

the Tech Chronicle

The Official Company Newsletter of NorthStar Tech. Services

Give Your Business The Advantage In 2023

By Looking At Key IT Trends and News of 2022

The year 2022 was a big one for IT, which experienced growth in all areas, especially for infrastructure in remote work due to the pandemic. When businesses fail to have updated IT infrastructure in place, regardless of company size or location, **their customers' and employees' sensitive information is at risk.** By investing in proper IT infrastructure, businesses can improve productivity while saving money. It's a win-win situation.

Keeping that in mind, business owners need to be aware of changes in the IT industry in order to best protect their businesses and customers. The IT industry is continuing to grow, so you must make necessary updates. Here, you'll find the most important IT news and trends of 2022. Understanding these trends will help foster success into 2023 and beyond.

Increased Need For IT Services Due To Remote Employees

One of the most prevalent challenges for many industries was the need for reliable IT services for remote employees. Businesses had to send their employees home, so they needed to find ways to ensure their information would stay protected.

To fix this issue, many companies began working with MSPs to help with their IT and cyber security needs. MSPs can install, support and maintain all the users' devices and PCs connected to the network.

Since they manage devices remotely, they're available to help employees with their concerns as soon as they arise. MSPs are also incredibly beneficial when it comes to protecting information from hackers and other significant problems. They'll be there to assist with issues such as lost devices, hardware failures, natural disasters and other situations that would otherwise leave a business failing.

A Need For More Automation

Between rising costs due to inflation and staffing issues, many small-business owners are doing more of the repetitive but necessary tasks that don't bring much value to the business.

However, many things can be automated, including email marketing and data entry. Business owners don't have to do everything on their own, especially when they can automate many of these essential daily tasks. Implementing automation leaves business owners and employees less stressed while freeing up time for higher-valued tasks.

Cyber Attacks Of 2022 For Companies To Be Aware Of

Cybercriminals are getting smarter and bolder. In 2022, we saw cyber-attacks against the Israeli and Polish governments; the school system in Albuquerque, New Mexico; and large businesses such as Uber and Crypto.com.

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WHATS NEW

CYBER ASSESSMENT



In the last several years, our team has been putting much of our efforts towards cyber security. We have found way too many companies don't have a proper understanding of just how dangerous a breach can be for **their business** and for **their own clients**, so we have been offering **free** cyber security assessments to provide some clarity. For more info on this, scan the code on the final page.

THIS MONTH'S WEBINAR

We co-hosted a Cyber Security Webinar this month with leaders from Summit IT Services and Nashville Computer. The conversation covered **three techniques professionals need to practice to protect themselves against cyber criminals.** If you missed it, don't worry... We will be publishing the recording on our website under "Resources" for you to watch!



This monthly publication is provided courtesy of **Eric Williams**, the CEO, Owner, & Founder of NorthStar Technology Services located in Moorestown, NJ.



Our Mission:

To build a community of successful-minded entrepreneurs that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and expands the capacity of all members to achieve great things.

We are proud to have served the greater Philadelphia Metro Area since 2008.

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No business is exempt from cyber-attacks. Many small businesses don't prioritize cyber security, and cybercriminals know this. They will try to target and compromise businesses that they think are an easy target. Proper cyber security training for employees, as well as hiring an MSP, can reduce the risk of hackers gaining access to critical information.

If you're a small-business owner, it's essential to include your business's IT needs in your plans for 2023. Doing so will allow you to stay ahead of your competition while ensuring your employees and customers are well protected.

Tech Tip Recap

Every week, NorthStar posts "Tech Tip Tuesday" to share helpful advice on how to get the best out of technology and how to stay safe online.

In this segment, we will feature a recap of the tech-tips we shared last month. **To stay updated this month, follow us on social media!**

Store A Digital Signature On Your Computer

On Macs, go to Preview, then Tools, then select Signature. On PC, upload a scanned copy of your signature and enter it into your email.



Don't Use Browser Password Keepers

Browsers are more susceptible to malware attacks and are much less secure than they seem. Instead, you should opt for a password keeper with one master password.



Update Your Software

Seems obvious, but many don't realize updating your software is one of the best ways to keep it up and running AND safe from attacks.



Hover Over A Link To Check Url Before Clicking

A great way to take extra precaution against phishing emails is to hover your mouse over the link to reveal the url before clicking (or just avoid clicking it altogether for best results)



Highlight Text & Type fn + SHIFT + F3 To Capitalize

Ever wished you had typed a title or expression with caps lock on? You can quickly and easily convert your text on Microsoft Word to ALL CAPS with this tech trick



3 Mistakes Leaders Make With Job Descriptions



Leaders often make common mistakes with job descriptions when hiring and reviewing performances, leading to more errors that can become irritating and reduce productivity. These mistakes are entirely preventable and easily overcome, which leads to better hiring processes.

Here are three common mistakes you're probably making right now.

Describing A Job In Vague Terms

Watch out for "-ing" verb tenses – they are often too basic. "Supporting the marketing team in promoting our products" is undefined. What does "supporting" or "promoting" mean? What level of performance is considered poor, good or great?

Instead, consider a more specific description, such as "To help our customers modernize their inventory management systems by increasing sales of existing customers by 20% per year through new product introduction." This is a high-level but specific explanation of why the job exists.

Putting Focus Only On Results

Some leaders make the mistake of wording their expectations in terms of only actions, not results. "Contact at least 20 existing customers per week and conduct an account review with at least five per week."

That is a perfectly good expectation of an "action," but is insufficient if all of the expectations do not outline any results. The risk is people will perform required actions without feeling the urge to deliver a specific outcome.

Putting Focus Only On Actions

Other leaders make the mistake of wording their expectations in terms of big-picture results without specifying the actions an employee should take. "Grow revenue at least 15% per year" is a very specific goal. But to make that goal more achievable, it is helpful to also list several of the necessary actions needed to reach that result.

To avoid making these mistakes, we encourage colleagues and clients to practice writing a "scorecard." A scorecard has a clear mission for the role. It identifies five to seven outcomes you expect a person to achieve by a certain date. The outcomes are a mixture of actions you want the person to take and the results you expect them to achieve. And you can easily "score" whether someone achieved the outcomes.

Using a scorecard will improve your ability as a leader to hire and coach people to exemplify the organization's purpose and values and take actions that achieve results.

- A Guest Article By Dr. Geoff Smart



Meme Corner
Christmas Edition



3 Quick Things To Do Before You Head Out For The Holidays



The Holidays are approaching, and chances are you and your employees are taking some well-deserved time off in the next few weeks. As a business owner or executive, you may find it tough to get away because your thoughts turn back to the business.

To help eliminate added stress so you can enjoy time with your family and friends, or sitting on a beach somewhere, here are three quick things to do before you go.

1. Set up autoresponders for your e-mail and voice mail

There's nothing more frustrating for a customer or client than to reach out because they need something and, instead of getting a response, they get nothing. You can take care of that by setting up e-mail autoresponders (directions below) and updating your voice mail. Make sure that in each you let people know how to get a hold of someone if they need something urgent. Oh, and leave yourself a note to remove the autoresponder or update your voice mail when you're back.

2. Adjust your hours on your Google Business Profile

Google allows you to set Holiday Hours specifically for temporary changes, like vacations or holidays. Since many people rely on Google to give them up-to-date information on businesses, you need to make sure to let Google know when you'll be closed or have reduced hours. There's nothing more frustrating for a prospective customer or client than fighting holiday traffic to get across town to a business, only to find that the business didn't take 30 seconds to update their holiday hours.

3. Make sure your company data is backed up!

Did you know that more than 250,000 properties a year experience flooding from burst water pipes, most of which happen in the winter months? Coming back to the office to find that your computers are sitting in 6 inches of water (or ice) could really ruin your week. This is just one of many reasons that you need to make sure all your company computers and data are backed up (off-site).

You deserve time off from your business to relax and recharge and we hope these three tips will help you to make the most of that time this holiday season!

Every industry is full of businesses trying to persuade and attract the same group of customers to shop with them, so you can't just do the same thing as your competitors and expect your business to survive. If you're looking to start a new business or if your current business needs a refresh, there are things you can do to give your business a leg up on the competition.

Stand Out From The Crowd.

You don't necessarily need to revolutionize your industry to see success. You just need to stand out more than your competitors. So think for a moment, what do your customers actually want and need in your industry? How can you provide more or something different than your competitors? When you find the answers to these questions, you'll be well on your way to creating a profitable business.

Personalize The Experience.

When you own or operate a business, you want your customers to shop with you for life. You need to come up with some ideas to encourage that loyalty. You could start a loyalty program, but how can you be sure your rewards are better than competitors? Instead, make each customer interaction about them. Personalize their experience so they feel valued at your business.

Put The Focus Back On Work.

We live in a world full of distractions. Every one of us has a smart phone capable of keeping in contact with anyone at any time, searching the Internet for endless information and scrolling through social media for hours on end. These distractions can quickly take away from our productivity, but it's not always easy to put our phones down. Here are two ways to reclaim your focus so you can get back to work.

Turn Off Your Distractions.

Find out what's most commonly distracting you and find a way to block it out. If you're distracted by your phone, turn on Do Not Disturb mode or turn your phone off. If you struggle with talking to co-workers, close your office door. Log out of your social media accounts so they're not as easy to access.

Break Up Your Schedule.

It's essential to take breaks during your work to stay focused and refreshed. This is when you should be looking at the things distracting you. Make sure you have breaks throughout the day and set a reminder so you take them. If you actually take breaks, you'll be less likely to reach for your distractions while working.

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Did you know we offer a cyber security assessment?

This **no-risk** and **high-return** assessment will tell you whether your company is fully secure. Even if you already have in-house IT or a tech MSP, a routine check up is not only recommended but vital to your company's success. Scan the QR code or visit this link to learn more: <https://www.northstarsvc.com/discoverycall/>

