

November 2009

- ▶ The Power of Saying Thank You
- ▶ When Times are Tough, There's no Room for Risk
- ▶ 7 Things to Expect From Your IT Partner
- ▶ Microsoft Outlook Tip: Find Needles in a Haystack with Instant Search
- ▶ Quote of the Month
- ▶ Laugh Out Loud

The Power Of Saying Thank You

By Joanna L. Krotz
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The wheels of business revolve with such spin and speed these days that we roll right over the courtesies. Who has time for quaint customs?

More to the point, who can afford to let competitors rush onto the new and the next while we slow down for pleasantries? You're in for a surprise. The advice that follows, rest assured, is not some ubermom lecture about society's loss of grace (not that I couldn't get into that). This is about leveraging an underutilized edge in the marketplace.

Today, extending old-time courtesies helps you stand out. Yes, boys and girls, saying "thank you" has become a competitive advantage. So few people express appreciation — a Lenox etiquette poll found that nearly five out of every 10 people don't always say thanks — that remembering to do so is a sales point of difference. It also goes a long way toward forging the relationships that can turn into opportunities.

Here are fast and affordable ways to show business gratitude, as well as tips about timing and tactics. Your takeaway: Don't underestimate the power of saying thanks.

1. Throw a bash that boosts their business.

In New York, TelX, an interconnection facility, invites all its vendors to an annual party to say thanks. The event, called the "Customer Business Exchange," is held in a large hall with tables where participants can set up demos or materials. TelX arranges for snacks and an open bar.

The party attracts about 400 telecom customers who get the opportunity to network in a comfortable way. "Typically, millions of dollars of deals are generated out of these events," says Rory Cutaia, TelX chief executive.

2. Be warm and personal.

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When Times are Tough, There's No Room for Risk

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Don't Stop fortifying against risk
Four ways to mitigate risk in a tough economy

Every business deals with risk. But medium-sized businesses, with smaller IT staff and tighter operating budgets are often more exposed to risk than larger companies. This reality is never more evident than in a down economy: When the repercussions of a business disruption are as grave as they are, how do you insulate your business from risk?

"For mid-sized businesses, the financial impact of business disruptions is tremendous," said Anil Miglani, senior vice president, AMI-Partners. "We estimate that through security breaches and data loss

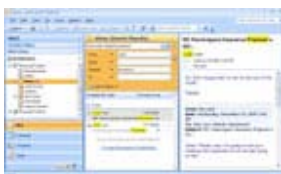


Happy Thanksgiving!



Warm wishes for a wonderful holiday.

Find Needles In A Haystack with Instant Search



If you're buried in e-mail (and who isn't?), Instant Search in Outlook 2007 can save the day for you every day.



The new Instant Search helps you quickly find e-mail messages, appointments, contacts, or any Outlook item. You don't even need to know which folder the item is in.

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Quote of the Month

Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.

~Albert Camus

LOL



alone, medium-sized businesses worldwide lost approximately US\$4.7 billion in 2008."

According to strategy consulting firm AMI-Partners, in 2008 medium-sized businesses worldwide lost approximately US\$4.7 billion due to security breaches and loss of data.

However, taking the right precautions with your IT infrastructure can help you steer clear of danger. Here are four steps you can take to mitigate risks to your revenue, your reputation, and your investment – all the things that keep you awake at night as you wait for this storm to pass.

1. Reduce the probability of downtime

Your order system goes down, leaving your e-commerce customers unable to place orders. In addition to lost revenue, this downtime can derail employees, leading to productivity loss. While you're focused on fixing the problem, your competition has a chance to poach your customers. Worst of all, failing to detect and fix the problem means it may happen again.

High availability of critical systems is the medium-sized business's highest IT priority, and it's attainable with a few key changes:

► Invest in reliable servers. Look for servers that have been extensively tested and certified to run on the latest operating systems. Couple that with a comprehensive set of server management tools.

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7 Things to Expect from Your IT Partner

By Jeff Wuorio
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Your information-technology partner business should be just that — a partner in every sense of the word. On the surface, that may sound a little warm and fuzzy, and possibly a bit optimistic.



Some IT consultants may focus on fulfilling your basic needs. They provide you technology advice and supply whatever tangible products and service are necessary to facilitate your needs.

But what you should reasonably expect from an IT "partner" goes well beyond that. They should take a vested interest in your business, providing the benefits and guidance that are central to your company's growth and success.

Here are seven things to expect from your IT partner:

1. Technical expertise — and strong communication skills. Of course, an IT partner should be well-versed in the ins and outs of technology. But that sort of knowledge can be of little more than academic value if your partner doesn't have first-hand knowledge of how it applies to your business. "He should be first and foremost a businessperson who utilizes technology in a cost-effective manner to solve business problems," says Michael Crowe, director of the technology consulting and solutions group at Chicago-based Plante & Moran. "He can bridge the technology and communications gap that often exists between IT and a CEO's office."

2. An awareness of your budget — and resources. IT partners are proving increasingly essential to a broad range of small to medium-sized businesses. But that sort of critical function shouldn't necessarily come at a crippling expense. When looking for an IT partner, ask how fees are structured.

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