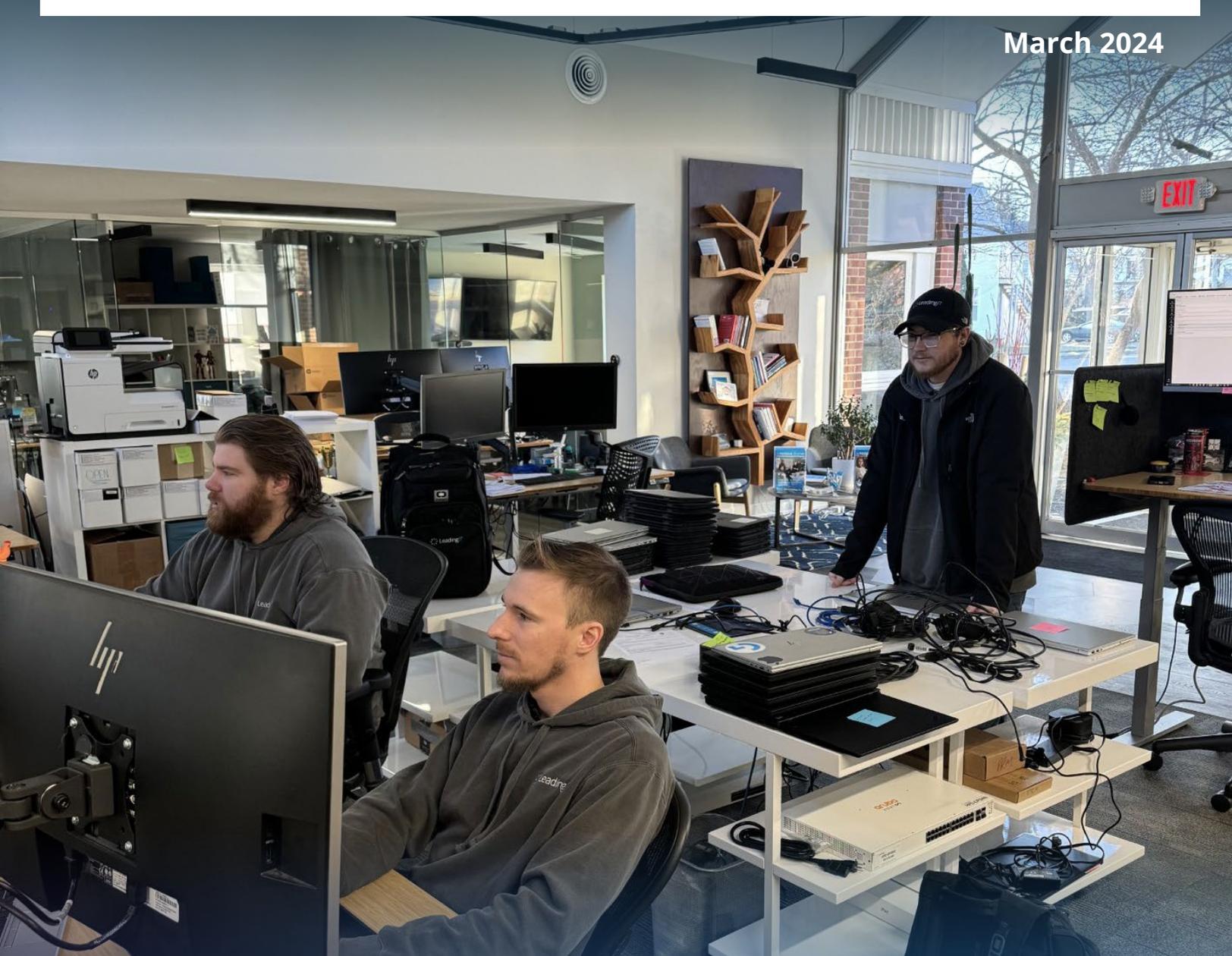


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Chicagoland Cybersecurity Support

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Revolutionizing the Workplace: The Impact of Microsoft Copilot and Generative AI

Securing the Future: The Strategic Importance of Routine IT Audits

The Best of Both Worlds: How Hybrid IT Can Fortify Your Business's Cybersecurity

The Triple Shield: Password Managers, MFA, and Biometric Safeguards

Spotlight on Excellence: Celebrating Our Values Victor



Revolutionizing the Workplace:

The Impact of Microsoft Copilot and Generative AI

AI has been a game changer in the workplace, opening up new possibilities for productivity and creativity across all fields. One of the major players driving this change is Microsoft with their Copilot tool for Microsoft 365. This software isn't just reducing digital debt but is also supercharging productivity, freeing up employees to focus on tasks that need a human touch.

The Tangible Benefits of Generative AI in the Workplace

Microsoft's pioneering research into the effects of Copilot on workplace productivity has shed light on the benefits of Generative AI. Here are a few key benefits backed by solid data:

- **Increased Efficiency and Quality:** Approximately 70% of users reported heightened productivity, with 68% noting an enhancement in the quality of their work.
- **Time-Saving Capabilities:** On average, users accomplished tasks like writing, summarizing, and searching 29% faster. Moreover, catching up on missed meetings became nearly four times quicker, illustrating Copilot's remarkable ability to streamline work processes.
- **Enhanced Drafting and Searching:** A significant majority of users affirmed that Copilot aids in achieving a solid first draft more swiftly and effectively locates necessary information within files.

According to Deloitte, organizations using Generative AI can more effectively increase productivity, embed knowledge, and boost research and development, thereby creating and protecting value. This shift allows leadership to direct their focus toward nurturing a culture of innovation, strengthening relationships, and driving forward initiatives that carry significant value and impact.

Let's dive a little deeper:

1. ENHANCES ROLE-SPECIFIC TASKS

The impact of Generative AI can be felt across all roles. Sales, customer service, and finance professionals, in particular, have highlighted how AI could significantly enhance their performance, pointing towards a future where AI's role is tailored to specific industry needs and challenges. For example, over 75% of sales, customer service, and finance professionals agree that AI could help them find the information they need to do their job.

2. REIMAGINES TIME AND TALENT

Generative AI emerges as a crucial instrument in reshaping how organizations manage time and talent. By taking over mundane tasks and optimizing workflows, staff members are released from exhaustive protocols that previously consumed their productive hours. This liberation paves the way for more strategic thinking, team collaboration, and customer engagement.

3. IMPROVES DECISION-MAKING AND STRATEGY

Generative AI also plays a crucial role in decision-making and strategic planning. Through the thorough examination of massive quantities of data, Microsoft Copilot equips company leaders with key insights that are easily understood, allowing them to make

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Pictured on the cover: Alex, Kyle and Daniel

Securing the Future: The Strategic Importance of Routine IT Audits

Regular IT audits are not just a routine checkup; they're a strategic view into the foundation of your business's technological framework. These audits are crucial for uncovering weaknesses, securing compliance, enhancing efficiency, and aligning IT infrastructure with strategic business goals. In short, IT audits ensure that a business's IT infrastructure not only meets today's standards but is also prepared for tomorrow's challenges.

Identifying and Mitigating Security Vulnerabilities

A key benefit of consistent IT audits is their power to reveal potential security risks and flaws within a company's IT framework. With cyber threats growing at an extraordinary speed, an IT audit offers a comprehensive review of the security stance, pinpointing areas of vulnerability that bad actors can take advantage of.

According to a report by IBM, the average cost of a data breach in 2023 was \$4.45 million, making the identification and mitigation of security vulnerabilities through regular audits a cost-effective strategy for risk management.

Ensuring Compliance with Regulatory Standards

In the current climate of rigorous regulatory mandates, IT audits play a pivotal role in ensuring corporate compliance with relevant laws and guidelines. Be it GDPR, HIPAA, or SOX, failure to comply can lead to severe financial penalties and damage to your company's reputation. Regularly scheduled audits provide a comprehensive evaluation of adherence to these protocols; they act as safeguards against legal complications while simultaneously fostering credibility among stakeholders.

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IT AUDIT

The Best of Both Worlds: How Hybrid IT Can Fortify Your Business's Cybersecurity

The rate of cyber attack attempts doubled last year, rising to 104%. Businesses are desperately seeking sanctuary. Enter Hybrid IT, an IT model that embodies the best of both worlds - combining a unique blend of a business's internal IT prowess with the advanced cybersecurity and project support of a Managed Service Provider (MSP).

This partnership model is not about replacing the internal IT team but enhancing and expanding their capabilities, ensuring the business is fortified against cyber threats while operating at peak efficiency.

What is Hybrid IT?

Hybrid IT is essentially a strategic collaboration between an internal IT team and externally managed services, designed to leverage the best of both worlds. With this model, internal IT staff handles day-to-day operations, while the MSP provides advanced cybersecurity, tools, and additional manpower for larger projects. This synergy ensures that workloads are managed effectively, keeping security, compliance, and operational efficiency in mind.

Benefits of Hybrid IT

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERTISE

Hybrid IT's key benefit lies in blending the specialized knowledge of an internal team with the broad know-how that MSPs possess across diverse technologies and sectors. This fusion amplifies a company's overall IT prowess. MSPs

typically leverage cutting-edge security tools and technologies, offering resources that could be overly expensive or intricate for an independent internal team.

COMPLIANCE AND DATA SOVEREIGNTY

Hybrid IT effectively addresses data compliance and sovereignty concerns. MSPs stay up-to-date with the latest compliance regulations and can ensure that an IT environment meets all necessary standards, thus minimizing legal and financial threats. With robust cybersecurity defenses and adherence to compliance protocols, MSPs fortify the protection of sensitive information thereby reducing the possibility of costly data breaches.

RAPID RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Hybrid IT infrastructures boost agility in addressing security incidents. With round-the-clock monitoring and support, MSPs quicken threat response

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The Triple Shield: Password Managers, MFA, and Biometric Safeguards

Break the Habit of Reusing or Writing Down Passwords

A common mistake for many people is the tendency to reuse passwords across multiple accounts or jot them down for easy reference. This practice poses a significant risk - if one password is compromised, it opens the door to multiple breaches. Encourage the use of unique, complex passwords for each account, and discourage writing them down. Password management tools can help users keep track of multiple strong passwords without compromising security.

Fortifying with Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)

One effective countermeasure against password compromise is the implementation of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA). MFA adds an extra layer of security by requiring users to provide more than one form of identification to access an account. This could involve a combination of passwords, temporary codes sent to mobile devices, or biometric data, providing an additional hurdle for cyber criminals even if the primary password is compromised.

The Rise of Biometrics

Biometric authentication, using unique physical or behavioral attributes like fingerprints, facial recognition, or voice patterns, is gaining prominence. Unlike traditional passwords, biometrics are not easily replicated or stolen, providing a more secure method of identity verification. Integrating biometric authentication into your security protocols enhances protection against unauthorized access.

■ *The Best of Both Worlds*

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times and promptly neutralize potential dangers before they inflict serious damage. Leveraging extensive cybersecurity knowledge and advanced tools, MSPs proactively pinpoint and counteract possible threats, thus lowering the likelihood of breaches while ensuring swift action when a threat emerges.

COST EFFICIENCY

Hybrid IT bolsters security measures and promotes cost efficiency. By partnering with an MSP, businesses can shift from fixed to flexible IT costs, only paying for utilized services. Additionally, most MSPs operate on subscription-based models that aid companies in accurately predicting their IT spending. A well-executed managed service strategy could slash IT costs by 25-45%.

FOCUS ON CORE BUSINESS FUNCTIONS

Defending an organization from digital threats is a considerable task that can take over the time of a small internal IT team. By delegating some of these tasks to an MSP, in-house staff can concentrate on strategic plans and essential business operations, thus enhancing efficiency and creativity. MSPs can handle regular maintenance checks and monitor systems, allowing the internal team to tackle more complex, business-critical IT projects instead.

Conclusion: Resilience and Flexibility

Hybrid IT is revolutionizing how businesses approach cybersecurity. By combining the knowledge of their in-house team with the broad skills of an MSP, organizations can create a resilient, flexible, and scalable IT infrastructure. As we move forward, the adoption of hybrid IT will undoubtedly become a cornerstone for businesses seeking to protect their digital landscapes in an increasingly complex digital environment.



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■ *Revolutionizing the Workplace* continued from pg 2...

informed decisions. This process is rooted in hard data, ensuring that strategies are beyond just being effective; they perfectly echo the long-term goals set by any organization.

4. FOSTERS SKILL ENHANCEMENT

Generative AI is revolutionizing skill enhancement for employees by offering personalized learning paths, instant feedback, and identifying skill gaps for focused development. AI encourages creativity, nurtures technical abilities as well as soft skills, and refines leadership skills. This method not only fast-tracks career progression but also instills a mindset of lifelong learning and adaptability among employees,

it also prepares them to meet future challenges and drive organizational success in the dynamic market landscape.

Conclusion: The Future of the Workplace

Generative AI is set to revolutionize the workplace. Microsoft Copilot offers a glimpse into the future of work - a future where technology and human ingenuity converge to create unprecedented possibilities. As we move forward, the integration of generative AI into the workplace promises to unlock unprecedented levels of efficiency and innovation, setting a new standard for how businesses operate and thrive in an ever-evolving market landscape.

■ *Securing the Future* continued from pg 3...

Optimizing IT Performance and Infrastructure

IT audits serve a purpose beyond just security and compliance - they offer a deep dive into the efficiency of IT systems and processes. These rigorous evaluations pinpoint inefficient systems, and highlight resources that aren't being fully utilized, while also uncovering potential areas for enhancement. This empowers businesses to fine-tune operations and slash expenses.

Enhancing the efficiency of their IT systems allows businesses to significantly raise their profit margins. However, it's not merely a financial gain - improving this aspect also augments user experience, resulting in increased productivity which fuels business expansion.

Strategic Alignment and Decision Making

Routine IT audits aid in syncing IT infrastructure with the business goals. They make sure that every dime you invest in tech is hitting its mark. After a deep-dive analysis, these audits hand over critical intel that helps shape strategy and decision-making processes - providing businesses with the ability to shift and adjust according to emerging technology trends and market requirements.

Enhancing Cyber Resilience and Business Continuity

With 2,200 cyberattacks occurring daily in 2023, according to Cybersecurity Ventures, the critical need for regular IT audits is highlighted, demonstrating their key role in fortifying businesses against the escalating cyber threat environment.

These audits actively pinpoint potential risks, enabling businesses to craft solid disaster recovery strategies and continuity plans for their operations. This forward-thinking strategy not only lessens the damage from possible cyberattacks but also guarantees uninterrupted business processes even amidst disruptions.

Conclusion: A Proactive Approach

Regular IT audits offer a plethora of advantages such as strengthened security, adherence to regulations, optimized operations, better strategic alignment, and increased cyber resilience. Right now, everything is interconnected; These audits have become an absolute requirement for companies wishing to protect their resources, drive innovation, and stay ahead of the competition. By proactively managing their IT infrastructure, businesses can confidently tackle challenges while ensuring lasting success and viability.

Spotlight on Excellence: Celebrating Our Values Victor

Jose Ledesma - Level 2 Lead



LEADINGIT VALUES:

Driven

Chase Excellence

Humbly Confident

Accountable

Positive/ Fun Mindset

At LeadingIT, we believe in recognizing and celebrating the extraordinary efforts and dedication of our team members. Building on the spirit of our weekly "Ironman/Wonder Woman" award, we're excited to introduce a new dimension to our accolades: the monthly Values Victor.

Each month, we will spotlight one of our core values, a beacon guiding our actions and decisions. For this inaugural month, we've focused on the value of being "Driven"—a quality that resonates through the passion, perseverance, and relentless pursuit of excellence among our team.

From our pool of weekly Ironman/Wonder Woman awardees, the entire LeadingIT family had the opportunity to vote for the person they felt most exemplified being Driven.

We are thrilled to announce Jose as this month's Values Victor for embodying the essence of being Driven. Congratulations to Jose, whose dedication and drive have truly set a high bar. Here's to your continued success and impact at LeadingIT!

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WE ARE CELEBRATING!

Birthdays

Camden Kraft - March 7th

Matthew Perry - March 12th

Jacob Abernathy - March 23rd

Anniversaries

Christa Gibbons - 3/11/2020

Mark Seplowin - 3/1/2021

Jose Ledesma - 3/1/2021

Michael Seplowin - 3/1/2021

Dustin Looper - 3/21/2023