

# TECHNOLOGY TIMES

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

## Luck Is For Leprechauns — Is Your Business Prepared for Future Security Threats?



If your business hasn't been the target of malicious intruders or cybercriminals, consider yourself lucky. Hackers are a relentless bunch and they want your gold: information and access they can use to exploit loopholes in your business's Internet security. The last few years have been hard on companies all across the globe. And these cyber-breaches aren't going to stop simply because the "damage has been done." In the US and Canada, reported incidents have affected over 215 million consumers and over 7 million small businesses. And that's only counting the attacks that authorities have uncovered.

For cybercriminals, there is no end game. All too often, small business owners assume they are outside the firing line and hackers aren't interested in them. While the media focuses on the big cyber-attacks, there are countless other stories playing out at small businesses everywhere. Cybercriminals are constantly in search of loopholes and weak security. And, unfortunately, small businesses often have the weakest IT security.

Security industry analysts predict that 2015 won't be much different from 2014 when it comes to cyber-security. There are going to be more data breaches. It's just a matter of where and when. It's also a matter of being prepared.

During the month of March, we are offering local businesses a FREE 57-Point Cyber-Security Audit (\$897 value) to help uncover loopholes in your company's online security. At no cost or obligation, our highly trained team of IT pros will come to your office and conduct this comprehensive audit. And after we're done, we'll prepare a customized "Report Of Findings" that will reveal specific vulnerabilities and a Prioritized Plan Of Attack for getting any problems addressed fast.

Because of the intense one-on-one time required to deliver these Cyber-Security Audits, we can only extend this offer to the first seven lucky companies who request it by March 17th—St. Patrick's Day. All you have to do is call our office at (805)284-9700 or go online at [www.synergyinc.net/notjustlucky/](http://www.synergyinc.net/notjustlucky/) to request yours today.



*“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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*Savage Chickens*

by Doug Savage



www.savagechickens.com



## The Truth About E-mail In 2015



Love it, hate it or call it the gold at the end of your rainbow, e-mail is here to stay. Over the past two decades, it's become deeply ingrained in our day-to-day business communication. It's basically a requirement. Despite a number of software advances and changes in the online communication landscape, e-mail is more important than ever.

This was recently confirmed by a study conducted by Pew Research. They found that e-mail is indispensable among those who are Internet-connected at work. These days, that covers a lot of people. In fact, 61% say it plays an integral role in their job. Additionally, 46% say e-mail access keeps them more productive (while another 46% say e-mail has no bearing on their productivity one way or the other). Only 7% say e-mail hurts their productivity.

In 2014, social media analysts warned that e-mail was on its last legs and that it would soon be overtaken by other online services. However, as this study seems to confirm, that is not the case. In fact, in the workplace, it's very much the opposite. The Pew study found that social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, benefited only about 4% of those in a connected workplace.

Even among the millennial generation, and those who regularly use social media networks in their personal lives, it hasn't been something fully translatable to the professional environment as a productivity factor. This doesn't discount uses for social media in the workplace—as a marketing or customer outreach tool—but no social media platform has come close to replacing e-mail as the go-to communication tool.

That doesn't mean Silicon Valley start-ups aren't trying. They are always at work trying to find that next four-leaf clover in online communication, hoping to develop that so-called "e-mail killer." So far, nothing has stepped up that can achieve what e-mail can, particularly for businesses.

For many businesses, it comes right back to the fact that e-mail works. It's a proven platform and it remains the business communication "golden child." It's the same reason phones and fax machines aren't extinct. They serve a purpose and they help us get things done. That doesn't stop businesses from always looking for ways to streamline that process.

Another reason e-mail works: accessibility. E-mail is used on nearly a universal level. Social media platforms, while many are incredibly popular, can't touch the truly global reach of e-mail. Have you considered how e-mail impacts your job? Does it keep you productive? Or are you ready to move on to the Next Big Thing?

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**FREE REPORT: If you are still relying on tape drives, external hard drives or USB devices to back up your data, then it's critical for you to get and read this informative business advisory guide.**



### You will learn:

- 1) The only way to know for SURE your data can be recovered if lost, corrupted or deleted—yet fewer than 10% of businesses have this in place.
- 2) 7 critical characteristics you should absolutely demand from any off-site backup service.
- 3) Where many backups fail and give you a false sense of security.
- 4) The #1 cause of data loss that businesses don't even think about until their data is erased.

**Claim Your FREE Copy Today at <http://www.synergyinc.net/12facts/>**

## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



### The Withings Activité Pop

Lately, it seems the tech world has been inundated with wearable devices, from fitness trackers to smartwatches. They offer a number of useful features, but they also lack in elegance. They are often bulky, ordinary, complicated and—in the case of smartwatches—have less than desirable battery life.

This is where the Withings Activité Pop comes in. It looks like a classy watch on the outside, but on the inside it's a very different story. It's an activity tracker, verging on expressing itself as a smartwatch.

From the smartphone app, you control everything, from the analog dials to your activity goals.

The watch face features a secondary dial that tracks your activity—from 0% to 100%—for the day. It's simple and straightforward. It's water-resistant up to 30 meters and available in three colors: azure, sand and shark gray. It's currently available at Best Buy, in-store and online.

## MARKETING THROUGH YOUR CUSTOMERS

Word of mouth—the better-than-anything-you-could-pay-for form of spreading the word about companies and products worth supporting. Your customers do your marketing for you, and you simply continue delivering the high-quality product they're raving about.

But how do you get your customers to do it?

On May 9, 2013, an article was published by a journalist who'd stopped in Dominique Ansel Bakery in New York City and asked what was new. The staff offered the journalist a taste of a new product that would launch to the public on the day after the article was published. On May 10, 2013, the Cronut™ was born. There were customers waiting outside the little bakery, lined up to sample the delectable baked good they'd read about.

By the end of the week, the line outside the bakery was 100 people long. People stood in line to sample the Cronut™ they'd heard about from their friends. And they didn't just buy one Cronut™; they bought lots of them—as well as all of the other unique, handmade pastries the shop produces.

The Dominique Ansel Bakery is a small business. They don't have a big marketing department who dreamed up the Cronut™ as a publicity stunt. They simply embrace the creativity inherent in baking, and word of mouth pulls customers from all over the world into the little shop. It's organic. It's natural. It's the power of word of mouth.

Another great example of a company whose customers are ardent fans is a well-known jewelry store (whose name I can't share with you). Their policy for purchases of engagement rings is pure genius. A couple selects a ring—say a diamond of one full carat. The jewelry store has a secret upgrade policy, and they supply the client with a stone that's just a little larger than the one they paid for. When customers take their one-carat ring to an appraiser, they discover that it's a carat and a quarter. The customer—stunned at having received more than they paid for—returns to the jewelry store, at which point the jeweler thanks them for their business, tells them about the secret upgrade and—here's the genius part—asks the customer not to tell anyone about the secret upgrade.

But the customer does tell. The customer tells everyone he can think of about the spectacular customer service he received and about the exceptional value the jeweler provided. That customer ropes in hundreds more customers, and the jewelry store doesn't do anything except make customers happy and wait for new customers to pour in. It's brilliant.

Whether customers are sharing a Cronut™ with a friend, or whether they're swearing a coworker to secrecy about the jewelry store's secret upgrade they swore not to divulge, if you can get your customers talking about you, your company and your brand, then you're starting a marketing trend that can not only become self-sustaining, but can also bring more customers than you'd ever dreamed of—right to your door.



**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 <http://www.mikemichalowicz.com/>.

## Never Forget A Password Again With A Password Manager



We all have a number of passwords for all the online services we use. You name it: banking, online bill payment, e-mail, social networks, shopping and more. You know it's incredibly easy to lose track of them all—unless you are committing one of the greatest online security offenses by using one password for everything.. One of the best—and most secure—ways to handle your passwords is with a password manager.

It's not uncommon for password managers to get overlooked when it comes to online security. There is a lingering—and false—concern that keeping all of your passwords in one place can potentially open up all your protected accounts to intruders—if they are able to break into the password manager. It's a legitimate concern, but password managers use powerful encryption to keep your passwords safe. They are specifically designed to keep you even more secure than you otherwise would be.

Many password managers—including LastPass, KeePass and 1Password—do much more than simply “remember” your passwords. They also offer password- creation assistance. They will tell you if a password is too weak or just right. Some managers offer the option to generate a secure password for you. Since you don't need to remember it, it can be more complex. They are compatible with a number of platforms and they are packed with customizable tools to keep you safe.



## Paying Too Much for Your Phone and Data? We May Be Able to Help!

If you think you have outgrown your current phone system and are tired of constant downtime in addition to repairs and maintenance, you may want to consider a VoIP system for your office. It is time to stop throwing money down the drain.

For a free phone/data audit, visit us at

<http://www.synergyinc.net/data-phone-audit/>

or call us at (805)284-9700



## The Lighter Side: Happy St. Patty's Day

May the dust of your carriage wheels blind the eyes of your foes.

May you live as long as you want, and never want as long as you live.

May your fire never go out.



May your well never run dry.

May the roof above you never fall in and those gathered beneath it never fall out.

What do you get when you cross poison ivy with a four-leaf clover?

A rash of good luck.

What do you get when you do the Irish jig at McDonalds?

A Shamrock Shake

Why can't you borrow money from a leprechaun?

Because they're always a little short.

What do you call an Irishman who knows how to control his wife?

A bachelor.

