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## The 10 Technology Basics

Technology is always changing and evolving, but most businesses can't afford to keep pace with the latest trends. Instead, focus on laying a solid foundation for your business technology, with a plan and a budget for ongoing support, maintenance and replacement. It's just as important to get the technology basics right as it is to have a strong financial or marketing plan. This month we touch on the ten technology basics that should be in place in your business.

- 1. Hardware & Software** - The most obvious technology components. To reduce problems, ensure that your hardware isn't too old and always use legally licensed software.
- 2. Power protection** - Often neglected, power protection equipment is an essential investment for protecting your more expensive technology assets from power-related damage.
- 3. File sharing** - Whether using a shared storage device on your network, a 'hosted' solution or your own server, save yourself from the tiring and unproductive task of emailing documents around your own team.
- 4. Backups** - Ensure they are functioning, checked daily, tested weekly and stored securely at another location. It's not enough to 'think' that they are working and that 'someone' is looking after them.
- 5. Internet access** - Balance your monthly fee budget with a connection that is reliable and gives you enough speed and data allowance to enable your staff to work effectively.
- 6. Domain name** - The cost is negligible to show people you are serious about your business and you are not just operating with a free email service. Build your internet presence on this and tap into a great source of new customers.
- 7. Security** - Though network 'firewalls' and 'anti-malware' software security measures are now considered essential, don't neglect the physical security of your computers. Is your server easy to grab during a break-in through your front door?
- 8. Passwords** - Commonly avoided in small business as you trust the people you work with, secure, complex passwords are needed in your defense against hacking attempts and physical theft.
- 9. Plans & Policies** - Technology needs to be managed like any area of your business, not just taken for granted and acted on in an emergency. Your plans should include budgeting for replacing aging hardware, business continuity processes in case of technology failure, and disaster recovery processes. Policies for staff covering acceptable usage and computer security are also easier implemented before they are needed.
- 10. Trusted I.T. advisor** - Develop a relationship with a technology expert who is willing to learn about your business. Then you'll get the best possible support and solutions that fit your current needs and future plans.

Talk to your local Computer Troubleshooter about how you can protect your family online.

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