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QUARTERLY

Newsletter

Fall 2015 | Vol. 1, Issue 1 | www.AureusConsultants.com | Phone: (209) 230-5818

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Now you can create, edit, and share easily between your PC and your mobile devices. *Page 2*

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YOUR COMPUTER NETWORK IS BEING HACKED!

Here are 7 critical security measures your business must have in place to have any chance of fending off these criminals

Your small business is under attack. Right now, extremely dangerous and well-funded cyber-crime rings are using sophisticated techniques to hack into thousands of small businesses to steal credit cards, blackmail you to recover data and swindle money directly out of your bank account.



82,000 NEW malware threats are being released every single day and HALF of the cyber-attacks occurring are aimed at small businesses just like yours. You just don't hear about it because it's kept quiet for fear of bad PR, lawsuits and sheer embarrassment.

The National Cyber Security Alliance reports that 1 in 5 small businesses have been victims of cyber-crime in the last year and this number is growing rapidly as businesses continue to move to cloud computing and mobile device, and to store more information online.

1. TRAIN EMPLOYEES ON SECURITY BEST PRACTICES.

The #1 vulnerability for business networks is the employees using them. If they don't know how to spot infected e-mails or online scams,

they could infect your entire network

2. CREATE AN ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP) AND ENFORCE IT!

An AUP outlines how employees are permitted to use company-owned PCs, devices, software, Internet access and e-mail. Having this type of policy is critical if your employees are using their own devices to access company e-mail and data.

3. REQUIRE STRONG PASSWORDS THROUGHOUT YOUR COMPANY.

Passwords should be at least 8 characters and contain lowercase and uppercase letters, symbols and at least one number.

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5 Hot New Business Gadgets For The Cutting Edge Advantage

We've highlighted some new gadgets to introduce great time-saving advantages into your daily operations and give you the competitive edge in your business.

- 1. Logitech Bluetooth Multi-Device Keyboard.** Designed for use with up to 3 devices regardless of computing platform, you can work on a report on your computer and (with a flick of the Easy-Switch dial) respond to a message on your smartphone or tablet.
- 2. G-DRIVE ev SSD.** Extreme solid-state performance made portable, it gives you transfer rates up to 400 MB/s with 512 GB of storage and a three-year warranty. The device connects with a USB 3.0 and is compatible with Mac OS 10.6, Windows 7, 8, and Vista.
- 3. Livescribe Echo Smartpen.** This is a rechargeable smartpen device that allows you to record audio while you're taking notes and play them back later. Also share and save interactive notes to your computer, iPad, or iPhone using a micro-USB with 400-800 hours of storage.
- 4. LaCie RuggedKey.** It's a data stick that fits on your keychain with 100 meter drop-resistant rubber construction, which means ultimate protection for your flash drive -and your data- from any clumsy stumble. With file transfer speeds up to 150 MB/s, it has a USB 3.0 interface that is backward compatible with USB 2.0 and also comes with AES 256-bit file encryption for greater security.
- 5. NEC VE281 Mobile Projector.** Designed to provide high brightness for small to medium-sized businesses, education environments, and corporate conference rooms, it includes 3D-ready technology, high-contrast images, and a powerful 7W speaker. The VE281 offers power-saving automated technologies and the Intelligent Driving Scheme (IDS2) for increased lamp life, making it also an eco-friendly choice.

MICROSOFT OFFICE 2016 ADDS NEW CROSS-PLATFORM FEATURES

Office now lets you create a document on your desktop or laptop and then seamlessly edit it on your phone or tablet, without having to move the file manually onto those devices - it's all about the cloud...

SINCE MICROSOFT RELEASED OFFICE 2016 LATE LAST MONTH, USERS HAVE ENJOYED EASIER CROSS-PLATFORM SHARING AND REAL-TIME CO-AUTHORING VIA THE CLOUD.

While this 2016 edition of the popular Microsoft Office Suite offers plenty of new features and cloud-based functionality, longtime Office users will be happy to hear that they haven't made any major changes to the ribbon UI, so it shouldn't break your work-flow.

Office 2013 introduced OneNote and cloud storage for your files, but the 2016 version takes it a step further by syncing your files across all of your devices, similar to Dropbox and Google Docs.

One new feature that really stands out in the new Microsoft Word is real-time co-authoring. You can now see what others are typing in real time when multiple people are editing a document stored on one of Microsoft's cloud

services. Unlike Google Docs (which lets multiple people edit the same document at the same time) however, only one person at a time can edit the document in Word.

Another interesting feature included with the new Office Suite is that a subscription to Office 365 will now give you the ability to work on documents on your Windows PC, Mac, iPhone, and Android tablet.

Considering that a subscription to Office 365 puts you on a permanent upgrade track and lets you use Office on basically any device, including 1TB OneDrive cloud storage, it's well worth the investment.

Office 365 also allows users to share calendars, contacts, and more without having to use an in-house server. If you are interested in how Office 365 can help you increase productivity in your business, call Aureus Consultants today! (209) 230-5818



St. Paul Lutheran School
2916 McKee Rd.
Merced, CA
(209) 383-3302

Amy Mello
Principal

The Gold Standard Spotlight

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

At St. Paul Lutheran School, we strive to develop lifelong learners who have a passion and a purpose to serve the Lord. A private Christian school serving children from preschool through grade six, St. Paul aims to develop 21st century learners guided by the Core Knowledge Curriculum. AuREUS Consultants has helped ease our transition as we strive to incorporate the use of technology into our classrooms. Their commitment to supporting our teachers and students as we expand our use of technology has been outstanding. Aureus Consultants is extremely responsive and has spent valuable time working with teachers to develop their "troubleshooting" skills and maximize their use of time on task in the classroom. We are thankful for their dedication!" -Amy Mello, Principal

DOES THE THOUGHT OF YOUR IN-HOUSE COMPUTER EXPERT LEAVING SCARE YOU TO DEATH?

Here's a scary question most businesses don't think about: what would happen if your computer guy suddenly quit? Most people think it would only be a temporary inconvenience when, in fact, the opposite is usually true. If you want to know how much you are really at risk, ask yourself the following 6 frightening questions:



1. DO YOU HAVE WRITTEN NETWORK DOCUMENTATION ABOUT YOUR COMPUTER NETWORK?

What software licenses do you own? What are the critical administrator passwords to your systems and devices? How is your computer network structured? What hardware do you own and when do your equipment warranties expire? Are there cloud vendors for email, online storage, hosted line of business applications, etc. that you don't currently have? You should NEVER allow a single IT person or company keep this information under their full control over your network and company. If they suddenly left for any reason, this could lead to huge consequences for your company.

2. DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR BACKUP FILES ARE STORED AND IF THEY ARE BEING STORED PROPERLY?

If you are like most business owners, you're too busy dealing with the "crisis of the day" to think about system backups and probably leave tasks to your

internal expert. If your database gets fried and your tech is nowhere to be found, you might be in a lot of trouble.

3. DO YOU HAVE A WRITTEN PLAN FOR RESTORING YOUR NETWORK FAST IN THE CASE OF A DISASTER?

If you don't have a fully tested disaster recovery plan for your office, you could be at serious risk without ever knowing it until something happens.

4. DO YOU KNOW WHERE ALL OF YOUR SOFTWARE IS STORED?

Bad things can happen to computers and servers, and the situation can be made worse if you are not prepared. Taking a minute to organize and store your software in a secure place can save you a considerable chunk of money in the event that you need to restore a program on your systems. If you don't have access to the software or don't know where it is located, you might be forced to buy the software again.

5. DO YOU KNOW WHAT ROUTINE MAINTENANCE IS BEING DONE ON YOUR NETWORK?

I know that the very idea of learning about and keeping track of all the servers, workstations, and peripherals on your network is about as welcome as a black cat crossing your path, but it is important information to maintain. If your in-house expert leaves, who will take over?

6. DO YOU KNOW HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM AN UGLY SECURITY BREACH IF YOUR IN-HOUSE COMPUTER EXPERT LEAVES?

What happens if your in-house expert splits with no warning AND has access to your company's network? As soon as humanly possible, you should disable his or her access, including remote access to your network and all cloud based applications.

"Your Computer Network is Being Hacked"

(Continued from page 1)

4. KEEP YOUR NETWORK UP-TO-DATE.

New vulnerabilities are found almost daily on common software programs you use all the time; therefore it's critical you patch and update systems frequently.

5. HAVE AN EXCELLENT BACKUP.

A quality backup can foil even the most aggressive ransom-ware attacks, where a hacker locks up your files and holds them ransom until you pay up. If your files are backed up, you don't have to pay to get your data back.

6. DON'T ALLOW EMPLOYEES TO DOWNLOAD UNAUTHORIZED SOFTWARE.

One of the fastest ways to access your network is by embedding malicious code in seemingly harmless apps.

7. DON'T SCRIMP ON A GOOD FIREWALL.

Your firewall is the front-line defense against hackers, so you need a really good one, with monitoring and maintenance done regularly.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO FOR PROFESSIONAL IT SERVICES 'TIME SECURE' IS A NEW WAY TO BUDGET YOUR IT EXPENSES

Time Secure and Time Secure Proactive offers a unique approach that gives local business owners the power to choose pre-paid technician time — and get huge discounts!

Aureus customers have spoken and the team at Aureus Consultants went back to the drawing board to give the people what they want. Now you can take advantage of discounted rates and pay-as-you go service by purchasing technician time in advance. Pre-paid hours will never expire and you decide how much you want to buy, even just having one hour on the books will keep you from being caught with your guard down when computer problems pop up. Plus, if you decide to get more than 6 hours at a time, you can pay the balance in installments over 6 months. Don't wait for a problem to happen first, or you'll be stuck paying full standard rates without the option to make payments.

Find out more about Time Secure at www.aureusconsultants.com/time-secure

Enter the "Time Secure" Raffle Contest!

We are so excited to offer our new pay-as-you-go service and we don't want anybody to miss out on these huge savings, so we thought we would sweeten the deal for all our customers. Any business that purchases at least 3 hours of "Time Secure" before November 30th will be entered into a raffle to **receive a \$50 gift card from Best Buy**. So, whether you decide to get only 3 hours of prepaid service or to take advantage of our payment plan and get a big chunk of technician time upfront, we'll sweeten the deal with a chance to win!

Meet The Team



Ashley Smith-Jenkins, President / IT Engineer
asmithj@aureusconsultants.com

Ashley has vast experience in the information technology field relating to computer and network services, including web development. For the past 21 years, Ashley has provided computer consulting and implementation for his customers. Ashley's

educational experience includes a Bachelor's in Business Administration at the California State University of Fresno, as well as a being CompTIA A+ Certified.



Mike Steen, Products & Services Adviser
msteen@aureusconsultants.com

Mike has been a resident of the city of Merced since 2008, where he began working as a health insurance broker/agent who specializing in benefit packages for self-employed people. He continues to be involved with the community and, in addition

to serving on the Board of Directors for a local nonprofit, has been an active supporter of the Merced Art Hop, as well as an advocate for wounded veterans and the disabled. He received his Bachelor's from Sonoma State University in 2000.

Is your AT&T bill too high? Frustrated with slow Internet speeds?

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Authorized Connector

Aureus Consultants, Inc. is a computer consulting firm and IT Service Provider headquartered in Merced, CA. We offer the gold standard in providing professional IT services with the most affordable options for local small-mid sized businesses.

Contact:

AuREUS Consultants, Inc.
P.O. Box 3529
Merced, CA 95344-1529
Phone: (209) 230-5818
www.AureusConsultants.com