



Going Behind Your Lines: How Hackers Can Use Your Phone Line to Steal \$\$\$

Every month brings yet another story of hackers and the damages left in their wake. Be it data breaches or virus scams, businesses today have a lot to worry about when it comes to digital theft. As we begin this article, there are probably a slew of new computer threats that are just waiting to infiltrate our systems. But we're not going to cover those today. Rather, we're going to discuss something a little closer to home. Something that could be taking place right under your nose.

Your phone system not only connects you to the outside world but also to potentially risky situations. When hacked into, your phone system can be compromised bringing in expensive bills for calls that you didn't even make. Phone line fraud has been around for years but with the company phone lines now being run over the internet, it is finding new life. In the last year alone, phone line fraud cost victims \$4.73 billion globally, up nearly \$1 billion from 2011, according to the Communications Fraud Control Association.

The scam tends to work like this: hackers sign up to lease premium-rate phone numbers to deliver some type of web-based service and charge dialers over \$1 a minute and give the lessee a cut. Following this, the hackers hijack a business's phone system and makes calls through it to their premium number, racking up the minutes and raking in the dough. This process is only made worse on high speed computer systems where these hackers can make hundreds of calls simultaneously, forwarding as many as 220 minutes' worth of phone calls a minute to the pay line. The hackers then get a cut of the charges through a Western Union, MoneyGram or wire transfer.



Without the proper security measures in place, a business will be stuck having to pay the bill for these calls. While major telephone companies have complex fraud systems in place to catch these kinds of scams before they are able to affect your phone bill, local providers are lacking the sophisticated antifraud systems to prevent these types of attacks. This leaves a small business owner susceptible to phone fraud. What's an SMB owner to do?

To take precautionary measures with your phone lines, give the experts here at TLC Techs a call and we'll implement the security features to protect your phone system. Security is not something to be taken lightly and if left alone, your technology is at risk. Ensure the safety of your business and your bank account with TLC Tech.

The ABCs of Memory vs. Hard Disk Space.

Here at TLC Tech we pride ourselves on building close relationships with our clients and answering their IT questions. Lately we've been receiving a lot of questions regarding memory and disk space. What's the difference between the two? Which one affects my backups? Etc.

The hard disk is a spindle of magnetic discs that holds several gigabytes of data, so when we refer to disk space, we're referring to how much space you have available on your hard disk for storing files. Every time you save a document or install a new program or application, it is stored on your hard disk so the more files you download, install or save, the more full your hard disk becomes. Simple right?

Now here's where things get a bit trickier. Memory itself is not the same as your hard disk space. When we refer to memory, what we're actually referencing is actually random access memory or RAM. RAM is made up of tiny chips known as memory modules that store actively running programs on your computer, including your operating system. So when you turn on your computer and the system starts booting up, your operating system's interface and other processes get loaded into your RAM. When you quit the program, your RAM is freed up for use by other programs.



Since RAM can be accessed much more quickly than a hard disk, active programs are loaded here. That being said, since only small amounts of data from a hard disk needs to be loaded into the system memory at a time, computers generally have much more hard disk space than memory. For example, a standard 2014 computer may come with 8 GB RAM and a 1TB hard drive.

Keeping this knowledge in mind, if your computer displayed a notification saying that you didn't have enough disk space available to install a program, you would have to delete files from your hard disk in order to make space. But if you're like us, deleting files is not necessarily what you want to have to do as a first resort, so this is where purchasing an additional hard drive would come in handy. If your computer said that there was not enough memory to run a particular program, you would need to upgrade your memory by purchasing more RAM.

The New Bodyguard: How to strengthen your anti-virus software against threats



Hackers are always working to develop new ways to infiltrate our networks and take our data hostage. From the defunct Cryptolocker virus to its minion CryptoWall, businesses today have a lot to worry about in terms of data threats.

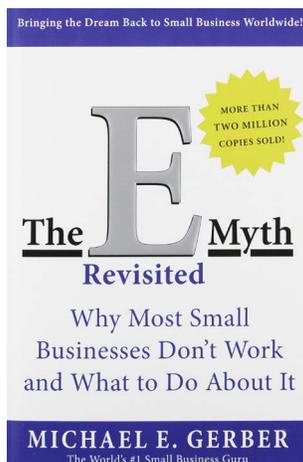
But even the best antivirus software is no match against the ever changing nature of the technology space. Just ask [JP Morgan](#), [Chase](#) or [Kmart](#).

By now you're probably wondering, is all hope lost? Is there really no way to protect my business?

Truth is, there are ways to guard your business against viruses and we're covering a few of those ways in this very article. Keep reading for tips to keep your business safe.

1. Keep your antivirus up-to-date: The main way for your anti-virus software to defend your systems against viruses is for it to be current. As viruses become more complex, your anti-virus has to adapt and familiarize itself with the latest string of viruses so that it can better recognize them when encountered.
2. Avoid downloading programs from unfamiliar sites. Just like opening an email from an unknown source, downloading a file from a site that you don't know makes you an unwilling participant in the implantation of a virus on your own computer.
3. Never open any attachment in any email, unless you know who it's from and why they are sending it.
4. Be sure to engage in a full backup of your system on a regular basis. For businesses, this is where a proper backup disaster recovery (BDR) solution comes in handy. In the case of a technical data breach, a BDR solution would be able to restore your system and data from a more recent time than just a normal system backup.
5. Keep sensitive data saved on a secure source. Client information like account numbers and payment files should always be saved to an external source, such as a cloud based storage solution or an external hard drive.

Business Book of the Month



We're back this month with another great read. When you think of the small business world, there are many assumptions that you hear from people on why they didn't take the plunge in starting their own business. Be it the fear of not having the financing to pay for necessary items or the resources to get the company off the ground, potential business owners have many reasons for why they are hesitant to start working for themselves. We all know this. But what fears are actually justified and what ones are just myths?

Author Michael E. Gerber distinguishes fact from fiction in his bestseller "The E Myth: Why Most Businesses Don't Work and What to Do About It." Originally published in 1988, Gerber has since rereleased the book with updates for modern businesses. From defining the lifecycle of a business, entrepreneurial infancy to maturity to franchising lessons, Gerber takes the guesswork out of running a business and provides you with a blueprint that addresses all of your questions.

The book's premise focuses on 4 key ideas:

1. The E-Myth:

The main concept behind this myth is that businesses are started by entrepreneurs who are willing to risk capital to make a profit. Gerber asserts that this is false and rather, businesses are started by someone that does something well (the technician), has the entrepreneurial spirit and has the tenacity to think that they can do "it" better than their current boss. So ultimately, they start their own business.

2. The Turnkey Revolution:

This change is the reason for the growth in franchises, Gerber claims. People are now becoming business owners without having to reinvent the wheel to sell their own product, rather under the franchise operation, they are able to resell goods and follow policies already set in place by the franchisor.

Gerber rounds out his book with the premise of working ON your business versus IN it, a topic that holds dear to most business owners. For those of us who are passionate about our careers and our businesses are our lifeblood, we strive to do everything possible to make it succeed, even if that means stretching ourselves too thin. Gerber provides tips to change this dynamic so that we can focus on growing our businesses rather than just trying to make them run in the day to day. This is a MUST READ for any business owner so I'd recommend taking a few minutes to check it out!

3. Repetition is Paramount:

At the heart of the turnkey revolution are repeatable processes and procedures. If what works can be repeated, then you can ensure that only the good things are constant. The author notes that repetition is the secret to a successful business.

4. Business Processes Rule:

Your best employee may know how things work by heart, but what if that employee is out tomorrow and the rest of your staff is struggling? Having set processes help ensure that things run smoothly no matter who is working as well as makes success predictable for your business.

Client Spotlight

This month's client spotlight feature is on **Media Solutions**, a Sacramento based best-in-class media buying agency that specializes in strategic communication, research, planning, buying and implementation for all media. For over 20 years, founders Carol Michael and Cynthia Metler have worked together to build this California premier independent media buying agency. Media Solutions has been a client of TLC Tech since January 2014 and in the short time that they've been working with TLC, they have been able to see the benefits. Prior to becoming a TLC Tech client, Media Solutions had constant issues with their server, be it connecting to it or sending faxes directly to it. They also dealt with a frequent failing internet connection and update issues. These problems were quickly fixed when they began working with the TLC Tech staff.



Overcoming their initial hesitation of leaving their former tech service provider of ten years, Media Solutions was easily able to see that working with TLC Tech would satisfy the technology skill sets of their entire staff and would be able to solve all of their problems. One such instance where the value of TLC Tech was easily seen was when Media Solutions Co-founder Carol Michael was having trouble with her keyboard. She called one of the dispatchers and they walked her through troubleshooting her issue without making her feel inept or incapable.

"We appreciate your attention to detail, and your understanding of the level of our problem. I personally also appreciate your responsiveness to the owners of Media Solutions, no matter what the level of importance for the problem! TLC definitely cares about their clients."

—Carol Michael, Media Solutions