

# TECHNOLOGY TIMES

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

## What's New

We are grateful for our partnership in 2017 and we look forward to working together in the New Year. Happy 2018!

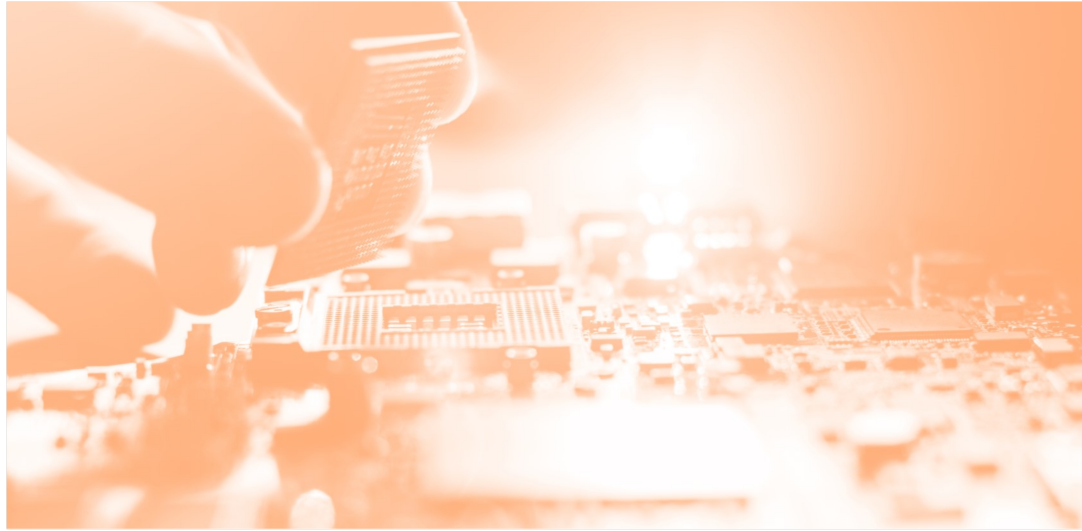


## January 2018



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Rick Johnston, President of Information Management Systems

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



## Do You Really Want The Cheapest Computer Technician Working On Your Company's Network?

These days, small businesses are more dependent on IT systems than at any other time in history. Because of this, even the slightest technological hiccups in our cyberspace-centered workflow can have expensive, lasting consequences. Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of this occurred back in 2013, when Amazon went dark for half an hour. Sure, it was a paltry 30 minutes, no big deal, until you consider the megagiant was theoretically hemorrhaging \$66,240 every 60 seconds, based on their quarterly revenue.

Of course, your company probably isn't a staple of international commerce like Jeff Bezos' beloved brainchild.

Because of this, many small business owners think that a downed server or small security breach here and there won't matter too much for their bottom line. For these unlucky few, IT takes a backseat to more “pressing” issues, and they go the cheap route with their technicians. This cost-cutting solution seems like the idea of the year, and will undoubtedly work great for the business — until it doesn't.

Maybe your long-time technicians fail to notice a piece of outdated equipment, and your server gives up the ghost during peak business hours. Virtually all work grinds to a halt, and your employees are forced to wile

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

away the two hours shooting three-pointers into the trash bins. Add up the two hours of wasted wages for your entire team, the financial cost of missed business, and the much more intangible loss of customer goodwill as they struggle with diminished service on a workday, and you'll come up with a sum that disabuses any business owner of their illusions about "cheap" IT.

And that's not even close to the worst-case scenario. Imagine, for a minute, that your technicians assure you, despite the lack of regular monitoring and maintenance, your network is secure. These words of comfort sound nice until the day a team of expert hackers actually attempt to access your systems, and find outdated, ramshackle security solutions in place – basically, a front door left wide open. At that moment, your business becomes a criminal's playground. They're free to access financial information and personal data of your customers and employees, hijack your business to send out floods of malicious software and spam, hold nearly every aspect of the company ransom for thousands of dollars, and cause chaos to their hearts' content.

**"These words of comfort sound nice until the day a team of expert hackers actually attempt to access your systems, and find outdated, ramshackle security solutions in place – basically, a front door left wide open."**

The fact is, fixing problems is a lot more expensive than preventing them. When you cut corners and utilize subpar IT professionals (if any at all), you're paying for an array of shoddy, Band-Aid solutions that will be applied piecemeal, and usually too late, like a finger plugging a hole in a dam. But when you make a substantial investment in your IT support, you're



investing in the most basic aspects of the future of your company.

Robust network security, dependable computers and servers, consistent internet access, and other fundamental components of your company network are far from luxury items. These days, technology forms the scaffolding upon which businesses run. If any piece of the operation fails, the whole system suffers, usually accompanied by a fat financial penalty.

There is an ever-growing, endless list of potential technological pitfalls that can have permanent consequences for your business: teams of hackers zeroing in on vulnerable small businesses, rogue employees with a grudge, lost laptops, aging and unreliable hardware, fire, natural disasters, and IT "professionals" that have no idea what they're doing, to name just a few. As technology progresses, and companies depend increasingly more on it to stay competitive, it simply doesn't make sense to relegate IT to the neglected corners of your budget.

When it comes to business, there's a lot to worry about these days. A total collapse of your company's technological infrastructure doesn't need to be one of them. Invest in a robust, managed IT package from tried-and-tested professionals, and leave the worrying to the experts. You can rest assured that our IT team of experts truly has you covered. Don't wait, contact us today 701-364-2718 or email [info@imsnetworking.com](mailto:info@imsnetworking.com).

## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



### AirSelfie: The New Way To Take A Selfie

Move over, selfie sticks — it's time to take photo tech to the skies. The new AirSelfie, a pocket-sized camera equipped with four rotating fan propellers that allow it to take flight, aims to revolutionize the way we take pictures. The palm-sized device promises to take 5-megapixel, HD photos from up to 65 feet in the sky, steadied by an anti-vibration shock absorber that ensures images stay crisp and clear.

The hovering camera is the product by AirSelfie Holdings, an international team of developers and engineers, and is designed from the ground up to integrate seamlessly with your phone. To use it, all you do is slip it out from its charging case (which attaches directly to your smartphone), use the app to direct it to the desired height and orientation, and snap an aerial picture or video. The tech is available now, and with a \$320 price tag, comparable to many other modern cameras. Check it out at [AirSelfieCamera.com](http://AirSelfieCamera.com).

## Some Websites Can Force Your Computer To Mine Cryptocurrency

Researchers at Malwarebytes have discovered a new exploit that allows malicious website owners to use your PC to mine various forms of cryptocurrency, even if you exit the browser window the malicious site was displayed on.

The exploit relies on a smart pop-under trick. Code on the website determines your monitor's resolution and places a ghost browser session sitting behind the clock on the MS Windows task bar, where it continues to mine cryptocurrency, utilizing a portion of your CPU's power and resources.

The impact on your system's performance is nominal, so only the most observant users will notice anything amiss.

According to Malwarebytes researcher Jerome Segura, "This type of pop-under is designed to bypass adblockers and is a lot harder to identify because of how cleverly it hides itself. Closing the browser using the "X" is no longer sufficient. The more technical users will want to run Task Manager to ensure there is no remnant running browser processes and terminate them. Alternatively, the taskbar will show the browser's icon with slight highlighting, indicating that it is still running."

It's worth noting that there are a couple of other ways you can determine whether some portion of your system's resources are being coopted in this manner. Restarting your system will certainly do the trick, and if you have your taskbar set to transparent, you'll be able to see the pop-under quite clearly. Also, resizing or relocating the task bar will reveal the hidden browser window.

This is but the latest chapter in the ongoing battle between hackers and unscrupulous website owners and the makers of adblocking and other types of security software. In time, ad blocking software will be modified to catch this type of exploit, and in response, the owners of malicious websites will change their approach and find a new way to get around various detection schemes. As ever, while software can certainly help, vigilance remains the best defense.

If you have questions, please contact us right away — 701-364-2718 or email [info@imsnetworking.com](mailto:info@imsnetworking.com).





## **Bits & Bytes**

### ■ **Are Your Kids Careless With Online Passwords?**

With corporations taking hits left and right from cybercriminals, security on the Internet has become more important than ever. Still, even as many of us step up the security of our online presence, stragglers who believe they're immune to such attacks abound.

Based on a recent survey from Statista, young people are more careless with passwords. Thirty-four percent of people aged 18 to 34 years use the same password for "most online logins," compared to only 20% of the 35 to 54 demographic, and only 13% for those older than 55. In addition, a whopping 10% of 18- to 34- year-olds use the same password for all their online keys.



It goes without saying that this is bad practice. It can be all too easy to hack into a single, less secure account, but if different passwords are used for separate logins, it becomes much more difficult to access more important files in, say, a Gmail account or bank login. Not so if the passwords are identical. *BusinessInsider.com 10/18/2017*

### ■ **Apps That Make Our Lives Easier, All Under \$10**

With new apps flooding the market every day, it can be difficult to pick out the ones that will assist you instead of just inspiring buyer's remorse. But there are dozens of apps that, despite their miniscule price tag, can have a small but lasting impact on your day-to-day.

Take Dark Sky (\$4) for example. An up-to-the-minute accurate forecasting app that will break down weather information for exactly where you are at any given moment, down to when the expected rain or snowstorm will start and stop.

You can also check out Notability (\$9.99), which Business Insider calls "one of the best things to ever happen to note-taking." The app allows you to mark up PDFs and photos, take voice recordings, and a number of other

functions, with everything stored in the cloud.

Those young people mentioned above who have trouble keeping more than one password might appreciate 1Password (Free), a dedicated place to guard all your passwords behind one difficult-to-hack password. *BusinessInsider.com 10/26/2017*

### ■ **Use This App To Pinpoint Dangerous Drivers.**

The open road is full of jerks and road rages, and a new app is taking them on. Nexar asks you to mount your phone to your dashboard, and it will monitor surrounding traffic. If someone starts driving dangerously, it will ask if you want to record what's going on with a 30-second video. The goal is to capture license plates of bad or hostile drivers. This is useful if you witness a crash or a criminal offense. According to [trafficsafetystore.com](http://trafficsafetystore.com), Nexar also uploads data to a central database. It will let you know if someone with a bad driving history enters the camera's field of vision, helping you spot potential bad drivers. In the future, Nexar plans to use GPS to identify dangerous cars to the side and behind them, too. *Safety Resource Center - December 1, 2017*