

Is working from home... working?



A quarter of people plan to work from home either permanently or more regularly when the pandemic is over.

No surprises there. Many people feel more productive when they work from home. And three quarters believe there are fewer distractions at home (when the kids are at school, anyway).

Here are five things we recommend you put in place for everyone who's going to be working from home, long-term:

1. A dedicated working space:

Trying to work in the same space as other members of the family is testing for everyone. Help your team to identify where they will work, and set up a proper work environment. This will also help them draw the line on the day's work when they leave their work space

2. Fastest possible internet:

Slow speeds are the biggest frustration. There are often options to speed up internet speeds. Maybe you could subsidise them upgrading to a better service?

3. Dedicated tech:

62% of home workers would like their company to provide better technology to help them stay connected to what's going on in the business. From a data security point of view, you'll have a lot more control if you give them a business device to use only for work.

4. Collaborative software:

Whether it's Microsoft Teams or other software, it's so easy these days for anyone working anywhere to stay up to speed on all relevant projects.

5. Help them feel involved:

This can be as simple as sending pizzas to everyone's houses, so your team can have lunch together on a video call.



To talk to us about your technology book a call using our live diary by clicking this link - [Online calendar](#)

4 useful features in Microsoft OneNote



OneNote is a brilliant tool for staying organised and on top of all of the bits of information you collect throughout each day.

But are you using the Microsoft 365 app to its full potential?

Here are four useful features you may not have tried out yet.

1. INTEGRATE IT WITH OTHER APPS

OneNote integrates very well with the rest of the Microsoft 365 ecosystem. Did you know there are also a load of third-party apps that integrate with it?

From Zapier to Feedly, it's worth exploring the ways that OneNote can work better with the rest of your technology.

2. TURN ON DARK MODE WHEN THE LIGHTS GO DOWN

If you're burning the midnight oil and the bright light of a white screen gets a bit too much, OneNote has an excellent dark mode feature. It turns everything dark while still maintaining enough contrast to make it easy to keep working.

3. PASSWORD PROTECT PRIVATE SECTIONS OF YOUR NOTEBOOK

If you're using OneNote to write

or organise information you want to keep private, you can password protect individual sections of your notebook.

This can make it difficult for others to view things you'd rather they didn't see.

Be careful though... adding a password doesn't encrypt it. And if you lose your password you lose access to your notebook.

4. EXTRACT TEXT FROM IMAGES

OneNote supports Optical Character Recognition. This lets you throw a picture into OneNote and have the software automatically extract the text for you.

This can save a lot of time if you need to get hold of text from an image and then paste it into other documents. It can make quick work of a stack of business cards, avoiding the need for you to type all of the phone numbers and email addresses into your computer.

Enquire about Office 365 now on 01392 796 779 or visit our online calendar - [click here.](#)

Your office is on fire, what do you save?!

A horrendous thought, and thankfully it doesn't happen to many businesses.

But say it did happen to yours. Nobody's hurt or at risk. What would you want to save from the office?

It has to be your data, right? After all, it is the most valuable asset in your business.

Without it, there would be no business.

But what if you're too late? What if your server was the first thing to go? And of course, any paper files you had have gone up in smoke. What then?

Have you got a working backup to rely upon? Assuming you do, when was the last time it was checked, and the data verified?

This really is a daily job.

Are there other things that you thought you'd get around to? Like creating an inventory of your devices. Or moving all your paper files online?

These are just a few of the jobs that you need to make a priority now if you want a solid disaster recovery plan. Because if a major problem strikes and you don't have a safety net, it really could be goodbye to your business.

Get in touch for a FREE disaster recovery review today on 01392 796 779 or email ask@bluegrass-group.com.

This is how you can get in touch with us:

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

WEBSITE: www.bluegrass-group.com

Has tape backup had its day?



Tape backup has been around since the 1960's. For many years it was the go-to reliable choice for backing up your data, but your business doesn't operate like it might have back in the 60's.

In fact your organisation is probably very different today than it was even just 5 years ago.

So let's explore the top 4 Has reasons tape backup has had its day:

1. Cloud backup is more reliable

Physical tapes need regular maintenance, checks and tests to make sure they're performing. But they will degrade over time, they may become unsupported and obsolete or the physical tape may even get damaged if not stored properly. Worst still your tapes could get lost or stolen meaning all of your data is in the wrong hands putting your business at serious risk.

With cloud storage you choose exactly where your data is stored, either in a private cloud, on a public cloud or a mix of the two with a hybrid approach.

2. Cloud backup is faster

Backing up on tape is time consuming and manual, it takes up valuable staff time, but also opens up the risk of human error. Cloud backup can be automated to any schedule or frequency you need, daily or weekly for example and can also be accessed from anywhere where you have an internet connection.

3. Cloud backup is cost effective

The amount of data your business holds is only every going to increase as we all move further into the cloud. Not only do the physical tapes costs money, but so does the space in which they are stored and the amount of maintenance they require by someone in your team.

With cloud backup, you don't need to worry about any of these costs and can enjoy a simply pay for what you need OpEx pricing model.

4. Cloud backup is more secure

Data in the cloud is encrypted from one transfer end to another, meaning it's scrambled making it harder for hackers to access it. Cloud providers also invest huge amounts of money into data security, much more than SMEs can afford, allowing them to offer enterprise level security measures, robust data policies and regulations.

They also use built in firewalls which filter out suspicious traffic, acting as a virtual wall around your data to keep it safe.

The popular cloud service providers such as Microsoft Azure and Amazon Web Services are constantly increasing their levels of security with advanced monitoring and continuous investment, so you'll know your data is always in safe hands.

Get in touch with us to find out more.

DID YOU KNOW?

About spoofed Wi-Fi?

Do you usually connect to public Wi-Fi when you're in a coffee shop or shopping centre?

Next time you're about to do so... pause to consider whether the connection is genuine.

Cyber criminals create spoofed access points which sit between you and the real connection. Many people fall for these as they look just like the real deal.

But once you connect to a spoofed Wi-Fi network, these criminals have access to all the information you're sending and receiving on your device.

That could be passwords and login information, financial details, and even customer records.

It's estimated that around a quarter of all public access points are spoofed.

Think before you connect.

If you have any cyber security concerns, call us 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



Monthly update from Dave



Every time I go to look at the latest technology news, it seems that things are speeding up.

And I don't just mean with the big "wow" stuff like internet access from space, AI spotting diseases in people before doctors can, and even Elon Musk helping a monkey play computer games with just its mind (yes that's really happened).

No, I mean with the software that businesses like yours and mine use every day.

Take Teams as an example. It's the collaboration app Microsoft has been putting so much effort into improving in the last year.

Already its been better integrated into Outlook. It has automated meeting recordings and transcripts. And you can use breakout rooms in video calls. But there's so much more to come.

I just looked at the product roadmap for Teams on Microsoft's website (you can find it easily on Google if you're curious).

At time of writing, there are 28 new developments being rolled out, and 196 more in development! Impressive.

This is what I love most about technology. It's always changing and improving. And giving us all more options to work better.

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 - [Online calendar.](#)

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

Question

My mouse has stopped moving. What do I do?

Answer

If your mouse freezes, or the cursor disappears, it can be really tricky to do anything. This is where keyboard shortcuts come to the rescue. Press "ALT" and "F4" together to open the shutdown menu, then restart your device. When it reboots, things should be working correctly.

Question

I'm trying to upload a Word document, but it needs to be a PDF

Answer

Not a problem. In your Word document, select File > Save As. Click the drop down box at Save As Type, and select PDF. Then choose where you want to save the file. Now you have your PDF version, with no stress.

Question

My screen has turned blue and won't do anything

Answer

Ah, the blue screen of death. Looks like you just need to reboot your device. Hold down your power button for 5 - 10 seconds and it should turn off. Power it back up and things should be back to normal. If you have any prompts to install updates, do it as soon as you're back up and running.

This is how you can get in touch with us:

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

WEBSITE: www.bluegrass-group.com