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CKR Financial Services

monthly journal

HELPING OUR CLIENTS GAIN THE ADVANTAGE OVER THE COMPETITION

Malware, Ransomware, Colonial Pipeline, Your Business, Your Home... We talk to an expert to find out how to protect against CyperExposure.

Data Protection!

Today we're sitting down with someone on the frontlines of data protection. Angel Soto is a friend of ours as well as being the owner of our local Nerds To Go – an IT support and computer repair service. We call them OUR IT Team. Let's get right into it!

Angel, we've seen headlines about "malware" or "ransomware". Can you tell us in laymen's terms just what this is?

Malware is typically any software that is intentionally designed to cause damage to a computer, server, client, or computer network. There are many types of malware that exist. These include computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses, ransomware, spyware, etc. In the case of the Colonial Pipeline it was Ransomware. Ransomware is a virus that takes all of the data in your computer, server, or network and it encrypts it so that you cannot access it. The hackers then threaten to either publish your

data or not let you access it unless you pay them some sort of ransom, hence the name ransomware. They usually request payment via some sort of cryptocurrency so that the transaction cannot be traced. Colonial paid the requested ransom and the hackers sent them software to unlock their computers. If it can happen to a very big company like Colonial, it can happen to any business.

Can this happen to individuals?

This can happen to any individual as well as a business. The most common way for a hacker to get into your computer is no antivirus and clicking on a hyperlink that lets a hacker get access to your computer. We have had some very sophisticated hacks happen to our customers. One example was a customer visiting what they thought was a Hewlett Packard printer troubleshooting site. She used the chat function to try to connect a printer. The operator of the chat said she could not fix the issue unless they had access to their computer. The operator asked her for her phone number. The

hackers then called her, sent her a link to click on and let them access their computer and proceeded to lock up all her data. She called us and asked if this was normal (while the hackers were working on her computer) and we instructed her to immediately shut off her computer to close their access. She was too late. They had already locked up her data, however, she had her data backed up and we were able to restore the computer and the data. The main worry then was to change all of her passwords to all her financial institutions and make sure that no transactions had occurred. Luckily for this customer, she was able to make the changes quickly and lock out the hackers.

Are you seeing any particular trends in Las Vegas for any type of hacking?

The trend that we are seeing is people clicking on links they receive in an email from big companies like Amazon, Costco, Home Depot, their banks, etc. These emails basically say something to the effect that your account has been blocked and to unblock the account, click on the link below. These emails are not from the actual vendors, they are from hackers. When you click on the links, it takes you to a website that looks just like the vendor website, but they are not!

We will continue next month...in the meantime, if you need Nerds To Go, go to www.nerdstogo.com/las-vegas-nv/



KEYS

We all have them. Keys to the car, to the office, to the house. What about other, more important keys? I'm talking about the keys to success. Sometimes these "keys" can take the form of people we learn from. Sometimes they are books, resources, or inherent gifts. What "keys" do you have in your proverbial pocket that can open doors to your success? Look closely. They are there.



10 Commandments

Well, let's call them 10 Really Good Practices to Exercise when growing your business! I'm often asked about keys to success or how to scale up. These "Commandments" should help you get on your way!

"Find out who you are and do it on purpose."

DOLLY PARTON

Reminder:



Extended Personal Tax Returns are DUE October 15!

Halloween is October 31!

"The only man who never makes mistakes is the man who never does anything."

-Theodore Roosevelt

1.VALUE YOUR BUSINESS. Understand the value in your goods and services and hold that dear. Guard your reputation. While doing that, do not speak badly about your competitors. In this day of social marketing, it has a way of coming back to visit.

2.REWARD OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEES FREQUENTLY AND FIRE BAD ONES IMMEDIATELY. While appropriate wages are important, money isn't the only motivation for most employees. Recognition for a job well done and respect for individual effort are important contributors to low employee turnover. Nothing can poison a harmonious work environment worse than a bad attitude or bad work ethic. Everyone in your organization knows who the good and bad people are.

It's up to you to do something about it.

3.REVIEW YOUR FINANCIALS MONTHLY. If you don't understand what your financial reports are saying, hire someone to help decipher them. How do you know if you're growing or approaching a financial crisis if you can't read the data?

4.BE AGGRESSIVE IN COLLECTING ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE. You do the work, you deserve to be paid. Do not feel ashamed to ask for YOUR money.

5.MARKETING IS IMPORTANT. Understand what brings in business and repeat that. It should be a continuous process that works for you.

6.DEVELOP A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR BANKER. Being able to call your banker rather than

sit in an automated landscape where you are a number makes a huge difference.

7.RUN YOUR BUSINESS; DON'T LET IT RUN YOU. Get the right people in the right positions. Automate and delegate properly. This takes more time upfront but pays off.

8.CREATE S.M.A.R.T. GOALS. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound).

9.LEARN CONTINUOUSLY. I can't emphasize the importance of sharpening your skillset at this particular time. People have to be choosy about where they spend their money and we, as business owners, need to sound competent and well-versed when recommending they spend their hard-earned money in our shop instead of the one down the street.

10.WHEN THERE'S BUSINESS TO BE FOUND, GO GET IT! One thing this pandemic taught us is that we could still grow the business even when people weren't meeting in person. We rebound, we pivot, we embrace new technologies, and we get out the door and sell our services.

"IRS Troubles?"

1-For refund info, log in to <https://www.irs.gov/refunds> and click the blue button "Check My Refund Status".

2-Got a notice from the IRS, contact us ASAP. These are time sensitive and need immediate attention.

3-Although notices are time-sensitive, the IRS works from its own clock, and they are running behind this year. It started with COVID and they never caught up. So, your automated letters are going out but responses to real letters seem to take forever.



CKR FINANCIAL SERVICES

DO YOU HAVE TROUBLE TRACKING EMPLOYEE TIME BECAUSE THEY SHOW UP AT DIFFERENT WORKSITES? WE CAN HAVE THEM CLOCK-IN ON THEIR CELLPHONE, YOUR TABLET, OR COMPUTER. TIMEKEEPING SIMPLIFIED AND INTEGRATES SEEMLESSLY WITH PAYROLL. OH, AND SCHEDULING TOO! CALL US FOR MORE INFORMATION!

Your Partner in All Things Business

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