

TECHNOLOGY TIMES

“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably”

5 Mistakes To Avoid When Investing In IT

As a small or medium sized business owner, you likely have your hands full. Between managing your staff, looking for growth opportunities and keeping clients happy, you probably have little time to dedicate to new technology purchases. Being so busy, it can be easy to make a mistake when choosing an IT solution. That’s why we’ve compiled a list of common IT investment missteps that every business owner needs to avoid.



Investing in the newest technology instead of the best fit

It’s the job of every marketer to make you believe the newest technology on the market will resolve all your problems. And while the latest cloud or virtualization offering is likely to make things better for many individuals and organizations, it isn’t going to work for everyone.

Don’t let the flash and hype of a new product deceive you. Take the time to think about the results you’re trying to achieve with technology. Make a list of them, and when you’re done match those criteria with the product that fits. Any good IT provider will be happy to serve as your consultant to ensure you make the best choice.

Believing everything will magically work together

As technology evolves, it is inevitably becoming simpler to use. Consumers want user friendly products and solutions that are easy to implement, and nowadays that’s what they’re getting – at least most of the time. Because of this belief that all products are going to be plug-and-play, many business owners hold the misguided assumption that any new technology they implement is automatically going to synchronize with their other IT. It is simply not true.

Though many technologies are compatible with one another, your business is taking a big risk – that could result in massive downtime and wasted money – if you implement a new tool that doesn’t integrate well into your current system and workflow. Be smart, do some research or consult with an IT professional before making a purchase.

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“Enabling People to Provide Great Products and Services - Anytime, Anyplace, Anywhere”

- Rick Johnston, Information Management Systems

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Want to Lock-in your IT Costs for the Next **THREE** Years? Sign up for IMS Total Care Services **TODAY!**

Assuming your team doesn't need support and training

Now that you've found the perfect fit technology and you're sure it will integrate into your current IT setup, you go ahead and purchase it. You let out a sigh of relief as you kick back and let your sparkly new IT solution power your company to new levels of success and profits in a SMB "happily ever after" fantasy. Don't forget that not all of your employees are going to instinctively know how to use the new technology. Consult with your IT provider to see if they offer support and training. If not, you may want to look elsewhere or find an alternative solution before you buy.

Forgetting to create a budget

More and more IT solutions are packaged with pay-as-you-go monthly pricing. While this is a great way to help you avoid large upfront capital investment, if you implement too many different technologies too fast – and without thinking about the recurring costs – you could quickly run out of money before having properly created a complete technology platform.

Think about what you're comfortable spending on IT before you open your wallet. Do some research, and either draft a budget on your own or acquire the assistance of a consultant to help you along.

Failing to get staff input

It's wise to consult with the employees who will be using the new technology you implement, on a daily basis. It's even wiser to do it before you purchase it.

The truth is that not all of your employees may be on board with the new product. They may actually even know some downsides to it you weren't aware of. Regardless, it's smart to consult with them beforehand, or you may find yourself in a constant fight getting them to adopt it.

Need to consult with an IT professional to create a complete technology solution for your business? We're happy to serve you in any way possible. Please give us a call at 701-364-2718 or email info@imsnetworking.com

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Win A Microsoft Surface Pro 4

Information Management Systems is having a referral contest and we have a great prize for you: a Microsoft Surface Pro 4!

Here's how the contest works:

- Email your referral to referral@imsnetworking.com
- Call us with your referral at 701-364-2718
- Or go to www.imsnetworking.com/referral

We will call and schedule an appointment. When we get the appointment we will send you \$50.00. If your friend becomes a client, we will send you a check for \$250.00. We will also give your friend a \$200 discount off our services. If you submit the most referrals that result in an appointment you will win a Microsoft Surface Pro 4!

But hurry, the contest ends August 31st!



Want to Lock-in your IT Costs for the Next **THREE** Years? Sign up for IMS Total Care Services **TODAY!**

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



InfiniteUSB

As laptops grow thinner, USB ports become scarcer. This means that if you need to connect to many printers, phones, or a mouse, you need to carry around a multiport hub to plug in various devices. But Jiange has created a USB plug that is based on a daisy chain, allowing you to plug multiple devices into one USB port. It recently launched its product via a very successful Kickstarter campaign.

The design won an IF Concept Award from one of the most prestigious design competitions in the world. Jiange has a lot more design inventions underway. InfiniteUSB cables start at \$10, and will also come in varieties that support microUSB and Lightning connectors.

[http://
getinfiniteusb.com/](http://getinfiniteusb.com/)



Tornado Season, it's not "if," but "when."

Make Sure You're Prepared with a Reliable Disaster Recovery Plan

During the spring and summer months dry polar air from Canada collides with warm moist air from the Gulf of Mexico spawning an average of 1,000 tornadoes each year. While tornadoes have become a way of life here, they are anything but commonplace. These powerful storms cause an average of \$1.1 billion in damage to homes and businesses and 80 deaths each year. The message is clear—be prepared.

Beat the Odds

The only sure way to beat a tornado is with a reliable disaster recovery plan. Let us show you how to create a complete, end-to-end disaster recovery plan you can count on to get your business up and running again almost instantly, not only after a tornado, but any kind of disaster.

Attend this FREE "How to Create a Disaster Recovery Plan" Lunch & Learn

Whether the disaster is a twister or just a careless employee with fat fingers, recovery is faster for those who have a good backup and disaster recovery plan. Let us show you how to create one.

Date: June 17, 2015

Time: 11:30 AM

Location: The Hilton Garden Inn; 4351 17th Avenue South, Fargo, ND 58103

Register Today!

Please register for this lunch and learn by going to:
<http://disasterrecoveryplan.eventbrite.com>

How To Make Yourself 'Invisible' To Hackers

There's an old joke about two men hiking in the woods when they come across a big, grumpy black bear. Scared silly, one of the guys starts to run but notices his buddy stopped, bent-over, changing his shoes. He shouts to him, "Dude! What are you doing?!?! Why aren't you running?" to which his friend replies, "I'm changing my shoes because I don't need to outrun the bear – I only need to outrun YOU."

This is a perfect analogy for what's going on in small businesses: the "slow," easy targets are getting nailed by fast-growing cybercrime rings that are getting more sophisticated and aggressive in attacking small businesses. Last year, the average cyber-attack cost a small business \$20,752, a substantial increase from 2013, when the average was \$8,699. That's because most small businesses don't have the security protocols in place or the manpower and budget to implement sophisticated security systems. While there's absolutely no way to completely protect yourself other than disconnecting entirely from the Internet, there are several things you can do to avoid being easy pickings. Here's how:

- 1. Lock your network.** While WIRED networks make you invisible to WiFi snoops because you have to access them by plugging into physical outlets or hacking modem ports, you can create a hidden or cloaked network on a wireless network. Simply disable the service set identifier (SSID) broadcasting function on the wireless router, and only users with the exact network name will have access. Small businesses like coffeehouses can also do this—just periodically change the network's information and place a small sign near the register with the current network name and passcode.
- 2. Encrypt your data.** On your desktops, turn on the full-disk encryption tools that come standard on most operating systems: BitLocker on Windows-based PCs and FileVault on Macs. There is no noticeable performance lag; however, the encryption only applies when users are logged out of the system. So setting computers to automatically log out after 15 minutes without use is a good idea. And for mobile devices, use a VPN (virtual private network) to encrypt data traveling to and from your mobile devices and limit your employees' access to only the company data that they must have to do their jobs.
- 3. Install firewall and anti-malware applications** on all of your equipment, including mobile devices.
- 4. Disable features that automatically connect your mobile devices to any available network.**
- 5. Disable printer and file-sharing options on mobile devices before connecting to a hotspot.**
- 6. Check before connecting to hotspots.** If there is an unusual variation in the logo or name on the login page, beware...this could mean it's a fake hotspot designed to steal your data.

Can you guarantee that the person across the hotel lobby isn't looking at your data? Not really, but the chances of them being able to do that are greatly reduced if you take precautions to protect your business.

The Lighter Side: Lost In Translation: Advertising



- Clairol introduced a new curling iron they called the "Mist Stick" to the German market, only to find out that "mist" is slang for manure in German. Not too many people had use for the "manure stick."
- When Gerber started selling baby food in Africa, they used the same packaging as in the US that featured the "Gerber baby" on the front. Later they learned that in Africa, companies put pictures of what's inside the package on the label since most people can't read, thereby causing African consumers to think there was pureed baby inside.
- Colgate introduced a toothpaste in France called "Cue," the name of a notorious porno magazine.
- Pepsi's "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" translated into "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave," in Chinese.
- The Coca-Cola name in China was first read as "Ke-kou-ke-la," meaning "Bite the wax tadpole" or "female horse stuffed with wax," depending on the dialect. Coke then researched 40,000 characters to find the phonetic equivalent "ko-kou-ko-le," translating into "happiness in the mouth."