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How Cybercriminals Are Exploiting  
Human Weaknesses

THE DATA BREACH EPIDEMIC

Every year, thousands of businesses fall victim to data breaches. In 2022, over 1,800 data compromises affected more than 422 million people, according to the Identity Theft Resource Center's 2022 Data Breach Report. As cybercriminals continue to refine their tactics, it's clear that cyber-attacks and data breaches will not stop anytime soon. That's why it's so crucial for businesses to develop strong cyber security strategies.

If you want to bolster your cyber security efforts, a great place to start is with your employees. Research from Stanford University suggests that human error is responsible for 88% of all data breaches. Here are the two common reasons why employees put their workplaces at risk of cyber-attacks.



**Ignorance:** Do you give cyber security training to new hires during onboarding? Do you host annual cyber security training to give your employees a refresher on what they need to know? If not, your employees might be completely unaware of what cyber-attacks can look like and how to protect the company.

**Stress:** If your employees are stressed out, overwhelmed and overworked, they may overlook potential cyber security concerns. Evaluate your employees' workloads and, if necessary, make adjustments to ensure nobody becomes overwhelmed.

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Insider Tips To  
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WHAT'S NEW AT  
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Every Company Needs  
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4 THINGS TO DO NOW TO PREVENT  
YOUR CYBER INSURANCE CLAIM  
FROM BEING DENIED

“Thank goodness” is probably what Illinois-based manufacturing company ICS thought about having a cyber insurance policy with Travelers Insurance after a data breach in 2022. But after claims investigators pulled out their microscopes, they found that ICS failed to use multi-factor authentication (MFA) across all digital assets, which they had agreed to do in their policy. Travelers sued ICS *and won*. The policy was rescinded, and so were ICS's feelings of gratitude, which likely evolved into worried whispers of “Oh, crap.”

Smart businesses like yours are adding cyber insurance to their policies because they know good security hygiene is just as much a competitive advantage as a way to reduce business risk. But with cyber insurance premiums steadily increasing – they rose 62% last year alone – you want to make sure your claim is paid when you need it most.

Why Claims Get Denied

“Most claims that get denied are self-inflicted wounds,” says Rusty Goodwin,

the Organized Efficiency Consultant at Mid-State Group, an independent insurance agency in Virginia.

Though we like to paint insurance companies as malicious money-grubbers hovering over size “DENIED” stamps over claims, denials are usually the result of an accidental but fatal misrepresentation or omission by businesses or simply not letting an insurer know about changes in their security practices. However, there are simple steps you can take to prevent a claim-denial doomsday.

4 Ways To Make Sure Your  
Claim Doesn't Get Denied

1. Find a broker to help you understand your policy.

There's no doubt that insurance policies are tedious, filled with legal lingo that makes even the Aflac Duck sweat. Nevertheless, there are several parts to an insurance contract you must understand,

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OUR MISSION:  
To build a community of success-  
minded entrepreneurs that  
inspires excellence, encourages  
collaboration and expands the  
capacity of all members to  
achieve great things.



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including the deck pages (the first pages that talk about your deductible, total costs and the limits of liability), the insuring agreements (a list of all the promises the insurance company is making to you) and the conditions (what you are promising to do).

“If your broker can help you understand them and you can govern yourself according to the conditions of that contract, you will never have a problem having a claim paid,” says Goodwin. Some brokers don’t specialize in cyber insurance but will take your money anyway. Be wary of those, Goodwin warns. “If an agent doesn’t want to talk about cyber liability, then they either don’t know anything about it or they don’t care because they won’t make a lot of money off it.” If that’s the case, he says, “take all your business elsewhere.”

2. Understand the conditions.

Insurance companies are happy to write a check if you’re breached *if* and only if you make certain promises. These promises are called the conditions of the contract. Today, insurance companies expect you to promise things like using MFA and password managers, making regular data backups, and hosting phishing simulation and cyber security awareness training with your employees.

Understanding the conditions is critical, but this is where most companies go wrong and wind up with a denied claim.



Smart businesses like yours are adding cyber insurance to their policies because they know good security hygiene is just as much a competitive advantage as a way to reduce business risk.

3. Make good on the promises.

If you’ve ever filled out a homeowners insurance application, you know you’ll get a nifty discount on your premium if you have a security alarm. If you don’t have one, you might tick “Yes,” with good intentions to call ADT or Telus to schedule an installation. You enjoy your cheaper premium but are busy and forget to install the alarm (nobody comes around to check anyway).

Then, your home gets broken into. “Guess whose insurance claim is not going to be paid?” Goodwin says. “The power is in our hands to ensure our claim gets paid. There’s really nothing to be afraid of as long as you understand the promises that you’re making.”

This happens all the time in cyber insurance. Businesses promise to use MFA or host training but don’t enforce it. As in the case of ICS, this is how claims get denied.

4. Don’t assume the right hand knows what the left hand is doing.

Goodwin sees companies make one big mistake with their insurance policies: making assumptions. “I see CFOs, CEOs or business owners assume their MSP is keeping all these promises they’ve just made, even though they never told their MSP about the policy,” he says. MSPs are good at what they do, “but they aren’t mind readers,” Goodwin points out.

Regularly review your policy and have an open and transparent line of communication with your IT department or MSP so they can help you keep those promises.

“We’re the architect of our own problems,” Goodwin says. And the agents of our own salvation if we’re prepared to work with a quality broker and make good on our promises.

SAVE A BUNDLE OF MONEY ON TAXES, COMPUTER UPGRADES, HARDWARE AND SUPPORT...

But You Have To Act FAST Because Once The Clock Strikes Midnight On 12/31, Your Tax Savings Will Be Gone Forever

Thanks to a recently updated Small Business Jobs and Credit Act of 2010, the Federal Government updated a tax deduction titled the “Section 179 Election”, which now allows you to buy up to \$2,800,000 with a maximum deduction of \$1,160,000, in machinery, computers, software, office furniture, vehicles, or other tangible goods and significantly REDUCE your taxable income on this years tax return.

We can help with computers, software, or other IT hardware needs.

Visit us at: [www.cybertools.us/section179](http://www.cybertools.us/section179) or scan the QR code



DEMYSTIFYING IT SUPPORT PRICING: FACTORS AND MODELS EXPLAINED



When seeking IT assistance for your company, understanding the intricacies of pricing becomes essential. The interplay between your organization's characteristics, the level of support required, and the specific services needed all influence the costs associated with IT support. In this article, we delve into the mechanisms behind IT support pricing, shedding light on how providers determine their charges and the key considerations in this process.

Key Factors Influencing IT Support Pricing

- 1. **Business Size:** IT support pricing hinges significantly on the size of the business. Larger organizations typically require more comprehensive IT assistance, which can lead to higher costs.
- 2. **Complexity of IT Infrastructure:** The complexity of your IT setup directly impacts pricing. Extensive IT infrastructures, characterized by multiple locations, servers, and devices, demand increased time and resources for management, thereby contributing to elevated expenses.
- 3. **Service Level Agreements (SLAs):** IT vendors offer various levels of support, ranging from basic to premium and managed services. The pricing structure corresponds to the chosen level of support.
- 4. **Type of Service:** IT services encompass a wide spectrum of offerings, each with distinct pricing models. Some providers charge a flat fee, while others opt for hourly rates or monthly memberships.
- 5. **Customization of Services:** Tailoring software or hardware solutions to specific business needs may incur additional charges, as customization demands more intricate attention.

Pricing Approaches Adopted by IT Companies

- 1. **Hourly Billing:** IT firms may implement an hourly billing structure, where charges range from a few dollars to several hundred dollars per hour. The fee is determined by factors such as the level of support required, the expertise of the technician, and the complexity of the task.
- 2. **Fixed Pricing:** For certain tasks like software installation or network setup, IT companies may propose fixed one-time fees. This approach can be cost-effective for specific requirements.
- 3. **Subscription Model:** A monthly fee structure is commonly employed for managed services, where the IT provider assumes responsibility for all aspects of business IT support. This subscription-based model ensures consistent and comprehensive assistance.
- 4. **Bundled Services:** IT suppliers may consolidate software licensing, hardware maintenance, and help desk support into a comprehensive package offered at a fixed price.

In summary, the cost of IT support hinges on multiple factors, encompassing business size, complexity of IT infrastructure, service level agreements, service type, and potential customization. Providers may adopt hourly billing, fixed pricing, subscription models, or bundled services to determine charges. A reputable IT provider will prioritize understanding your unique business needs, offering transparent pricing that aligns with your budgetary considerations.

SHINY NEW GADGET OF THE MONTH

The Ooni Volt 12 Electric Pizza Oven



Pizza is one of the most common meals eaten by Americans. The average American eats 23 pounds of pizza annually, and every day, 13% of Americans eat pizza as a meal. If you enjoy making your own fresh pizza, consider getting an Ooni Volt 12 Electric Pizza Oven. Unlike most pizza ovens currently on the market, you can use the Ooni Volt 12 indoors and outdoors. Its compact size makes it easy to move, and since it’s electric, there’s rarely a mess to clean up. The Ooni Volt 12 heats up to 850° F within 20 minutes. Once the oven has preheated, your pizza will be ready to eat in only 90 seconds. If you want to improve pizza night at your house, look no further than the Ooni Volt 12.

GET OUT OF YOUR OWN WAY

By Mark Goulston  
And Philip Goldberg

As a business leader, you confront external obstacles daily. You likely have no problem devising solutions to these problems, but it becomes a different story when the challenges come from within. Most business owners’ #1 enemy is themselves. They second-guess their actions, grow envious of others’ successes and bottleneck important tasks while trying to devise the perfect solution. By reading *Get Out Of Your Own Way* by Mark Goulston and Philip Goldberg, you’ll learn how to overcome your self-defeating behaviors. We all have self-destructive habits that prevent us from reaching our goals, even if we haven’t identified them. This book offers examples and advice to identify and overcome any internal behaviors that are setting you and your business back.

