TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

SPOT IT UPDATE

Your monthly newsletter, written for decision-makers

What are you using your work laptop for?...

Let's be honest, most of us have used our work laptops for personal stuff now and then. Whether it's checking your personal email, browsing social media, or streaming a video, it seems harmless... right?

Well, according to recent research, it could be a big risk for your business.

A new study found that 90% of workers use their company laptops for personal activities. And many are doing risky things like accessing unsecured websites, streaming illegal content, and even visiting the dark web. These activities can expose your company's sensitive data to malware, phishing attacks, and other cyber security threats.

With more employees working remotely or hybrid, it's harder for you to monitor what's happening on company devices. People are connecting to public Wi-Fi, using personal USBs, and generally mixing their work and personal lives in ways that can lead to trouble. Younger workers are more likely to take these risks.

What's even more worrying is that 18% of employees don't have any cybersecurity software on their work devices, and 7% aren't even sure if they're protected. Without solid security in place, your business is left wide open to attacks.

On top of all that, using a work laptop for personal stuff can create privacy concerns. A third of workers said they'd feel like their privacy was being violated if their boss could see their personal activity on a company laptop.

So... what can you do?

It's time to rethink how you and your team use work devices. Put stronger security measures in place and make sure employees understand what's OK and what's not on a company laptop.

Remote management tools can also help keep everything secure. And of course, seeking expert help from an IT partner like us will make this a simpler job all round.

If you'd like help managing your business devices, get in touch.

DID YOU KNOW...

ActiveX controls are being switched off in Office 2024

ActiveX lets you use interactive elements in your documents, such as buttons and forms. It's been on by default since being released in 1996 (!), but with Office 2024 it will be switched off.

Why? Because it's caused security issues, with cyber criminals leveraging it to install malware. If you're a fan, you can enable it again by changing your Trust Center settings, but we'd suggest keeping it disabled.

TechFacts

1 The original Apple logo from 1976 featured Sir Isaac Newton sitting beneath a tree, with an apple about to fall on his head. It included a quote from a poem: "Newton...a mind forever voyaging through strange seas of thought...alone." Catchy!

2 In 2004, the @ symbol was added to Morse code making it possible to communicate email addresses. The character is called a "Commat" and consists of the signals for A and C.

3 Hal, the computer in '2001: A Space Odyssey', got its name by taking the letters IBM, and selecting the preceding letter for each one.

Technology update

Microsoft is rethinking Windows security after the CrowdStrike outage

Earlier this year, a problematic update from CrowdStrike took down Windows systems all over the world.

To avoid a repeat, Microsoft is working with major security companies (including CrowdStrike) to develop a new platform that meets security needs without compromising system performance – or threatening future outages.
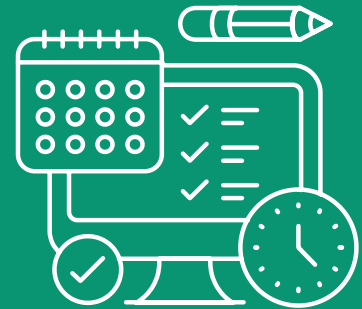
NEW TO

MICROSOFT

Finally, you can declutter Microsoft Edge

Microsoft Edge has started to look cluttered with its toolbar, sidebar, and context menu, and that can be distracting.

A new pop-up lets you clean it by hiding the apps you use less regularly. It even gives you a helpful list, complete with checkboxes, to select which ones you want to hide and which you'd like to keep in view.

Who will be November's quiz champ?

1. What common element is used in the manufacture of computer chips?
2. What's the name of the computer language named after a French philosopher and mathematician?
3. Retro tech question: How many feet/meters of tape would you find in the typical C60 compact audio cassette?
4. What was the first website to display banner ads?
5. Before it became Photoshop, what was the early version of the software called?

The answers are below.

1. Silicon
2. Pascal
3. 281 feet / 85 meters
4. Hotwired.com
5. ImagePro

Cloud Telephony vs. VoIP – which is best for your business?
Is it time to upgrade your phone system?

These days there are two main technologies to choose from. Let us explain them so you can pick the right one for your business.

The first is VoIP, an acronym for Voice over Internet Protocol.

It's a reliable technology. You make phone calls using data sent over the internet. You can use a desk phone for this, or your computer or cell.

Cloud Telephony takes things a step further. It uses VoIP technology but operates entirely in the cloud.

Everything is managed remotely. No hardware to maintain and no complicated setups, just a flexible system that grows with you.

Need more lines or features? That's easy, it's all done online in seconds.

Both are solid choices for growing businesses.

Want us to look at how you use your phones and suggest which system is best for you? Get in touch.

Checkout this month's infographic, video and Guide on this!

Business gadget of the month

Creative Pebble V3 Desktop Speakers

Whether you're joining video calls, editing audio or video, or simply listening to music while you work, you want good quality speakers that don't distract you.

The Creative Pebble V3 desktop speakers are affordable, but offer crisp sound, appealing design, and they have a good selection of connectivity options. They're also compact enough that they don't take over your desk.

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This is how you can get in touch with us:
CALL: 817.337.0300 | EMAIL info@fulcrumgroup.net
WEBSITE: www.fulcrum.pro