

Technology Insider

YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER, WRITTEN FOR HUMANS NOT GEEKS

March 2021



Would you know if you were being smished?!

Oh, you'd hope so right?

But push away whatever image that word has put in your head, and turn your attention to your mobile phone.

Smishing is the text message version of phishing.

What's phishing again? It's where criminals send you an email, pretending to be someone else (like your bank), to try to get sensitive information from you. Just like with phishing, smishing attempts are not always as easy to spot as you might think.

Most of them pretend to be sent from a recognised business - like your network provider, for example - rather than just a random number. Some look like they've come from someone you know personally.

They'll ask you to click a link to take an action like checking your monthly bill, updating your account information, or maybe to pay a bill.

But if you click that link... you've potentially given them access to your device. And that means they may have access to your data, passwords, and any other information stored on your phone.

Terrifying. Protecting yourself is really similar to the way you'd deal with a phishing attempt on your email:

- Never click on any links unless you're certain the sender is who they say they are
- If you're unsure, contact the company (or person) on their usual number to check
- And if an offer seems too good to be true, it usually is (sorry, you didn't really win that competition you never even entered)

Want to find out more about smishing or phishing attacks, give us a call on 01392 796 779.



Or book your call using our live diary www.bluegrass-group.com/contact/call-booking/

Is your business data encrypted?



Encryption can be a confusing subject for most people.

Is it a good thing, or a bad thing?

We understand the confusion. Thanks to the surge in ransomware, you could be forgiven for thinking that encrypting data is definitely a bad thing. After all, if it's encrypted, how on earth will it be usable?

However, when you encrypt your own data, you're actually adding a level of protection to it. It means that should it be stolen; it'll be unusable to anyone else.

But less than 50% of companies have standardised end-to-end encryption set up. While they have some level of encryption, they don't have a documented standard that covers every area of their business.

And it's not only hackers and other cyber criminals that could benefit from a business's lack of data encryption. Lost or stolen devices put that data at risk too.

When you consider that a laptop is stolen every 53 seconds, it's leaving businesses more vulnerable than they should be.

Microsoft 365 automatically encrypts business data by default. But if you have no other encryption set up across your applications and files, it's time to speak to your IT support partner.

For peace of mind, we can check your level of encryption today, just call us on 01392 796 779 or visit

www.bluegrass-group.com/contact/call-booking/

Do you back-up your data every day, off-site? And check the data (a process called verification)?

If the answer is no, you need to look at implementing this right now.

As ransomware attacks rise (where your data is encrypted and held hostage until a ransom fee is paid), how would your business survive if it lost all of its data?

That's all of your files, your documents, your contacts...everything, gone.

It's a terrifying prospect. And one that's made worse when there's no hope of recovering data.

An off-site data back-up means that your business can continue to operate, even after a critical attack.

If you already have back-up in place, make it a routine (ideally daily) to ensure that it is working correctly and verified. The number of people that don't do this is staggering...

Of course, as your IT support partner we may already do this for you.

However if you could do with some help, or someone to check your back-ups are working correctly, give us a call today on 01392 796 779.

This is how you can get in touch with us:

CALL: 01392 796779 | **EMAIL** ask@bluegrass-group.com

WEBSITE: www.bluegrass-group.com

Microsoft Office 365 - the best tool for staff productivity



The tools available in Microsoft 365 have developed to help us stay productive wherever we're working.

If you've been using Microsoft's software for years, now's a good time to discover new features.

If you haven't started exploring yet, you're missing out on loads of ways to boost productivity and make your life easier. Here are some of the main things to explore

Microsoft Teams

Teams has made communication and collaboration even more effective than traditional ways of working face-to-face.

Long gone are the days when different versions of the same documents were flying around on email. Set up Teams correctly and your colleagues can work together in real-time - with only one master copy of a document that's shared and discussed.

You can even turn the clock back to previous versions if somebody makes an error or heads in the wrong direction.

Setting up dedicated channels within Teams lets defined groups of people focus on specific projects and topics. This makes sure people

only get notified about the work they're involved in. Which stops Teams being overwhelming or confusing.

It's a space to help your team work with a focused level of productivity.

Don't know how to do something? Try the search box at the top of Microsoft's apps.

My Analytics

MyAnalytics is a productivity insights tool to help your people work smarter.

By offering specific data on how you work, MyAnalytics is designed to help you improve how you spend your time. It includes data on how much uninterrupted time you have - you know, time each day when you can focus on your actual work. Along with lots of other tailored advice to help you plan your time.

Now so many of us are balancing home life and work life in the same location, this data can really help to plan and structure your work.

As well as providing you with data, MyAnalytics also offers suggestions for specific things you can try to improve the way you work. For example, it can automatically add a couple of hours of dedicated focus time to your calendar each day to block anybody else from stealing the time you need to get things done.

Get in touch with us to find out more.

Still struggling to remember passwords?

What can you do to keep your passwords safe and your digital accounts secure?

Enter the Password Manager

Instead of scratching your head to come up with a new password for each account, use a password manager to automatically generate long, random, strong passwords.

It'll also remember them for you.

You only need to remember one password... the master password to access the password manager.

Don't forget MFA (Multi factor authentication) too.

As well as setting up a password manager, turn on multi factor authentication.

When you log in to your accounts, you'll need to enter an additional security code. These can be sent to you by text message. Better still, you can set up an authentication app on your phone that refreshes with unique codes every few seconds.

Multi factor authentication is available on most software. And is considered a highly effective tool against hackers. Even if they've got your login details, without your phone they can't get in.

We recommend you implement this for all apps your staff use. After an initial bit of discomfort, they'll soon get used to it.

Give us a call if you need any help setting this up on 01392 796 779.

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WEBSITE: www.bluegrass-group.com



Monthly update from Dave



Blended Working - are you ready?

A roadmap is in place and we're starting to slowly return to normality, but what does that mean for your business?

It's clear that most businesses will never return to their pre pandemic set up; 9-5 everyone crammed in the office.

The flexibility and improved wellbeing that remote working has achieved is something we should hold on to.

But you want to make use of your physical office too, right?

Then welcome to blended working, the best of both worlds.

However before you open your doors back up again, you need to consider how you'll manage both.

If staff took their PCs, devices, screens, even chairs home, what will they have

in the office? Will you need to buy extra equipment to enable hot desking?

Do you have the space in your office set up to enable collaboration; strategic discussions and creativity?

Now is the time to consider your technology gaps and needs to get it right first time.

You want your employee's first experience back in the office to be a positive one so don't delay - make blended working your priority. I know I am.

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

Managing Director

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

Not delighted with your IT? Let's talk...

Here's two quick questions for you:

1. Do you currently have an IT support company?
2. How happy are you with them?

If the answer isn't "utterly delighted", let's jump on a Zoom.

We've been through a lot of change in the last 12 months and this has taught us all just how important proactive and responsive IT support is.

Book a call here www.bluegrass-group.com/contact/call-booking/

Or to speak to us now, give us a call on 01392 796 779. We'd love to help.

Question

How should we dispose of old devices?

Answer

Never just throw your old devices away. First, ensure they are fully wiped of any data that may have once been stored on them. Then, if they are not fit for use, recycle them.

Question

Can I retrieve a deleted email in Outlook?

Answer

If you've already checked your deleted folder and can't find the email, click on 'Recover deleted items'. This will open a new window and display recently permanently deleted emails. Find the email in question and click 'Recover'.

Question

Why does my router keep prompting a reset?

Answer

With so many of us working from home, this has become more common. It's usually because it's overheating, or there are too many people using it. But it may also need replacing. Contact your internet provider if it's happening regularly and they may send you a new one.

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