

# TECHNOLOGY TIMES

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

## Are You Paying 80% Of Your Employees To “Cyberloaf” On The Internet, Watching Cat Videos, Searching For A Better Job Or Accidentally Downloading A Virus On Your Network?

Recently, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of local businesses suffering significant financial and productivity losses due to employees inappropriately using their Internet access during work hours – and much of this is fueled by social media sites such as Facebook and YouTube. Studies have shown that between 60 and 80 percent of people’s time on the Internet at work has nothing to do with work!

What makes this situation so dangerous is that the majority of business owners don’t even realize that it’s going on until it’s too late. By then they have found themselves in the middle of a costly and embarrassing lawsuit because an employee posted something inappropriate online OR downloaded a virus.

In other cases, the owner NEVER finds out, but is inadvertently losing THOUSANDS of dollars because employees are spending 2-3 hours a day to goof off online – and you’re footing the bill.

And age of the employee doesn’t affect an employee’s ability to waste time on the Internet. Older employees do things like managing their finances while younger employees check social media.

### A Company Internet Policy Is NOT Enough

A recent study showed that the presence of a strong Internet policy at work was not enough to curb activity, as many employees don’t think it’s wrong to surf the web and a policy was not going to change their minds. Unfortunately, the only way to curb this activity is not only to threaten consequences, but to actually take action and reprimand employees.

Our Free Internet and E-mail Usage Audit gives you the answers to whether you have a problem on your hands. **Schedule your Internet and E-mail Usage Audit today by calling our office at 805-967-8744.**



*“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!”*

**- Scott Phillips, Synergy Computing**

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*“Have you got the app where the little red light jumps around? It’s amazing!”*

## **If We Knew A Dozen Or More Ways That Cyber-Criminals Could Steal Thousands Of Dollars From Your Company's Bank Account, Damage Your Reputation And Cripple Your Operations... Wouldn't You Want Us To Tell You About It?**

Imagine walking into your office one morning to discover your computer network was breached by a hacker, exposing not only YOUR company's data, but also your clients'. Imagine the embarrassment of having to notify your clients that, because of you, their personal information may now be in the hands of cyber-criminals. And hopefully that's the only damage done...

Operations could be halted or severely limited for days, possibly weeks. Your data corrupt to the point of being useless. Clients lost. Potential lawsuits and government fines for violating data-breach laws. The exorbitant emergency IT fees to get everything restored to working order fast. Then there's the risk of your bank account being drained dry - and because you're a business, you are NOT protected by the banks in the same way individual consumers are.

### **You're At Greater Risk Than You Think**

With St. Patrick's Day this month, I want to take a moment to remind you that just because you've been

"lucky" enough to avoid an incident like this in the past doesn't mean you're not at risk - in fact, that's *exactly* what cyber-criminals want you to think.

That's why I'd like to offer you a FREE comprehensive Cyber-Security IT Audit that will reveal your risk score on common security loopholes cyber-criminals use on a regular basis to get around fire-walls and antivirus software to gain entry to your computer network. Normally we charge \$897 for this service, but we've decided to give it away to the first 5 companies who request it before March 17<sup>th</sup> (St. Patrick's Day). All you have to do is call our office at **805-967-8744** or go online to [www.synergyinc.net/shamrock](http://www.synergyinc.net/shamrock) to find out more details.



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## **The Santa Barbara Business Owner's Guide To IT Support Services And Fees**

You will learn:

- √ The 3 most common ways IT service companies charge for their services, and the pros and cons of each approach.
- √ A common billing model that puts ALL THE RISK on you, the customer, when buying IT services; you'll learn what it is and why you need to avoid agreeing to it.
- √ Exclusions, hidden fees and other "gotcha" clauses IT companies put in their contracts that you DON'T want to agree to.
- √ How to make sure you know exactly what you're getting to avoid disappointment, frustration and added costs later on that you didn't anticipate.

Claim Your FREE Copy Today at [www.synergyinc.net/ITBuyersGuide](http://www.synergyinc.net/ITBuyersGuide)

**IT BUYERS GUIDE**  
What Every Business Owner MUST Know About IT Support Services And Fees

What You Should Expect To Pay For IT Support For Your Business And How To Get Exactly What You Need

## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



### Nest Protect

The Nest Protect motto: Safety shouldn't be annoying.

We have all experienced it. That annoying low-battery chirp that 9 times out of 10 wakes you from a dead sleep. Why is it that the smoke alarm battery inevitably runs low in the middle of the night? Then it happens...in your half-awake stupor, you rip it from the wall with intentions of re-hanging it in the morning. More times than not, you forget to replace the batteries and re-hang it and then there you are with no warning system should a fire break out in your home. This annoyance has now become a safety issue.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), almost two-thirds of US home fire deaths happened in homes with no smoke alarm or no working smoke alarm.

The Nest Protect smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarm comes without that annoying chirp or the threat of false alarms. It's unique structure and settings give you quiet, visual low-battery reminders and allow you to relay to the alarm when the smoke is from that burning grilled cheese versus an actual fire. Its remote features also allow you to manage your alarm and receive alerts via your smartphone.

This innovative device gives you all the protection and security you need without the annoyances. Get yours today at: <https://nest.com/>

## Knock Down The Walls That Block Communication

To be a successful executive you must know how to knock down walls. I don't mean the walls of brick and steel that hold up buildings; I mean the bureaucratic barriers that hold up communication.

In many companies, communication flows through narrow channels, usually from the top down — chimneys of power, they're called. People walled off from these chimneys are left to work in an information vacuum.

Today's successful corporations have demolished the walls that prevent the lateral flow of communication. With the walls gone, information permeates the organization.

Such organizations find it easier to achieve the "Four F's" that management expert Rosabeth Moss Kanter tells us are essential to business success. A successful company, she says, must be focused, flexible, fast and friendly.

- ◆ You can't focus the efforts of your entire workforce if your organization is criss-crossed with walls that impede the flow of information.
- ◆ You can't be flexible if you have a rigid corporate structure in which every division and department is a closed information loop.
- ◆ You can't be fast if information has to seep slowly through layer after layer of management.
- ◆ And you can't be friendly if your people don't talk to other people inside and outside your organization.

If you look around, you may see plenty of boundaries in your own company that need to be removed. One of them may be the door to your office that remains closed to input from your employees. Another might be a rigid boundary between hourly and salaried employees that keeps people in one category from talking freely with people in another. Or it could be a boundary that shuts out ideas that don't originate in your own organization.

Other boundaries might be the lines that run between divisions of a corporation. If one division develops a new method or a new technology, does it keep it to itself or does it share it with other divisions? Among the toughest boundaries to dismantle are the ones individual managers erect around the borders of their turf.

In the old days, corporations became overpopulated with people who were promoted to their "levels of incompetence." Armed with the word "manager" in their titles, they staked out their own little turfs and guarded them jealously.

In a corporation without boundaries, advancement means moving into positions in which knowledge can be put to productive use as coaches, advisors or knowledge workers; where expertise is interchanged throughout the organization.



Dr. Nido Qubein is president of High Point University, an undergraduate and graduate institution with 4,300 students from 40 countries. He has authored two dozen books and audio programs distributed worldwide. As a business leader, he is chairman of the Great Harvest Bread Company, with 220 stores in 43 states. He serves on the boards of several national organizations, including BB&T (a Fortune 500 company with \$185 billion in assets), the La-Z-Boy Corporation (one of the largest and most recognized furniture brands worldwide) and Dots Stores (a chain of fashion boutiques with more than 400 locations across the country). As a professional speaker, Dr. Qubein has received many distinctions, including the Golden Gavel Medal, induction into the International Speaker Hall of Fame and as the founder of the NSA Foundation in Arizona. To learn more about Dr. Qubein, go to: <http://www.nidoqubein.com/>

## Another Reminder Of Why You Can't Use Home Routers In Your Business

This past Christmas, a hacker reportedly stumbled upon a back door to Linksys and Netgear DSL modems that allow an attacker to reset the router's configurations and gain Admin access. Not good!

Some routers have this "back door" open to the local computer network while others are open to the Internet side of things, opening up users of these devices to remote Internet attacks. This essentially means that someone could easily gain access to the network and all files located on it.

In the past, this may have taken weeks or months to get out, leaving plenty of time for the manufacturer to get in contact with their clients, right? Not so anymore. In this instance, the exploit was promptly posted up to GitHub in a PowerPoint explaining all of the details and how to exploit the devices. Many others started trying this out (just for fun, of course), and confirmations started flooding in immediately for all to see.

**The Bottom Line:** If you are concerned at all about the security of the data on your network, you need to have a real, business-class firewall and router in your office. These days, it doesn't pay to go cheap on IT security.

**Password Tip!** *Want an easy-to-remember password that's super secure? Try mixed-entry passwords. While JohnSmith12345 could fairly easily be broken, J1o2h3n4S5mith (inserting the same numbers between each letter in the password) would take about 1,800 years to crack, and is almost as easy to remember!*

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## Services We Offer

- Managed Services — We are your I.T. Department
- Networks, Servers, Workstations
- Cloud Integration
- Backup & Disaster Recovery
- Network Security Audits & Reviews
- E-mail & Internet Solutions
- Spam Filtering & E-mail Archiving
- Storage Solutions & Document Management
- Voice over IP Phone Systems (VoIP)

## The Lighter Side: Have You Heard This Before?



- "March comes in with an adder's head, and goes out with a peacock's tail." Richard Lawson Gales
- "Up from the sea, the wild north wind is blowing under the sky's gray arch; Smiling I watch the shaken elm boughs, knowing It is the wind of March." William Wordsworth
- "Who in this world of ours their eyes In March first open shall be wise; In days of peril firm and brave, And wear a Bloodstone to their grave." Unattributed Author
- "Ah, March! We know thou art Kind-hearted, spite of ugly looks and threats, And, out of sight, art nursing April's violets!" Helen Hunt Jackson
- "Slayer of the winter, art thou here again? O welcome, thou that bring'st the summer nigh! The bitter wind makes not the victory vain. Nor will we mock thee for thy faint blue sky." William Morris
- "March: Its motto, 'Courage and strength in times of danger.'" William Morris
- "Beware the ides of March." William Shakespeare
- "In fierce March weather White waves break tether, And whirled together At either hand, Like weeds uplifted, The tree-trunks rifted In spars are drifted, Like foam or sand." Algernon Charles Swinburne
- "With rushing winds and gloomy skies The dark and stubborn Winter dies: Far-off, unseen, Spring faintly cries, Bidding her earliest child arise; March!" Bayard Taylor