



## This Issue:

Why You Need to Be Concerned about Both Phishing and Ransomware

Collaboration Drives Business Efficiency

Working with PDF Files

Are You Properly Managing Your Cloud Services?

Vendor's Can Cost You More Than You Realize

Technology: Then and Now

### Working with PDF Files



Portable Document Format files (better known as PDFs) have become incredibly common

as a means to save documents in a constant and consistent format that can be viewed on just about any device. They also allow users to make some simple changes to make it even easier to review the data they contain. Here, we'll go over a few options for this year's first tips.

#### Rotate the Document

It is very easy to accidentally scan a document into your computer...



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### About Global Tech Solutions

We provide IT Support such as technical helpdesk support, computer support, and consulting to businesses nationwide. It's always been our goal to provide enterprise-level IT practices and solutions, with small business prices.

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## Why You Need to Be Concerned about Both Phishing and Ransomware



When people talk about cybersecurity nowadays, there certainly seems to be a lot of emphasis put on phishing attacks and ransomware. This is for good reason. Not only can either of these attack vectors create significant difficulties for a business, they are often used in tandem. Let's discuss why these threats are so potent, and why they so often show up together.

First, it will help to briefly review how each attack works.

### How Ransomware Works

Imagine if you tried to log into your computer, only to be presented with a message that your entire computer had been encrypted, and that (unless money is transferred to the perpetrator, often through cryptocurrency, within a period of time) the contents of your device will be wiped. This is precisely the experience of someone victimized by a ransomware attack.

### How Phishing Works

Remember those old scams, where the target would receive an email from some nobility or long-lost relative that asked for a sizable loan or investment (all to be paid back with interest, of course)? These are phishing scams, known as such because the scammer responsible simply distributes a message and waits for someone to take the bait. As time has passed, these schemes have become much more effective - and harder to spot.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Collaboration Drives Business Efficiency



Much is made about collaboration. It's not just a buzzword, it is extremely important in many parts of business. Collaboration is simply getting people to cooperate in their work to a successful end. While collaboration can be found in every business to some degree, it can be more of a challenge for the small business. Today, we'll take a look at what constitutes successful collaboration, and how your organization can go about improving your collaborative capabilities.

It's not a secret that departmental cooperation is increasingly central to the workflows of today. Businesses need to stay agile, which means more has to be done with less. As more people take on more responsibilities, there needs to be better communication, and ultimately trust, if a business' goals are going to be met. This has businesses of all sizes looking for tools that will help their staff be more collaborative, more efficient, and meet those benchmarks that will allow for organizational growth.

### Obstacles to Collaboration

It seems ironic that a strategy that most businesses need to foster, is actually getting harder to achieve. Today's workforce is different in many ways, but one of the most glaring weaknesses of the modern workforce is that their needs supersede that of the organization they work for. This is not wrong per se, but it can be a major problem for smaller organizations that need collaborative initiatives to fuel their products and services. With the gig economy growing rapidly, and the cost benefits of hiring contract and outsourced workers, it makes it harder than ever to get a staff of people on the same page.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Are You Properly Managing Your Cloud Services?



Today, cloud services can be used for about every facet of business. In fact, your business probably uses the

cloud for some very important parts of your business. With so many options to choose from, business owners often develop a cloud strategy that includes software as a service (SaaS), infrastructure as a service (IaaS), and many more options.

Most cloud vendors will propose that an organization's IT is too expensive for what they would get out of it and that by using cloud services a business can cut down on its hardware and

management costs. For the most part, this is true. Cloud services can bring flexibility and capital cost reduction, but it can also bring substantial waste if your cloud-based resources aren't managed effectively.

We don't want to give the impression that cloud services aren't useful, they undoubtedly are, but you may be surprised to learn how much money is wasted by small and medium-sized businesses in the cloud. By routinely playing for recurring web service accounts may not seem like a big deal on the surface, but it only takes a couple accounts per month to add up to hundreds and thousands of dollars a year. That's just the tip of the iceberg.

Many organizations that use hosted environments for development or

deploy virtual machines for application distribution may initially find cost savings by moving to the cloud, but over time, see those savings dilapidated as larger-than-needed VMs are left running and other computing platforms chew up resources that are billed per CPU hour or per gigabyte.

So how do you go about creating a strategy that will give your staff the resources they need, while also not having to waste money on unused cloud resources? Here are a couple tips:

- Track all online service licenses and correlate them with the number of employees that need that software...



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## Why You Need to Be Concerned about Both Phishing and Ransomware

*(Continued from page 1)*

### These Attacks Can Easily Cooperate

Cybercriminals have taken to pairing these attacks together to help them take advantage of as many targets as possible. Let's run through a fairly typical scenario that someone using both may subject you to, and how you can spot these kinds of joint efforts.

Let's say you open your business email to find a message that appears to come from the Microsoft Support team - which, unnoticed by you, actually reads "Microsoft Support" in one or two places. According to the email, there's a hugely serious security issue affecting systems across the board, which is why Microsoft is supposedly sending out these emails, with the necessary fix bundled in as an attachment.

Trouble is, this isn't actually a fix to an issue - it's actually an executable file that installs ransomware when you try to apply the "security fix" and creates a huge problem.

This is exactly why these two distinct attacks combine so well... by incorporating phishing strategies into

the distribution of their ransomware, a cybercriminal has the ability to boost how successfully their ransomware can infect the users that are targeted.

### How to Spot Phishing to Avoid Ransomware

There are assorted warning signs that a message is a phishing attempt that you should always keep an eye out for in order to protect your business. For example:

- **Details are off** - In keeping with our above example, how likely do you think it is that "Microsoft" would send out an email in which they misspelled their own name? While this is admittedly happening less in phishing emails, the same goes for the small things that are easily overlooked. Was the email in question sent from "user at example.com"? Or, was it actually sent from "user at exarnple.com"? Tricks like this are common ways that cybercriminals will try to pull the wool over a user's eyes.
- **There's excessive urgency** - To keep users from paying too much attention to the minutiae of the email - like the "off" details we just

discussed - many cybercriminals will write their phishing messages to instill a sense of urgent panic. If an email starts to make you panic, collect yourself and look at it more objectively.

- **There's a link or an attachment** - As the preferred means of delivering a ransomware payload or other issue, attachments or links to websites present no small amount of risk, especially if they are received unexpectedly. If at all possible, avoid accessing these without reaching out to the sender to confirm their legitimacy through another method of communication.

There are many other steps you need to take to protect your business from these insidious threats - from keeping a comprehensive backup to user training to applying spam filtering to your email. Global Tech Solutions can help you implement them - give us a call at (800) 484-0195 to get started.



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## Collaboration Drives Business Efficiency

*(Continued from page 1)*

There are several more barriers to collaboration, including:

- Differences in opinion
- Lack of respect and/or trust
- Internal competition
- Lack of solid project management

When you are asking people to work with others for a common goal, personalities can get in the way. That's not to say that there shouldn't be some semblance of professionalism and workplace decorum, but the truth is that some people just don't like working with other people. If you are running a small business petty squabbles are unacceptable and can really hurt your chances of success.

It is important that every member of a team knows exactly what is expected of

them, but it's the decision makers that need to understand who works well with who and what type of collaboration to use. There are three different types of positive workplace collaboration. They are:

- **Simple Collaboration** - The most basic form of collaboration. This is your typical information and document sharing. If someone needs an answer, someone else provides it.
- **Document Collaboration** - Document collaboration is a significant step because it means that people are actually working together on a single document towards a common goal. Giving multiple users the capability to work as though they were side-by-side without regard to the actual distance between them is not being integrated into many software platforms nowadays.

- **Structured Collaboration** - This is the type of collaboration in which people need to work together to complete a predefined goal. If they aren't able to work together, there will be no product or service. Essentially, anyone that has worked on a project with someone else has taken part in a structured collaboration.

### Collaboration and Technology

Most businesses use technology to bridge the gap between departments, teams, and employees. Technology is making it more possible than ever to collaborate, and many of a business' technology investments are made with collaboration in mind. The idea is that if employees are expected to use...



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## Vendor's Can Cost You More Than You Realize



Businesses use a lot of different vendors and many of them demand a certain amount of attention.

Any attention you are spending on your vendors is attention that you aren't spending on your business. Fortunately, there is a service that can reduce your exposure to unnecessary vendor calls.

This is what is called vendor management, and it can go a long way toward saving you a lot of time and money.

### What Is Vendor Management?

Think about how many vendors you use when it comes to your business' IT. There's a pretty good chance that there are quite a few. Hardware, software, services, and much more. As you get established with certain vendors, they become important to your business' success, but aside from supplying you with their organization's goods, they also take up a fair amount of time.

### That's where the challenge lies.

Since you don't have all the time in the world to keep your vendor representative on your speed dial, but you also need to focus on your business. At Global Tech Solutions, we offer what we call a Vendor Management that serves as a go between you and your vendors, providing you the solutions that your business needs without having to spend all types of time being bogged down talking to vendors. Vendor management helps to alleviate the issue significantly.

### How Vendor Management Benefits Your Business' Bottom Line

Now that we've told you what vendor management is, we can now tell you how it can significantly affect your organization's bottom line. They include:

#### Better Use of Time

As we went over above, dealing with your vendors yourself can be a time-intensive process. However, by working with Global Tech Solutions and allowing us to manage your vendors, all you have to focus on is your relationship with us. We will handle the vendor

relationships, allowing you to focus on your business.

### Benefits and Bargains

Since we have long-established relationships with all types of IT vendors, we are often able to procure technology quickly and effectively; saving you money on your technology investments.

### Simplicity

If we are to serve as your single point of contact, it keeps the situation simple. You don't have to focus an ounce of energy setting up and managing your IT services and relationships. We do it all for you.

Is a vendor management service seem like something you could really benefit from? If so, call Global Tech Solutions at (800) 484-0195 to speak to one of our IT professionals about our managed IT services.



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## Technology: Then and Now



Technology gives business owners opportunities to expand, and essentially has become the center of most business practices. Marketing, customer contact, all sorts of inter and intra communication methods now depend heavily on technology. Let's take a look at what the past has brought, and what the future could bring us.

Before we discuss what the last decade brought us, I wanted to remind everyone just how limitless innovations are. Many years ago, many of these inventions or technologies seemed unrealistic for the times.

Let's go through the past decade's biggest hits, as well as what we might see in years to come.

### 2010: When Innovation Thrived

While many technologies were introduced in the 2000s,



the 2010s saw these technologies used in bigger, more innovative ways. Let's take a brief look at the past ten years and what improvements we saw.

### 4G

While 4G was actually first developed in 2009, but primarily spreading in the early 2010s, 4G wireless changed the capabilities of wireless data transmission. As a result, further innovations were made, encouraging (and sometimes forcing) technologies to improve. The companies that worked in real-time and heavily depended on application deployment were suddenly given the tools they needed to really take root. Furthermore, 4G was responsible for the viability of many of today's biggest players, including Spotify, Instagram, Uber, and Snapchat - among many others.

### Apple iPad

Can you believe that the iPad has only been around for about a decade? It was the first of many mass-produced consumer tablets, and it took other companies a few years to catch up as they followed Apple's lead. Powered by iOS, and featuring a large screen, the explosive initial sales of the iPad cemented the tablet's reputation as a useful

device, both at home and in the workplace.

### IPv6

In June of 2012, the longstanding wireless networking standard was upgraded for the first time in years. This sixth standard allowed a new age of connectivity, permitting a far larger number of devices to be connected to the Internet.

### Chromecast

As we suggested in the section on 4G, streaming was growing in popularity, and it is safe to say that the first Chromecast was partially responsible for that. While it may seem practically ubiquitous today, integrated casting was revolutionary upon its release... and in many ways, it changed how businesses could communicate ideas. Conference rooms everywhere are now equipped to work with this (or similar) technologies.

### Virtual Assistants

Today, every major technology brand has its own take on the virtual assistant. Apple has the OG - Siri - while Microsoft has Cortana, Google has its Google Assistant...



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We partner with many types of businesses nationwide, and strive to eliminate IT issues before they cause expensive downtime, so you can continue to drive your business forward. Our dedicated staff loves seeing our clients succeed. Your success is our success, and as you grow, we grow.



**Abraham Brown**  
CEO

### Tech Trivia

The pager code 143 means "I love you."

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