T. Daniels Consulting

THE T. DANIELS TIMES

Microsoft SMB Cloud Champions Club

Microsoft Partner | Silver Cloud Platform, Silver Small and Midmarket Cloud Solutions

What's New

T. Daniels Consulting Achieves Microsoft's Silver Cloud Platform Competency

Recently, T. Daniels Consulting was awarded the Silver Cloud Platform competency by Microsoft. This designation spotlights our expertise and experience with deploying and managing clients on the Microsoft Azure platform.

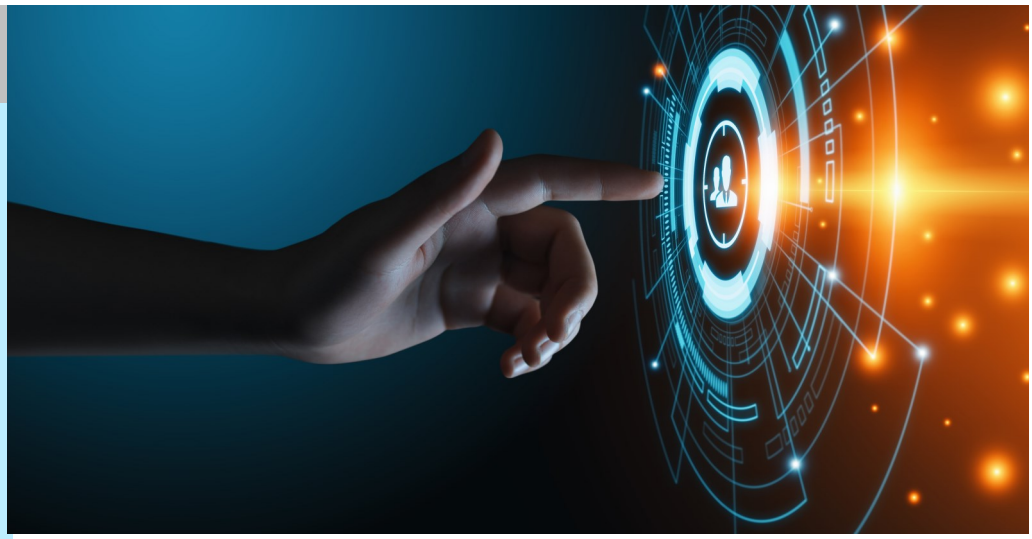
Combined with our existing Silver Small and Midmarket Cloud Solutions competency, which focuses on Office 365, we demonstrate our commitment to leveraging best in class technologies to help our clients successfully transition to and be productive in the cloud.

T. Daniels Consulting ranks in the top 5% of Microsoft Partners in the area and specializes in delivering IT solutions to Small and Mid-Sized businesses. To learn more about how your business could benefit from Microsoft cloud solutions, **call 810-629-0131 or e-mail us at info@tdaniels.com.**

December 2019

This monthly publication provided courtesy of Timothy D. Ricketts, President of T. Daniels Consulting.

"Thank you for the confidence you have given our entire team to manage and protect your valuable assets. We take great pride with our goal to exceed your expectations every day!"



Cybercriminals Are Taking Aim At Your Business … Is Your Network Protected?

Cybercriminals love to test your defenses. They love to see how far they can get into the networks of businesses all over the globe. Cybercriminals really love going after small businesses because they can all too often sneak onto a network, copy data and move on. Through the use of ransomware, they can hold your data hostage and refuse to cooperate until you pay them some amount of dollars – and if you don't pay up, they threaten to delete all your data.

But protecting yourself is not as hard as you might think. While cybercriminals and hackers are an everyday threat to businesses, you can take steps to significantly reduce that threat and take that target off your back.

The first thing you need to do is understand why cybercriminals target small businesses and what makes your particular business vulnerable. There are many things small businesses do and don't do that open them to attack and data theft. These may include not having enough (or any) security in place or not training employees on security protocols.

Realistically speaking, the biggest threat to your business does, in fact, come from your own employees. This doesn't mean they are intentionally harming your business or leaving your network exposed to outside threats. It means they don't have the proper training and knowledge to protect your business from a cyberthreat.

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For instance, your team needs to be trained to use strong passwords, and those passwords *must* be changed periodically (every three months is a good rule of thumb). A lot of people push back on strong, complicated passwords or use the same password for everything, but this is just asking for trouble and should not be allowed at your company.

Once strong passwords are in place, enable two-factor authentication (2FA) on everything you possibly can, from network access to every account you and your employees use. This is an additional layer of security on top of standard password protection. This feature is generally tied to a mobile number or secondary e-mail, or it may be in the form of a PIN. For example, when 2FA is enabled, after you've put in your password, you will be prompted for your PIN for the associated account.

Another thing you must do to get that target off your back is to get anti-malware software installed. Every workstation or device should have some form of this protection. Not sure what to use? This is when working with a dedicated IT company can come in handy. They can help you get the right software that will meet your specific needs without slowing you down. They will install software that is compatible with your PCs and

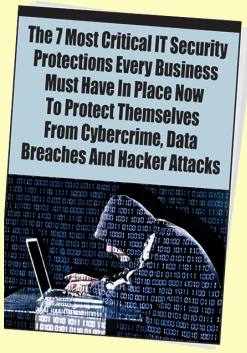
"You can take steps to significantly reduce that threat and take that target off your back."

other networked equipment. Plus, they will make sure anti-malware software is working and is regularly updated.

On top of this, you want to have an active firewall in place. Every business should have its network protected by a firewall; like anti-malware software, firewall security comes with a number of different settings, and you can customize it to fit the needs of your network. Firewalls help keep attackers and malicious software off your network. When paired with a good anti-malware software, your layers of security are multiplied. The more layers, the better protected you are.

Finally, with all of this in place, your employees need to know what it all means. Keep your team up-to-date on your business's security protocols. This includes items like your password policy, malware protection policy and proper e-mail and web-surfing etiquette. The bad guys are never going to stop attacking, but you have the power to protect your business from those attacks.

FREE Report: The 7 Most Critical IT Security Protections Every Business Must Have In Place Now To Protect Themselves From Cybercrime, Data Breaches And Hacker Attacks



Eighty-two thousand NEW malware threats are being released every day, and businesses (and their bank accounts) are the No. 1 target. To make matters worse, a data breach exposing client or patient information can quickly escalate into serious damage to reputation, fines, civil lawsuits and costly litigation. If you want to have any hope of avoiding a cyber-attack, you MUST read this report and act on the information we're providing.

Claim your FREE copy today at
https://www.tdaniels.com/security-1219/

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

HD Mask Surveillance Camera USB Spy Cam

Sometimes, you don't want security cameras in plain sight or you don't even want to go to the trouble of installing cameras. Meet the HD Mask Surveillance Camera USB Spy Cam. This device makes video monitoring easier than ever.

The HD Mask is a tiny camera disguised as a USB charger. At a glance, you would have no idea it was a camera. Even better, it actually works as a USB phone charger, which really sells the disguise. It records as soon as it's activated with motion and has many practical purposes, from keeping an eye on pets to monitoring certain areas of your office for security purposes. You can access the footage right on your smartphone and watch in real time. Learn more at: https://www.hdmask.com/

Windows 7– Time Is Really Running Out

By: ***Tim Ricketts, CEO***

I know we keep talking about this but there is a good reason. With the state of cybersecurity and the number of businesses on a daily basis that are the target of an attack, we can't emphasize enough the importance of upgrading your Windows 7 devices…today.

The Deadline-What Does It Really Mean?

The impact of Microsoft ending standard support for Windows 7 devices on January 14th, 2020 may not be immediately visible. What WILL happen will occur in things you can't see- your privacy and data security. It's pretty straightforward actually. The critical security updates from Microsoft, which protect your device (and consequently your network) from viruses and malware, will no longer be available to protect you. In effect, you are placing a 'we are open' sign on your system and all but inviting the cybercriminals and viruses into your system.

Windows 7 Devices and the Internet

You may have heard that one way to avoid having to upgrade your Windows 7 machines, while still being protected from cyber-attacks, is to simply ensure that they are not connected to the internet. The thought is that if the PC doesn't have an open door to the internet (where all the cybercriminals 'live') then there is no way for them to get in.

Any device living on your internal network, and most have to in order to be able to access client data and applications, print, scan etc., are definitely connected to other devices. If any of those devices become infected then it's only a matter of time before that virus or attack makes its way through your entire network and infects all devices, even those not directly connected to the internet.

Upgrade Timeline.

With the end of year crunch looming on the horizon, you may think that upgrading your systems can wait until after the New Year.

This is not a good plan.

Upgrading to Windows 10 is not a simple 1 hour project. It takes time and someone with the knowledge on how to do it correctly. As we get closer to the deadline, IT firms like ours will get more requests than we can handle to help businesses like yours with upgrades. This is a marathon and not a sprint so start preparing now so you are not stuck at the starting line when the race is already finished. The clock is ticking and there are less than 45 days until January 14th. Prepare now by visiting: https://www.tdaniels.com/windows7-eol/

The T. Daniels Difference

25 YEARS
1994 ~ 2019
T. DANIELS CONSULTING

For over 25 years, T. Daniels Consulting has provided Small and Medium sized organizations with excellent customer service. Our Microsoft Certified Professionals and Engineers have an average 10 years' experience benefiting you by fixing problems quickly and correctly the first time. No other competitor comes close to our level of knowledge, experience and professionalism. We are continuously adding new and improved services to meet your ongoing needs. We never stop improving. That is the **T. Daniels Difference**. Thanks to all of our customers for making us one of Michigan's fastest growing IT consulting and service companies.

4 Ways Technology Can Improve Your Business

It boosts productivity. Technology like task management software can change how you work through a day. Everything is listed out, and you can check it off as you go. You can even make dependent tasks so tasks are automatically created for anyone who may be next in line to work on a project.

It's crucial to marketing. You need online and social media marketing. This is where people are. Understanding how social media marketing works can increase the number of people who know about your company, which increases your customer base.

It's essential for security. Technology and security go hand in hand. As your business relies more on technology, you need to rely more on security to protect your networked equipment, like all of your employees' PCs and your many servers.

You can't communicate without it. With things like e-mails, VoIP phone services, and direct messaging through social media sites, technology has made communication easier than ever. When you know how to use all these forms of communication, it puts you above the competition. *Pixel Productions Inc., 7/20/2019*

10 Easy Ways To Destress At Work

1. Take a walk. A 15-minute walk will refresh your mind.

2. Work outside. Weather permitting, working in the sun can boost your mood.

3. Meditate. Use a meditation app like Calm or Headspace to lower blood pressure and de-stress.

4. Take deep breaths.

5. Make a checklist. Write it out and focus on one task at a time.

6. Talk to a friend. Have a conversation about a problem. Talking it out can change your perspective.

7. Watch an informative video. It can be on anything. Videos are a great distraction for 5-10 minutes.

8. Listen to soothing music.

9. Take a 20-minute nap. Nothing does wonders for stress like a power nap — just be sure to set a timer!

10. Trust your instincts. If you feel you need a break, take it. Don't push yourself if it isn't necessary. *Small Business Trends, 7/19/2019*