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Special points of interest:

- Improve the odds on your next IT project implementation.
- Fundamental security practices.

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Summer is here and we are going places...



Gone phishing...

More like we would go fishing and hope to catch something. Phishing is when you, or more likely your data, is the catch of day. Typically you would get an email that slips by your spam filter with an offer from an organization you know and trust or a notice that you need to reset your password for your mail or other service such as a credit card or bank account.

It could be legitimate, but how do we tell the fakes? If you don't bank with Citicorp or the Royal Bank of Canada chances are good it is a phishing email and you quickly press delete. In some cases people know it is fake and are curious. They want to know what is behind the link. Clicking the link could invite some misery and a data recovery bill. Don't click the link, it may take you to places you don't want to go.

What if you do business with My Bank? First thing to do is check where it is from. Does the email use

the correct domain name of the bank? If it has passed that test, and I have had phishing appear to come from `ibm.com` the next step is to check the spelling and see what happens when you hover the cursor over the link. If the link does not look like a legitimate link either delete the email or forward the email to an IT security person to validate it. Some legitimate emails may have links to a third party domain for surveys or a particular web application.

Beware of attachments. Your anti-virus should catch most malicious attachments. Only open attachments that you would expect to come with the email.

Follow a few basic steps and ensure that your staff are also aware of potential phishing e-mails so that the only disappointment on this fishing vacation will be about the one that got away.

Going to the moon

50 years ago this month the world's attention was captured as three American astronauts ventured to the moon and back. It was a technical as well as a leadership challenge. On May 25th, 1961 President John F Kennedy set a major stretch goal – to put a man on the moon, launch weather satellites and other space projects by the end of the decade. Near the end of the speech Kennedy did not pull any punches. He acknowledged that there would be costs.

This decision demands a major national commitment of scientific and technical manpower, materiel and facilities, and the possibility of their diversion from other important activities where they are already thinly spread. It means a degree of dedication, organization and discipline which have not always characterized our research and development efforts. It means we cannot afford undue work stoppages, inflated costs of material or talent, wasteful interagency rivalries, or a high turnover of key personnel.

He did not live to see the culmination of his vision, but on July 20th, 1969 the Eagle landed on the Sea of Tranquility on the moon. The project was successfully completed with the safe return of all three crew members on July 24th, 1969.

Putting in a new system takes the same vision and dedication as the space program did in the 1960s. We remember the achievement yet we forget the costs and toil to get there. Most people don't remember Apollo 10. It was a successful dry run of everything except actually landing on the moon. It would be like the test data migration of your new system. In a final test run you would migrate your data and put the system through all the paces except actually landing – in this case except for sending in-voices to real customers and paying vendors.

The amount of effort and grit needed to lead a major system migration tends to be underrated. As Kennedy noted a moonshot demands a major commitment of manpower and the diversion from other important activities until you can declare “the Eagle has landed”.

If you are planning a major system upgrade then consider the following. A major system upgrade is not an upgrade of the server. It is an upgrade of the system and related processes. This needs the full involvement of people. Do you have the resources available to do the task? Can you divert some of your staff from their current work for this project? Do you have a clear vision? The vision is more than what you are going to do - it must encompass the results. Putting a man on the moon was a clear task, but it was also in the context of the cold war. America was behind in the space race. Putting a man on the moon first went beyond an engineering task—this was a project that would unify and solidify national identity. In the middle of your large project there will be technical hurdles and staff may question why are we doing this? Why can't we have our old system? A clear vision outlining the task and the results that everyone can understand and sign up for vastly improves your chances for success.

If you would like to chat about your organization's cultural values and leadership actions that can improve your chances for project success feel free to contact KDI.

He who rejects change is the architect of decay. The only human institution which rejects progress is the cemetery.
Prime Minister HAROLD WILSON.
Speech to the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg January 23, 1967

Going on Vacation ...

Here is a basic IT vacation checklist:

- [] Set-up your out of office email – with who to contact while you are away.
- [] Bring a USB plug charger – don't rely on the USB chargers in public places – they can provide more than power the USB plug can be a conduit to steal data or load an app.
- [] If you are planning on using public wi-fi (and who isn't) make sure your devices are locked down, that sharing is off and antivirus is on.
- [] Turn auto connect off – you want to know when you are connected to a wi-fi network and you want to think hard about doing any banking on non secure networks.
- [] Minimize location sharing and think twice about posting where you are going. You don't want to advertise to thieves that they have three weeks to visit your home while you are away.
- [] Are you bringing your laptop with you? Make sure you have an image of your laptop saved as well as a plan for backups of your data as you make changes. It would be a shame if that novel you were working on was lost when your laptop is stolen.

Do you want a real vacation? Maybe consider leaving the technology at home.



“Tom, this is Kate from the office. Boy, you’re a hard person to reach when you’re on vacation!”

Going to the Cloud

Going to a new system promises that the end result will be better, faster and easier. With a move to the cloud the system management, backups, and upgrades are moved out of your office to someone else's data center to manage. There are two promises with the cloud. The first promise is the server management is someone else's headache. The second promise is that you can have easy access everywhere. The second promise is a double edged sword. It gives greater access for you and hackers to your data. You should review your security practices to ensure that policies, processes and training is in place for security issues like password structures and type of access. Do you access only via VPN? Is there a two factor authentication process? Moving your mail and collaboration to Microsoft, Google or an IBM cloud is generally easy and makes sense. It allows you to stay in touch while you are away and continue to toil at your work while paying a small monthly fee for the privilege. For more information about moving your current systems to the cloud feel free to contact KDI.

Post that on Instagram!

According to my daily security newsfeed someone has a bit more money to go on vacation. It was published in the India Times that he received a \$30,000 bounty from Instagram for identifying how to gain access to any Instagram account using their mobile password reset function. The news was released a month after the bug was identified and corrected. Make sure that the apps you use are up to date. Perhaps there is an opportunity waiting for us with Pinterest or Whatsapp!

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Going for the prize

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

- Theodore Roosevelt Paris, April 23, 1910.

What We Believe

That technology should be a positive influence on the people of this planet.

That by helping our clients through training, building, and maintaining IT that fits their needs and aspirations, we are contributing to the greater good of mankind.

That technology should fit your needs and aspirations rather than you having to fit the technology.

That there is a time to adopt IT best practices, but best practices are past practices and that a generic implementation of generic technology gives generic results.

This means that:

We actively seek organizations that can benefit from the effective use of technology.

We do this with a team of professionals who understand technology as well as our client's culture and objectives.

We work as advocates, on our client's behalf, to develop and maintain systems designed to meet their goals and expectations.

Seneca ...

It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare; It is because we do not dare that things are difficult.