

Fellow Informer

Ground Hog Day

It's February and once again we all wait to see if a groundhog can predict the weather for the next six weeks. Snow or Spring?

Or in the true form of that silver screen classic, will your IT problems run in a continuous loop:



This month may be a good time to look at our Managed Services Plans and schedule a time to meet with our team .
Call us at (435) 214-4126.

February 2016



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Richard Rothman, President of IT Fellows.

"As a business owner, you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we shine! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"



You just gave your staff an extra 6-week paid vacation to check in with friends on Facebook, expose your company's valuable trade secrets from smartphones, watch cat videos, send résumés to your competitors and download porn – all on your time, and your dime... That's right: if a full-time employee wastes just ONE measly hour each day, it equals 250 hours burned – 6 weeks of paid time – on non-work-related activities.

Sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are a constant source of distraction to people who feel like they need to keep in touch at all times.

Not only is work time being frittered away, but crucial company secrets slip through the cracks more easily. And sites being visited on your network expose your whole system to malware, hackers and online theft.

So, what are you going to do about it?

Face it – you rely more than ever on

Why Slackers Love Tech

mobile technology. And you want to have faith in your team... But how do you know they aren't secretly taking advantage of your good nature when they're online?

You don't. The only way to know what's really going on at work is to monitor their on-the-job online activities.

CEO Shocked By What She Found
Celeste O'Keefe, CEO at DANCEL Multimedia, a Biloxi, Mississippi, marketing firm, started monitoring her employees when she noticed some of them attempting to cover their computer screens as she walked by.

Since then, she's fired four people for digital infractions. One was a man doing side deals with clients that should have come into the firm. She also fired a woman doing schoolwork on the clock and another employee downloading child porn.

Your rights as an employer to track web and e-mail activities of employees using company

Continued pg.2

computers are well-established. But should you? And if so, how do you do so legally, and without damaging company morale?

Several good things happen when you check your team's online behavior. For one, it can help your company avoid theft, embezzlement or other financial harm. Monitoring can also prevent compliance issues, provide evidence in the event of lawsuits and ensure that your workplace is free from harassment.

Deal With It

It's just a fact of life that monitoring with your employees' full knowledge and consent is necessary to mitigate legal and regulatory risks. However, it's also important to be aware of the potential pitfalls.

If employees feel a distrustful Big Brother is looking over their shoulder, it could hurt performance and morale.

Be careful about inadvertently

gathering information about your employees' religion, political views, sexual orientation or medical history. This could expose your firm to discrimination lawsuits.

Disciplining an employee for making negative comments about you online could result in trouble with the National Labor Relations

Board. Check the Board's guidelines to avoid issues, as there have been several cases recently involving social media.

So how do you monitor without getting into hot water with attorneys and

regulators – and avoid hurting your team's morale and performance?

Know the difference between monitoring and surveillance.

There's nothing obtrusive about monitoring events on a company's computer system to protect the company's assets and reputation. Surveillance, on the other hand, is tracking an individual's activities, and entails a certain "creepy factor." Engage in focused surveillance only

if you have well-founded suspicions and documented agreement with your attorney and top managers.

Set clear policies. Document your corporate policy on Internet and device usage to make rights and responsibilities clear to everyone – and to protect you in the event of a legal challenge.

Inform and gain consent. It's not enough to simply let your employees know you'll be watching them. By being fully transparent and explaining the risks to the business from improper use of digital assets, you'll steer clear of legal issues without putting a damper on morale.

Let Us Help You!

You don't have to navigate the employee-monitoring maze alone. For the month of February take advantage of our Free Technology Abuse Consultation to see for yourself how much work time is being wasted, and how many hacking and legal issues your employees expose your company to every day. Contact us today at (435) 214-4126 or ask@itfellows.net to get started.

"It's also important to be aware of the potential pitfalls."

Free Report: What Every Small Business Owner Must Know About Protecting And Preserving Their Company's Critical Data And Computer Systems

PROTECT YOUR NETWORK

"What Every Business Owner Must Know About Protecting and Preserving Their Network"



Don't Trust Your Company's Critical Data And Operations To Just Anyone!

This report will outline in plain, non-technical English common mistakes that many small business owners make with their computer network that cost them thousands in lost sales, productivity and computer repair bills, as well as providing an easy, proven way to reduce or completely eliminate the financial expense and frustration caused by these oversights.

Request your FREE copy today at www.itfellows.net/protect/ or call our office at (435) 214-4126.

Services We Offer

- ◆ Technology Consulting
- ◆ Computers and Network Security
- ◆ Server Installation/Migration and Support
- ◆ Network Design, Administration and Monitoring
- ◆ Firewalls/Routers/Managed Switches
- ◆ Security Risk Assessments
- ◆ HIPAA Compliance Audits (Coming Soon!)
- ◆ Business Continuity Planning
- ◆ Managed IT Services
 - Monitoring
 - Patching (Microsoft, Adobe, Java...)
 - Help Desk
 - Cloud Computing (Private/Public)
 - BDR (Backup and Disaster Recovery) Services with Cloud failover
 - Anti-virus End-Point Management
 - Email – Hosted or On-Premise MS Exchange
 - Email Security, Continuity & Archiving Solutions
 - Vendor & ISP Management
 - VoIP Phone Systems

Forget Something?

A while back I did a huge favor for someone and never heard anything from them... Zip, zilch, nada, nothing. Just a simple “thank you” would have been nice...but they acted as if it was expected of me. To say that I was disappointed is putting it mildly.

To me, *disappointed* is a very powerful and scary word. You see, *disappointed* can turn into other “dis” words, such as *disgruntled*, *discouraged*, *disenthralled*, *disillusioned*, *disheartened* and possibly even *dissatisfied* with our current personal or business relationship. I might start noticing that this relationship (business or personal) is really all about YOU and how YOU can benefit; the words *reciprocation* or *gratitude* don’t seem to be in your vocabulary.

Everyone likes to be remembered, thanked or appreciated for doing favors, going above and beyond, being courteous, considerate, thoughtful or kind. Being “taken for granted” stinks. Forgetting to show any kind of appreciation for someone who did something for you...that they didn’t have to do... can end up causing you problems later on. You will never know when someday you may need a helping hand, and all those people you took for granted and/or never thanked might NOT be so readily available to help you out.

Francesca Gino, an associate professor at Harvard Business School, did some research on gratitude and looked at 41 fund-raisers at a university, all receiving a fixed salary. The director visited half of the fund-raisers in person, telling them, “I am very grateful for your hard work. We sincerely appreciate your contributions to the university.” The second group received no such expressions of gratitude. What was the impact of the director’s thanks? Gino said that “the expression of gratitude increased the number of calls by more than 50%” for the week, while fund-raisers who received no thanks made about the same number of calls as the previous week.

Organizations and leaders who miss chances to express gratitude lose opportunities to motivate people that actually cost them nothing. Simply stated: gratitude is free and profitable. People may not show that they are upset about not being thanked...but when the time comes for them to help YOU out again, they may just be a little too busy that day. You can transform your relationships, business and personal life with the Power of Gratitude! Never underestimate the power of a thank-you and never pass up on the opportunity to say those two words.

“It is not happy people who are thankful. It is thankful people who are happy.” – Anonymous



Robert Stevenson is a highly sought after, internationally known speaker. He is the author of the best-selling books *How to Soar Like An Eagle in a World Full of Turkeys* and *52 Essential Habits For Success*. Robert is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) and is a former All-American Athlete. He started his first business at 24 and has owned several companies. Robert has international sales experience dealing in over 20 countries, and his client list reads like a Who’s Who in Business. He has shared the podium with such renowned names as Generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf, Former President George H. W. Bush, Anthony Robbins and Steven Covey. www.robertstevenson.org/

This trio of tools can help keep you healthy at work.

1) Combat eyestrain with *F.lux*. This free app tweaks the tint and brightness of your device's screen based on time of day. It leans toward full spectrum during the day and warmer red spectrum at night. 2) Improve your posture with *Lumo Lift*. This small sensor that you put on your shoulder reminds you to sit or stand tall when you've been hunched over too long. 3) *Move* reminds you to stretch and stay active throughout your day. It gives you over 300 "coworker-friendly" exercises to choose from that you won't be embarrassed to do at work. In fact, nobody will know – except you. - *Entrepreneur*

Want more rave reviews on the web?

Deliver great value, and your customers will say nice things about your business online. Make it easier for them to do so, and you'll get great reviews. "Google My Business" lets customers leave reviews, but it can be tricky to navigate. Show your customers how to leave a review for your business with a simple e-mail request. Ask for a short and honest

review. Provide instructions for both mobile and desktop, and a link to your Google My Business page. Only verified Google My Business pages publish reviews, so don't forget to verify your business with Google. Call us if you need help setting this up – and let your best customers help you attract more like them!

-Google My Business Help

The key to keeping in touch with your best prospects.

In sales, a little follow-up can go a long way. Yet when things get hectic, it's all too easy to let valuable leads slip through the cracks, resulting in lost sales and wasted marketing dollars. That's where picking the right e-mail marketing service can make a big difference in hitting your sales goals. The best services feature a rich set of tools, an easy-to-use interface, great tech support and innovative features like social media integration. Top-rated services like iContact, GetResponse and Constant Contact range in price from around \$14 to \$150 per month – easily recouped with one or two deals you might otherwise miss.

-TopTenReviews.com

Stressful day at work? This "massage-on-demand app" may be just what you need.

Whether for your whole office, a hardworking team you want to reward or just for yourself, Zeel will send you a licensed massage therapist with as little as one hour's notice. Take your pick from Swedish, deep tissue, prenatal or sports massage. Enter your work, home or hotel address, select a 60-, 75- or 90-minute massage, and the gender preference of your massage therapist. Within hours you could be unwinding in the hands of a real pro. No need to worry about the tip – Zeel takes care of that all in one payment. Prices range from about \$100 to \$150 – not bad for a healthy bit of stress relief. -Zeel.com

Ladies: Time to replace that boyfriend with a robot?

Pepper, a cute, blue-eyed male robot won't cook or clean for you for fear of "disappointing you." However, he'll understand and empathize with you, laugh when you're happy, frown when you're upset, even sing your favorite songs and dance for you. He's curious about humans – the more you interact with him, the more he'll learn about your tastes. According to Aldebaran Robotics, his creator, he's the first robot designed to live with humans. Want to take him home with you? He's found mostly "at work," relating to customers in retail stores – however, the company's goal "is for Pepper to live with humans. The stores are just the beginning..." - Aldebaran.com

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"No, Spidey-sense is different. I think what you've got is a hotspot."