TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

SPOT
IT UPDATE

Your monthly newsletter, written for decisionmakers

Are your tech tools helping or hurting your business?

In the rush to stay competitive, businesses have been trying out new tech tools left, right, and center. It's great to embrace change. But here's the thing: Having too many tools – or the wrong kind – can create more headaches than solutions.

That means lots of businesses are now stuck with a jumble of software that doesn't play nicely together, making work slower and more frustrating than it should be.

Over the past few years, companies have thrown tools at every problem:

- HR needed a way to track time off requests… there's software for that

- Finance needed help with tax compliance… another tool added to the mix

- Add in the scramble to adapt to remote work and fast growth, and suddenly, every department has its own tool

The result? A patchwork quilt of systems that just don't connect.

Now the focus is shifting to working smarter, not harder, and those cracks in your tool box are showing. Instead of helping your team, too many disconnected tools are slowing them down. Data gets stuck in silos, workflows feel clunky, and employees are juggling software. To make matters worse, you're likely paying for tools no one's even using.

So, what can you do?

Look at the bigger picture. Think about consolidating your tools. Cut out the extras and focus on systems that work together smoothly. When your tools are aligned, your data flows properly and your team can do what they do best.

It's not just about saving money (though you'll probably do that too). It's about making work easier and more efficient. Automation can also help you spot inefficiencies and connect the dots between systems, so everything runs more smoothly.

If your team isn't working as efficiently as they could, before you start pointing fingers consider that your tools might be the reason.

We can help you create a tool box that helps, not hinders your workflow. Get in touch.

Our new 2025 IT Buyer's Guide is out! Check it out!

DID YOU KNOW…

about "crafted malicious requests"?

A recent security issue on Bing.com allowed attackers to steal sensitive data from services like Microsoft 365. Cyber criminals could send "crafted malicious requests" to Bing. Which means they designed specific commands that tricked the system into doing something it shouldn't (like providing access to private emails or documents).

This flaw allowed attackers to inject harmful code into Bing search results, making it possible to steal data. Thankfully, Microsoft has fixed the issue, but it's a reminder of why keeping software up to date and monitoring for security vulnerabilities is so important.

1 GPS is free… for some. Even though it is free to use GPS globally, it costs $2 million to operate EVERY DAY. This money comes from American tax revenue.

2 Remember MySpace? The original social media platform lost all its content before 2016 due to a faulty server migration. Every photo, song, and video that was uploaded to this once-popular social network was accidentally deleted. That accounts for 50 million songs from 14 million artists. Those that didn't have backups are now lost forever.

3 The first photo ever uploaded to the internet was of a four-piece all-female comedy band called "Les Horribles Cernettes". They were colleagues with Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the World Wide Web. He asked them for some scanned photos of their band so he could publish them online. And history was made!

Technology update

LinkedIn is saying goodbye to audio broadcasts

LinkedIn has retired its audio-only events, so you can no longer host live audio broadcasts. You may have used this feature for things like hosting informal Q&A sessions or industry discussions.

Now, LinkedIn is focusing on its combined video and audio Live Events tool, making it easier to connect with your audience in one place. It's all about streamlining how you share ideas and engage.
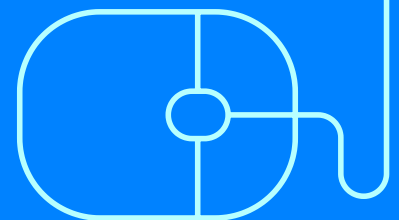
MICROSOFT

There are new mouse settings in Windows 11

Windows 11 has made navigating your computer even easier with some smart updates to mouse settings.

Now, you can fine-tune how your cursor moves, including an option to turn off "enhanced pointer precision" for smoother, more predictable control. This is great if you want more consistency, especially when doing detailed work. It's a small tweak, but one that could make your day-to-day tasks simpler.

New year, new quiz champion?

1. What unit of length is equal to around 5.8 trillion miles?
2. What was the name of the first internet search engine, created in 1990?
3. In which decade was the Sony Walkman launched?
4. Was electronics company Nintendo founded in 1889, 1946 or 1975?
5. How many characters can a long post on X Premium be?

The answers are below.

1. A light year
2. Archie
3. 1970s
4. 1889 (yes, really!)
5. 25,000! (a standard post is 280 characters.)

Act now: The clock is ticking for Windows 10

Still using Windows 10? It's time to start planning for a big change. Microsoft has announced that this October will mark the end of support for the operating system.

That means no more security updates, no bug fixes, and no technical support. While your computers won't suddenly stop working, staying on Windows 10 after its end-of-life date could put your business at serious risk.

Without regular updates, your systems will be more vulnerable to cyber attacks. Cyber criminals love to exploit old, unsupported systems because they know the weaknesses won't be fixed. If you handle sensitive customer data or financial information, this is a huge red flag.

On top of that, software compatibility could become a problem. New applications will be designed with Windows 11 and future systems in mind, meaning your current setup might not be able to keep up. The result? Slower workflows or even critical tools that stop working entirely. And if something goes wrong, you'll be on your own – Microsoft won't be there to help.

But Windows 11 is here, and it's built to make your business run more smoothly. From stronger security features to smarter productivity tools, the upgrade is packed with benefits… and it's free!

Before making the move, you'll need to check if your current computers meet the requirements for Windows 11. Not all Windows 10 devices will be compatible, but it's easy to find out using Microsoft's PC Health Check tool.

If some devices don't make the cut, it might be time to invest in new hardware. While that sounds like a big step, newer machines offer better performance and security, saving you headaches down the line.

The key to a smooth transition is starting early. Back up your data, check compatibility, and plan your upgrade timeline so it doesn't disrupt your team. Making the move now means you'll avoid scrambling later. And of course, you'll set your business up for success with a system designed for the future.

If you're feeling overwhelmed about where to begin, we can help every step of the way. Get in touch.

Checkout this month's **infographic, video** and **Guide** on this!
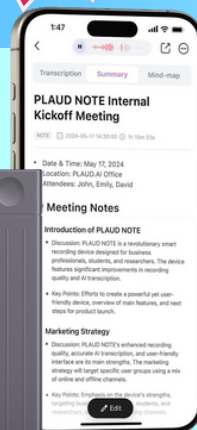
Business gadget of the month

Plaud Note AI Voice Recorder

Yes, we know Microsoft Teams has a huge range of voice recording and transcription functions that, let's face it, we'd struggle to live without. But what happens when you have a face-to-face meeting?

This Plaud Note AI Voice Recorder has you covered. It uses ChatGPT 4.0 to record, summarize and transcribe your conversations. It even supports 59 languages.

Q: Should everyone in my business use the same browser?

A: While it's not vital, it does make room for better consistency, support, and security. Whatever people use, make sure to check the security and privacy settings.

Q: My team doesn't have time to sit down for cybersecurity training together. Is it necessary?

A: Yes, training is critical for everyone. But it doesn't have to be classroom style. You can use interactive or online training that people can do when it suits them best.

Q: What's the best way to back up my data? And what should I backup?

A: The answer to this depends on your individual business needs. We can assess them for you and make recommendations – get in touch.

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