TECH TALK NEWSLETTER

NEW IN THE NEWSLETTER

HAPPY 2 YEAR ANNIVERSARY KARL!

This monthly publication is provided courtesy of Kari Renn, President of LoyalITy.

Our Mission: To make IT work at work so our clients can focus on their company goals without interruption.

In This Edition:

In 2024, businesses are urged to prioritize comprehensive Incident Response and Disaster Recovery plans to navigate the evolving digital world successfully. Meanwhile, Google thinks it could be the "beginning of the end of passwords," emphasizing heightened security through public-key cryptography and the need for wider adoption. Next, we underscore the universal impact of a "Culture of Appreciation" on work and customer loyalty, offering tips for consistent recognition and appreciation in the workplace. Finally, tech expert Bernard Marr's insights predict transformative tech trends for 2024, including generative AI, and the practical applications of quantum computing, promising innovation and solutions to global challenges in the tech landscape.

Safeguarding Success: The Importance of Incident Response and Disaster Recovery Plans in 2024

As we step into the new year, the digital landscape continues to evolve, presenting both opportunities and challenges for businesses. One crucial aspect that often stands between success and setback is the implementation of comprehensive Incident Response (IR) and Disaster Recovery (DR) plans. In this month's newsletter, we explore the invaluable benefits of having these plans in place and how they can be pivotal for your business's resilience in 2024.

1. Rapid Response to Minimize Downtime:

An incident, whether it be a cyber-attack, system failure, or natural disaster, can bring operations to a standstill. With a well-crafted incident response plan, your team can swiftly identify and contain the issue, minimizing downtime and ensuring business continuity. Time is of the essence, and a rapid response can make all the difference in mitigating the impact on your operations.

2. Protection of Critical Data:

Your data is the lifeblood of your business. A disaster recovery plan ensures that critical data is backed up and can be recovered seamlessly in the event of data loss. This not only safeguards your sensitive information but also maintains the trust of your clients and stakeholders.

HAPPY NEW YEARS!

3. Compliance and Legal Safeguards:

In an era of increasing regulatory scrutiny, having incident response and disaster recovery plans is essential for compliance. These plans demonstrate due diligence, which can be crucial in legal proceedings and investigations. Ensuring that your business operates within the bounds of regulatory requirements is a proactive step toward long-term success.

4. Reputation Management:

The aftermath of an incident can have lasting effects on your brand reputation. Having a well-executed incident response plan allows you to communicate effectively with stakeholders, showcasing your commitment to transparency and resolution. Proactive communication can help mitigate reputational damage and foster trust among your clients and partners.

5. Continuous Improvement and Learning:

Regularly testing and updating your incident response and disaster recovery plans not only ensures they remain effective but also facilitates a culture of continuous improvement. Learning from each incident or simulation strengthens your team's ability to handle future challenges, making your organization more resilient in the face of evolving threats.

In an ever-changing digital world, the benefits of having robust incident response and disaster recovery plans cannot be overstated. As we navigate the uncertainties of the year ahead, Loyality is here to assist you in crafting customized plans tailored to your business needs. Strengthen your resilience, protect your assets, and ensure the continuity of your operations. Contact us today to embark on a journey of preparedness and success in 2024.

Passkeys: the Beginning of The End of Passwords

In May, Google began rolling out passkeys, calling them "the beginning of the end of the password." Passwords have been with us since the mid-1960s, decades before computers became mainstream. But with more sophisticated cybercrime attacks, dated password technology does us more harm than good.

According to a survey by AllAboutCookies, 84% of people still use unsafe passwords (like birthdays and pet names), and over half of survey respondents admitted having five or fewer passwords for all their accounts. Sure, we could do better. But these stats are also a testament to how annoying and ineffective passwords are. Google and other major players in the industry believe that passkeys are the "key" to a simpler – and safer – future.

Did You Know?

84% of people still use unsafe passwords like birthdays and pet names?

What is a Passkey

Instead of relying on something you remember (like a password), digital passkeys rely on something you have (like a device) or something you are (like a fingerprint or face recognition) for secure authentication.

Here's How Passkeys Work

Your device has a pair of keys, a public key and a private key. The public key is shared with whatever website or app you want to access. The private key is stored securely on your device ONLY.

When you try to sign into a site, the site sends your device a digital "challenge" to check if it's really you. In response, your device shares the private key.

The website uses the public key to verify the response. If the authentication is successful – i.e., the keys match – the website knows the response truly came from your device. It's like a secret handshake between your devices and the sites you use. This way, a hacker cannot log into your accounts without the private key from your device. This provides an added layer of security compared to passwords.

CARTOON OF THE MONTH

FREE DARK WEB SCAN:

Claim your FREE no obligation Dark Web Scan

Are YOUR Credentials On The Dark Web? With Our Free Scan, You'll Know:

- What credentials (if any) are actively being SOLD on the Dark Web
- If your company (and your reputation) are at risk
- If your customers' private information is at risk

Ladies and Gentlemen! for my next trick, I will attempt to correctly remember my **password** ...

Why Passkeys Are Better

If you use a passkey, a hacker must have your device (and be logged in), fingerprint, or face to log in. Also, passkeys are encrypted on your device instead of on servers, so even if your company's data is breached, they can't access your passkey.

Though companies like Google, Apple, and Microsoft are already using passkeys, it will take time for other sites and companies to get on board. Continue to use strong, secure passwords in the meantime, and store them in a password manager.

A "Culture of Appreciation" Improves Work and Customer Loyalty:

The desire to feel valued, recognized, and appreciated is universal in Western culture, not only in our personal lives, but also in the workplace. According to Great Place To Work's 2023 discretionary effort study, 37% of respondents said that more recognition at work "would encourage them to produce better work more often." Additionally, employees who feel consistently recognized are 2.2X more likely to innovate and bring up new ideas and 2X more likely to say people at work go above and beyond. Working harder, smarter, and happier – that's a significant ROI.

Similarly, customer appreciation drives loyalty, engagement, and company growth. A Forrester survey of 85,000 consumers found that the top three emotions that "inspire or discourage loyalty" among people are feeling valued, appreciated, and respected.

We can all agree that appreciation is important, but how you show it matters. Appreciation isn't a one-and-done event. (Sorry, but your annual Christmas party or Facebook customer appreciation post doesn't cover it.) To reap the benefits of appreciation in your organization, you must weave it into company culture.

Tips To Create A Culture Of Appreciation

A culture of appreciation is about being consistent. While significant events like anniversaries, birthdays and holidays are great opportunities to recognize and appreciate employees and customers, you need to do it in small ways throughout the year.

Also, t's important to note that there is a difference between appreciation and recognition. Appreciating an employee is to acknowledge their value as a person to your organization. Recognition is related to performance and effort. Consider both when you are planning your acts of thanks:

Here are a few important tips to help you create your own meaningful culture of appreciation:

- **Find out what's meaningful to them.** Everyone has preferences for how they want to be appreciated. So ask! Food, a note, a personalized gift – there are many simple ways to show appreciation.

- **Create more opportunities for recognition.** You can't see everything, so ask for submissions from your entire team and post the shout-outs on an office bulletin board or internal team e-mail.

- **Be specific.** Did they put in extra effort for the presentation? Are they always on time for team calls? Specific comments are more genuine.

- **Don't wait.** Don't recognize an employee for their work on a presentation a month after the conference. The sooner you say it, the more impact it will have.

- **Align with the bigger vision.** Recognize how employees contribute to your organization's mission during team meetings. You could even offer to pay for a training course or industry conference to invest in their professional growth.

Appreciating Customers:

In a study by the Rockefeller Corporation, 82% of customers will stop doing business with you if they feel they're undervalued. Here are tips for creating a culture of customer appreciation in your organization:

- **Personalize their experience.** A handwritten thank-you note is meaningful to customers, but personalizing the customer experience can go even further. Figure out how they like to be reached (via e-mail or phone, for example) or set up marketing campaigns relevant to their unique preferences.

- **Follow up.** After a service or purchase, check in with your customer to ensure they're happy. Proactively showing up and addressing questions or problems before customers get frustrated helps them feel valued and respected.

- **Create loyalty programs.** Programs (like Starbucks' Rewards or REI's co-op membership) where customers earn points for purchases or get discounts for loyalty milestones help express how important their business is to you, ensuring you keep getting it!

Loyality *it's our word.*

REFERRAL PROGRAM

Recommend LoyalITy and get a $200 VISA for every qualified appointment booked.

LoyalITy will meet with your referral and determine if we are a good fit for their IT needs.

LoyalITy will propose a best-fit solution to solve their IT problems and concerns.

Your referral becomes a LoyalITy client - you get a $1,000 VISA!!

- **Offer perks or gifts (especially when something goes wrong).** Customers love getting perks on their birthdays, on holidays, as a surprise, or to celebrate a significant purchase from you. But gifts like a free product, gift card, or discounts are essential if there's a problem. Once solved, gifts provide a way to recognize and rectify the inconvenience.

Infusing appreciation and recognition into your organization isn't just a pleasant gesture – it's a strategic move that yields tangible results like improved employee effort and innovation, stronger relationships, and loyalty. Whether acknowledging an employee's hard work or sending a personalized note to a customer, let's make every interaction a testament to our appreciation and respect for them – not just this month, but all year-round.

2024 Tech Trends

As we stand on the cusp of 2024, the tech landscape is poised for transformative shifts that will redefine the way we live and work. Renowned tech expert, Bernard Marr, shares his insights on the top five tech trends that are set to dominate the coming year.

1. Generative AI – Everyday Automation

Welcome to the era where generative AI takes center stage. Having made its mark in 2023, Marr predicts that 2024 will be the year we fully grasp its potential. Far from being a cause for concern, generative AI becomes our intelligent companion, streamlining everyday tasks. Marr envisions a future where AI handles routine brainwork, freeing us to unleash our creativity and focus on genuine human skills.

2. Phygital Convergence: The Fusion of Real and Digital

The boundaries between the physical and digital realms are rapidly dissolving. Marr foresees an intensified blending of the real and the virtual through technologies like augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). The concept of the digital twin, a virtual representation of the real world, becomes increasingly prominent. In 2024, expect an even more seamless integration of the digital and physical aspects of our lives.

3. Sustainable Technology: A Green Revolution

Sustainability takes center stage in 2024 as countries, corporations, and individuals focus on reducing their environmental impact. Marr emphasizes the rise of eco-friendly practices, from electric vehicles to circular economy concepts. The tech world embraces green cloud computing and sustainable apps, setting the stage for a tech landscape that prioritizes both innovation and eco-friendliness.

4. Cyber Resilience: Beyond Security

The ever-growing threat of cyberattacks prompts a shift towards cyber resilience. Marr notes that one in two businesses has fallen victim to cyberattacks, highlighting the need for comprehensive defense and recovery measures. Beyond traditional cybersecurity, cyber resilience encompasses strategies for continuity and recovery, including remote work procedures and AI-driven defense mechanisms.

### 5. Quantum Computing: A Quantum Leap Forward

Quantum computing, long a subject of speculation, is poised to deliver tangible benefits in 2024. Marr predicts practical applications across diverse fields, from drug discovery to genome sequencing and traffic optimization. Quantum computing's ability to process vast calculations simultaneously opens doors to breakthroughs in solving complex challenges facing humanity.

As we embark on the journey of 2024, Marr's insights serve as a guide to the revolutionary tech trends that will shape our future. These trends not only promise innovation but also pose exciting opportunities for addressing global challenges. Stay tuned for a year of groundbreaking developments in the tech sphere.
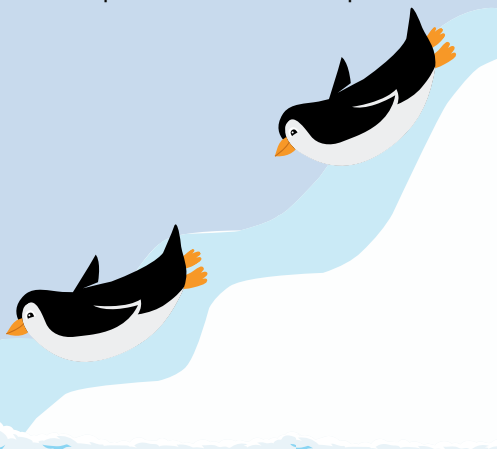
ZERO TRUST FOR 2024...

As we navigate an era of heightened digital risks, the Zero Trust model emerges as a paramount cybersecurity strategy for the year ahead. Departing from traditional trust assumptions, Zero Trust mandates continuous verification of every user and device seeking access to a network. In an age of dynamic work environments and evolving cyber threats, Zero Trust's adaptability, focus on data-centric security, and advanced threat detection make it indispensable. By adopting this proactive approach, organizations can fortify their defenses against both external infiltrations and insider threats, ensuring a resilient and secure digital future in 2024.
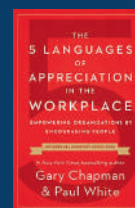
READING CORNER

The 5 Languages Of Appreciation In The Workplace
By Gary Chapman and Paul White

If you loved Gary Chapman's New York Times #1 bestseller, The 5 Love Languages®, you'll love its sister book written for the workplace, The 5 Languages Of Appreciation In The Workplace: Empowering Organizations By Encouraging People, coauthored with Paul White.

By teaching the art of authentic appreciation, the book tackles the core issue: Do employees feel valued? When you learn your team members' languages of appreciation, you can work to improve workplace relationships. Plus, the book includes a valuable MBA Inventory assessment to tailor your approach. Though some readers note that it repeats concepts from The 5 Love Languages, this new take is an excellent read for leaders aiming to improve relationships and elevate team performance.