

Stay safe online



Cyber security basics for small businesses.

October is Cyber Security Awareness Month, and did you know that small businesses can be just as much a target for scammers, phishers and fraudsters as any other company? Staying diligent in protecting your business can help reduce the risk of a cyber attack. Here are a few tips to help keep your business safe.

1 Train employees

Keep your employees up to date on best practices and policies for cyber security. Schedule regular trainings and establish rules so they know how to handle and protect customer information and other important data. Creating a culture of security starts with you, so be sure to set a good example.

2 Understand possible risks

Phishing, spoofing and other common types of attacks often impact small businesses. Educate employees to be conscious of emails, texts, links and phone calls, as being aware can be as important as any security software.

3 Update software automatically

Setting up your apps, web browsers and other software for automatic updates makes sure your systems are always up to date and allows for fewer opportunities to download malicious software.

4 Back up files

Automatically back up important files offline, on an external drive or in the cloud. Make sure critical data (spreadsheets, databases, financial documents, human resources files, customer information and accounts receivable/payable files) are all secure.

5 Create user accounts and passwords

Require unique passwords for all employees on their devices, and make sure they are updated every three months. Designate trusted employees with administrative access, and instruct all employees to not leave devices unattended where anyone could access them.

6 Encrypt your devices

Make sure that mobile devices are password protected, and have multi-factor and other protections added. You can also have security apps installed to prevent cyber attacks.

7 Secure your WiFi network

If you have a Wi-Fi network for your business, make sure it is secure, encrypted and hidden. Required passwords and multi-factor authentication (MFA) to access sensitive information on your network.

8 Secure your router

Once your router is set up, go ahead and change the default name and set a strong password. Make sure your router offers encryption, and that it's turned on.

9 Secure your Internet by firewall

Hardware firewalls protect your network against cyber crime threats. With a firewall in place, you can defend against unwanted attempts at accessing data on your private network..

Many businesses owners believe that being small or not being a large corporation doesn't make them a target of cyber criminals. In fact, many instances of hacking occur because basic security measures haven't been implemented. Taking an active role in protecting your business can make a big difference in preventing cyber attacks.

**With a little prep and mindfulness,
you can stay safe online!**