

“As a business owner, you don’t have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That’s where we *shine!* Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!”
- John David Kistler – Business Owner

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Technology Times

*“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run
Faster, Easier And More Profitably”*

3 Technology-Specific New Year’s Resolutions You Need To Make

Ahhhh! A brand new year, full of promise, hope and a fresh start. If you’re like most people, you’re making the usual resolutions to exercise more, lose weight, pay off debt, etc., etc., etc. Essentially, it’s a time of year when we momentarily take stock in our lives and think about all the things we “should” be doing more of, but don’t. So while you’re in the goal-setting mode, we thought we would tack on 5 things that probably aren’t on your list, but should be. Especially since these all fall into the “important, but not urgent” category.



1. **Offsite backups.** Can we beat this horse to death anymore? I know MOST of the clients reading this newsletter are smart enough to have this already done, but many still don’t and are relying on undependable (and outdated, I might add) tape drives, Carbonite or other volatile backup solutions. If that’s you, don’t let this be another year where you gamble with everything you’ve worked so hard to achieve. Get a better backup!!!!
2. **Write A Disaster Recovery Plan.** Pop quiz: If you woke up tomorrow and discovered that you couldn’t access your office building due to a flood, fire or tornado, what would you do? Or what would happen if a key executive—one who holds the “keys” to critical processes or applications—fell sick or (God forbid) died? Or what would happen if a disgruntled employee or hacker gained access to your web server, line of business application or file server and deleted everything—particularly if the data was hosted on the 3rd party cloud provider’s web site? These are all very real scenarios, and without a plan in place, you could be facing serious downtime and financial losses.
3. **Develop A Stronger Cyber Security System That Goes Beyond A Firewall And Anti-Virus.** With more and more information about us being stored electronically, and with State and Federal laws becoming more strict, you MUST take cyber security seriously. Simply having a good firewall and anti-virus isn’t enough these days to keep the highly motivated and technically sophisticated criminals out of your network. The HUMAN element is the biggest threat—employees who accidentally click on links in e-mails or download files that introduce viruses to your network. Employees are also using social media sites more frequently, and they can intentionally or accidentally post something that could harm your company’s reputation or leak confidential information. Therefore, your security plan must also include employee training and policies so they know what is and isn’t acceptable when handling data and using company resources (Internet, computers, etc.).

If you don’t know where to start in creating any of the above, we’re here to help! Call us at 314-993-5528 to discuss how we can do all of this for you and take the work and worry out of these New Year’s resolutions!

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Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

MagicFuture.com

<http://www.magicfuture.com>



Have you ever wondered how much money you need to have in order to quit work forever? Well wonder no more!

Thanks to a new online tool developed by a veteran financial advisor to multi-millionaires, Stefan Wissenback, this site will help you determine what your “magic number” is, or more specifically, the exact amount of money you need to have so you can quit working forever.

Unlike many retirement planning calculators, this tool will factor in a number of factors such as the type of vacations you want to take every year, what type of legacy you want to leave your children and even the monthly cost of your favorite hobbies. Then, based on WHEN you want to “retire” so work is optional, it will tell you how much money you need to invest or save in order to attain your goal.

Unlike other sites, it won't try and sell you anything—and you can try the tool out for 21 days at no cost. We definitely recommend giving it a try—you might be surprised to find out the amount of money you thought you needed is actually a lot lower and very attainable!

www.magicfuture.com

The 4 Best Gadgets To Help You Lose Weight And Get Fit This Year

Getting fit is going high-tech these days, with new gadgets that are actually cool to wear instead of looking like the beeping hunks of junk your grandma wears when mall walking. Plus, they're going very social with online workouts and apps that track your progress and allow you to compete against your friends. Here are four new high-tech gadgets that may help you get in beach-body shape by spring:

1. **Nike+ FuelBand.** This new wristband tracks your activity throughout the day and converts it to a metric of activity. Using their mobile or online app, you can set a goal for each day and then work to beat it. At \$149, it's cheaper than a personal trainer. We think this is Nike's answer to the Fitbit, which comes next on our list. www.nikestore.com
2. **Fitbit Ultra.** The Fitbit is an altimeter, which can track how many hills or stairs you've climbed, and a motion sensor to track calories and activity levels throughout the day. If you love charts and graphs, you'll love the Fitbit. www.fitbit.com
3. **GymBoss.** This tiny clip-on interval trainer is the lowest-tech item in this list, but may be the best at getting you to lose those last stubborn pounds by doing short, high-intensity intervals. If you want a free workout to follow that uses the GymBoss, check out www.bodyrock.tv. Warning! These workouts are not for the faint of heart!
www.gymboss.com
4. **Endomondo Sports Tracker.** This is a great option for those of you who are all tapped out from holiday shopping. Endomondo is an app that you can download for free to your phone to track miles running, cycling or in other sports using your phone's GPS. You can make any workout a race against your friends or against your own personal best. www.endomondo.com, I logged over 1200 miles last year walking, running and cycling.

Happy New Year!

I've polled many of my clients and although some are sad to see 2012 go, most are very happy to see the end to this year that held so much promise for horrible things to come. From the world ending to the fiscal cliff to the extremely partisan elections, let's raise a glass and hope that 2013 is the year that we have all been dreaming about; abundant clients with loads of money willing to spend it all with you in whatever line of work you do. I'll drink to that!

Could You Use A Website Like This In Your Sales Process?



If you do any selling by appointment in your business, you are absolutely going to LOVE this new website that we've developed as part of our sales process.

Imagine being able to send a fully customized website to your prospect that pre-sells your products or services before you even arrive for your appointment. This is exactly what we've created.

Check out our site that we created at <http://fixedforever.premeeetingmaterials.com>

Here's how this site works...

- As soon as an appointment is set with a new prospect, we create a customized website for them.
- We record an intro video specifically for them.
- We write a cover letter confirming our upcoming appointment.
- We even include a variety of sales materials we've created and tie them directly into the conversation we just had on the phone.

The great part is that once we built out this web tool, it takes our sales team only about 5 minutes to create one of these!

Pretty slick, huh?

We're considering offering this as another service for our clients. If you would be interested, give us a call at 314-993-5528 to discuss it.

How To Design A "WOW!" Trade Show Booth Without Spending A Fortune

Trade shows are sales and marketing tools. We have never been able to cash a check on image. We have only been able to cash checks from real, live, flesh-and-blood customers. Because of this, we believe that all sales and marketing tools must be accountable. They must all stand on trial for their lives.

That's why booth design is so important, and why it's a lot more than just designing a pretty booth. Here are some important things to remember:

- Your booth must first **ATTRACT** the eye of the attendee.
- It must next tell them **WHO** you are and **WHAT** you do.
- It must give them a **REASON** to want to share their precious time with you.
- In other words, it must **PERSUADE** them to want to stop and talk with you.

Unfortunately, many exhibitors fail to recognize this important fact. Typically, they fall into one of three traps.

#1—The first trap is the *Traffic Trap*. This is where an exhibitor designs the booth and promotions to attract as many people as possible. These are companies who have no way of using trade shows to measure impact on creating or maintaining long-term customer relationships. They believe that if their booth is crowded, they **MUST** have had a successful show!

#2—The second trap is the *Cost Trap*. These companies see trade shows purely as a line item in their budget. They're an expense. And the only way to make money off an expense is to cut it down or out. These companies strip their participation to the bare bones. Many small and first-time exhibitors fall into this trap. You see them with the 10X10 booth, a couple of tables and chairs, and very little signage.

#3—The third trap is the *Me-Too Trap*. Very few exhibitors are willing to "visually" take a chance. In fact, most exhibitors (especially the smaller ones) look to each other for design ideas. That's not standing out. That's being a lemming. As Gary Hamel, author of *Competing in the Future* puts it: most people in an industry are blind in the same way—they're all paying attention to the same things and not paying attention to the same things.

I'm not advocating spending a lot of money. But I am saying you have to create a booth that helps you stand out from the crowd and attract your target market.

A trade show is a three-dimensional representation of your company. You are there to create and maintain long-term customer relationships. Think about the display you had at your last show and ask yourself these questions:

1. Did your booth visually attract your specific target market?
2. Did your booth give the visual representation of your company that you want your market to have?

Why is this so important?

A trade show can be one of the most powerful marketing tools your company ever uses. You can exhibit at shows where hundreds, maybe thousands of your targeted prospects are looking for you! But first, they've got to find you.



Steve Miller calls himself Kelly's Dad. But Meetings And Conventions Magazine calls him, "The Idea Man." That's because he's the author of the trade show industry's #1 BEST SELLING book, "How to Get the Most Out of Trade Shows." Steve has consulted and spoken for 93% of the Top 200 largest trade shows in North America, including CONEXPO-CON/AGG, the Consumer Electronics Show, The International Manufacturing Technology Show, The Home Builders Show, The Sweets & Snacks Expo, the International Home & Housewares Show, and many more. He has guided hundreds of the largest exhibiting companies in the world to exhibiting and sponsorship success, including Microsoft, Proctor & Gamble, Boeing Commercial Airplane, Delphi Automotive, Emerson Electric, Coca-Cola, Starbucks, and Chase Bank. Learn more at www.theadventure.com

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It's National Clean Up Your Computer Month



I didn't believe it either, but after some research it is official...an authority no less reputable than "The Vinegar Institute" declared January as a national holiday to clean up your computer.

In light of this holiday, I thought I'd take the time to answer a small but nagging question, "How do I get those smudges, dust, and fingerprints safely off of my flat screen monitor?"

Although each monitor manufacturer has its own special instructions for cleaning, there are some common guidelines you can use to get your screen looking like new in no time.

- **Turn off the monitor.** It's not required, but it makes smudges and smears easier to see.
- **Use a cotton cloth** or compressed air to get rid of light dust buildup. Never use a rag or paper towel to clean since they can scratch the screen.
- **Don't use products with ethyl alcohol or ammonia-based products.** Products like Windex can yellow flat-screen or laptop monitors.
- **Use water or a homemade mix to clean grungy surfaces.** If water is not enough, concoct a cleaning solution of 1 part water, 1 part isopropyl alcohol, and 1/2 part vinegar.
- **Lightly moisten your cloth with the cleaning solution.** Never apply the liquid directly to the screen.
- **Wipe the cloth in one direction** – from top to bottom. This method will ensure grime and dust move to the bottom of the screen surface where it can be wiped away.

One final guideline, never touch or press on your LCD screen with your fingers as this can cause the pixels to burn out. Happy cleaning!

"Super Wi-Fi" Coming This Year Promises An End To Dead Spots



Get ready for a new type of Wi-Fi coming online in 2013 called, "Super Wi-Fi." What is it? As defined by the FCC (Federal Communications Commission), it's a stronger, more powerful wireless networking connection that uses the lower-frequency white spaces between television channel frequencies instead of the 2.4 GHz radio frequencies of the Wi-Fi we all know and love. These lower frequencies allow the signal to travel further and penetrate walls better than the radio frequencies used in Wi-Fi today.

Why do I say, "As defined" by the FCC? Because it's not really a form of wireless networking; therefore, the name "Super Wi-Fi" is being questioned and criticized by organizations who feel it's a copyright infringement on the Wi-Fi name. Politics!

Whatever it ends up being called, this new wireless connectivity could make it a lot easier (and faster) to get online. As you might expect, it's being championed by the likes of Google and Microsoft who have heavy investments in cloud computing and wireless networking. Until now, there have only been a few beta networks where people can use it. But like any new technology, the delivery will get cheaper, faster and more ubiquitous, particularly in rural areas and other dead spots where broadband wireless isn't available. Essentially, if you can get a TV signal, you'll be able to get high-speed Internet access. Of course, as your technology leader, we'll continue to keep tabs on this and let you know about your best options for getting and staying connected!

"Referrals are the lifeblood of all businesses, they turn small businesses into big businesses!"

Each and every day a customer comes in and says "you come highly recommended" or "my friend / co-worker / neighbor told me to just bring it here" Most of you may have referred people to us in the past and I want to personally take the time to thank you for your help and confidence in us. I would also like to take the time to say that we are striving to get better at our service. We would like to get an email address when you drop off a computer so we can email a status report. We have invested in an alerting software that enables us to have a jump on any issues you might have. We are adding new vendors to our recommended list so that we can continue to treat you the way you deserve to be serviced.

Call us today! (314) 993-5528

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