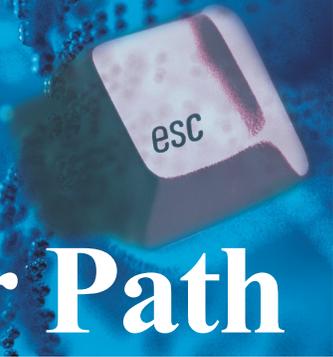




“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably”



The Smarter Path



“As a business owner, I know 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!”

- Willie Kerns, SmartPath Technologies

What’s Inside:

Laptop Security while using Wi-Fi Hot spots Page 2

The Lighter Side Page 2

How to Grow Star Performers Page 3

Shiny New Gadget Page 3

(270)238-8997

SmartPath New Employee Spotlight



Please join us in welcoming Christopher Thompson to the SmartPath Technologies family. Chris is originally a native of Benton, Kentucky but he currently resides in Kevil, Kentucky. Chris joins SmartPath Technologies with a wealth of experience in telecommunications as well as the security industry. Chris will serve as the Director of WOW! , so he will work to “wow our clients” and be the liaison between the clients and SmartPath techs and administration. He will also be deploying new VoIP services to businesses as well as general customer service, HIPAA Audits and Security Audits. Chris is a state certified firefighter and currently serves on the West McCracken Fire Department. He is married to his wife Andrea of four years and they have two children, Zach (15) and Katie (5). In his spare time you can catch Chris hanging around the fire station or spending time with his family.

Broken Hearts and Stolen Data



While many people buy their significant other a box of decadent chocolates, a dozen red roses or an oversize teddy bear for Valentine’s Day, there are a few people who are going to go home with a broken heart as their personal information is stolen right from under them. It’s a harsh reality, but both individuals and businesses are constantly targeted by fraudsters and hackers who want to steal any bit of data that will make them money.

You may have taken all the precautions to protect yourself and your business – but what do you do if it does happen? Just as when a lover breaks your heart, you have to move on, get back on your feet and work your way through this unfortunate circumstance.

Once your data is stolen, it’s gone. Credit cards can be canceled, but other information, such as your name, address, social security number and more, can be more difficult to control.

In 2014, social media accounts, such as Twitter, became more valuable to hackers than credit cards. These types of accounts are hot commodities on black markets.

Does that mean you should be worried with all the information you have stored online? Absolutely not!

We have a new service that is vital to your business’s future success

I know you’ve heard of it-if not been victim of- a data breach like the Anthem hack, the Home Depot/Target/TJ MAXX credit card breach, and all of the others in the news -but did you realize the **data that YOU have-your QuickBooks file, your Microsoft Word Documents, and your e-mail are what hackers want MOST?** We can’t seem to emphasize this enough to our clients.

WHY DO THEY WANT YOUR DATA? Let’s face it-Anthem and the bog names have a lot of money to invest in security and cyber defense/prevention. A business of your size isn’t investing hundreds of thousands of dollars to prevent these kinds of attacks. You’re the easiest target- **most likely, they could steal your data and you never know.**

SmartCYBER Defense is a new service we’ve launched for businesses like YOURS- we come in, analyze where your risks of data loss are, fix those risks for you, write policies and procedures for your staff, train all of the employees, AND give you a \$100K insurance policy should you ever fall victim to a data breach or security incident. Please go find out more today at www.smartpathtech.com/cyberdefense.

Give us a call at 270-238-8997 and we’ll put together a plan to keep your company’s data secure.

*The Lighter Side...
Punch a Painting,
Go to Jail*



In 2012, Andrew Shannon punched a Monet painting valued at \$10 million. The incident occurred at the National Gallery of Ireland, located in Dublin. The painting, entitled *Argenteuil Basin with a Single Sailboat*, painted in 1874, apparently represented something much greater to the man who decided to attack it.

Right after his initial arrest, Shannon said the attack represented his way of “getting back at the state.” Later on, when he appeared in court, he changed his tune. Instead of an “attack against the state,” he said the whole thing was just a big misunderstanding. He said he didn’t punch the painting, he “fell into it.” He told the court he had felt faint and fell. The painting just happened to be in his way.

Fortunately, the National Gallery has plenty of CCTV cameras and the whole thing was recorded. What did those cameras see? Andrew Shannon very deliberately thrusting his fist through the Monet painting. In December of 2014, he was sentenced to five years in prison, and *Argenteuil Basin with a Single Sailboat* is back on display after being fully restored.



“Sure, it’s all fun and games until someone loses an iPhone.”

How To Keep Your Laptop Secure When Using Public WiFi Hotspots

They are everywhere these days. WiFi hotspots for checking e-mail and hopping on the Internet can be found in airports, coffee shops and even most fast-food joints. But have you ever wondered, just how safe is it to connect? With the proliferation of hackers, viruses and identity theft at an all-time high, you are smart to be concerned. Unfortunately, it is easy for a hacker to set up a WiFi spot to access your laptop, called an “evil twin.” An evil twin is a wireless hotspot that is used to lure people from a nearby, legitimate hotspot. For example, when logging in at your favorite coffee shop, you may have inadvertently logged in to an evil twin Internet connection set up by the person working on a laptop at the next table.

Just like legitimate sites, evil twins allow you access to the Internet, but in the background they record everything you are typing. Log on to your e-mail, investment web site or bank account, or buy something online, and they are recording your keystrokes.

Tip: Do you want an easy way to securely access your network and the Internet from anywhere? Call us today at <your phone # here> about setting up a VPN for your office!

You may be asking, “How do I protect myself at WiFi hotspots?” First you need to make sure the hotspot is legitimate. You can do this by asking someone who works at the WiFi location; in fact, some businesses will give you printed instructions that include the hotspot name. Even here you need to be careful. Many times, in an attempt to make you feel comfortable, the hacker will use an evil twin name that mimics the legitimate hotspot and, on some occasions, the fake site may even show up at the top of your network list by having a stronger signal than the legitimate site.

The best protection you can have is connecting via your company’s VPN (virtual private network).

A VPN protects your online information by encrypting your data and activity even if you’re connected through an evil twin. If you don’t have a VPN, the best protection is to surf the net, but never type in password, credit card, social security, bank account or other sensitive information when connected to a public WiFi hotspot.

Want to Offer WIFI in Your Building for Guests?

In today’s social media obsessed climate, its not unusual to see the waiting room at the dentist full of folks scrolling away on Facebook or Twitter. Children playing the latest learning game on their smartphone or tablet while waiting for a meal at a restaurant. Technology is everywhere and in order to keep up with the demand and remain competitive, businesses must recognize that.

Providing free public wireless access for your patrons is no longer considered a luxury, it has become almost a necessity. No one wants to stay at a hotel on a business trip and not have access to their work emails. Many folks want to be able to multitask and read emails, books and other media on mobile devices while waiting at various appointments as well, so your business needs to accommodate such individuals.

Now, that all that being said doesn’t mean we recommend that the general manager of your business run out and grab a wireless router from the local big box retailer and start connecting wires. Please let us at SmartPath Technologies handle all of the details. We will not only pick the right equipment for your business, such as a router big enough to support 50 users, but we will also professionally install all the items and make sure the connection is secure. We will also establish a separate network connection so that your sensitive work data remains protected and your internet speeds are consistently meeting your needs. We will come out, do a free consultation for all cost and services. All you have to do reach out!

If you are interested in setting up a free wireless access consultation please call our office and speak with Kristen or email her at klassiter@smartpathtech.com



Where Technology and Dependability come Together: www.smartpathtech.com

Shiny New Gadget of the Month



Prizm

Meet Prizm — a small, pyramid-shaped device designed to make your home-audio experience as hands-off as humanly possible. The device was recently backed on Kickstarter this past November. The French company behind the audio device wanted to create an intuitive music experience that brings users new music, while learning what they really love to listen to.

The device streams music from cloud services such as Deezer, Spotify and SoundCloud, with more services planned in the future. It works by accessing your WiFi network. It doesn't contain any speakers, so you'll have to supply your own (it connects via Bluetooth, 3.5 mm stereo jack and optical audio). And despite being called hands-off, the device sports buttons to let you like or skip songs to customize your listening experience.

It can currently be pre-ordered from www.meetprizm.com for \$139.

HOW TO GROW STAR PERFORMERS

A study of computer programmers at Bell Laboratories showed that the star performers outperformed moderate performers by a margin of 8 to 1. If that holds true in your organization, the conversion of five of your moderate performers into star performers would be the equivalent of adding 35 moderate performers to your workforce. Where are you going to find the five additional star performers? You don't find them. You develop them.



The Bell Labs study identified nine work strategies that characterize star performers. All of them are qualities that can be inculcated through a good corporate education system. According to researchers Robert Kelly and Janet Caplan, these qualities are:

- 1) **Taking initiative:** accepting responsibility above and beyond your stated job, volunteering for additional activities and promoting new ideas.
- 2) **Networking:** getting direct and immediate access to coworkers with technical expertise and sharing your own knowledge with those who need it.
- 3) **Self-management:** regulating your own work commitments, time, performance level and career growth.
- 4) **Teamwork effectiveness:** assuming joint responsibility for work activities, coordinating efforts and accomplishing shared goals with workers.
- 5) **Leadership:** formulating, stating and building consensus on common goals and working to accomplish them.
- 6) **Followership:** helping the leader to accomplish the organization's goals and thinking for yourself rather than relying solely on managerial direction.
- 7) **Perspective:** seeing your job in its larger context and taking on other viewpoints, like those of the customer, manager and work team.
- 8) **Show-and-tell:** presenting your ideas persuasively in written or oral form.
- 9) **Organizational savvy:** navigating the competing interests in an organization, be they individual or group, to promote cooperation, address conflicts and get things done.

Star performers considered initiative, technical competence and other cognitive abilities to be core competencies. Show-and-tell and organizational savvy were on the outer edge of their circle of importance. Middle performers placed show-and-tell and organizational savvy at the center. While star performers were focused on performance, middle performers were focused on impressing management.

Star performers and middle performers also showed marked differences in their attitudes toward networking. The middle performers waited until after they had encountered problems before looking around for someone who could provide help and support. The star performers built a network of helpers and supporters in advance, so they could call on them immediately when needed.

The study concluded that "Individual productivity... depends on the ability to channel one's expertise, creativity and insight into working with other professionals."

Star performers emerge from educational systems tailored to the individual company and the individual job. They don't want to become clones. Too many companies today are content with training programs that provide people with knowledge and expertise, but skimp on educational processes that teach them to apply what they learn. You can't train them to seek excellence. You change that attitude through consistent input that appeals to an individual's self-interest and organizational spirit.

♥ Happy Valentines Day ♥



78 Ash St
Calvert City, KY 42029
(270) 238-8997

Tell a Colleague, Score Some Cash

We feel that a referral from our clients is the sincerest forms of “atta boy” you can get. That being said, when one of our great clients refers us, we like to say “thanks” back in the form of money.

Simply refer any company with 5 or more computers to SmartPath Technologies for a **FREE** Computer Network Audit (a \$397 value) and once the initial visit is complete, we will rush a \$25 Visa card to you to show our appreciation.

But wait, it gets better...

When the business you have referred to us signs a contract with SmartPath Technologies, we will send you ANOTHER \$25 Visa card for **EVERY** computer user! Do the math, 10 computers equals \$250 in your wallet! And we mean **YOUR** wallet. Even if you are not the owner of the company for which you are employed, if you drop our name, we are dropping **YOU** some credit.

Visit our website www.smartpathtech.com/about-us/referral-program to get more info today!