

# NEWSLETTER

■ March 2020



## COMPUTER MAGIC

Welcome to our monthly publication provided to you by Samantha Boneck, Marketing Associate of Computer Magic, Inc.

**Our Mission:** We help you reach your long-term objectives, enable you to drive real growth in your company, and to secure greater return on investment.

## CYBER EXTORTION INSURANCE

Your receptionist clicks a link within an email. Then, everything begins to spiral out-of-control and leaves everyone in a panic. By clicking that link, your receptionist unknowingly put the business in jeopardy. Be aware that an email may be slightly different in the email address, such as **johnsmith@company.co** instead of **johnsmith@company.com**. This hacker is desperately hoping that the person on the other end does what is directed so they can make your life a living nightmare. And, now you have to deal with negotiation efforts with a hacker who, most likely, will make demands for money with no intention of giving you access to your accounts or the information they have stolen from you.

It's best to be prepared! Learn more about cyber insurance to see what type of cyber liability policy is best for your company.

### Local and National Cyber Insurance

Local Madison insurance companies include M3 Insurance, Ansay & Associates. National firms include AXA XL, AIG, and Fairfax.

### What's covered:

- Ransom Money
- Extortion-Related Expenses
- Repair Costs

### Threats may:

- Alter, damage or destroy your software, programs or data
- Infect your computer system with a virus or other malicious code
- Release your data on the dark web
- Make your website or computer system inaccessible by initiating a cyber-attack, such as a denial-of-service attack
- Transfer funds using your computer system.

### Prevention

- Protect your computer with a firewall system including email and antivirus scanning.
- Keep your software updated.
- Look for red flags within emails; it's best practice to confirm an email with a simple phone call to the recipient.
- Don't click on pop-up ads; add a pop-up blocker
- Back up your data and keep copies of critical data at offsite locations.

*Bonner (2019, October 21)  
thebalancesmb.com*

## WHAT'S NEW

As the start of the 82nd annual edition of March Madness approaches, we at Computer Magic are rooting for the Wisconsin Badgers!



Samantha Boneck  
Marketing Associate  
Computer Magic, Inc.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPANY CULTURE

Your company's culture is one of the most important aspects of any business, and it should define the 4 W's: who you are as a unit, what you stand for as a group, where you see your business going, and when you expect to see results.

The most significant impact for results have these five values in common: collaboration, customer service, innovation, integrity, performance, and respect.

### Define your Core Values

It's essential to set guidelines to outline a set of rules for your employees to follow. They need to know how to portray themselves within the business environment both internally and externally. Make sure every single employee understands your set of values.

### Put your mission statement into play: actions speak louder than words

Lead by example! Employees look to top management to learn how to conduct themselves and believe they will catch on quickly because they will.

### Hire according to your values

You may choose to hire like-minded people, but remember, you already excel at a specific task a certain way, and hiring another to do that same thing, unless you're replacing yourself, could be a mistake. You don't want an environment filled with people just like you, it may make you comfortable, but without unique and different ideas, a company cannot flourish and grow.

### Encourage communication

If you take anything out of this section, this one right here is the most important! Reach out to your teams on an individual level to make sure they have an appropriate structure system and are on the same page as everyone else. If there is a problem, your staff will have answers.

Small businesses must take responsibility when it comes to their company culture. It could mean the difference between being like HubSpot that focuses on Individuality or Enron who crashed and burned because of their decisions.

*Credibly. [credibly.com/incredibly/small-business-company-culture-need-build-one/](https://credibly.com/incredibly/small-business-company-culture-need-build-one/)*



**Bottom line, you're either a risk taker or you're not. And if you don't take risks, you'll never win big."**

*Geno Auriemma, University of Connecticut Huskies*

# IT'S TAX SEASON! IS YOUR SMALL BUSINESS READY?

**Disclosure: Always speak with an advisor for questions about your business tax situation. We offer the following as tips for educational purposes only not to be confused with tax advice.**

It's that time of the year! Are you ready to file your taxes for your small business? Tax Day is coming up on Wednesday, April 15th and is one of the most stressful times of the year. We've provided a list of a few tax tips and deductions you may, or may not, be aware of. Review our list to see if you may benefit. *Weltman (2020, February 10) smallbiztrends.com*

## 7 Best Tips for Tax Prep

- 1.) Find an accountant willing to work with you throughout the year
- 2.) Keep your accountant involved in your business plan
- 3.) Make sure income you report to the IRS matches your 1099s
- 4.) Keep your records up-to-date and accurate
- 5.) Properly classify your business
- 6.) Hire a company to assist with payroll
- 7.) Understand capitalization rules

## 12 Key Tax Deductions

- Salaries & Wages
- Contract Labor
- Supplies
- Rent or Business Property
- Utilities
- Repairs
- Travel
- Advertising
- Legal & Professional Fees
- Meals
- Employee Benefit Programs & Qualified Retirement Plans
- Office Expenses

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# 10 EMAIL ETIQUETTE RULES FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

- 1.) Stay professional: Don't write anything within an email that would hurt your own reputation or that of others.
  - 2.) Avoid negative terms and remember your manners: Terms such as "failure," "wrong," or "neglected" can be misinterpreted, and always say "please" and "thank you."
  - 3.) Focus on readability: use 10-12-point type; Arial, Calibri, and Time New Roman fonts; and type in black.
  - 4.) Always double check to make sure you've typed in the correct recipient.
  - 5.) Don't forget to proofread: it matters! You will be judged for spelling errors.
  - 6.) If you receive an email directed to another, respond so they know they need to re-send.
  - 7.) It's best to leave humor out of emails.
  - 8.) Exclamation points should be used sparingly.
  - 9.) Use professional salutations such as "Hi" or "Hello" and use a client's last name when addressing them; unless they know you well.
  - 10.) Make sure your subject line is clear and direct.
- Smith (2016, February 2). inc.com/business-insider/email-etiquette-rules.html*

## IT Security Tip of The Month

# CREDIT CARD SAFETY

How do you know if you've given your credit card number over to the representative of a company or to a hacker over in Russia?

## Signs your credit card has been hacked

- Purchases you know you didn't make are showing up on your statement
- Small charges on your account
- Unfamiliar company names on your statement
- Payments from different locations
- A lower credit balance

## How to stay safe

Take action and act quickly! The criminals do, and so should you!

- 1.) Sign up for notifications and alerts of all charges through text and email. Additionally, a daily review of checking your balances is always good practice!
- 2.) If you see an unfamiliar name on your statement, contact your credit card company IMMEDIATELY!
- 3.) Review purchases from other destinations. If you haven't been to Florida but are seeing a charge, this should be a red flag to you.
- 4.) Has your credit line diminished? Red flag! This indicator is not a good sign and needs to be investigated. Stay abreast of credit limits, balances, and pending transactions.
- 5.) Visit the company's official website and review the instructions when a breach occurs or, better yet, know the rules beforehand.
- 6.) Implement a credit freeze. However, if your account(s) have already been compromised, freezing them will not reverse the situation. It merely stops future withdrawals from occurring.

*O'Connell (2018, June 14). Experian.com.*

# UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

## March 1

### Shamrocks & Shenanigans Virtual 4-Mile Run/Walk - Madison

\$27-\$50. Location: Virtual. Mar.1 at 12pm to Mar.31 ending at 11:30pm

## March 14

### Madison Shamrock Shuffle

\$30-\$35. Library Mall. 8-8:15am to 10am

## March 14

### Great Dane Bockfest

\$40. Great Dane, Hilldale 357 Price Place, Madison, WI 53705. 12pm to 4pm

## March 14

### St. Patrick's Day Family Fun

FREE. DreamBank, American Family Insurance, 821 East Washington Avenue, Madison, WI 53703. 9:30am to 12pm

## March 14

### Lucky's St. Patrick's Day Crawl - Madison

\$20. Red Rock Saloon, 322 West Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53703. 4 to 11:59pm

## March 15

### St. Patrick's Day Celebration Parade - Madison

FREE. Capitol Square. 1:15pm

## March 17

### St. Patrick's Day Celebration Culinary Dinner Theatre

\$54 to \$69. vomFASS - delecTable, 3248 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53705. 6 to 9pm

## March 17

### St. Patrick's Day Run

FREE. Movin' Shoes, 528 S Park St, Madison, WI 53715. 4:30pm

## TECH TRIVIA QUIZ ENTER TO WIN!

You can be the Grand Prize Winner of this month's Trivia Challenge Quiz! Just be the first person to correctly answer this month's trivia question and receive a **\$25 Amazon gift card**. Ready? Call us with your answer!

What computer virus replicates itself, shutting down the computer system in the process?

- A) Worm
- B) Botnet
- C) Trojan horse
- D) Back door

Call us right  
now with your  
answer!  
608-291-9723

# FREE IT SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT

## Reveal Where Your Computer Network Is Exposed and How to Protect Your Business

At no cost or obligation, our highly skilled team of IT experts will come to your office and conduct a comprehensive cybersecurity assessment to uncover loopholes in your company's IT security. After the free estimate is done, we'll prepare a customized "Report of Findings" that will reveal specific vulnerabilities and provide a Prioritized Action Plan for getting these security problems addressed fast. This report and action plan should be a real eyeopener for you, since almost all the businesses we've done this for discover they are completely exposed to various threats in many areas.

**Claim your free assessment now: call 608-291-9723**



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