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Wherever you go and whatever you do this Thanksgiving, we wish you the best. Being able to work with you is something we are truly grateful for.

Have You Considered the Cloud for Your Business?

Expansion of Remote Work



Is your business equipped with the necessary tooling to adopt remote working strategies? Re-

remote workers have an incredible amount of benefits to contribute to your business' operations. Remote work is not possible without a well-thought-out strategy. Today, we'll review what your business needs in order to capitalize on remote workers.

Communication & Collaboration Solutions

Remote workers would be useless without the ability to communicate with them. What good is an your...



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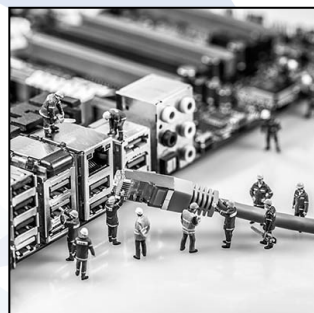
If you asked the layman on the street about cloud computing, you may get some surprising answers. Some people may actually believe that the computing resources are stored in the clouds in the sky. Obviously, that isn't the case, but one thing is certain: not all cloud strategies are understood by the people that use them. This month we will take a look at the different types of cloud computing and how they can actually work for business.

The Public Cloud

When you see advertisements in magazines or on television for cloud computing, it is likely a public cloud that they are talking about. The public cloud is simply a cloud platform that uses shared virtualized computing resources. Public cloud resources are readily available from Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Dropbox, Adobe, and a slew of other providers. Essentially, you share the computing hardware with hundreds of thousands of other users. That's not to say it's available to anyone else, as it is protected by a login platform, but overall

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Current Small Business IT Trends



Technology is trending, there's no doubt about that, but if you are a decision maker at a small business, technology solutions aren't typically developed for your business in mind. As a result, it can often be difficult for the SMB to get tools that are scalable enough to make sense for them, while also getting powerful options that will actually work to improve some part of the business. This month, we'll take a look at three trending technologies that small businesses are starting to use regularly.

Cloud Adoption

One trend that has seemingly been a trend for almost a decade is the continued use of cloud computing to expand the reach of a company. Nowadays, there have been several innovations that now make cloud computing a no-brainer for the modern small business.

Servers, software, and other resources can be extraordinarily expensive, and maintaining them can often cost even more. Many of today's most utilized productivity software now come in a service package through the cloud. This presents an opportunity for the small

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Understanding Disaster Recovery: RTO and RPO



In business, having contingencies for potential problems tends to be advantageous for the business that

wants to stave off ruin. When you are dealing with information technology--specifically data--ensuring that it is protected against loss in the face of the litany of threats out there is an undertaking in itself. A disaster recovery strategy is created to govern the processes a business develops to recover to restore operations in a manner that will keep the business in business. This month we take a look at two of the core variables of a disaster recovery strategy: RPO and RTO.

Recovery Point Objective (RPO)

A recovery point objective is measured in time. The figure describes and determines how much data a business

is willing to lose in the event a disaster strikes their business. This metric is a good one for an organization to determine how often to perform data backups, since in theory, the more data you need to maintain, the more frequently you will be backing up said data.

Recovery Time Objective (RTO)

A recovery time objective is also measured in time. It determines how much time you can go without recovering data and IT infrastructure before you lose continuity of your business. After a disaster it is extremely important to get data and infrastructure back up as soon as possible, but some businesses can function better than others without access to its normal critical data and infrastructure.

RPO vs RTO

RPO and RTO are both metrics widely used in business disaster recovery and need to be qualified properly in order to be effective. To help you and your network administrator set up a disaster

recovery platform that is right for your business, we look at some of the differences between RPO and RTO:

Calculation

This is where it gets tricky. You would think that RPO is easier to calculate because there are fewer moving parts, right? The problem is that you can only restore data to working hardware, and if a disaster knocks out your organization's server, for instance, you won't be able to restore anything until new hardware is procured. So when calculating an RPO, you have no choice but to do it by calculating inherent cost and demand for data. RTO, on the other hand, has to stay aligned with what is possible. If your business' RTO is too close to its necessary RPO, your business may be in jeopardy if a major outage such as a server failure takes place...



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public cloud resources have the highest risk of being insecure. The price is generally a small, per month, per user fee. For that, you get the storage/applications you need at a price that is advantageous for any business.

The Private Cloud

If a business is looking to take advantage of remote access of data, but needs that data to stay as secure as possible, they will build a private cloud. Essentially, a private cloud is hosted on hardware that is dedicated to that lone organization and has a significant amount of security and customizations available to keep the data behind the organization's firewall, and therefore secure. It allows an organization to completely control how sensitive data is distributed, and is the most secure cloud platform a business can have. Costs are usually substantial as you will need to either buy and maintain the hardware on-premises or purchase ded-

icated space in an enterprise data center. There are ways to minimize the cost a bit, but ultimately you will be on the hook for large capital costs, with smaller operational costs.

The Hybrid Cloud

The hybrid cloud is part-public cloud and part-private cloud. It is also well-known to be harder to manage as there are considerations about where data is stored and called from. The main draw is that an organization can take full advantage of the cost savings that public cloud services provide, while also keeping sensitive information secured on a dedicated private cloud server. The integrations needed to make a hybrid cloud work properly are usually in place, but can also be developed by the organization looking to use hybrid cloud architecture.

An orchestration layer, as it is called, connects public cloud resources to an organization's private cloud servers.

This provides end users a seamless experience, with no extra work needed to access data from public or private cloud interfaces.

Which Is Right For Your Business?

The million-dollar (or multi-million-dollar) question is: what works for your business? For the average small business, a private cloud solution makes the most sense as it gives you complete control over your data and applications--and keeps your data and infrastructure onsite--generally thought of as a best practice for smaller businesses.

If you want to use public cloud resources for your business, to cut costs, or because your company's needs don't call for building a dedicated private cloud, you will want to understand just how your business' data is stored...



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Current Small Business IT Trends

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business to get any type of software in needs without carrying the huge capital investment that buying new hardware and paying for software licensing is sure to thrust on a business.

Smarter Business (BI & BA)

Another trend we are seeing is that more and more small businesses are utilizing business intelligence and business analytics platforms to get a better read on how their business investments are returning revenue-generating situations. Using these platforms allows businesses to alter their business strategies to the market in which they compete, giving them a better understanding of what they need to do to improve their operations.

Everything Digital

Up until recently, and even today, digital transformation is often considered too costly for the SMB. That shouldn't stop smaller businesses from pursuing this strategy where they can. The more a business does early to prioritize building a digital workplace, the better position they will be in going forward.



There are several ways a business can go about doing this. They can start either in their customer-facing strategies or with their internal ones. One way that a business can start is by installing

a platform that allows for secure remote work experiences. This will not only make it easier for their own staff to work remotely, it also opens up the possibility to leverage outsourced workers into higher degrees of productivity and cost reduction.

If you are looking for the right technology to invest in, the consultants at ShowTech Solutions can help you find innovative solutions that will create workable ROIs, while boosting efficiency, communications, and productivity. Call us today to see how we can help at (813) 793-4700.



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Ways to Be Smarter About Your Data



Here's a fact that you've heard before: data loss is a nightmare for your business, and ransomware is the boogeyman. Once your data has been breached, your company's reputation is damaged in perpetuity. That's why it is important to confront these fears and start prioritizing data security.

We get it, people everywhere are sharing all this data without a care in the world, but businesses are targeted and are losing revenue, data, and face in the process. What can you do differently?

We will discuss three things you can do right now to improve your organizational data security.

#1 Keep Sensitive Data Behind Your Firewall

The majority of data is secure behind your business' defenses, but with the clear capital benefits brought by cloud computing, more organizations than ever are moving their business-critical data and applications outside of their control to the cloud. This could lead to detrimental situations like your data being intercepted or your cloud platform being breached.

That's not to say that cloud platforms don't provide passable security, most of them absolutely do, but what happens

when one of your employees go on a trip and use the airport Wi-Fi? That cloud platform filled with critical information is just lying in wait for some hacker to come along and steal it. Using a virtual private network is a good option, but not as good as keeping your sensitive data in-house.

If you want to keep your business' data secure, one of the best things you can do is to ascertain which data needs to be secured and protected and then store that data on locally hosted hardware. This gives your ability to control access, security, and the overall management of the data system a boost.

#2 Keep Continuous Backups

Protecting data assets is one of the first steps of organizational risk management. There is no better solution on the market today to do just that than a backup and disaster recovery platform (BDR). Not only does this allow you on-site local backup, it also pushes copies to the cloud, ensuring that you don't keep your proverbial eggs (data) in one basket (server).

Another suggestion we have to make is that you should frequently test your data backup solution to make sure that it is working properly. It would be devastating if you needed to restore your data only to have the backup system...



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Cybersecurity Throughout History



The way a business approaches its network security is a crucial con-

sideration - especially to a business that is planning to have a future. This has contributed to cybersecurity becoming a multi-hundred-billion-dollar (per year) industry. In its short history, cybersecurity has had a huge impact on businesses, so we felt it would be useful to go through some of the highlights of its deployment.

What's the Status of Today's Cybersecurity Industry?

At the time of this writing, cybercrime certainly does pay... it takes in at least \$1.5 trillion in profits per year, and that number is still growing. Some projections anticipate it causing \$6 trillion in yearly damages by the time 2021 rolls around. The cybercrime industry is worth \$200 billion per year, and there's been a 67 percent increase in security breaches over the span of the last five years.

Phishing has grown in popularity to reach the top spot, targeting approximately 76 percent of all businesses. Phishing is a multi-purpose attack vector for cybercriminals, delivering ransomware or other types of malware,

tricking the target into handing over sensitive data, or stealing credentials that allow them to access your data at their leisure. Making it an even worse threat, many who have been phished successfully don't realize it until the ramifications set in. These attacks are responsible for the exposure, theft, or corruption of billions of records annually.

It should be pretty clear at this point why businesses need to be concerned about cybercrime.

However, cybercrime wasn't always as huge of an issue as it is now.

Cybercrime's Origins

Believe it or not, the global threat that costs economies trillions each year was once a simple research project. An individual named Bob Thomas realized that a computer program could potentially be able to travel across a computer network, leaving a trail behind. He designed a computer code that he nicknamed "Creepier." The aptly named Creepier was meant to traverse the ARPANET, moving from Tenex terminal to Tenex terminal, carrying its message:

"I'M THE CREEPER : CATCH ME IF YOU CAN"

When Ray Tomlinson - the inventor of email - took notice of it, he created what was effectively the first-ever computer worm. He then wrote another code, named "Reaper," which hunted down Creeper and deleted it - effectively inventing antivirus.

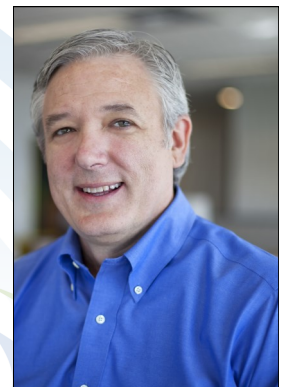
Leveraged By Criminals

Cybercrime was once much different than what can be observed today. In the 1980s, Soviet hackers considered the benign applications that academics had designed, and speculated the same concept could be used to infiltrate other networks. By 1986, a German hacker named Marcus Hess successfully hacked into an Internet gateway that the University of California at Berkeley hosted. With this connection, he had reached the ARPANET. He ended up hacking a total of 400 computers, including some Pentagon mainframes, and planned to sell the secrets he had absconded with to the Soviet Committee for State Security, which translates to Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti... otherwise known as the KGB. Through cooperation between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the government of West Germany...



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Cary Showalter
President



Christopher Storey
Director of Business Development

Showtech Solutions

200 N. Pierce Street
Suite #300
Tampa, FL 33602

Voice: (813) 793-4700

Visit us **online** at:
newsletter.showtechsolutions.com



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