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Keep Employees Off of Distracting Websites



As incredible a tool as the Internet truly is, for every website that is beneficial to the workplace,

there is another that is certainly the opposite. Naturally, it is these sites that your employees would most likely want to visit if left to their own devices. Sometimes, the best course of action is to remove the temptation and block these websites. For this week's tip, we'll talk about a few ways to do so...



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About Us

Machado Consulting provides a wide range of solutions for small to medium sized businesses. We offer top notch, well-rounded solutions and expert project planning at reasonable costs. Don't see a particular solution you're looking for? Give us a call and let us know what your business needs are. We'll do anything we can to make your business dreams a reality.

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Should High-Speed Internet Access Be a Luxury?



With so many new technologies being introduced and innovation at the highest levels in human history, you'd think that ubiquitous access to bandwidth Internet would be high on the list of the priorities of ISPs and for residents of every jurisdiction. This doesn't seem to be the case. With the disparity between urban and rural bandwidth Internet offerings growing by the day, we look at the causes of the gap and how companies plan on getting Internet access to people in areas where the population may be low.

A little background would tell you just how much some places are behind others. To start, 15 million Americans don't have access to broadband Internet. Beyond that, they pay more for it than almost any people in a first-world nation; and, if that wasn't enough, the average speed available is slower and less reliable. Furthermore, it seems as if the Federal Communications Commission, the federal regulator of such things, finds no problem with this--and if there was a cherry on top, they seem to be foregoing assessment and analysis of the problem for more nationalistic rhetoric stating that new strategies that have been implemented after the fall of net neutrality laws are "removing barriers to infrastructure investment, promoting competition, and restoring the longstanding bipartisan light-touch regulatory framework."

This despite two FCC commissioners saying things like the FCC's statement is "ridiculous and irresponsible," and "biased, flawed, and woefully incomplete." The politicization of what traditionally is an objective report, is one of the many problems that the people of the United States are facing in regard to Internet availability. Unfortunately, this has been an ongoing problem for the better part of two decades. Let's move away from politics to look at some of the ways that the country is making out with Internet access.

Internet Service Providers

An Internet Service Provider (ISP) is a company that, well...provides Internet service and support to customers. ISPs don't have to be huge media conglomerates, but many of them

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How the IoT Can Be a Security Risk



The Internet of Things means a lot more than just enhanced connectivity. In particular, you'll have a considerable security risk associated with the Internet of Things. It's clear that the more devices accessing a network, the more risk will be associated with that network, which is where the inherent risk of the Internet of Things comes into play. How can you control the number of devices accessing your network, and thus secure your business from the Internet of Things?

Understanding why security is such an issue for Internet of Things devices is critical to keeping your business secure from these devices.

Too Many Devices

The more threats are associated with a particular industry, the more likely you'll encounter a threat. This is not conjecture--it's reality. When you consider how many devices now have connectivity compared to the past, you might realize that these fears regarding the Internet

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Understanding RPO and RTO



Data backup. Nobody wants to think about it until it's too late to do anything about it.

While no business ever hopes that they will be struck by a data loss incident, no business will ever regret implementing a backup on the off-chance that they ever suffer from a worst-case scenario. What are some of the most important parts of a data backup and business continuity system? We'll start with Recovery Point Objective and Recovery Time Objective.

While they might sound similar, RPO and RTO are two very different things that work toward the same ultimate goal of sustaining your business' continuity in the event of some catastrophe.

Recovery Point Objective

When you picture your business suffering from a data loss incident, just how

much data do you see yourself losing? Whether it's a considerable amount of data or just a couple of files, we want you under the impression that no amount of data loss is acceptable for your business--particularly because you can never know if that information will be restored again or not in the future. Your ultimate goal should be to minimize data loss by any means necessary, which leads us into the recovery point objective.

Basically, the Recovery Point Objective is a designated amount of data that your organization aims to restore in the event of a disaster. It's ideally 100%, and most modern backup solutions will help you reach this threshold. Incremental backups like those taken with a comprehensive Backup and Disaster Recovery (BDR) solution can help you toward this end.

Recovery Time Objective

The other half of BDR consists of the recovery time objective. How long does it take your business to recover in the event of a disaster? The idea is to

minimize this time, as downtime can be both expensive and risky for your organization. Any time when your business isn't functioning as intended due to data loss or otherwise constitutes downtime, and situations like these are costly--meaning that you should minimize them as often as possible.

Business continuity needs a minimal recovery time objective so that you can get right back in action following a data loss incident. The best way to accomplish this is through a Backup and Disaster Recovery (BDR) solution from Machado Consulting.

You can minimize data loss and restore your data backups directly to a temporary device so that your business doesn't have to wait any longer than needed to get back in action. To learn more, reach out to us at (508) 453-4700.



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Should High-Speed Internet Access Be a Luxury?

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are, and while they mostly provide in-home service, and "business-class" service, they do a lot more than that: they provide an essential service to everyone that needs it. It doesn't seem like there is any difference in the two, of course, but there is. It is this qualification that allowed FCC chairman Ajit Pai to effectively take down the net neutrality laws in 2017. It was all in the name to allow ISPs to be looked on as less of a utility (which they most certainly are) and more as a service; thus, paving the way for infrastructure investment.

So, in layman's terms, the ISPs needed incentive to build access to Internet where it wasn't, and have been given the run of the Internet to make this happen. That would be great if ISPs, especially the major ones, had a strategy in place to make these infrastructure investments, but it seems, at least on

the surface, that the only thing they did have a strategy for is to reap the benefits of the dissolution of the net neutrality laws.

No matter how you slice it, the ISPs that distribute broadband access in the U.S. (and in the U.K. for that matter) aren't doing a great job at serving their customers. As of May 2018, the United States ranks 47th in the world in average bandwidth speed, while the U.K. ranks 51st. At the same time, only four nations' businesses pay more for high-speed Internet than businesses do in the United States (at \$60.14 per month). At least in the U.K. the average price for high-speed Internet is under \$37 per month (\$36.83).

If those figures weren't bad enough, before the newest era of deregulations, ISPs have been accused of pocketing hundreds of millions of dollars for fiber

optic infrastructure that never materialized. Skeptics say that most of that was tax subsidy and it was utilized in creating many of the wireless networks that we all utilized today. So, whether or not the ISPs did, in fact, invest that money back into infrastructure or not, many people would argue that it was not what that money was appropriated for and that it should be a giant scandal. Since it wasn't, it's fair to assume that the truth is somewhere in the middle as many of these investments were made before the great recession at the end of the last decade. Besides a lot of that capital would have been going to state utility telecommunications contractors and not the ISPs themselves. If ISPs need public assistance to lay this infrastructure it stands to reason that the...



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How the IoT Can Be a Security Risk

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of Things aren't unfounded. You should go about organizing your business' security by imagining what you would do in a worst-case scenario in which at least one of these devices makes it past your organization's defenses. All it takes is a single weakness to bring down an entire network.

The issue with these devices is that they are often those that you wouldn't expect to traditionally have such connectivity. For example, you might not immediately think of cars, kitchen appliances, watches, or thermostats to have such functionality. These can be difficult to plan for if you're not careful.

Patches and Updates

When there are a lot of devices accessing a network, chances are that at least

one of them won't be up to snuff with its updates and patches. The incredible vastness of the Internet of Things all but guarantees that at least one of these devices is going to be out of date, placing your organization at risk. To make things even worse, some Internet of Things devices are created based off a trend that could very well be obsolete soon afterward, meaning that developers might not see the need to support the device beyond that timeframe. For example, if a device sells poorly and was created only to meet a specific need in the industry at the time, the developer may choose not to support it anymore as the investment simply isn't worth the return.

"The Internet of Things means a lot more than just enhanced connectivity."

Cloud Can Cover Most of Your Business Needs



The traditional computing structure has been under siege by cloud computing for the past several

years. More businesses than ever are seeing the value in cloud-hosted applications and infrastructure, and while that may not be a huge surprise, the perceptions that the cloud can solve any of your organizational computing problems depend largely on the needs of that endeavor. Today, we will take a look at successful small business cloud strategies and tell you why they find success.

Cloud for File Sharing

File sharing is the number one reason any small business moves some of their computing to the cloud. Cooperation is essential to small business success, and a cloud-based file sharing solution gives any small business near-ubiquitous access to data. This access allows work to be completed from multiple locations, giving the small businesses great benefit

as it makes them competitive with larger organizations who have more people and more resources. This allows small businesses to take charge over more of the market than ever before, increasing revenues and promoting business growth.

Cloud for Communications

Another avenue a lot of small businesses are taking is using cloud-hosted communications services. Like many other cloud-hosted applications, it can save a company quite a bit of money switching to a VoIP system or public-cloud-hosted email solution. What about functionality? Cloud-hosted VoIP is actually a great solution for any organization looking for a feature-rich phone platform and wants to do away with their traditional phone bill. With feature-rich packages, any organization can get the customized VoIP solution that fits in their budget and provides them options for messaging, conferencing, and enterprise-level phone services.

Hosted email can provide a lot of benefits, as well. It eliminates the costs associated with the hosting and management of the email server, while

Even if you can't control the devices of others, you can control the ones that access your organization's sensitive data. You can start by taking a look at the specific permissions of your business' users and their devices. A good practice is to never give employees access to information that they don't need to do their jobs properly. After all, the more people who can access data, the more likely that a device could be compromised and expose that data to threats.

Machado Consulting can help your business manage devices and access control on its network. To learn more, reach out to us at (508) 453-4700.



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providing users enhanced functionality that includes added message encryption, instant messaging integration, and much more.

Cloud for Storage

When you think about cloud storage, the first thing that must come to mind are the hundreds of gigabytes that many cloud storage providers just give away to anyone that signs up for their services; and the affordable options individual users can explore to gain a substantial amount of cloud storage space. The issue for small businesses is that public cloud hosted storage facilities don't provide them the control over their data that most of them would like. This is why you see organizations building their own private cloud inhouse or collocate it to a data center where they have full control over the data.

The benefits of cloud storage are that data is accessible from anywhere, giving a business increased mobility that can definitely benefit them over time...



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Some Providers are Offering Blockchain as a Service



There's a big risk associated with implementing any new

technology solution for your organization. For one, it's difficult to know how a specific solution will run without first implementing it. This leads many businesses to avoid implementing a new solution for fear that it won't be worth the investment. On the other hand, if they fail to implement a new solution, they could potentially lose out on valuable new tools they could use to succeed. How can you get around this issue?

One of the most relevant examples is blockchain technology. There are quite a number of great uses for the blockchain in a modern business environment, but the most practical among these might warrant at least a little bit of hesitation on the business owner's side of things.

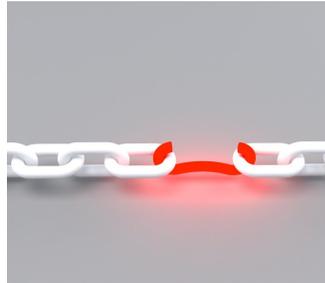
It makes sense that a lot of organizations might be skeptical about implementing blockchain without taking a closer look at the numbers. Blockchain is still new enough that there will be second thoughts before any organization implements it. According to the 2018 CIO Survey by Gartner, only one

percent of CIOs have adopted blockchain technology for business purposes, whereas about eight percent of them have plans to do so in the future. Similarly, 77 percent say that there is no interest whatsoever in implementing blockchain technology.

Those who do plan on adopting blockchain technology soon have found that it will likely not be a simple task. 13 percent of organizations with plans to do so say that in order to implement blockchain technology, they would have to make significant changes to their IT department, whereas 14 percent believe that a culture shift is necessary to accommodate this. 18 percent also found that it was difficult to find staff who were capable of working with blockchain technology, and 23 percent found that blockchain demanded the newest skill development out of any other new technology solution they could implement.

Some service providers have taken advantage of this deficit in use by offering Blockchain as a Service. This type of business model actually saves organizations the pain of adopting blockchain technology by making it so your employees don't have to have specific blockchain-related skills in order to take

advantage of it. Since there is little to no investment in blockchain involved on your end, you can take full advantage of services like these through providers like Amazon, IBM, Microsoft, and more.



There are considerable challenges for this approach, but it's a much more attractive option for organizations that have limited budgets or workforces. What this accomplishes is that you can take advantage of blockchain without making any huge investment. Of course, this also means that there will be issues related to compliance and regulation to deal with, but it's easier to think about these when you know you have a solid way of implementing and affording the service in the first place.

How would your business utilize Blockchain as a Service?



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There are many different IT companies out there that you could choose to handle your account, but there's only one that won't see you as just an account. At Machado Consulting we prefer to think of our clients as partners, working together with the owners and employees to make that company the best it can be. Business owners have a lot on their plates. Leave the worrying about being up to date on the latest business technology and leveraging that technology up to us.



Helder Machado
CEO

Tech Trivia

Facebook accounts for approximately 21% of ALL social media referral traffic in the world.

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