It's a New Year!

The HI Tech Hui Team's New Year's Resolutions

- "To be thankful everyday for the life I have. And to do cardio at least 5 days a week".
- "To do more for ME with less self-inflicted guilt."
- "Be more active, eat well, and take care of myself better."
- "Continuing to work hard while also being present in the moment."
- "Just survive the chaos."

HI TECH HUI NEWSLETTER

this issue

CONNECTIONS

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"I want to stay healthy for my team, and then everything takes care of itself."

- Fernando Tatís

OUR MESSAGE

It's a new year and 2021 doesn't feel much different than 2020. However, nothing could have prepared me this time last year for what was to come. 2020 has provided many hardships and losses, including the loss of a mentor and inspiration for HTH. I thought it was fitting to start the year off talking about how he's inspiring us to focus this new year on happiness.

I read Tony Hsieh's book Delivering Happiness in 2010 and fell in love. I was shocked that such a company existed that shared so many of my philosophies, so I applied to work at Zappos and I got hired! It was such an amazing place to work; everything you read about is all true! I worked with such smart talented people that were nice, kind and fun to be around. I woke up every day excited to go to work.

There was a program at work where employees could make wishes. The wishes could be about anything and everything, and anyone in the company can grant a wish to anyone. My wish was to shadow Tony himself and pick his brain. Tony found out about my wish and granted it! Talk about a dream come true!

I only got to meet with Tony a few times but I learned so much from him and from working at Zappos. Here are just a few nuggets that I wanted to share.

1. Be humble. Tony and his exec team sat in a cubicle like everyone else and he always wore a t-shirt and jeans. He wasn't flashy and he never made people feel like he was better than anyone else. The CEO of a billion dollar company was sitting and having a conversation with me just because I wanted to. He made you feel like your equal and he was willing to help anyone that crossed his path.

2. Do business with people you could be friends with.

On one of the days I got to follow Tony around, I was privy to some cool business meetings. On one of those occasions, there was someone pitching a large deal/opportunity. The guy and his team just flew in and he was OBNOXIOUS! (With a capital O). Starting the initial daytime meeting with a loud "Let's do a round of shots!" He was extremely loud, pompous and talked over people – completely opposite from Tony. After the meeting, I was there to debrief with Tony's team and saw Tony's thought process in making decisions. He asked the team if they could do business with that guy and the consensus seemed to be "no". He wasn't judgmental, but he was aware that the potential partners were not the type of people he would want to do business with and that was the end of that. At Zappos, he encouraged coworkers going out after work and connecting with them in a deeper way because he believed that if you became friends with who you worked with, then you were more likely to help them in their job. It's been 7 years since I left and I can still call the people there my friends.

Those few interactions with Tony and the time I spent at Zappos were some of the most profound moments in my life. I can attribute our success to much of what I learned there. It doesn't matter what business you're in, life is about creating happiness for yourself and others, for your team, and for your customers. When people are happy they pay it forward and make this world a better place. May his legacy to deliver happiness live on through us.

- Anne-Marie Lerch

Finally Shed The Old This Year It's Costing You Much More Than You Think

New year, new technology! If your business is still relying on older and aging technology, it's time to think about updating that technology. As it ages, the effort to keep it running comes with many hidden costs. While it may seem financially savvy to keep older hardware and software running, you may be setting yourself up for major costs down the road.

It's understandable why many small businesses shy away from investing in new equipment and software. They do the math and see a number that keeps rising. While the upfront costs of new technology – hardware or software – can be high (or higher than you would like), you have to consider what you would be paying for versus the cost of keeping aging technology running.

Let's start by looking at some of the "hidden" costs that come with using older or outdated technology. First, consider the cost of productivity.

The older technology gets, the less efficiently it runs. This applies to hardware and software. Hardware has a tendency to lag, even if it's well-maintained. Devices simply wear out with use. This cannot be avoided. But the productivity issues that come with aging hardware only get worse when you bring aging software into the mix. Over time, you will start to lose support from developers, and this comes with all sorts of problems. Here are three examples.

Loss Of Integration Older apps lose stable integration with companion apps. At one point, your CRM software may have worked perfectly with your billing software. As developers focus on newer versions of their apps, they stop updating past versions. The end result is more hiccups or errors. You risk losing data.

Loss Of Compatibility Older apps aren't always compatible with newer apps. What should you do when still using an old software and your vendors or customers use the up-to-date version? It can result in a lot of aggravation on everyone's part, and you can end up losing customers. One Microsoft survey showed a vast majority of consumers – 91% – would walk away from a business if that business were using older technology.

Loss Of Time And Money Factoring in slow equipment and a loss of integration and compatibility, aging tech makes it harder for your team to do their jobs. A recent study by Currys PC World found that employees lose an average of 46 minutes every day due to aging technology. That adds up to about 24 days per year and an average loss of about $3,500 per employee – though that number can vary wildly from industry to indvustry. You can be sure the cost in time and money has a ripple effect throughout the entire business.

While productivity takes a hit, there's another major issue that comes up when your business relies on aging technology: security.
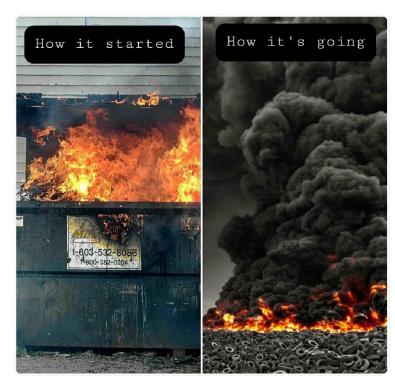
As your tech ages, and as developers end support, this means you'll see fewer security patches. Eventually, there will be zero security patches, leaving you vulnerable. Developers may stop supporting older products, but hackers and cybercriminals will keep on trying to break into those products. They know small businesses tend to update their systems at a slower pace, and this gives criminals an advantage.

If you get caught using outdated software and a hacker is able to break invto your network, the costs associated with this kind of a data breach can put a business under. It's devastating. The problem is made worse if you had limited IT security in place (or none at all) and weren't backing up your data. It's like handing your business over to the criminals! The importance of IT security cannot be overstated, and if you are working on older computers with outdated software, risks are greater.

So, What Can You Do? As we said before, many small businesses assume that keeping their technology up-to-date is cost prohibitive. They don't want to deal with the upfront cost that comes with investing vin new hardware and software. While it can be costly, depending on your needs, there are ways to mitigate those costs.

When you factor in the loss of productivity (and the frustration that comes with that) along with the costs that come with data breaches, malware infections or cyber-attacks, it can easily be worth it to kick your old tech to the curb and embrace the new!

All of infosec right now

Hacker's Corner

SolarWinds. Sunburst. Supply Chain. DUMPSTER FIRE.

For the Infosec community this SolarWinds hack is a prime description of a dumpster fire. A stinky mess on fire. New information is constantly dumping with the scale of this hack, so we want to share with you the information we have.

SolarWinds is a tech company based out of TX that makes network management and monitoring tools with more than 300,000 customers worldwide. Many of them enterprise and government level organizations.

This extremely sophisticated attack is considered a supply chain attack. When 18,000 of SolarWinds Orion customers downloaded an update file, they inadvertently downloaded an embedded malware called SUNBURST. After an initial dormant period of up to two weeks, it retrieves and executes commands, called "Jobs", that include the ability to transfer files, execute files, profile the system, reboot the machine, and disable system services.

Numerous security companies were affected by this breach, but it was FireEye's advanced research and detection methods that identified the intrusion and was able to trace the breach back to SolarWinds. Post notification of the situation, the FireEye team continued to exceed cybersecurity community expectations with level of communication and responses to breach. Unfortunately, their Red Team Tools, used to mimic the behavior of many cyber threat actors and enable FireEye to provide essential diagnostic security services to their customers, were compromised.

It's important to use this event to start thinking about a more resilient, hardened multilayer approach and not relying on a single solution to protect you. Contact us today to learn more about how we can help you build those secure layers.

For more information, and to hear Chuck speak on this topic visit the link below:

shorturl.at/prDPS