and compassionate environment; and, work to exceed your expectations.



How To Enable Remote Work Without Exposing Your Entire Business To Cybercriminals

A record number of businesses said goodbye to the traditional in-office work model in 2020. They embraced the remote work model as they adapted to the new COVID-19 reality. It was a huge shift that came with many challenges, and some of those challenges are still felt today.

One of those challenges was – and is – cyber security. Businesses wanted to get their remote workforce up and running, but there were a lot of questions about how they would keep their newly remote employees secure.

So, how can you enable remote work while keeping your business and your employees secure? How do you keep cybercriminals out? The answer is multifaceted. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to cyber security – that would make things much easier! But there are several steps you can take to help your remote team stay productive while keeping the cybercriminals out. Here are

three things you need to do:

1. Skip the public WiFi. This is Cyber Security 101. Never use unsecured, public WiFi, especially when working. For remote employees who have the option to work from anywhere, using public WiFi is tempting. It's just so easy to access, but it comes with huge risks, including the potential to expose your device to intruders.

Thankfully, there are plenty of options to help keep employees connected without having to worry about snoops. The most popular is the VPN, or virtual private network. VPNs allow remote workers to securely access the Internet, even through public WiFi. VPNs are ideal for remote workers who need to routinely access your network.

Another option is the personal hotspot. This is a portable WiFi access point, usually

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paired with data service through a telecom like Verizon, AT&T or T-Mobile. It gives remote workers flexibility to work anywhere they can get high-speed data service. Because the remote worker is the only person on the hotspot (and should be the only person), there is less worry about hackers snooping for your data.

2. Have a strong device policy. When it comes to cost-cutting, it can be appealing to let employees use their own devices while working remotely. Avoid this, if possible. The bring-your-own-device (BYOD) approach has its benefits, including keeping costs down, but the security costs could be massive, especially if an employee gets hacked or misplaces crucial data. In short, BYOD can get complicated fast, especially for businesses unfamiliar with the BYOD approach.

That said, many businesses work with an IT services company or managed services provider to create a list of approved devices (PCs, laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc.) that employees can use. Then those devices are loaded up with malware protection, a VPN, and other security solutions. So, while employees may be using a variety of devices, they all have the same security and other necessary software in order to perform their duties.

The best device policy, however, is to provide employees with

work devices. This ensures that everyone is using the same hardware and software, and this makes it much easier to keep everyone up-to-date and secure. It takes a little more effort logistically, and it has a higher up-front cost, but when it comes to keeping your business secure, it's worth it.

3. Don't forget about physical security. While a lot of businesses are focusing on digital security right now, they're not putting a similar focus on physical security. They may have a team of people working remotely spread across different neighborhoods, towns, states or countries. This mobility comes with the risk of device theft or loss.

If employees will be carrying their work devices with them for any reason, those devices should be kept nearby at all times. That means *never* leaving work devices in vehicles or unattended at a café or airport (or any location). Never leave a device where it has the potential to be taken.

It's also important to remind employees to not only keep their doors locked but also keep work devices out of sight. You wouldn't want to set up a home office in a room facing the street outside while leaving the windows open and the door unlocked, because you never know who may walk or drive by. Just as cybercriminals are always looking for ways to break into your network, criminals are looking for opportunities to walk away with high-value items.

The way we work is changing, so we must be prepared for whatever happens next. Implementing these three steps will give you a starting point, but they aren't the end point. Work with an experienced MSP to get the most out of your remote work approach. Many businesses will not be returning to the traditional in-office model, so the more steps we take to secure our businesses and our remote teams, the better off we'll all be.

"There is no one-size-fits-all approach to cyber security – that would make things much easier!"

Free Report Download:

The Business Owner's Introduction to Cloud Computing

INTRO TO CLOUD COMPUTING

"5 Critical Facts Every Business Owner Must Know Before Moving Their Network To The Cloud"



Discover What Most IT Consultants Don't Know Or Won't Tell You About Moving Your Company's Network To The Cloud

If you are considering cloud computing or Office 365 to save money and simplify IT, it is extremely important that you get and read this special report: **"5 Critical Facts Every Business Owner Must Know Before Moving Their Network To The Cloud."**

This report discusses in simple, nontechnical terms the pros and cons of cloud computing, data security, how to choose a cloud provider and three little-known facts that most IT consultants don't know or won't tell you about cloud computing that could end up causing you MORE problems and costing you more money than you anticipated. **Even if you aren't ready to move to the cloud yet**, this report will give you the right information and questions to ask when the time comes.

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“The CLOUD” What the heck is that??

There are a lot of terms being thrown around like “the cloud,” “cloud computing,” or “cloud storage” among others. But, what the heck does all of that mean??

Here’s the real kicker – it’s the Internet. Or, more precisely the things you can remotely access over the Internet. “Being in the Cloud” means that you are accessing data and/or services that are stored on Internet servers in a secure data center somewhere in the world instead of a physical server, desktop PC or laptop in your office or at home.

If you have used/or use Microsoft Office 365 Outlook, Gmail, Yahoo Mail, etc. you are already using the Cloud via a web-based email service. Using the web-based service means you can access your email from anywhere in the world as long as you have access to Internet service. It also means that your emails are not stored on your local device; but, on remote servers in those data centers discussed earlier. The most basic reasons for using the Cloud are for convenience and reliability. Convenience because it’s “access anywhere” and reliability because the data is able to be easily recovered if your local physical hardware fails.

There are other more business-oriented reasons to use the cloud:

- ◆ **File Storage** – all types of information can be stored in the Cloud which means you can access things from any computer or mobile device with an internet connection. There are many Cloud-based storage venues such as Google Drive, Dropbox, Microsoft OneDrive, and even your local Internet providers.
- ◆ **File Sharing Collaboration** – storing files in the Cloud can make it a simple process to share files with employees. Again, you can use Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive and SharePoint, etc. And, with Microsoft SharePoint multiple people can be working in the same file at the same time with instantaneous changes being seen by all editors.
- ◆ **Data Backup** – there are numerous Cloud backup providers that offer services to backup your files to the Cloud automatically and on a regular basis. Making it easier to recover from a hardware failure.
- ◆ **Web Applications** – Some of you may already use web apps. More and more software and application providers are moving their software and the use of it to the Cloud. An example would be QuickBooks. You can still purchase QuickBooks and load it onto your server or dedicated PC; however, more and more businesses are moving to their web-based applications.

There are a few fears that business owners experience when contemplating moving to the Cloud. And rightly so. Moving to the Cloud may not be the optimal solution for all businesses and the decision should be carefully assessed and analyzed with a qualified IT provider who will put your best interests forward. But, if it saves your business time, provides security for your critical data, is accessible from anywhere there is an Internet connection, doesn’t take away your control of your data, and is priced within your budget; businesses owners should put real thought and consideration in evolving to a Cloud-based company infrastructure.

Reach out to us and we’ll be glad to talk to you about how moving to the Cloud can help your company thrive.

Schedule a FREE Cloud Assessment NOW by contacting one of our Client Relationship Managers at (703) 261-7200 or (540) 546-5626

Communication In Times Of Fatigue

In light of all the Zoom and videoconferencing meetings, communication is changing both internally and externally.

Some companies think working remotely is the best thing they’ve ever done, while others say it’s awful because they thrive on personal, face-to-face relationships.

Oftentimes, dominant personalities can overrun the room in person, but on a video call, the indirectness of virtual communication can help more soft-spoken team members feel comfortable speaking up.

When companies are together in person, they grab a coffee and a meeting breaks out, but when you have that on video it’s awkward. There has to be more structure to the meetings because people don’t want to spend an excessive amount of time like they would in person. They want to make it as short and efficient as possible.

Where people could get better is in their external messages on video chats. When you speak to your team, use a different tone. Simple things like charisma, lighting and talking to your audience – the things people master for TV and film – take a lot more effort than chatting with your team in person. Not having this skill is hurting some on the marketing side.

In planning for 2021, companies are running into big issues and plans may need to change.

It’s time for the annual reset and the One-Page Strategic Plan (OPSP) – the gift that gives back for the next four quarters. We set our annual key initiatives – six to eight things over the next 12 months to move the business forward – but what often gets left behind is time to reset ourselves.



We need to be mindful of what we’re doing with our people to keep them on track on a personal-growth level. We’re all a little out of our rhythm right now, but so goes the person, so goes the business. We need to develop the *whole* person to get the best results in the new year.

Answer the question: what do you want? Don’t let your logic stifle what your true goals are. Once you define it, then you can set out and figure out how to achieve it.

With upcoming changes, necessary planning and so much more, how can organizations combat the fatigue?

We must make time to take a break and step away for a moment. Set some boundaries.

It’s easy for us right now to just keep working – especially working from home. You have to make yourself “go home.” Do simple things, like changing your clothes after work, to turn the “work” switch off. Make yourself “commute” home. At 5 p.m., go to the store and drive back home. Give your body and mind the shift change. Honor a schedule because it is easy not to.



Chip Gallent’s career has taken him through a number of C-level roles with a nonprofit, a technology development company, a publicly traded dot-com firm where he served as president and more! With an extensive background in marketing, and as a fervent entrepreneur, he’s led many businesses to success. Now, as a Petra Coach, he’s helping others do the same.

■ Driving Business Success In The Age Of COVID-19

Countless businesses had to figure out how to navigate the last year. Some didn't make it, but at the same time, many thrived. Nearly a year after the pandemic began, many businesses are still trying to navigate COVID-19 repercussions. How do you drive success in 2021?

Budget Wisely. Countless businesses had a knee-jerk reaction to the pandemic. They rapidly cut costs in an effort to survive. Cutting certain areas can work. But cut the wrong area of a business, and it may be hard to recover. Some companies that put off upgrading technology during the pandemic are now paying for this costly mistake with out-of-date hardware and software that created holes in their network that are open to cybercriminals. However, if your customers didn't stick around, cutting the marketing budget is disastrous.

Embrace New Ideas. COVID-19 isn't going anywhere soon.

Businesses that decided not to adapt because they thought it would blow over or it wasn't serious were put into a tough spot. Meanwhile, businesses that planned and focused on innovation were in a much better spot. When your customers' habits change, your habits need to change as well. *Forbes*, Nov. 23, 2020

■ The Realities Of Burnout

We all feel burned out every now and again. It's the point when we feel completely exhausted with our work and need to step away. But here's a different way to think about burnout: we don't get burned out because we're working *too much*, we get burned out because we're doing *too little of what we love*.

When we do things that we're passionate about, that gives us

energy and keeps us going. When our work becomes work for the sake of work, that's what drives us toward exhaustion. You may be productive, but does your productivity enrich your life in any meaningful way? To truly avoid burnout, engage in activities, projects and tasks that drive you forward and keep the passion alive. *Inc.*, Nov. 23, 2020

■ 4 Traits To Keep In Mind When Hiring

1. Value-minded. They're someone who fits in with your company culture and values. They're ready and willing to learn and grow within that culture.

2. Purpose-driven. They aren't in it just to collect a paycheck. Yes, being paid is important, but there must be drive beyond that. They have their purpose and they're working toward it.

3. Standout. There's something about them that strikes you — it could be anything from their credentials to their personality, but it's something that sticks with you in a positive way. They go the extra mile.

4. Open-minded. They're receptive to feedback and criticism and use it to grow. But more than that, they're willing to give feedback to others. They're comfortable with honesty. *Forbes*, Nov. 23, 2020

