

Small Business Matters

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 52 TIPS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Tip #48 - Benefit from Cyber Security and Privacy Training

By Kevin Goodman, BlueBridge Networks

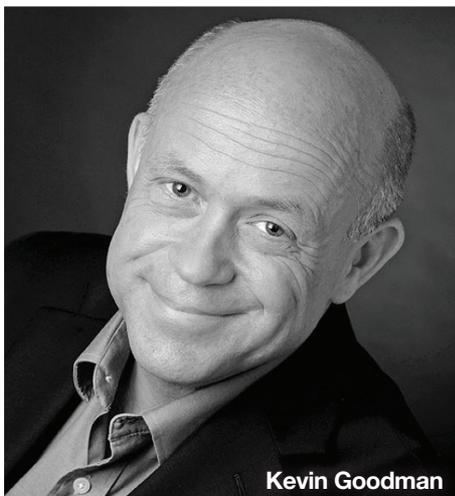
When it comes to cyber security, the small shops seemingly fare better than their bigger brethren. The old adage of "The bigger you are, the harder you fall" seems to hold true in cybersecurity (at least in the press reporting) as larger stores seem to have more to lose and are a higher profile target. Still, many studies show that approximately 75% of data breaches occur outside of large enterprise environments.

Limit exposure

If you or your company is a victim of fraud, you want to limit your exposure and ensure your bank and others are on your side. Know your bank and its policies. Shop around for cyber protection, not just interest rates. Your liability limit for credit vs. debit card is a consideration that must be understood.

Although there is really no one-size-fits-all, effective short list of checking a proprietor or how to behave in the digital era, it is wise to look for and be a company that exhibits best practices. The best defense in controlling your destiny around cyber and mobile security is to clearly understand and know your risk exposure. As a culture, we put a lot of faith while impulse buying that our information and transaction is secure. The truth is we never know.

Think of the adage, "Nothing is truly free," including mobile apps. Be mindful of the personal information you give mobile app providers. Many free apps sell your information to a wide range of companies,



Kevin Goodman

some of which may have malicious intents. Studies have shown most apps do not have many, or even any, security controls built in. Check privacygrade.org to see if the app you want respects your privacy and has security built in.

Be smart about 'smart' devices

Be cautious with new "smart" devices. A wide range of new and unique gadgets — from socks to smart cars — connect you directly to other entities (and even to the Internet) to automatically share information about your activities, location, and personal characteristics. Before using such devices, know which data they are collecting, how it will be used, and with whom it will be shared.

Think before you write

There is much that we can do on our own side to assure privacy, security, and mitigate risk. The fact is every person is vulnerable to hackers, as evidenced by the reputation damage suffered by several Sony Pictures executives whose emails were leaked to the public. Things you may think are cute, funny or private, when exposed to a broader audience out of context, can paint a public picture of a person you are not. This can be disturbing and unfair. Remember: You should never put anything into an email — especially your work email — that you would not want the entire world to be able to see if that message is not encrypted.

Consider outsourcing

Be open to outsource to providers who are third-party audited and hold various certifications; do not run a cybershop on your own and without expert consultation and regular updates. Anti-virus companies offer software that will scan your website for malware and alert you of any breach. Entrepreneurs and consumers both could consider using security as a differentiator over their competitors. Car manufacturers tout how safe their cars are; businesses can lead with a commitment to security and privacy.

Kevin Goodman is managing director and partner with BlueBridge Networks, a cloud data center and managed services business headquartered in downtown Cleveland.

 BENEFITS/52 TIPS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Tip #49 - Keep Your Long-term Growth in Focus

By Erik Gawthorpe, VSP® Vision Care

For small businesses, growth can be a difficult and uncertain process. Employers looking to build their workforce run into serious challenges, such as:

- skyrocketing healthcare costs due to employee illnesses or injuries;
- recruiting quality talent against larger companies; and
- lost productivity due to employee sick-days and turnover.

Implementing a quality vision benefit is a high-impact, low-cost way to overcome these challenges and reach your growth strategy goals. Here are three concrete ways vision plans can keep your long-term growth plans in focus.

Control healthcare costs

There is a benefit to vision utilization, especially for high-risk employees who have been identified as having chronic conditions. In 2013, Human Capital Management Services Group (HCMS) conducted a study including 120,000 VSP members to determine the impacts of VSP WellVision Exams® on employee health and employer healthcare costs. The results proved the exams can detect these chronic medical conditions earlier than primary care physicians:



Erik Gawthorpe

- Diabetes — 34% of the time
- Hypertension — 39% of the time
- High Cholesterol — 62% of the time

Further, HCMS found that over a four year period, employees identified with one of these health conditions experienced fewer health plan costs and lower rates of ER visits and hospital admissions. The study also showed that for every \$1 spent on exam services; VSP clients saved an average of \$1.45 in healthcare costs over a four-year period. That's a proven return on investment of 145%.

Recruit, retain quality employees

It's no secret benefits play a major role in attracting and keeping top talent. According to the Jobson 2013 Managed Vision Care Patient Experience Study, 91% of consumers rated their vision plan as "very or somewhat important." Furthermore, MetLife's 2013 Study of Employee Benefits Trends reported that employees who are satisfied with their benefits are twice as loyal to their employers. Vision care can also be promoted as preventive healthcare, fashion, or as wearable technology.

Maintain productivity

Satisfied, healthy employees are able to work more and are more loyal to their employers.

The HCMS study found that employees with chronic conditions identified through a WellVision Exam experienced fewer lost-time costs and a lower turnover rate. The study also concluded that employees in the study group were generally healthier than those whose conditions were identified through their health plan, leading to substantial savings due to increased productivity.

Want to learn more? Contact VSP's Erik Gawthorpe at erik.gawthorpe@vsp.com

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COSE

council of smaller enterprises

December 7

By The Numbers

Small Business Saturday



\$16.2 billion

The amount spent this year on Small Business Saturday, up from \$14.3 billion a year ago.

SOURCE: POST-SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY CONSUMER INSIGHTS SURVEY, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

Connection Calendar

TECH GROWTH: GROW REVENUE, EMBRACE THE CHANGING ROLE OF TECH SALES

Join us for an instructive, engaging session and hear from successful tech sales leaders on how to remain nimble and responsive to change to keep your company growing in 2016 and beyond.

DECEMBER 10

7:30 - 10 AM



AKRON LOCATION:

Akron General Health & Wellness Center, Akron

CLEVELAND LOCATION:

Indiana Wesleyan, Seven Hills

Cost: \$10 for members, \$20 for non-members
Register at www.cose.org/events.

"THE WORLD IN 2016: BOMBS, BRAVADO AND BLAHS" 2016 GLOBAL ECONOMIC FORECAST

The International Business Network invites you to a program "The World in 2016: Bombs, Bravado and Blahs" 2016 Global Economic Forecast featuring Dr. Ken Mayland, President of ClearView Economics, LLC. Dr. Ken has spent more than 39 years studying the business cycles and providing economic analyses to a variety of constituencies, is widely quoted by the media and has won numerous awards for forecasting accuracy.

DECEMBER 16

8-10 AM

Embassy Suites, Independence

Cost: \$20 for members, \$25 for non-members
Register at www.cose.org/events.

Check out www.cose.org/events for all the latest happenings.