

# Technology Insider



YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER, WRITTEN FOR HUMANS NOT GEEKS

January 2021

## Bye bye 2020 Getting the most out of your people in 2021



What a year we have left behind.

Although with many of the negatives we had no control over, came some positive changes to the way we all do things.

Many businesses now have people working from home on a permanent or semi-permanent basis. As much as no one asked for this, it's been great to see how businesses that we work closely with have adapted. And in the process they have become more flexible.

This flexibility often results in a more motivated, engaged workforce. Who really appreciates the ability to work different hours and work from home (WFH). This is a huge benefit, especially if you're looking to hire new people.

Because what's your greatest competitive advantage in your business? It's your people, of course.

We believe that offering flexible working and the choice between WFH and going into the office, will help you attract the very best people in your field.

This year is going to be a "buyer's market" for employers. A great opportunity to take on truly excellent new people.

But, of course, along with this comes a responsibility to give everyone the tools and accessibility they need to be able to excel at their roles from wherever they choose to work.

That means you, as the business owner or manager, need to be on top of issuing the right devices, keeping security tight, and network access open but safe.

After the 2020 lockdowns, hopefully you've already got the fundamentals in place. But going forward, it's as important to offer your team as much IT support in their homes, as they get in the office.

Do you need help with that? Let's talk...

To book your call visit [www.bluegrass-group.com/contact/call-booking/](http://www.bluegrass-group.com/contact/call-booking/)



You can see our live diary and choose the time and date that suits you best.

## Can we help you, to help your people get more done?



On page one we talked about the opportunity to snap up the very best people in your field this year.

So here's a question to ask - what else could you do to help them achieve more?

If they were given the right tools:

- Tools to help them make the most of their time
- Tools that complemented what they do
- Tools that simplified the process

...could they get more done in a day?

Probably.

And fortunately, we live in an age where there is an app to help you do pretty much anything.

Why wouldn't you take advantage of that?

The thing is, it's too easy to get stuck in our ways. Yes, even when it comes to business. We log into the same software each morning, have the same grumbles about how we wish it did things differently; then carry on with our day

Sometimes what we need is a new set of eyes. Someone who can stand back and see the simple solutions that we simply can't.

Because when something is a habit, it can be difficult to imagine a different way of doing it. Even if that new way is easier, and brings about more benefits - like a

more productive team, and better customer satisfaction.

Could we be that new set of eyes for you?

We'd like to offer your business a productivity audit.

During this audit, our experts will take a detailed look at your business, what you do and the tools you currently use to do it.

We'll talk to you about how your processes would work in an ideal world and help you to identify the apps or software that can help that to happen.

Before we carry out the review, we'll need to have a quick video call (no more than 15 minutes) to discuss your business, and to answer any questions you may have.

**To book your call visit**  
[www.bluegrass-group.com/contact/call-booking/](http://www.bluegrass-group.com/contact/call-booking/)

## Right device for the right role?

Is everyone in your business working on a device that's best suited to their role?

Technology can be exhausting, with the constant new releases, updates, and ever evolving capabilities. But without it, things would be very different, wouldn't they?

We know it can be costly to furnish your team with new devices. However, it is worth taking some time just to check that everyone has the right device to do their job to the best of their ability.

For example, an additional monitor might benefit someone working in design. Or a speedier processor may be more suitable for someone working on big projects.

Taking a little time to assess this now could increase productivity and save you some time further down the line. It's worth noting that supplies of some hardware are STILL a little erratic due to Covid production interruptions.

It's certainly worth planning more, and making sure you have spare technology available.

**This is how you can get in touch with us:**

CALL: 01392 796779 | EMAIL [ask@bluegrass-group.com](mailto:ask@bluegrass-group.com)

WEBSITE: [www.bluegrass-group.com](http://www.bluegrass-group.com)

## IF YOUR IT SUPPORT WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH LAST YEAR, THIS IS THE SWITCHING SEASON



How satisfied are you with your IT support team? How well did they look after you last year?

With the pandemic forcing massive urgent technology changes for millions of businesses, the quality of their IT support contributed to whether businesses thrived, survived, or struggled last year.

The start of a new year is an opportunity to plan and change. With the hope that 2021 won't be as destabilizing as 2020 was.

A key element of your success will be making sure that you're working with the right people to support your growth.

If your business needs better IT support from someone you can partner with, now's the time to switch.

### But you must be clear on why you're switching

Before looking for a new IT partner to work with, you must first be clear why you're looking to move away.

Is your current IT company difficult to get hold of?

Do they take too long to fix problems?

Are they not proactive enough to stop problems happening in the first place?

Make a list of issues you've faced.

And speak openly with your prospective new IT partner about what went wrong.

Clarity on the problems you faced with the last company will help make sure you pick the right partner for the future.

### Switching IT partners is a lot easier than you think

The first thing to check is your contract. How long are you tied in, and how simple is it to bring it to a close?

Much of the risk and complexity around making the change can be reduced by having open conversations with both your old and new IT support partner.

You'll want them to work together to do an effective handover. And allow your new partner to clear up any outstanding problems or complicated situations that are holding back your business.

Switching IT partner may be the best decision you make for your business this year.

Obviously, we'd love to talk to you if you're thinking of switching.

### Do your team need an at home VoIP upgrade?

As WFH rolls into another year, don't forget to look at the phones your team use.

You don't just have to default to them using their mobile. There's a huge amount of choice available. For example, you could easily let them access your business's usual VoIP phone network from their home. So people can still direct dial them on the same number.

There are huge benefits to this. Apart from helping them to compartmentalise work calls and personal calls, the sound quality of calls on VoIP can be significantly better than on a traditional phone.

In terms of the kit needed for this, that can be tailored to each person's personal preferences.

Some will want a traditional handset. That's easily done. Others will prefer a headset. And some may just want the VoIP software on their laptop, and not have a "proper" phone at all.

All these options and more are easy. And allow you to give each member of your team the setup that suits them. Give us a call to find out more on 01392 796 779.

**This is how you can get in touch with us:**

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## Monthly update from Dave



Here we go then. Come on 2021!

After what we've been through last year, we're not scared of you at all!

I do wonder what big changes businesses here will face this year.

I reckon we saw at least 5 -10 years of business changes happen in 2020. Certainly in terms of people working remotely and businesses setting up their IT so anyone could work anywhere on any device.

These were already trends that were just accelerated by the virus.

There are other technology trends that are currently growing and could really accelerate this year.

The risk of ransomware is one worrying trend. This is the most terrifying type of cyber-attack. It's where hackers lock away your data, in a way it's virtually impossible to recover.

Trust me you should fear ransomware. We've seen some horrendous attacks. The more you can do to prepare and secure your business the better.

A more positive trend is the use of big data in a business. There are some amazing tools available for any size business to analyse and leverage data. Even good old Excel is a powerful data crunching tool these days. There's no doubt data can help you make better decisions.

As always, if you'd like to chat about any of this you can reach me at [david@bluegrass-group.com](mailto:david@bluegrass-group.com) or 01392 345980.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dave'.

Managing Director

## If you're not delighted with your IT support company, we really should talk

Three questions for you:

1. Do you currently have an IT support company?
2. How happy are you with them?
3. If the answer isn't "utterly delighted", let's jump on a Zoom

All the change we've gone through since March has taught businesses round here just how important proactive, responsive IT support is.

Book a call so that we can see how we can help you by visiting [www.bluegrass-group.com/contact/call-booking/](http://www.bluegrass-group.com/contact/call-booking/)

If you'd prefer to call right now please call us on 01392 796779  
We'd love to help.

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WEBSITE: [www.bluegrass-group.com](http://www.bluegrass-group.com)

### Question

How do I keep my laptop battery in good health?

### Answer

The batteries in most of our devices these days are Lithium Ion batteries, which are easy to take care of. Read your device's instructions for the most accurate advice. But in general, the battery will last longer if you don't let it go flat between charges, keep it cool, and don't leave it plugged in when it's on 100%

### Question

Is it ok to use public Wi-Fi?

### Answer

Public Wi-Fi isn't secure. Even if it needs a password to access, other people could still see what you're doing if they wanted to. That said, you can use it more safely if you turn off sharing on your device, and use a VPN (Virtual Private Network) if you're doing more than browsing the news.

### Question

Do I really need to eject 'USB' drives?

### Answer

Yes! To improve performance, computers store tasks, so they can complete a few at the same time. So when you move a file across to a USB drive it may say it's completed, but it may not actually be done. If you just remove the USB drive, you risk data loss. Hitting eject ensures your file is moved as it should be