

*Tech News for Your Small Business!*

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### Creating Process Documentation



Businesses are driven by processes. More often than not, these processes are fairly definitive - do this, then do that, then do the other thing - and require a set order of operations. There also happen to be a lot of these processes, which makes it important that they are well-documented so you and your employees can refer to this documentation later. Here, we'll offer a few tips on how to best document a task.

#### Step One: Preparation and Accessibility

When it comes to documentation, you need to remember the importance of playing to the middle. With the exception of tasks that are remarkably specific by nature, producing documentation that is too specific won't be nearly as helpful. Of course, you also need to avoid creating documentation that is too open-ended - leaving...



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## From the Desk of Helder Machado



Spring is here! It is the season for renewal and new beginnings.

With that in mind, April is Records and Information Management month. It is essentially spring cleaning for all the records you keep. Keeping records organized and in a safe place should always be a top priority on your list. Put reasonable amounts of security in place to keep your records safe. Keep in mind how critical it is to effectively manage the records and information. Your company's well-being depends on it! If you need any recommendations, or have questions, please contact us.

April is also Internship Awareness Month. We have two high school interns, Charles and Ernest, assisting us with various projects. It is a great way for them to learn and see if a career in IT is for them. This is another way that we believe in investing in our community. We want to see local talent stay in Worcester! Have you considered hiring interns for your office?

If you are like us, you cannot wait to get outdoors. We have several people in the office that enjoy a great walk around Worcester during their lunch breaks. We are also looking forward to the various outdoor sports starting up. And, the return of the Boston Red Sox, the 2018 MLB Champions.

We hope you enjoy the wonderful spring weather, and all its colors.



## Businesses Always Battle Risk



The way that an organization handles risk can make or break the company.

### Discovery

Say you run a retail business. When you have a surplus of one product and you are having problems getting rid of it, you put it on sale, right? The risk of having too much of one item is a simple one to manage. Not everything is that simple. That's why many businesses put together a committee of department representatives who discuss organizational shortcomings to help identify risks. In IT, risk largely results in downtime and data loss. These two factors are clearly defined, and therefore, can be tested for. How does any organization work to reduce or eliminate downtime and data loss? What practices or procedures could the organization put in place to mitigate the risk of suffering from those effects?

### Analysis

Start by singling out every system you have discovered that presents your business with some semblance of risk. Now, take the time to consider how each could be taken advantage of. Define what practical solutions are available to keep the individual systems from exposing the organization to more risk, and then, once you've identified all your potential weaknesses, begin the process of planning a strategy.

By analyzing the most critical possibilities first, and then running tests on corresponding systems to see what the potential damage could be if the risks are not reduced, you will get

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## Monitoring Your Network is a Great Way to Build Reliability



There are certain processes within an organization that take a considerable amount of time to do.

These include applying patches, monitoring network traffic, and updating software as needed. While it might seem like something your business can handle on its own, some small organizations struggle to accomplish everything they set out to do--especially with a limited budget or workforce. Our staff's powerful monitoring and management tool can aid in this initiative.

### The Everyday Situation

Small business owners know all about the pains of working with limited resources. More often than not, they don't have a dedicated IT department to handle their operational needs. They

instead rely on other employees to pick up the slack when it's necessary. In cases like this, employees are often not trained on how to do specific tasks, meaning that any attempts to apply patches, update software, or other responsibilities run the risk of being done improperly or irregularly.

Furthermore, small businesses that do have an in-house IT department likely have a small one--maybe one or two technicians at the most--who have their hands full with countless little tasks, whether it's helping someone set up an email account or resetting someone's password. They might not have time to think about the important tasks, like making sure the latest vulnerability is patched to every single device on the network.

### How This Helps

One of the major benefits of remote maintenance comes from its namesake--the word "remote." The technicians

don't have to be on-site to administer the maintenance needed. They can be either in the office scheduling automatic updates, or they can be across the country. Either way, the result is that it gets done with minimal involvement on your part.

Your devices can also be monitored for suspicious activity. This is helpful if you have employees who work remotely. For example, with Machado Consulting technicians watching over your network, you can be alerted if someone with a suspicious IP address logs into your network.

To learn more about how you can implement (and automate) your network and infrastructure management, reach out to us at (508) 453-4700.



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## What Can You Do to Improve Data Recovery?



Nobody wants to talk about disaster recovery, even invoking the phrase makes disaster seem less

like a possibility and more like an inevitability. Unfortunately, this is something that has to be discussed, as your business depends on it.

The truth is that, without a backup and disaster recovery solution in place, your chances of redundancy are limited. A BDR solution can be a major preventative measure that can make all the difference.

### Determine Your RPO and RTO

Recovery Point Objective (RPO) and Recovery Time Objective (RTO) are both key components of data backup and disaster recovery. RPO and RTO correspond to how much data you want to

back up, and how much time you have to recover your data before consequences strike, respectively. The primary goal that you want to aim for is to back up as much data as you think you need to get back into a proper operational standpoint. This should also prioritize recovery time, keeping it to a minimum and thereby eliminating downtime and data loss.



### Figure Out Where Your Backups Are Stored

After you know how much data you need to back up and how long you have to restore a backup, the next step is to figure out where you want to store your backups. Storing them on-site can be risky, as the site of the disaster scenario is often in-house. Still, you want to have at least one copy on-premise, supplemented by copies of your data

off-site in a data center and in the cloud.

### Test Your Backups to Ensure Reliability

What if you experience a disaster and your data recovery solution doesn't work? This is the worst-case scenario, and one that you want to actively avoid by routinely testing your data backups. This ensures that they aren't corrupted or damaged when you need them most. With so many responsibilities on your plate every day, it's not surprising that a lot of organizations turn to third parties to make sure it all gets done.

Machado Consulting can help your business with any aspect of data backup and disaster recovery implementation, from deciding on a solution to testing backups to ensure they work as intended. To learn more, reach out to us at (508) 453-4700.



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## Businesses Always Battle Risk

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a good idea of what kind of capital outlay it is going to take, in products, services, and manpower, to keep risks from sinking your endeavor.

Set priorities in your risk analysis. Look at your assessment of risk, the potential cost of mitigating that risk, and the possible effect risks could have if they aren't addressed. The ones that could cause the most problems for the most important systems get priority.

### Controls

Once you are finished inventorying your organization's risk factors and assigning priority, you have to begin placing controls in these systems to mitigate the risk of systemic failure. In this case, controls are typically policies or tools that allow for the management of risk. Many times, if it is a problem for your organization, it is a problem for another business, and they may have some documentation or some advice on how they

went about implementing a solution to the problem. Additionally, organizations like the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) will have a suggested (and often tested) framework available to help you find, and deploy a solution to your problem.

### Monitoring and Reporting

Once your controls are in place and functioning effectively, your organization will want to closely monitor them. Monitoring will allow you to get a good idea of how effective your controls are at patching your operational problems and mitigating risk. Fixes can be simple or convoluted and difficult, but ultimately by keeping a close eye on your changes, you'll at the very least, be able to get a picture of what the true cost of any problem's solution is costing your company.

Another benefit of monitoring is that it provides you the perspective you need to properly report your organization's

attempts at risk mitigation. These reports will allow organizational decision makers the critical information they need to make important determinations about risk management attempts and can be a crucial element if your organization manages data that fall under regulatory mandates.

By being steadfast in your risk mitigation efforts, thoroughly monitoring them, and building comprehensive reports you will make some major inroads in the way that your business handles risk. Reducing risk promotes a culture of success. If you are looking to learn more about risk mitigation, management, and practices used to create a more efficient and secure business, call the IT professionals at Machado Consulting today at (508) 453-4700.



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## Innovations in Your Office's Technology Can Bring Big Benefits



Technology innovation in the workplace is something that is constantly shifting and changing,

depending on various industry demands. We'll walk you through some of our favorites to improve data accessibility and workplace productivity as a whole.

### Meeting Technologies

With a rise in remote workers, convenient, cost-effective video-conferencing technologies are essential. Compare products and invest in solutions that allow virtual meetings frequent and user friendly. Interactive whiteboards are another way you can help your employees make the most of their meetings. Meetings should be accessible anytime, anywhere, giving your employees the tools to meet whenever it's

most convenient for them, regardless of physical location or connection to the workplace.



### Software Integration

It's no surprise that software integration will play a critical role in the workplace of the future. Thanks to software developers building APIs (Application Program Interface), your software solutions often have the opportunity to play nice with your productivity tools, whether they are new systems that you have recently put in place or are established ones on your in-house network. It's likely that the future will hold APIs in higher esteem moving forward, as so many

modern businesses value integration than ever before.

### Intranet Solutions

Your organization's applications need to be found in a place where anyone on your staff can access them. To this end, an intranet solution can help create a single point of access for any and all of your business' critical assets. An intranet can also be a great location for access to important information, like your employee handbook and other policies. Think of it as a portal to all of your organization's most important information.

### Cloud-Based Services

When you store data and applications in the cloud, you're creating an infrastructure that can be accessed on demand at any time from any location, as long as the user has the correct viewing or...



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## 3 Reasons You Want Experts Handling Your IT



Stop and consider something: Who do you turn to when your business' toilets suddenly stop working? Who do you call for when the lights stop working? Most likely, an expert... so if you turn to the pros for these needs, why would you do anything different for your IT?

Here, we'll present the value of turning to the IT experts at Machado Consulting for your business' technology needs. These values can effectively be broken down into three essential qualities that our services - known as managed services - are built around.

### Predictable Productivity

Regardless of a business' size, this is a primary concern: are they able to sustain their operations at a rate that means

that they can remain open? This is one of the reasons that productivity is such a big buzzword in IT - the influence a given solution can have on a business' productivity can easily make or break it over time. Try asking your employees how much they can accomplish if their computers don't work - they'll probably tell you how important an operational solution is to your business in no uncertain terms.

With a managed service provider (or MSP) like Machado Consulting managing your solutions, you can be sure that your technology is maintained. This way, your employees won't find themselves stymied by technical issues out of their control.

### Protection

Once upon a time, a business could be protected by storing their documents in a safe and

keeping the combination a secret. However, in today's increasingly collaborative world, the safe has been made impractical. This means that your data needs to be both accessible to those who need it to meet the productivity standards we discussed above, as well as secured against cyberthreats and other risk factors, like data loss.

An MSP like Machado Consulting can implement the various solutions needed to ensure that this balance is achieved, allowing you the security to focus on your business. With the confidence that our services and solutions--including integrated security measures and business continuity with backups--can provide, you can breathe easy, knowing that your data stores are secure.

### Professionals Pulling For You

As you may have noticed by now, most of the qualities of an MSP's services that we've discussed thus far revolve around you receiving the managed support that gives providers like Machado Consulting their self-explanatory title. However, that only scratches the service. When your MSP's team is made...

## About Us

Machado Consulting supports small to mid-sized organizations by providing high quality, customer focused, managed IT services. Our team of expert network engineers & helpdesk technicians manage IT infrastructure from phones to cybersecurity and streamline communications with third party vendors. As a veteran-owned IT consulting firm, our work ethic is motivated by service & marked by a dedication to efficiency, quality & community.



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