



# MK Tech Wire



## What's New

With recent attacks by cybercriminals on the Colonial Pipeline, JBS Meats, and the Nantucket Ferry, it is critical that you know if you are protected from the impact of ransomware. Do you know the answer to these questions?

1. How often are backups run?
2. When was the backup last tested?
3. Do we train our staff on cybersecurity?
4. Are credentials immediately removed when an employee leaves?
5. Do we have cyber insurance?

Call us today for a free ransomware readiness test at 954-324-1691

## June 2021



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Matt Kinsey, CEO of MK Tech Group, Inc.

Our Mission: To build a community of successful-minded entrepreneurs that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and expands the capacity of all members to achieve great things.



## Don't Let Your Employees Become Your Biggest Vulnerability

A couple years ago, *TechRepublic* ran a story with the following headline: "Employees Are Almost As Dangerous To Business As Hackers And Cybercriminals." From the perspective of the business, you might think that's simply inaccurate. Your company strives to hire the best people it can find - people who are good at their jobs and would never dream of putting their own employer at risk.

And yet, many employees do, and it's almost always unintentional. Your employees aren't thinking of ways to compromise your network or trying to put malware or ransomware on company computers, but it happens. One Kaspersky study found that 52% of businesses recognize that their employees are "their biggest weakness in IT security."

Where does this weakness come from? It stems from several different things and varies from business to business,

but a big chunk of it comes down to employee behavior.

### Human Error

We all make mistakes. Unfortunately, some mistakes can have serious consequences. Here's an example: an employee receives an e-mail from their boss. The boss wants the employee to buy several gift cards and then send the gift card codes to them as soon as possible. The message may say, "I trust you with this," and work to build urgency within the employee.

The problem is that it's fake. A scammer is using an e-mail address similar to what the manager, supervisor or other company leader might use. It's a phishing scam, and it works. While it doesn't necessarily compromise your IT security internally, it showcases gaps in employee knowledge.

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Another common example, also through e-mail, is for cybercriminals to send files or links that install malware on company computers. The criminals once again disguise the e-mail as a legitimate message from someone within the company, a vendor, a bank or another company the employee may be familiar with.

It's that familiarity that can trip up employees. All criminals have to do is add a sense of urgency, and the employee may click the link without giving more thought.

### Carelessness

This happens when an employee clicks a link without thinking. It could be because the employee doesn't have training to identify fraudulent e-mails or the company might not have a comprehensive IT security policy in place.

Another form of carelessness is unsafe browsing habits. When employees browse the web, whether it's for research or anything related to their job or for personal use, they should always do so in the safest way possible. Tell

employees to avoid navigating to "bad" websites and to not click any link they can't verify (such as ads).

Bad websites are fairly subjective, but one thing any web user should look for is "https" at the beginning of any web address. The "s" tells you the site is secure. If that "s" is not there, the website lacks proper security. If you input sensitive data into that website, such as your name, e-mail address, contact information or financial information, you cannot verify the security of that information and it may end up in the hands of cybercriminals.

Another example of carelessness is poor password management. It's common for people to use simple passwords and to use the same passwords across multiple websites. If your employees are doing this, it can put your business at a huge risk. If hackers get ahold of any of those passwords, who knows what they might be able to access. A strict password policy is a must for every business.

### Turn Weakness Into Strength

The best way to overcome the human weakness in your IT security is education. An IT security policy is a good start, but it must be enforced and understood. Employees need to know what behaviors are unacceptable, but they also need to be aware of the threats that exist. They need resources they can count on as threats arise so they may be dealt with properly. Working with an MSP or IT services firm may be the answer - they can help you lay the foundation to turn this weakness into a strength.

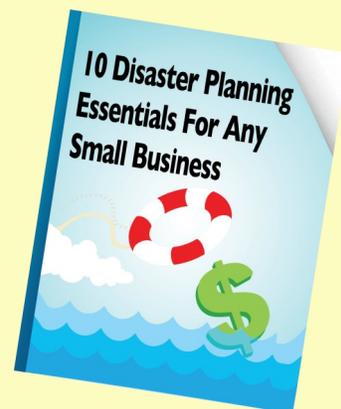
**"One Kaspersky study found that 52% of businesses recognize that their employees are 'their biggest weakness in IT security.'"**

## FREE Report: The 10 Disaster Planning Essentials For Any Small Business

Don't lose everything you've worked so hard to achieve in an instant!

This report will reveal important planning strategies you should have in place now to protect yourself from common data-erasing disasters including natural hazards, human error, cyber criminals, hardware failure, software corruption and other IT failures.

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## Vendor Spotlight

TRACI.net is a communications consulting and solutions provider specializing in virtualizing phone systems which allows employees to work from anywhere. Founded in 1987 as a telephone answering service, TRACI.net has continued to evolve with everchanging technology to keep their customers at the forefront.

TRACI.net works with all the top carriers in the industry ensuring that customers get the best solution to meet their needs at a price they can afford. They offer a free communications consultation to go over your phone and internet services. Most companies are over paying for service and/or lacking features that could help them grow their business. TRACI.net takes the pain out of managing communications allowing their customers to focus on running their businesses. They become your one call for your communications needs and issues which frees you up to focus on running your business, not sitting on hold.

During the pandemic TRACI.net kept their customers up and running working from home. They also came up with a product targeted at restaurants that eliminates busy signals with call queueing in the cloud, freeing up staff to handle calls at their own pace for takeout orders and restaurant information all with lower pricing than most were paying for basic phone lines.

TRACI.net has the right solution at the right price and it will cost you nothing to have them look at your current situation. **They can be reached at 800-881-8899 or [sales@traci.net](mailto:sales@traci.net).**

## From Start-Ups To Best Places To Work: How Culture Changes Everything

There are two parts to culture: people and systems. On the people side, consider the "Empathy Accountability Continuum." Empathy is at one end of the spectrum and accountability at the other.

Then, based on who you are dealing with and the context of the conversation, figure out where you need to be on that continuum. The more you get to know someone, the easier it becomes to choose the right moment in time to lean toward either empathy or accountability.

How do you know where to land on the scale? Be curious about the people on your team as well as people in the world around you. Ask what they are doing and how they are doing it.

A big part of maintaining curiosity and understanding also comes from being calm and connected. You can't have a connection with your people unless you are calm. It's part of being a leader within your organization.

To that effect, you need to be able to lead yourself and know where you are on the Empathy Accountability Continuum. We can't lead others unless we can lead ourselves. So, we have to understand our own fears and concerns. Then it becomes easier to make those connections.

On the systems side of things, you have to "discover the core": your core purpose and core values, which tell you what is important to you and your business.

As part of that, you also need to document the future. Plan, strategize and put it into writing. Where are you going? What is your vision?



What is your BHAG (big, hairy, audacious goal)? What is your 10-year obsession?

Once you plan and put your future into writing, you have to execute relentlessly. This is how you make sure you get there. Live your system – use daily rituals like huddles and make sure they are useful. You should be constantly talking about your core values and goals.

Of course, as part of building a strong culture, you need a robust recruiting process. Find the right people and keep them engaged. Have a multistep and multiperson process when hiring and use a scorecard (a very detailed job description) when recruiting.

When you bring it all together – people and systems – be sure to show more love. Make sure there is peer recognition and recognition from leadership on a regular basis. Send them cards on their anniversary or birthday. Even have a budget for when bad stuff happens in people's lives.

But don't rush your culture. Take it one piece at a time – do something every day to work at it and build something great.



*Tristan White is the founder and CEO of The Physio Co, a unique health care company based in Australia. While he's led The Physio Co, the company has been ranked one of Australia's 50 Best Places To Work for 11 consecutive years. In building this fast-growing company, White authored the book Culture Is Everything and started a podcast, Think Big Act Small. Learn more at [TristanWhite.com](http://TristanWhite.com) and see his Petra Coach webinar at [PetraCoach.com/from-start-up-to-best-places-to-work-how-culture-changes-everything-with-tristan-white](http://PetraCoach.com/from-start-up-to-best-places-to-work-how-culture-changes-everything-with-tristan-white)*

## ■ Are You Stuck In The Self-Employment Trap?

Many people go the self-employment route in order to have more control over their days, in search of a better work/life balance. But reality soon becomes very different: long hours while you pour everything into the business. This leads to burnout. What actions can you take to avoid or escape this trap?

**Delegate More Tasks.** This is hard to do, especially when you want things to go just right. Turn your attention to hiring one or more employees who are up to the challenge and can meet your needs. It might take a while to find the ideal match, but it's worth it to find someone who can take on crucial tasks and help you achieve your goals.

**Inspect Your Systems And Processes.** Across the board, you need systems and processes in place. When you have a framework to follow, it makes it much easier to

reclaim your time and energy. Inc., Feb. 18, 2021

## ■ Make The Most Of Your Remote Workforce

More people are working at home. With a spread-out workforce, businesses face new challenges that they didn't face with the traditional in-office model. Now, as businesses adapt, they are looking for ways to get more out of their remote workforce.

### 1. They're Reorganizing.

Businesses are taking a hard look at their internal structure, along with systems and processes. They're shifting the way they hire by raising their expectations. Along with that, they're redoing the way they onboard and train. They're relearning to do everything remotely, and tools like Slack and Zoom are taking center stage.

**2. They're Investing In Technology.** Businesses are bringing new tools and tech into the mix. They're investing in

communication and collaboration tools. They're relying heavily on the cloud and VPNs. They're also buying devices like laptops and PCs for their remote workforce to ensure everyone is using the same, approved technology – which makes support and security more efficient. Inc., Feb. 27, 2021

## ■ Use Technology To Make Your Business Stand Out

Today's workforce is more tech-savvy than ever before. This means your business should be as well. You want to attract good talent, and leveraging your own tech prowess can be a way to do just that.

Think about how you engage with social media. Is it something that's just there or is it something you're using to actively reach out and connect with customers, potential customers and your community? TikTok, for example, relies on a powerful algorithm to reach specific audiences. Businesses can take advantage of that to get content, including ads, to relevant eyes. According to Hootsuite, TikTok pushes for five million daily impressions for certain ads.

Taking it a step further, you can mix AI with human communication. Chatbots are more advanced than ever and can seriously impact lead generation. Chatbots also direct users to real people to continue the conversation on specific terms. Basically, there are more ways to customize how you communicate, and it's worth investing in. Forbes, March 12, 2021

