Technology Insider

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HELP YOUR TEAM GET MORE DONE: TURN WORK INTO A GAME

Even the most exciting workplace is packed with dull tasks that have to be done for smooth operations.

But human brains don't embrace boring tasks with passion.

The answer is to make the tasks fun. Have you heard of gamification?

It's a way of making something more motivating by turning it into a game. For example, you could offer a reward for new staff completing a series of onboarding tasks. How about a personalised mug with their usual drink order printed on the side?

When you need to train staff, don't just make them sit through training videos. Add in interaction. Perhaps they could complete an interactive quiz along the way?
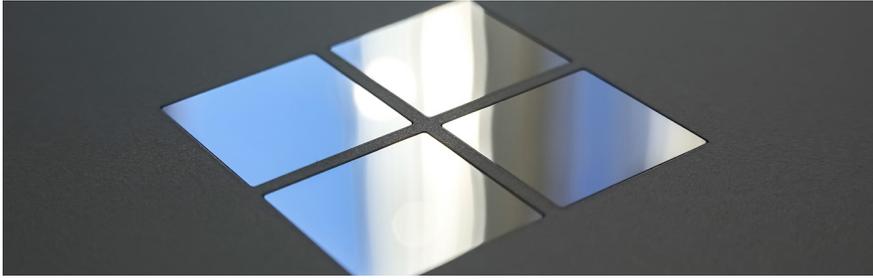
The ultimate gamification is awarding points and using leaderboards. This helps your team feel their work is being recognised, and can also strengthen their feelings of belonging.

Just be careful not to constantly reward only the same top achievers. Have spot prizes topublicly reward any member of your team for positive behaviour.

Try thinking beyond the usual Amazon voucher reward idea too. Can you offer staff something more unique and meaningful? A personal shout out on a company wide meeting for example.

Finally, have fun with it. Get it right and it will both engage your staff and boost productivity!

Technology update

Microsoft 365 license changes explained

Microsoft have introduced a New Commerce Experience (NCE) model for Office 365, which is essentially driving customers to take up longer term license commitments. This aims to reduce complexity around subscriptions and offers cost savings for longer term contracts.

Businesses however will have to swallow a price increase of around 15%, which is significant.

Microsoft are also removing the flexibility around licenses too; as of 1st March 2022, you wont be able to cancel licenses that you no longer need mid contract like you can now. Which is bad news for businesses who need to flex license numbers often. So that's most businesses then!

The option to add licenses at any time will remain however.

As of 1st March 2022 there will be three new subscription types:

Monthly subscription
This one is billed monthly. This subscription will be charged at a 20% premium to the annual subscription.

Annual Subscription
You can choose to be billed monthly or annually with this one
You'll also enjoy a saving of around 20% off the monthly subscription

36 Month Subscription
You can choose to be billed monthly, annually or upfront
This subscription will offer an additional saving to the 12 month subscription (saving percentage unknown at present)

These are big changes.
Call us now if you'd like any advice on **01392 796 779**.

New in Microsoft 365

Chat with yourself in Teams

This idea isn't as mad as it seems…

You know those times you're in a Teams meeting and you think to yourself, 'Oh, I'll remember that for later'… but you never do?

Later this month Teams will give you a new power to send things to yourself. Notes, messages, files, photos and other things to help you to stay more organised.

IS CYBER SECURITY TRAINING REALLY NECESSARY?

This is a question we often hear. And the answer is always a resounding YES!

Software can only protect you to a certain level. It's humans who are the first line of defence against the main cyber security attacks.

If you can teach someone to spot a bad link in an email and not click it… then you don't need to worry so much about mitigating the effects of the cyber-attack they unwittingly unleash.

Regular training doesn't just help your staff help you. It can also build a culture of security awareness within the business. Staff find it very hard to act against a culture. They'll think "if no-one else bothers to check links before clicking them, why should I?". That way of thinking also works the other way.

Regular training will also help you identify areas where your security isn't as robust as it could be and make appropriate changes.

If you don't already invest in cyber security training, please do consider it this year. The benefits are massive and far outweigh the investment.

This is how you can get in touch with us:
CALL: 01392 796779 **| EMAIL** ask@bluegrass-group.com
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3 tips to enhance your server management

You may have state-of-the-art servers, but their efficiency can diminish over time. Managing them is key to optimizing your business operations.

Numerous organisations rely on servers for various IT functions, such as applications, emails, hosting websites, and data storage.

The good news is, there's lots you can do to improve server management:

MANAGE AND MAINTAIN SOFTWARE

Software used for your server requires regular maintenance, too. The key is to perform regular updates and delete old software to enhance performance. Your servers will operate better, and there will be fewer vulnerabilities cybercriminals can exploit to access your network.

EMPLOY FREQUENT COOLING

You expect your servers to perform fast, but the only way to ensure this is to provide optimal conditions. That said, you should primarily focus on cooling the servers. Excess heat can dramatically decrease their lifespan. t

BACK UP YOUR DATA

The final part of robust server management is backing up your data regularly. After all, loss of information can be disastrous, harming your reputation and losing your customers.

Besides backing up server software and hardware, you should also have a backup for your power supply to prevent data losses during power outages. Moreover, you can integrate with various tools to expedite backups, recoveries, and status monitoring.

ARRANGE THE WIRING NEATLY

The amount of wiring in your server setup can be overwhelming, especially if you have no technical experience. Sorting out the mess doesn't only improve cleanliness, but it can also help boost the performance of your server viability for future upgrades.

Keep in mind that whenever you're removing, rearranging, or installing your cables, label and group them neatly. Doing so helps prevent clutter.

Tech Fact!

People visiting Google spend an average of 15 minutes and 13 seconds on the site per day – it's the most popular site on the internet

DID YOU KNOW?

Safari's busy protecting you

If you use Safari, maybe you've noticed its boasts about blocking "x" number of trackers from profiling you. But what does that really mean?

It has nothing to do with malware or being hacked. Rather, it means the browser has stopped the websites you visit from tracking:

• Your movements across the web
• Your IP address
• And even your location

It does this by blocking third-party cookies from being stored on your device.

You'll probably notice that the number is usually high. That means there's still a way to go to get more privacy online.

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Q & A

Monthly update from Dave

The year is full of quirky holiday's, and one of them is celebrated on February 18th; Battery day.

Yup, there is a holiday celebrating the chemical miracle that are batteries. And it's something that we mostly take for granted.
How many of the devices that make our day-to-day lives run on batteries? Close your eyes and do a quick count of how many battery operated devices you have at home right now.

Now ask yourself, which of them provide a critical function and when was the last time that I checked them?

Your smoke detectors and wireless home alarms will probably be the first to come to mind.

You know what other batteries go frequently unchecked? The ones making sure that your computer equipment can remain up and running during a power outage.

Now you might say, but I use a laptop. Well, when was the last time that you checked that battery status as well?

Wecan help you make sure that all the critical business devices in your company are up to the job with regular battery checks and replacements. Call us to discuss further.

Regards

Dave

Joint Managing Director

Not delighted with your IT support?

We'd love to chat.
If you have IT support in place currently, but you're not utterly delighted with it, we can help.

Or perhaps you'd just like to know what else is on offer?

Give us a call on 01392 796 779
Or email us: ask@bluegrass-group.com

Question
Can I print straight from my Android device?

Answer
Yes if your printer has Bluetooth or Wi-Fi. On your phone switch on Default Print Service in the settings. Open the file you want to print. Tap the menu (the three dots), print and select your printer.

Question
How do I see how much space apps are taking up?

Answer
In Windows 10 and 11 go to Settings -> System -> Storage. Tap on Cleanup recommendations to see what software you're not using and could remove.

Question
Does turning it off and on again really work?

Answer
Often, yes. Restarting any device allows it to refresh every process, which can often solve small annoying problems.

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