# Congratulations CTTS!

AUSTIN BUSINESS JOURNAL

Each year the Austin Business Journal names the top Network Integration Firms in Central Texas in their weekly publication.

For the 12th consecutive year CTTS has made that list!

Achieving such recognition is a wonderful accomplishment for both our Clients and our CTTS Team. It is recognition that we are the leader in cloud computing and Managed IT Services for the Austin area.

We would like to thank all of our Clients for making it possible once again for us to achieve this recognition. We know that the key to our growth and success is a direct result of having great Clients that trust us to manage their Information Technology each day.
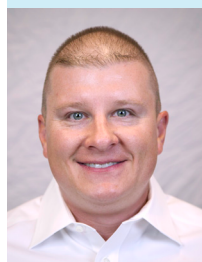
This monthly publication provided courtesy of Josh Wilmoth, CEO of CTTS, Inc.

"As a business owner, you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we shine! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"

You're Better Off Giving Your Employees A $1,000 Bonus Than Being Cheap With Technology

Imagine, for a minute, that you're the CEO of a scrappy, promising new start-up. In the beginning, it was just you and two other employees working on dinky PCs out of a 12-by-12-foot office, but times are picking up and the company is heading into the uncharted waters of rapid growth.

As the business moves into the public eye — and, in turn, the hungry eyes of potential hackers — it's become obvious that you're going to need to lock down your data. At this critical stage, a cyber-attack could mean the death of everything you and your team have built.

But the budget is looking lean. Everything you've done so far has been by the skin of your teeth, so why should security be any different? You put one of your more tech-savvy employees on the case, tasking him

with finding the cheapest cyber security solutions available. Sure, he may not be an expert, but he understands computers. What could go wrong?

He scours the web, perusing dozens of "Top 5 Cheap Firewall Software" articles, and, with the help of a scrappy how-to guide, installs what seems to be the best of the lot on your servers and across all your computers. The entire process takes 10 hours, and costs the company next to nothing.

Potential crisis averted, you turn your attention to other matters. We'll revisit our cyber security later, you think, once we have a little more financial wiggle room.

Across the following year, the company's success skyrockets. The phone is ringing off the hook, new

business is flooding in and your profit margin is exploding. You even ended up snagging a feature in Entrepreneur magazine. Your company is the envy of all your peers.

That is, until the day that you get hacked. One morning, an advanced strain of ransomware easily sidesteps your free antivirus and starts wreaking havoc. It slithers through your systems and locks you out of everything, from client data to basic Word documents, and encrypts it behind a paywall, demanding $50,000 in Bitcoin or you'll lose access to all of it — forever.

You couldn't make room in your budget for a robust cyber security solution. Well, how does that $50K ransom strike you?

"The fact is, when your time, money and business are on the line, it simply doesn't pay to be cheap when choosing your cyber security technology."

This may sound like nothing more than a horror story, but in reality, this happens to business owners all over the world each and every day. An IBM security study from last December discovered that over half of businesses surveyed had paid over $10,000 in ransomware payoffs, with 20% paying over $40,000. And that's not even including the millions of dollars of damage caused by other forms of malicious software every year.

The fact is, when your time, money and business are on the line, it simply doesn't pay to be cheap when choosing your cyber security technology.

Think of it this way. Say, with your free antivirus, you're "saving" $100 a month. Lo and behold, a virus manages to punch its way through and causes chaos throughout the company server. Even if you're lucky and it isn't ransomware, by the time you've managed to expunge the stubborn virus from your business, you'll have put in countless man-hours, guaranteed to cost you more than that $100 a month. Instead of throwing those thousands of dollars down the drain, you'd be better off giving each of your employees a $1,000 bonus!
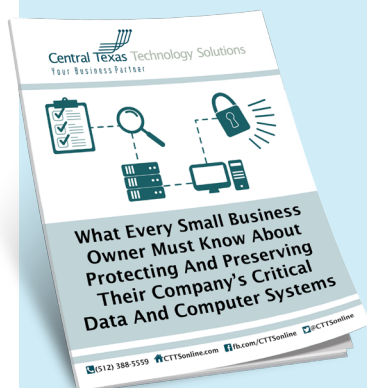
Free antivirus software, giveaway cyber-protection, or a $5 firewall seems like a great idea, until a hacker cuts through your company's defenses like a warm knife through butter. These guys love when they see these outdated, cheapo barriers guarding your priceless data — those are the paper-thin defenses that keep hackers in business.

You wouldn't buy a rusty, secondhand old lock for your house, so why are you installing primitive cyber security software to protect your most precious company resources?

In today's world of rampant cybercrime, it's inevitable that somebody will come knocking at your digital door. When that day comes, do you want a free piece of software that you saw on LifeHacker, or a tried-and-tested, up-to-the-minute, comprehensive security solution?

Don't be shortsighted and risk everything just to save a quick buck. Invest in your company's future, and protect yourself with the most powerful tools on the market.

Cloud-Based Phone Systems

Your phone solution doesn't have to be costly or complicated. Cloud-based phone systems are growing more and more popular, and with good reason.

Simply put, cloud-based phone systems are software-based phone systems that store and transfer voice and data on a server that is accessed via the Internet. As such, these systems do not require on-premises hardware or equipment. Additionally, these phone systems are able to fit users with standard functions—the ability to deliver calls over the Internet, route inbound calls correctly, etc.—as well as include extensive VoIP features such as call recording, voice mail transcription, virtual numbers and more.

For the month of October, we are offering FREE installation for any Client that moves forward with our trusted VoIP partner, Nextiva. **See the blue insert for options and more information.**

To discover how easy it is to migrate your current phone system to the cloud, go to http://bit.ly/CTTS-VoIP or call our office at (512) 388-5559

A Diverse Team Is More Productive

Everyone knows the saying, "If you build it, they will come," from the 1989 film Field Of Dreams. Well, the same rule applies to the type of work environment you create, and, as a result, how diverse your team becomes. Diversity may not happen overnight, but you can be sure that a diverse team means a broader range of perspectives brought to the problem-solving table. When employees feel accepted and comfortable in their workplace, you can expect them to take more chances on out-of-the-box thinking and creativity, not to mention increased productivity.

But you can't expect your employees to feel safe expressing their identities, and thus their ideas, if you don't first create an inclusive environment for them. But how do you create a space in which your team feels safe drawing from their unique perspectives?

One way to make your employees feel more visible and heard is through diversity networks, groups that come together based on shared identities, like single moms, veterans, LGBTQ individuals, Asian-Americans, the disabled or Latinx. These networks help individuals support and learn from one another, share resources and discuss the challenges and stereotypes facing this facet of their identity and how to address them. If you're worried that this could divide the office more than unite it, don't be. These networks empower individuals to share their experiences with the broader team, allowing everyone to learn from each other. You also need to make sure you allow opportunities for team members to express themselves. The quickest way to make an employee feel uncomfortable and unaccepted is to have their co-workers interrupt or speak over them. Provide moments for individuals to talk about the projects they are working on, their goals and their struggles.

Diversity training can be helpful in the office. The fact is, everyone has a bias, and it's usually subconscious. Diversity workshops can be a great way to unpack our biases and privilege. Being able to listen and empathize is a vital skill in any business setting, and will improve not only communication between your employees, but their customer service skills as well. A diversity workshop should not be a lecture, but rather an opportunity for honest conversation and learning.

Institute an open-door policy so that your employees feel safe coming to you and their other bosses about issues of discrimination, sexism, racism, homophobia and more. First and foremost, listen. Don't invalidate their experiences by immediately questioning them or taking a side in the conflict. This, plus literally keeping your door open as often as possible, will instill a feeling of trust in your office.

Show that diversity is important to you by hiring employees who come from a variety of backgrounds. Your work team should ideally represent the full diversity of your customer base, enabling them to relate and appeal to your clients on a personal level. Representation also works as a strong motivator. When individuals can see themselves in their role models — bosses, podcast guests, interviewees, etc. — they'll be more likely to imagine higher goals for themselves.

MIKE MICHALOWICZ (pronounced mi-KAL- o-wits) started his first business at the age of 24, moving his young family to the only safe place he could afford-a retirement building. With no experience, no contacts and no savings, he systematically bootstrapped a multimillion-dollar business. Then he did it again. And again. Now he is doing it for other entrepreneurs. Mike is the CEO of Provendus Group, a consulting firm that ignites explosive growth in companies that have plateaued; a former small business columnist for The Wall Street Journal; MSNBC's business makeover expert; a keynote speaker on entrepreneurship; and the author of the cult classic book The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur. His newest book, The Pumpkin Plan, has already been called "the next E-Myth!" For more information, visit www.mikemichalowicz.com/

■ NEVER Throw Your Boarding Pass Away, Not Even After Your Flight

Everybody knows that a boarding pass is mandatory in order to board a plane. While we're in the airport, we keep a close eye on our boarding passes, clutching them in our hands like they're precious gems. But after we land, pretty much everyone ditches the ticket, whether it's lost on the floor, compacted in the washing machine or thrown directly into the trash.

This may seem innocent enough, until you realize the abundance of personal information encrypted on your pass. You'd be amazed at the information a person can glean just by scanning the QR code on the ticket: your home and e-mail addresses, your phone number and even your bank information! When you get rid of your next boarding pass, shred it. Your bank account will thank you. *LuxuryAndGlamor.com 2/5/2016*
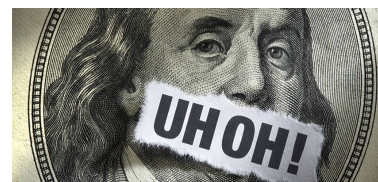
■ Are You Missing This One Critical Component In Your Business? If So, You Are GUARANTEED To Be Losing Sales

As Inc. writer Rohit Arora puts it, "It may be 2017, but many companies are still conducting business like it's the 20th century." According to data collected in a recent CNBC report, close to half of small businesses don't even have a website, and even fewer — around 36% — use a website to stay in touch with their customers and prospects. But if we can learn something from Nick's Pizza & Deli in New Jersey, it's that even the smallest companies can leverage new technologies to dramatically increase sales. The restaurant partnered with a company called The Block, a business that builds websites for small businesses, granting them online ordering capabilities. As a result, Nick's owner estimates an increase in annual revenues of around 15% to 20% in only six months. When you make it easy for your customers to pay, you drive further sales. It's that simple. *inc.com 8/6/2017*

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"We can either pay you pennies on the dollar, or nickel and dime you to death. It's up to you."

Downtime is real, and it's costly

Making sure your business can continue operations when disaster strikes is just as essential for small and medium businesses as it is for the largest enterprises.

Calculating your Recovery Time Objective, or RTO, will give you the insight you need to prepare for the worst and help you better understand the true cost of downtime. Visit the link below to determine just how much not backing up company data can cost you, before you find out the hard way. **http://bit.ly/CTTS-RTO**

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