In This Issue:

Here's a Cost-Effective Alternative to Onboarding Additional IT Staff

An internal IT department serves two primary purposes for businesses. The first is to keep an eye on your technology problems and resolve them. The second is to plan for the future and implement new...

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About Excalibur Technology Corp.

Business owners demand simple, reliable and powerful technology solutions to keep them ahead of their competition while reducing their costs; solutions that require expertise, teamwork and dedication. Excalibur Technology has built a reputation for excelling at helping our business clients achieve these goals.

Visit us **online** at:
www.excaltech.com

100% Uptime Is A Myth, But Our Total Support Solution Gets You Close

Every piece of technology comes with this risk. Although, some businesses are better at mitigating this risk than others, and it's usually based on how they approach their organization's IT maintenance.

Unfortunately, no computer manufacturer can guarantee their equipment to be impervious to breaking down, and no IT network can deliver 100 percent uptime. It's unrealistic to expect as much from your own technology, yet coming to terms with the reality doesn't make it any less frustrating when you encounter an error.

When it comes to protecting your company's productivity from the inevitable imperfections of technology, whether it be hardware failure, a data breach, user error, or a litany of other issues. Having the right approach to IT maintenance is the best way to give yourself peace of mind that issues that appear will be taken care of efficiently, before they are problems to be dealt with. Essentially, this approach must be proactive in nature, otherwise you're doomed to deal with one unexpected technology problem after another, and at the worst possible times.

With managed IT services from Excalibur Technology, we're able to proactively monitor and maintain your company's technology in order to significantly reduce the risk of downtime. Admittedly, even this approach cannot guarantee that your company will never again

Is Your Business Prepared to Handle These 2 Challenging IT Trends?

Small and medium-sized business owners are finding that it's getting more difficult to compete without the means to deploy the newest technologies. Larger organizations are finding greater market shares, but smaller businesses have some advantages, namely in terms of maneuverability. With the help of some external resources, SMBs can be operate as effectively as larger organizations.

Generally speaking, when your business faces a challenge, you might see little choice but to pick vendors who are best suited to resolve your issues at hand--even if they aren't the most qualified solution. Worse yet, if someone is particularly skilled in a specific area and they're not allowed to flourish due to the needful, they may find other opportunities. This makes it challenging to sustain operations, especially when you're already strapped for resources as is.

Take, for example, the position of an IT technician. While having a competent in-house IT department is a great benefit for your organization, paying one might be ambitious. You'd be better served elsewhere in your budget. Instead of adding multiple salaries to your payroll, consider your alternative choices. Furthermore, a qualified IT professional will want to help your organization implement the best technology solutions to improve efficiency and productivity, many of which might be budget-breaking off the bat. What's the business owner to do?

SECURITY TIP: If you allow visitors to access your wireless network, make sure that you have a segregated Guest WiFi setup and do not give out your production SSID or password. This will keep guests away from your data and servers.

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100% Uptime Is A Myth, But Our Total Support Solution Gets You Close

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experience a technology issue (this silver bullet doesn't exist, unfortunately). Although, we can confidently say that by taking a proactive stance toward your technology's maintenance, many problems will be prevented that would otherwise cause downtime.

So, while 100 percent uptime and issue-free technology is an unrealistic expectation, you can be confident that partnering with Excalibur Technology will provide your business with a dedicated team of IT professionals that do everything they can, and use every resource at their disposal to make sure your company's technology is operating at maximum efficiency. That said, if your company's technology is ever hit with an issue that takes your systems offline or causes downtime, know that we have a plan in place to handle such a crisis and our team of IT experts will act fast to resolve the problem as quickly as possible.

Keep in mind that, even if you are faced with such a crisis, if you've taken the proactive approach to IT maintenance, then the number of these technology crises your business faces will be dramatically reduced. Considering how expensive downtime is for any organization to experience, you can see why taking every measure possible to prevent IT problems proves to be so valuable.

Is your business taking a proactive approach to IT maintenance, or are you handling technology issues as they happen? To equip your business with Excalibur Technology's proactive IT solutions, give us a call today at (877) NET - KING.

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3 Ways Your Business Can Secure Its Hosted VoIP System

How much has your business invested in its communications technologies? If your business is like many others, it relies heavily on the functionality of its organization's communications platforms. You might have a VoIP system filled with features, but are you taking full advantage of them? Here are three ways you can get the most out of your VoIP solution.

Keep Track of Your Usage
There's always the possibility that your organization's VoIP solution will get hacked. It's safe to say that the majority of attacks you'll run into that target your VoIP system will be ATO attacks, which basically work by pumping traffic into the phone system. This ultimately affects how much money you're spending on your solution, as the hackers can use the phone system at will and make you foot the bill. To keep this from happening, you should keep track of your business's VoIP usage to make sure that nothing out of the ordinary is happening behind your back.

Furthermore, you should have a good, long conversation with your VoIP provider to see what they can do to keep your system secure from threats.

Implement Powerful Authentication Procedures
Security is incredibly important, especially in regard to access control. You need to make sure that only your employees are accessing your hosted VoIP system. One of the best ways you can do this is by implementing a two-factor authentication solution, or more specifically, an identity management system. By making it more difficult for people to log into your VoIP system, you can effectively keep those who aren't supposed to have access out of it.

> *"It's safe to say that the majority of attacks you'll run into that target your VoIP system will be ATO attacks, which basically work by pumping traffic into the phone system."*

However you decide to secure your VoIP system, you'll need to make sure that you do the same for all outlets of access, including mobile applications, desktop apps, physical phones, or virtual solutions. This makes sure that your phone system is accessible wherever your employees are.

Take Advantage of Private VLANs
With a private VLAN, also known as a virtual local area network, your business's IT can control your hosted VoIP system. This means that there is only one point of access and uplink for a device that's communicating with your network or server. Once you've managed to single out each device, you can group them together even if they are not on same network switch. Setting up a VLAN allows for even more security, something that you can never get enough of.

Hosted VoIP is fantastic for businesses that plan on growing, but only if you're capable of taking full advantage of the many benefits that they can provide. After all, you're paying for the service, so you'll want to make sure that you're getting the most of it.

If you want to improve the way that your business communicates, Excalibur Technology can work with you to assess ways in which you can maximize the value you get from your technology solutions.

To learn more, reach out to us at (877) NET - KING.

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SECURITY TIP: When setting up accounts on the web, use a different password for each site. If one account is compromised, you do not want a hack to have access to all of your other sites. Use a password manager to help you remember.

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Is Your Business Prepared To Handle These 2 Challenging IT Trends?

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IT support is much more manageable to obtain today. For Excalibur Technology's Managed IT Services in lieu of adding new salaries, you will only need to take on an affordable monthly payment to get the comprehensive support and management you need for your organization's IT. However, even with IT support handled, you'll want to know how trends will affect your business in the future. Two of the most important to consider are the proliferation of mobile devices in the workplace and Internet of Things technology.

Concerning Mobile Devices

Mobile technology is a major talking point among businesses, but this isn't anything new. Ever since the initial surge in mobile technology began over a decade ago, IT professionals knew that someday mobile would become crucial to the success of

their endeavor. While mobile devices have the potential to offer significant benefits to small businesses, they also could become huge problems in the long run, particularly in regard to network security and data leakage. Businesses that are serious about appropriately leveraging mobile devices in the workplace will want to implement a BYOD policy that allows employees to use their devices, but only by adhering to usage protocol designed to mitigate risk.

If implemented properly, mobile devices in the workplace can allow your business to improve employee morale and engagement. However, businesses that want to use mobile devices in the workplace still have their fair share of challenges. One of the clear problems associated with mobile devices is that they can become a huge time sink for your em-

ployees. Considering how the majority of the smartphone's operations are rooted in entertainment or social media rather than productivity, you need to instill proper time management practices into your employees. Furthermore, there needs to be some sort of protocol for distributing sensitive data and establishing unified communications between your devices, so management and monitoring needs to be considered before making a commitment to mobile.

The Internet of Things

In a sense, the development of the Internet of Things trend could be considered similar to the way mobile devices entered the work environ-

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Give Your Staff The IT Support They Need Without Breaking The Budget

What would you do if you got a surprise bill for tech support? Would you go around the office asking where it came from, or would you worry more about trying to figure out how you're going to pay for it? Clearly someone in your office doesn't know the proper way of asking for IT support if you are receiving mystery invoices.

Regardless, it's important that you understand that this is the norm for an organization working with a break-fix IT provider.

Basically, an employee will only contact an external tech support when you don't designate someone to contact internally. When you don't have any employees dedicated to keeping your technology functioning, what happens when you encounter a crippling problem that makes it more difficult for your workers to do their jobs? Your employees will try to find a solution to the issue, whether

it's in your IT budget or not. This could result in heavy blows to your bottom line, but when a project is on the line, the employee might not care. How do you stop these situations from happening?

Keeping the struggles of break-fix IT support in mind, it's easy to see how help desk support can improve the way your organization functions. Excalibur Technology, a managed service provider, can help you keep your business's technology troubles from breaking your budget by offering monthly, flat-rate services. This makes it so that you don't have to worry about an employee exceeding the budget with calls to break-fix IT providers, thus mitigating phantom cost.

To further enhance the benefits of managed IT, consider the difference between paying per hour and paying per month. If your business is charged per hour for IT assistance, your employees might hope to save your organization some money by not reaching out for help at all. However, if you're paying for something at a monthly rate, it makes the most sense to get as much out of it as possible. After

all, you don't pay for Netflix just to watch it for a day. You want to stream as much as possible and get the most value from the service. If you make a monthly payment for IT support, your workers can get the help they need when they need it, without suffering from long-term technology troubles.

Introducing "All You Can Eat" IT Support

If you want to give your team the IT support that they deserve, consider finding a service provider that gives as much support as possible for a monthly rate. This means that your IT provider won't bill you per call and will instead charge only a flat rate that is set in stone. All you have to do is sit back, relax, and see how much value you can get out of your relationship with your managed service provider.

Excalibur Technology wants to help your organization get the most out of its technology solutions. To learn more about what we can do for your business, reach out to us at (877) NET -

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A CLIENT RECENTLY SAID IN A GOOGLE REVIEW: "Excalibur's employees, while highly technically qualified, are able to communicate technical information in terms that we can understand and act upon."

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Pair Up The Right Workers To Increase Productivity By 10%

Keeping your workers as productive as possible is a challenge for every employer. According to a recent study by the Harvard Business Review, there is one easy that you can increase productivity: By keeping a productive worker in close proximity to other workers.

Such a profound discovery could be enough to shake the foundations of how you form your departments and how the interior of your office looks. Theoretically, you could simply arrange your office in a way which takes advantage of this "productivity by proximity" rule, keeping those who get the most work done at the center of the action. This could inspire your less-dutiful employees to better themselves and improve how they work.

What's interesting is just how the study describes this phenomenon: "We saw that neighbors have a significant impact on an employee's performance, and it can be either positive or negative. In terms of magnitude, we found that approximately ten percent of a worker's performance spills over to her neighbors.

Replacing an average performer with one who is twice as productive results in his or her neighboring workers increasing their own productivity by about ten percent, on average."

Maybe you're feeling that you should reevaluate how your organization is approaching the office setup, but before you go and make drastic changes, keep in mind that doing this haphazardly could actually make things worse. This study highlights the benefits of productivity by proximity, but keep in mind that it also warns of how the exact opposite can happen too. For example, an employee who wants to get the most done, for example, could be held back by a slacker that's nearby.

You need to also consider other factors that influence worker productivity, like motivation. If you have a worker who wants to learn how to do a better job, putting them next to someone who is highly motivated and willing to go the extra mile could help dramatically. On the other hand, a worker who doesn't care about doing a good job won't be impressed by the positive attitude of their peers.

This is a negativity that your business can do without. In this situation, it might seem tempt-ing to just isolate workers so they don't influence each other. You can do this by either providing them with their own office, giving them the freedom to work remotely, or removing the problem employee from the equation completely.

As you can see, motivation is a crucial when it comes to worker productivity. It's logical to assume that if you can provide powerful motivators, your team will be more likely to do their best work. Allowing workers to improve themselves by learning from motivated employees can be a spectacular way of improving productivity.

One last thing to consider is the technology that your organization uses. Implementing cloud-based collaboration software and communication solutions like VoIP and instant messaging can be a great way to help employees stay in touch and be more productive, regardless of where they are working. This helps your staff (especially those who might need help) stay in constant contact with those who can help them, allowing your team to be pro-

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Tech Trivia
86% of people try to plug their USB devices upside down.

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IT SAYS, "IN CASE OF DATA LOSS, POUR YOURSELF A DRINK..."
THAT'S NOT REALLY AN EFFECTIVE DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN...