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In this issue...

Keep your phone
alive with these
7 tips

Smarten up your
home with Nest
Learning
Thermostat.

Cybersecurity:
Have you
remembered
these 5 things?

Grow your
brain (and your
business) through
Lynda.

Gadget of
the Month:
SmartHalo



Keep your phone alive with these 7 tips

Protect thy screen.

A screen protector will not make your phone invincible; however, it will postpone those inevitable scratches and cracks. The longer you keep your phone scratch-free and without cracks, the higher your ROI is. And, considering the most popular phones are nearing the \$400 mark, a higher ROI is good by anybody's standards.

You can score an inexpensive pack of 10 plastic screen protectors for about \$5 or you can go up a level and purchase a high-quality tempered glass screen protector for about \$30.

Sleek and modern or bulletproof?

Yes, your phone is quite nice. It's shiny and slim, with curves in all the right areas; it's a smokin' hot piece of technology. But, just how good looking will it be when it cracks out and loses its ability to think?

Not so good looking, right? So, let's keep it covered in a rock-hard, nothings-getting-through-this, brick of a case.

Well, hello there toilet. We meet again.

According to CNET, 75% of people use their phone while on the toilet. Of this 75%, 19% will then drop their phone inside the toilet. This will not leave your phone in a very good spot—both mentally and physically.

Don't take your phone to the bathroom with you. It will not end well.

Liquids aren't welcome in these parts.

This is just plain commonsense. Don't put coffee, water, soda, tea or any other beverage near your phone. If you do, you deserve every wet second of it.

Also, do not put your phone near a tub, sink, things that go flush or anything that dispenses a liquid substance.

So many pockets, so little space.

Pockets are never a good idea. But, if you must put your phone in the pockets of your pants, pocket wisely. Back pockets are a certified and definite absolute no, never, not ever. You sit directly on your back pockets. In other words, you sit on your phone. Sounds like a good way to break it.

Also, as you sit, your pocket curves. During this process, anything too big inside your pocket falls out. Translation? Your phone falls out—onto the hard floor, into the liquid-filled toilet, towards a broke-down, cracked-up future.

Your front seat loves a good show.

A great majority of phone breakers suffer from the **Spidercrack Syndrome**. If your phone is too cracked, it becomes useless, unreadable and untouchable. Many times this happens as you get out of your car: Your phone is on or near your lap and as you move to exit your vehicle, it **gracefully falls from your lap straight onto the pavement**. If this happens, your phone will see the likes of the Spidercrack Syndrome. Avoid an early grave and keep your phone away from your lap.

Smarten up your home with Nest Learning Thermostat.

If you're a fan of smart devices or simply looking for a way to save some energy (and money), the 3rd generation Nest Learning Thermostat is the way to go.

Nest creates personalized cooling and heating schedules.

This particular thermostat works off of your habits and syncs with the seasons. After a week of use, it'll pick up your cooling and heating preferences. As your day progresses, Nest will keep your home at your preferred temperature—comfortable at night, off when you're gone and kicking on as you're driving home. It builds a personalized schedule for you and your family—on when you're home, off when you're not.

Change your temperature from any place and with any device.

You have the ability to control your Nest Thermostat from a variety of connected devices. Forget to turn off your air conditioner before you left town? No problem. Access your thermostat remotely and turn your AC off from any hotel room, in any city.

Follow the leaf and save money.

Nest can save you nearly 15% on your energy bills. All you have to do is follow the Leaf. On the display, a green leaf will appear and nudge you in a favored direction. Turn your thermostat up or down to follow the leaf and effortlessly reduce your energy consumption.

Protect your home with talking Nest devices.

Nest Thermostat works alongside other Nest devices. Your Nest Cam (baby monitor, burglar system or home surveillance) will automatically turn on when you set your thermostat to away. Your Nest Protect (intelligent smoke and Carbon Monoxide detector) will ask your thermostat to turn off if it detects a leak or fire.



Cybersecurity: Have you remembered these 5 things?

You've finally implemented a comprehensive security system. It comes with advanced features, administrative privileges and an entire setup dedicated to your privacy. At this point, you feel like your business is operating on an island, inside a locked vault, on another planet, guarded by the entire Marvel lineup. So, you've taken the liberty and placed all security related "things" in the back of your mind. All you have to worry about now is your clients...like it should be, right?

Wrong.

You see, securing your technology and all that data isn't just about the firewalls, antivirus programs and network protocols. It's also about your **mindset**. There are aspects of your security that should **permanently stay at front and center**... not pushed into the cobwebs of your mind. Here's a few of the things you should keep in mind on a daily basis.

Remember the Internet of Things.

Have you addressed all those devices floating around your business? Accessing your database, emailing private information and reviewing critical files? Let's hope so. The Internet of Things is taking over and if you want to succeed, grow or compete, your business will welcome its dominance with open arms; however, you have to remember that this naturally includes a large security risk.

Have you delegated which devices can access what? Do they have remote swipe capabilities? Are they locked, audited and secured? You may want to find out.

Remember to rank.

You can't have total security over

absolutely everything. This is why it's a good idea to know which parts of your practice come first on the digital chopping block (although—fingers crossed—none of them ever make it there).

Which aspects of your operations need less regulation, less security, less control? Which parts can be seen in public with little to no setback? Focus your security on the aspects that can absolutely, never, not in a million years be out in public.

Remember who.

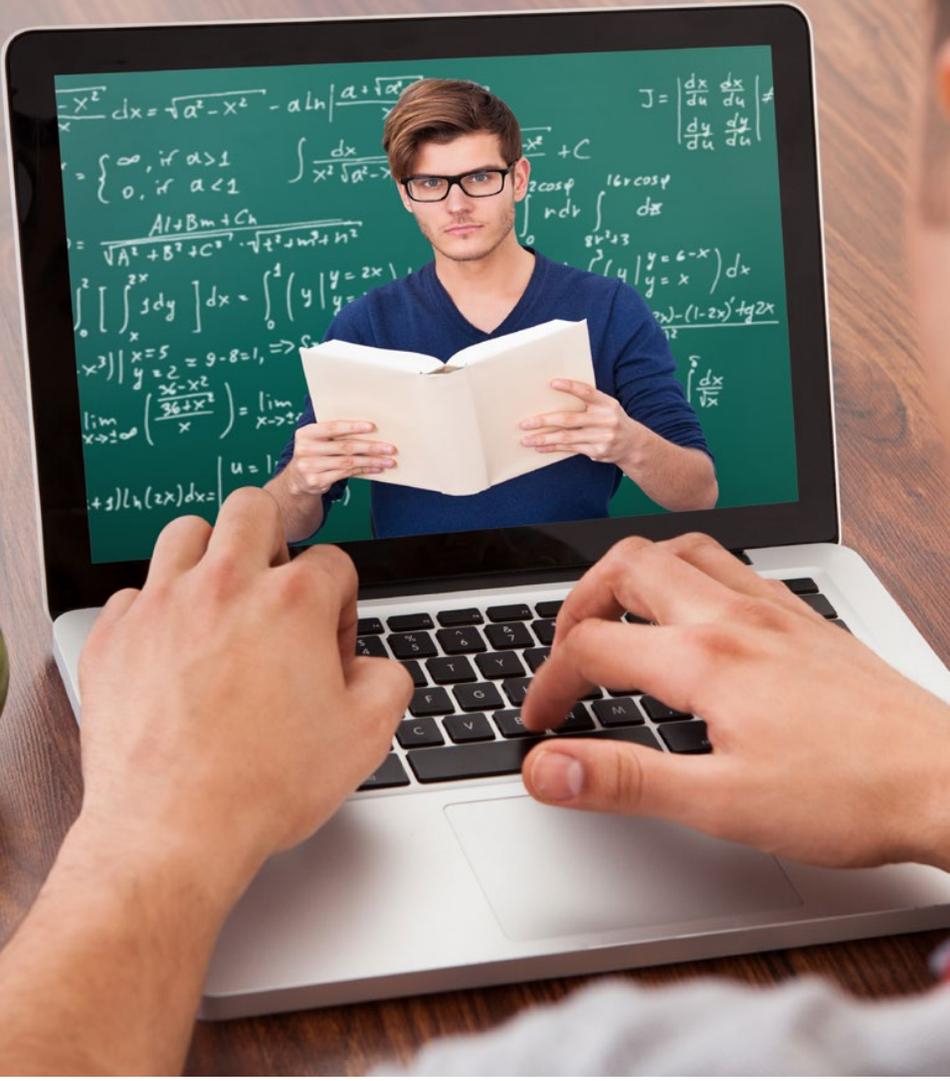
You can secure your data better if you're always aware of **who** would most likely target it and **why**. Use this to rank your processes and information. Depending on the **who** and the **why**, you *should* be able to ascertain the **what**.

Remember to give it a status.

Whether you outsource this or bring it in-house, there should be someone, somewhere entirely dedicated to the security of your business. While it's good that your staff members individually have the capacity to protect your data, it takes more than that. There has to be a bigger picture—an overall understanding of what's going on and how you can make things more secure for you and your clients.

Remember to remember.

Everyone throughout your entire company—from top to bottom, laterally and vertically, from one side to the other—should remember the security staples of your business. What data is okay to access? With what device and how? Is public Wi-Fi acceptable? Can an email be sent when they're outside the office? What types of projects can be worked on from home? These types of questions should dictate how your employees remember to keep your data safe.



Grow your brain (and your business) through Lynda.

If you want to grow your business, you need to grow your brain. There's no way you can compete if you've decided it's time to put a cap on your knowledge—because, meanwhile, that business over there, and that one down the street, and the other one around the corner... they're all growing, learning, training and expanding.

And, what does this mean for you?

Well, all this growing, learning, training and expanding that they're doing will be redirected at your clients—to steal them, coddle them and take them as their own.

There are many ways you can expand your knowledge and the knowledge of your employees and a good way to do

this is through the World Wide Web—namely, Lynda.com.

Lynda is an online membership that gives you unrestricted access to education in business, design and technology. Learn how to code your website, design your professional logo, market your business online, develop a mobile business app and secure your network.

A Lynda Membership will give you viewing privileges to 3,898 video courses from industry experts and teachers. Learn from your computer, tablet or smartphone and create customized playlists of subjects you'd like to go over in the future.

A plan will set you back about \$30 a month depending on your type of membership—standard or premium and annual or monthly. A standard, monthly membership runs \$24.99. This will give you unlimited access to all content, with new courses added on a weekly basis.

Gadget of the Month: smarthalo

Smartphones, smartwatches, smart cars and smart socks... why not throw a bike into the mix?

And, that's exactly what CycleLabs thought... Why not?

CycleLabs brings to you SmartHalo—a way to put a **bit of smarts into your bike**. This innovative gadget turns your two-wheeled transport into a modern, color-coded cycling GPS. It permanently attaches to the handlebar of your bicycle and syncs with your phone's GPS, as well as a fitness tracking app.

As you ride—for health, amusement or need—SmartHalo will show you directions, weather alerts, personal notifications and fitness progress. All this is **represented in colors and shapes to provide minimal distraction** during your cycling journey.

Because SmartHalo is paired with a smartphone application, your phone moonlights as your **lock, security alarm and parking reminder**. As you approach your bicycle, the gadget will automatically unlock itself. If another person decides to ride away on your bike or if they think your wheels would look better on their own bike, SmartHalo will sound off an alarm until you disable it.

When you begin to pedal, the gadget syncs with your application to **monitor your fitness goals and cycling progress**. It will track time and distance traveled, average speed and calories cycled off. The application also allows you to set fitness goals; as you ride, the gadget will notify you once you've cycled one off the list.

SmartHalo was designed to **withstand harsh weather** and was built to maintain a **long battery life**. When the battery does die, it recharges itself through a USB port. Right now SmartHalo is available for \$99 at a special pre-order price.

