Downtown is Calling

Good Times Await

Riverside Downtown Monthly Luncheon at Estrella Taqueria Lounge featuring Joe Ramos, Executive Director of the Miracle and Dreams Foundation and Jarod Hoogland, Executive Director of the Mission Inn Foundation. Tuesday September 26, 2023 at noon For Information call 951-781-7335.

RIVERSIDE DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP

Downtown Parking News

The new parking rates and schedule went into effect on July 1, 2023. The new rates provide funds for additional security in the parking garages. City Council approved an expanded contract with Allied Universal for security services on June 13, 2023 that included downtown parking garages as well as other city facilities. Allied Universal now provides 24/7 roaming security in the City-operated Downtown Garages.

The City will be installing signage in all of its downtown parking garages stating that the premises are under 24/7 security patrol and any garage concerns are to be directed to 311 (City's call center) and any emergency directed to 911. 311 directs all calls to the appropriate City Departments. 311 also creates Service Requests and directs them to the appropriate City Departments to follow up, usually within 24 hours or sooner.

Increased security is one of several ways the City is investing new funds from parking rates into the cleanliness and security of the Parking system. They have also increased the pressure washing schedule, installed new access systems, and are investigating additional improvements.

Source: *City of Riverside Public Works Department, Parking Services Division*

Fall Events

Doors Open Riverside takes place on Saturday, September 9th from 2 pm to 7 pm at 23 locations within and near downtown. Tour times vary so please check the website for information. https://riversideca.gov/DoorsOpen/

Riverside Inland Pride Festival takes place on Sunday, September 10th from Noon to 7 pm at the Riverside Convention Center. The event includes performances, art displays, and exhibits from LGBTQIA+ oriented and friendly organizations and companies. From Noon to 7 pm is all ages with a youth zone dedicated for youth 17 and under. From 7 pm to 10 pm is 18 and over. For more information, visit www.riversideprideie.org/event/riversides-inland-empire-pride-2023

Deafestival 2023 takes place on Saturday, September 16th from 10 am to 4 pm in the City Hall Breezeway on Main Street. The event is a joint effort of the Deaf Community of Riverside and the City of Riverside, and will include booths, awareness, entertainment, food, games, and more. For more information, visit www.deafcommunityofriverside.org

The 951 Market takes place on September 24th from 2 pm to 7 pm at the Raincross Art District located at 3583 Market Street. Explore a wide range of amazing products, delicious food, and unique handmade items. Discover hidden gems, support local businesses, and connect with like-minded individuals in a vibrant atmosphere. Email mindfulconnectionsca@outlook.com for more information.

The Riverside Art and Music Festival takes place on Saturday, October 9th in White Park.

The Riverside Downtown Partnership (RDP) and the Riverside Arts Council (RAC) are once again partnering on the annual Riverside Art and Music Festival. The festival will include performances by local cultural groups and entertainers, artisan vendors, exhibits and demonstrations by arts and cultural organizations, plus children's activities. For more information on the Riverside Art and Music Festival, visit www.facebook.com/RiversideArtandMusicFestival. Or visit www.riversideartscouncil.com or www.riversidedowntown.org

Mayor's Message - Project Connect: Connecting formerly incarcerated individuals with services and a path forward to prevent homelessness

Contributed by Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson

As the county seat—home to the justice center for expansive Riverside County, it is no hidden fact that the City of Riverside experiences challenges that other Riverside County cities do not experience. When someone is arrested in Temecula, Hemet, Moreno Valley, or elsewhere, they are taken to the Robert Presley Detention Center in downtown Riverside. Voter-approved ballot measures have expedited the closure of state prisons and the releasing of inmates at more frequent rates than in prior decades. When individuals are booked into Riverside's jail, their time served is often minimal and they are then released.

Data gathered by our city and county tell us that more than half of individuals released from the Robert Presley Detention Center are released onto the streets of downtown Riverside without contacts, ways to get home, or services for medical conditions such as mental illness or substance abuse. This is unacceptable.

Over a year ago, I met with Councilmember Chuck Conder and non-profit partner Victory Outreach to see what we could do within our local authority to prevent folks being released from ending up on the streets of Riverside—being victimized themselves or victimizing others.

From this discussion a partnership with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, Riverside Police Department, and Victory Outreach was forged. This partnership program is called Project Connect and was launched in July.

Additional data tells us 20% of our homeless population are formerly incarcerated, and that many of these individuals continually cycle through our justice system. Our Office of Homeless Solutions and Victory Outreach conduct jail in reach assessments to identify those most at risk of becoming homeless after their release—bringing a new level of case management. From there they can be provided services or returned to their city of origin—or (frustratingly) refuse help, too.

In the first two months of operation, Project Connect has seen a 50% success rate for accepting services. However, the sample size is small with a modest team of workers, so more work must be done to truly measure the efficacy of this program.

People have said, "Why should we care about 'criminals?'" The reality is much more complex than that. The population released from the jail in our downtown—without services or a place to go—will end up in cycles of homelessness and crime. We must prevent that before it happens and one way to do that is to ensure upon release formerly incarcerated people have a plan for what is next. A plan that does not include homelessness or recidivism in crime. The alternative is to continue to do what has been done for the previous years, which is direct release into downtown with nothing more and I say that is not an option.

Work continues to take on the many causes of homelessness in our city—this is just one cause. I remain committed to the dedicated work that is needed day in and day out to take on this challenge which has been years in the making. And, as always, if you have ideas of what the city can do—within our legal authority—to address homelessness in a more productive way, I am all ears, please email me at 2mayor@riversideca.gov.

Supervisor's Message – Kevin's Corner
Contributed by Supervisor Kevin Jeffries

New Veterans' Services Director: The County recently announced the appointment of Gregory Coffos as the new Director for the Department of Veterans' Services. He has years of executive management experience in administering both housing and Veterans' programs. He holds a dual master's in business administration and organizational leadership, and brings eight years of being progressively responsible for managing Veterans' federal and state eligibility programs in which he has advocated on local and national levels to support and expand Veterans' services.

As a military veteran, Gregory understands the unique challenges Veterans face and the importance of providing them with a comprehensive array of services that is administered with respect and compassion. He has an unwavering commitment to collaborate and build relationships to meet programmatic goals. In addition, Gregory has a proven ability to enhance operations through process improvement measures coupled with a deep commitment to support the needs of the Veterans in our communities.

Riverside County Veterans' Services and our veteran representatives are the liaison between the veteran/family member and the Veterans Administration. They provide assistance in filing various claims with the VA and information on additional veteran benefits through Federal, State and County programs. For more information: https://rivcoveterans.org/

First Five Children and Families Advisory Committee Vacancies! If you have a heart for helping children, our Supervisorial District currently has two Advisory Committee vacancies. The Riverside County Children and Families Commission, also known as First 5 Riverside County (F5RC) is dedicated to helping Riverside County's youngest children develop a strong foundation for success in school and throughout their lives. Their mission is to invest in partnerships that deliver results in these areas: physical health, social

emotional health, cognitive development, as stable home environment and schools that are ready. For more information visit www.rccfc.org

Other Vacancies! Other commissions and committees for which we have openings, including: *In Home Support Services (IHSS) - Recipient or Consumer of IHSS Services — One (1) opening, *Behavioral Health Commission - Family Member - One (1) opening, Public Interest—One (1) opening, *Community Action Commission - One (1) Alternate *Assessment Appeals Board No. 3 - One (1) Alternate. Assessment Appeals Board is one of the few county commissions/boards that will actually pay you for your time. The rest are all volunteer positions. More information on all these groups and the application to be a commissioner are available here: https://rivcodistrict1.org/boards-committees-commissions.

COUNCIL CORNER
Ward One Council Update
Contributed by Councilwoman Erin Edwards

This September, don't miss out on all the festivities and important policy discussions:

- Hear an update on the Riverside Transmission Reliability Project and a proposed partnership for electric, self-driving shuttles on the afternoon of September 5th.
- Doors Open returns for its sixth annual event on September 9th, from 2 pm to 7 pm. Keep your eye on the map of locations that showcase historic architecture and charm by visiting https://riversideca.gov/doorsopen.
- Riverside Pride Festival is on September 10th from 12 pm to 10 pm at the Convention Center.
- On September 19th at the 6:15 pm session, City Council will vote on the proposed Utility Rate Adjustments. Tune into the discussion in-person or virtually through engageriverside.com.

- Kick off the morning of September 23rd by celebrating the Santa Ana River at Martha McLean Park for a World Rivers Day event from 9 am to 2 pm.
- Musicians from across the globe join us on September 23rd for the first-ever Mucho Gusto Music Festival in North Park.

Our City Teams have worked hard to improve infrastructure and safety in the Downtown. Big belly trash cans and new benches have been installed throughout the Downtown core. Following our discussion at the RDP Townhall, stay tuned for more updates on Downtown security measures. Reach out to me with ideas and concerns at EEdwards@RiversideCA.gov or at 951-783-7811.

Ward Two Council Update
Contributed by Councilwoman Clarissa Cervantes

Happy End of Summer and Welcome Back to School!
Ward 2 Small Business Highlights in University Plaza:

Break Room Nutrition: Looking for a healthy drink to start your day? Look no further than the smoothie and juice bar located at 1601 University Ave! This locally owned business opened their doors in January and has already become a staple in our community! Whether it's providing you with a single beverage or providing a series of drinks for a work group, our local college campuses, or keeping our firefighters hydrated, Break Room Nutrition can meet your needs! They also have protein shakes, donuts, and waffles that are healthy alternatives. Open Monday through Friday from 7 am to 4 pm, be sure to stop by and have a break with their friendly owners and team!

University Pizza Company: Want to balance and pair that healthy drink with a homemade pizza? Are you looking for traditional or Vegan and Gluten Free options? Well, take a short walk down the way from Break Room Nutrition and you'll find this phenomenal locally owned Pizza Company at 1201 University Avenue Suite #116 for a full menu of options! Jake is usually there to greet you with a big smile and has been a strong supporter helping host local fundraisers for our college students at UCR, and is always looking to make a positive impact in Riverside. This is the place to go if you're looking to treat your family or friends to a pizza night! Open Monday through Thursday, 10 am to 11 pm, and Friday and Saturday, 10 am to midnight.

Eastside Arthouse - DUALITY Annual Group Show: This is a special gallery show by the Eastside Arthouse and Night Market by Pocket Change Popups. There will be a total of 18 artists featured work, 30+ vendors, food trucks, giveaways, FREE ENTRY, and it is family friendly! Join us on September 23rd from 5 pm to 9 pm at 4177 Park Avenue, Riverside 92507. Come see the incredible space where artists thrive in the City of Arts and Innovation, celebrating the two year anniversary of the Eastside Arthouse and their success!

MUCHO GUSTO - International Music Festival: After stopping by the Eastside Arthouse, make your way to North Park on September 23rd for a music festival that is a beautiful celebration of life, music, culture, diversity, and community! Tickets are $30 and can be purchased at MuchoGustoFest.com. This event is hosted by the talented Deladeso, Division 9 Gallery, Cosme Cordova, Eddie Salvale, and Ulises Rodriguez.

I look forward to seeing you out in the Ward of Arts and Music!

Councilmember Clarissa Cervantes

Arts Corner - Riverside Artswalk - Artist Spotlight: Glass Candi
Contributed by Rachael Dzikonski, Executive Director – Riverside Arts Council

What a busy year it has been so far – it's hard to believe that the holiday season is right around the corner! This is the prime time for Riverside Artswalk artisan vendors to start building up their inventory for holiday shopping during Riverside Artswalk and during the Festival of Lights – both great opportunities to purchase original handmade gifts for loved ones. Artists working in all media - from paintings and prints of original artwork to keychains, buttons, ceramics, and jewelry - work double the time to meet the demand during the holiday season. Vending events offer artists a prime location to share their artistic creations while continuing to create a career in the arts. Not all participating artists are creating a career out of their artwork however, some just want to share their creations while being involved in the amazing artist community we have in Riverside. This month's Riverside Artswalk Artist Spotlight is one of the few artists that value the experience of the event and those patrons who are drawn to her wearable artworks.

Candi Varela is a fused glass artisan specializing in wearable artworks who, at the young age of 52, discovered her passion for fusing glass. It started in March of 2021, when she purchased a beginner's glass fusing kit that included a microwave kiln. Armed with her trusty heat resistant gloves and safety goggles, she began experimenting with glass fusing. These experiments were exciting and sparked her curiosity for glass. Not only was Candi excited about the process and experimentation with glass, but she also began to receive compliments on her unique one-of-a-kind wearable glass pieces. This led to sharing her work even more and setting up as an artist vendor for events. The community atmosphere amongst the vendors at Riverside Artswalk and other events, coupled with the ability to talk with others about her work and what they see in it, inspired her creativity, giving her a new passion for exploring her glasswork.

Based on the creation process it takes to create her wearable glass pieces, Candi can spend anywhere from hours to days working on her artwork. It takes a significant amount of set up and clean up to create the works. Candi's artwork helps her to express herself, and that moment when the kiln is opened to a freshly fired batch full of completed new projects, fills her with incredible excitement. Candi has been showcasing and selling her creations at local vending events, including the Riverside Artswalk where she participates each month. She has also participated in the Festival of Lights, Eastside Arthouse events and The Art Market at White Park put on by the Riverside Art Museum. Through these events, Candi is inspired and feels like a part of the arts community which helps fuel her to grow and experiment more in her glass endeavors. Together with her husband Rey, she looks forward to continued growth while sharing her love of fused glass with others. Visit Candi & Rey each month on Main Street at Artists on Main for Riverside Artswalk and check out her beautiful wearable glass artworks!

For more information about Candi, visit @_glasscandi on IG. For more information on Riverside Artswalk visit www.riversideartswalk.com or @riversideartswalk on IG.

BUSINESS BUZZ
Email Marketing List Management Best Practices   *By Jamie Johnson*

Email remains an effective way to engage customers.
- Your email list, which contains the email addresses of all your subscribers, is the foundation of your email marketing campaigns.
- You must update your email list regularly to optimize your email marketing campaigns' effectiveness.
- Email marketing software is a vital tool for managing email lists.
- **This article is for small business owners who want to build and manage email lists for their email marketing campaigns.**

If you've been in business for any length of time, you know you need an email list. Email marketing allows you to develop a relationship with your customers and bring in more sales for your company. But building an email list is not enough on its own; you also need a way to manage and optimize your email list. This process is known as email list management. In this article, you'll learn about some of the best approaches to managing your email list and how high-quality email marketing software can help.

What is email list management?

Email list management is how you organize your business's email subscribers. It's the process of validating email addresses, getting rid of dead ones and otherwise maintaining a healthy list. When you regularly manage your email list, you ensure it's up to date and accurate, thus allowing you to deliver more value to your email subscribers.

Why is email list management important?

A strong email marketing strategy hinges on an active and engaged subscriber base. People sign up for your emails for different reasons, and many will lose interest at some point.

A certain percentage of people will eventually unsubscribe, while others won't — they'll just stop opening your emails altogether. Worse, your emails might go to their spam folders, which hurts your campaigns' deliverability and, eventually, your sender reputation.

Email list management needs to be at the core of your email marketing strategy. By maintaining a list of engaged subscribers, you can create content and offers that speak directly to your audience and generate a response.

Email list management is essential because it ensures your audience is as active and engaged as possible with your email marketing campaigns. A bad list equals an unsuccessful email marketing campaign.

Best practices for managing your email list

You've invested a lot of time and money into growing your company's email list, so you want to manage it well. Here are four best practices for managing your list:

1. Use the double-opt-in method.

Before your customers can begin receiving your emails, they have to subscribe. There is some debate over whether you should require them to do a single or double opt-in for this. If you require only a single opt-in, they can begin receiving emails from you as soon as they subscribe. With a double opt-in, they must confirm via email that they signed up for your mailing list.

It can be tempting to go with a single opt-in because it allows you to grow your email list faster, and you never have to worry about losing the subscribers left in limbo. However, you could end up with a bunch of fake or spam email addresses. A double opt-in ensures you have a list of engaged subscribers, since the people who signed up have shown they really want to be there.

2. Set up a welcome sequence.

What happens when a new email subscriber joins your list? Hopefully, that person goes into your welcome sequence, an automated email series that new subscribers receive right after signing up. It's an opportunity for them to get to know you and start building a relationship with your business.

When a new subscriber joins your email list, they are excited and engaged with your business. But if they don't hear from you for weeks, they'll quickly lose interest and move on, so a welcome sequence and other drip campaigns help you build trust and engagement with your audience.

Here are a few tips for creating a welcome sequence:

- Use a conversational tone in your emails.
- Ask a question, and invite your subscribers to respond to the email.
- Share one of your best pieces of content — a really helpful blog post, guide or video.
- Don't space the emails too far apart; send them every day or every other day, depending on how long the sequence is.

3. Segment your subscribers.

Personalizing your emails can increase your open rates to numbers well above those of generic emails sent to all of your subscribers. The best way to deliver targeted emails is to segment your email subscribers so you know who should receive what.

Segmentation can feel like a huge undertaking, so if you haven't been doing customer segmentation already, it's best to start small. Start by segmenting your list based on marketing demographics, like age, gender and income level. Those factors alone can tell you a lot about your subscribers' interests.

You can also segment your subscribers based on whether they are already customers. You can segment your current customers even further based on their past purchases or total amount spent.

4. Remove inactive subscribers from your list.

The final step in maintaining a healthy email list is to remove unengaged subscribers. It may seem counterintuitive to remove subscribers, but it doesn't matter how many subscribers you have; what matters is your overall engagement.

Inactive, or "dead," subscribers are individuals who haven't opened a single email from you in the past 90 days. Your email provider should have a way for you to find this information quickly. Once you've identified your inactive subscribers, tag them and send them one last email with the opportunity to stay on your list. Here is an example:

Hi, [name]!

I noticed it's been a while since you've opened one of my emails. I only want to send emails to people who are getting a ton of value out of them, so I plan to remove everyone on my list who isn't engaged — and my records show that includes you.

If you want to be removed, there's no action needed on your part. But if you're hoping to stay on my list, just click the link below.

[insert link]

This email allows you to reengage some of your inactive subscribers. At the same time, you're getting rid of the people who don't want to hear from you anymore.

Email marketing software that can help manage your list

A crucial component of successful email marketing campaigns is targeting the right people. To do this, you need to use proper list management strategies and segmentation tools. This combination ensures you are sending emails to those who want to receive your messages while also making sure those who want your emails are getting messages that appeal to them specifically.

There are many email marketing platforms, so choose the one that best works for your needs and budget. monday.com, HubSpot, Constant Contact and Mailchimp are some highly rated options that can help you manage your email list.

monday.com

monday.com is a project management tool designed to streamline the tasks involved with email marketing list management. You can store large amounts of email contacts in the program so you can easily keep track of all your sales leads.

Through monday.com's customizable opt-in forms, you can ensure the software's innovative features meet the needs of your business and your potential subscribers. The company offers automated email marketing campaigns and detailed analytics that track email open rates, conversion rates and bounce rates, among other tools.

With lead categorization, you can organize your subscribers based on factors such as location and customer preferences. This can complement your segmentation and personalization approaches.

Although the monday.com interface is user-friendly, users with little or no project management software experience may face a learning curve.

HubSpot

HubSpot is a leader in marketing software, and its email management solution is one of the best out there. You can use the software to create and track personalized email campaigns.

The email editor is incredibly comprehensive, with a wide range of templates for various purposes. You can add content blocks, like images and buttons, and edit the design to meet your vision.

One of HubSpot's most useful aspects is that it lets you personalize emails based on where your customers are in the client life cycle. You create an email, and HubSpot will adjust details such as the subject line to fit that subscriber's customer journey.

The platform also gives you access to extensive analytics about your campaigns. You can track your open rate, unsubscribes and spam reports. HubSpot will show you which subscribers are the most engaged and which links get the most clicks.

The only real downside to HubSpot is the price; it isn't the most affordable option for small businesses.

Constant Contact

With Constant Contact, you can manage your email list, set up a website and monitor your ad campaigns, all in one program. The software is incredibly functional and offers many advanced email marketing features.

Constant Contact has hundreds of email templates with many editing options. You can customize the fonts and brand colors for each email by entering your website URL, as well as add contact blocks, videos and social sharing options. The software's drag-and-drop tools make it easy to design each email exactly the way you want it.

If you switch to Constant Contact from another email service provider, you can automatically import your contacts. You can also use the software to grow your subscriber list, create sign-up forms and access advanced reports.

The software is relatively intuitive, so it's a great option even if you don't consider yourself particularly tech-savvy. However, the vendor doesn't provide 24/7 customer support, which could be a downside for some users.

Mailchimp

Mailchimp is one of the best email marketing services for novices. The software is easy to use, but it provides plenty of advanced reports that let you take a data-driven approach to email marketing.

When you sign up, Mailchimp walks you step by step through the process of setting up your first email campaign. You can choose to use an email template or build your own email from scratch. Mailchimp will even spell-check your emails for you when you're done drafting them.

Mailchimp stands out for its advanced reporting features. The software gives you insight into the results of each email campaign, showing you which ones had the most significant impact on your bottom line.

Mailchimp's functionality and ease of use make it an excellent option for beginners. However, its customer service options are limited on lower-tier plans.

Making email management simple and profitable

Managing your email lists is a large part of keeping customers engaged with your business. Several email marketing software platforms can make the process easier and more beneficial, and various factors will determine which is the best service for your business. When you invest in effective email list management practices, you build stronger customer relationships and expand your customer base. That, in turn, can help secure some additional revenue for your business — and fuel your continued growth.

https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/15999-best-practices-updating-email-list.html

SECURITY CORNER
Cyberattacks on Remote Workers on the Rise: How to Defend Your Business
By Donna Fuscaldo

- Small business owners are a target for hackers, largely because of their lack of cybersecurity.
- Phishing, brute-force attacks and ransomware are just some of the cybersecurity threats small business owners face.
- Remote work environments require small business owners to shift tactics in securing their networks.
- **This article is for small business owners who want to protect their network and remote workforce from cybercriminals.**

Small businesses remain a prime target for cybersecurity attacks, which makes sense if you think like a hacker. Most small businesses don't have a lot of cash to spend on safeguarding their networks, and remote teams often unintentionally increase their organizations' cybersecurity risks. This gives hackers plenty of easy targets — but that doesn't mean you can't protect your business, including your remote employees.

Cyberattacks on remote workers increasing

According to an Alliance Virtual Office analysis of millions of cybersecurity data points, misuse of both work and personal devices drives remote vulnerabilities. Here's a prime example: The analysis revealed that 69 percent of employees use their personal devices for their work tasks. However, personal devices often lack the cybersecurity guardrails and access control tools that protect work devices. This is one way hackers can more easily target remote workers.

Similarly, this analysis found that 70 percent of employees also use work devices for personal purposes. Websites and programs built for personal, nonbusiness use may lack the stringent security features that are part and parcel of business tools. This personal use of work devices thus offers another potential entry point for hackers.

Additionally, 30 percent of employees have allowed people other than themselves to use their work devices. This introduction of additional users, who may use weak passwords or nonbusiness programs, generates another security loophole through which hackers can infiltrate your business's systems. It's no wonder that according to Verizon's 2023 Data Breach Investigations Report, employees are targeted and manipulated in approximately 20 percent of cyberattacks.

"Small and medium-sized businesses are the No. 1 target for attackers because they don't have the security in place and they haven't deployed the technology they should have years ago," said Rob Krug, network security architect at Avast Business.

Types of cybersecurity attacks

Danger abounds for small business owners and their remote workforces as they navigate remote work. Small business owners need to protect their networks, make sure they're safe when using third-party software, and prevent their remote workers from clicking on the wrong thing.

Security is a herculean task, but an important one. Recovering from a cyberattack can be costly and time-consuming. Many small businesses don't survive it. Staying one step ahead of the bad guys is the first line of defense. That comes from knowing the cybersecurity risks, including the following:

Brute-force attacks

Many businesses with urgent needs to give employees remote access to their networks have turned to remote desktop protocol (RDP) servers — a Microsoft tool for accessing Windows servers and desktops remotely. Previously, these RDP servers didn't have the most up-to-date software installed, which left them vulnerable to cyberattacks. Criminals exploited that weakness, which led to a huge upswing in brute-force attacks on these remote access servers.

In brute-force attacks, the cybercriminal forces entry into a network by trying known username and password combinations. The RDP server crisis showed that this approach is less scattershot — and more effective — than you might think.

"Adding RDP servers opened up businesses to an external world, putting them at risk," said Kurt Baumgartner, principal security researcher at Kaspersky.

Malware and phishing emails and texts

Phishing emails — in which hackers try to trick users into clicking on links — have long been a problem in the business world. They've become so common that, in recent memory, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has warned the public about the upswing in phishing schemes.

"The big thing that will continue is the constant phishing attacks," said Tiffany Garcia, national cybersecurity practice leader at CBIZ. "They are getting more sophisticated and looking more legit."

It doesn't help that many employees use their personal devices or go rogue with the apps they install to communicate and remain connected to other remote workers. That makes a company more susceptible to malware and other nefarious infections. In fact, there's been an increase in fake versions of popular messaging and video conference apps that, once clicked on, install malicious software to track your movements and keystrokes. Hundreds of iOS and Android apps have served as hacker entry points.

Ransomware

Virtually all reporting on ransomware agrees: In recent years, this type of cyberattack has become increasingly common. It involves hackers breaking into company networks and holding their data hostage for a fee. Typically, the ransom exceeds $100,000. In fact, the average ransom is $5.3 million.

Much of the attention is on big corporations, but small businesses are a prime target for ransomware attacks as well. This type of attack is particularly worrisome for smaller companies since the bad guys usually require payment in untraceable cryptocurrency. They may impose a tight deadline, making a difficult situation even worse.

Third-party vendor risk

Small business owners are relying on third-party software more than ever before. That increases the company's risk if the software isn't safe and secure. That was the case with SolarWinds, a software company catering to Fortune 500 and government customers. National headlines abounded when, in 2020, the SolarWinds network was infiltrated by hackers who secretly installed malware on the company's software, which other companies were using to manage their IT resources. Those SolarWinds customers were compromised.

"As SolarWinds shows, you have to be careful about what software you are installing," said Peter Fidler, partner at WCA Technologies.   Brute-force attacks, phishing and malware, ransomware, and shadow IT apps are all big risks that small businesses face on the cybersecurity front.

How to protect remote workers from cyberattacks and hackers

Protecting your company from cyberattacks is a joint effort, whether your employees are home or in the office. You might have all the safeguards in place, but if you don't set boundaries with employees, you can easily be infected.

1. Control access.

This means segmenting permissions to access your systems and applications, blocking certain websites and apps, and teaching your staff about what to click on and what to avoid. This may be a refresher course for one employee and an eye-opener for another. The idea is to get everyone on the same page in regard to cybersecurity.

2. Train employees.

Cybersecurity training is extremely important in a remote work environment, yet it's often overlooked. This is true even at companies that put ample effort into their cybersecurity. According to a 2023 Fortinet report, 85 percent of organizations run cybersecurity awareness and training programs. However, among the same set of organizations, more than half said that their employees remain unknowledgeable on cybersecurity.

"There have to be clear policies on what kind of devices, the type of home network that can be set up, what employees are responsible for, and awareness about the shifts in [cyberattack] tactics," Baumgartner said. "The cybercriminals are going after people working from home. They need to be aware of that."

3. Vet your software.

If you use third-party software, cybersecurity analysts said it's important to properly vet the providers. Work with a reputable company that has a security policy in place to protect your business and your customers' data.

When you download software, Fidler said, verify that the download link is the correct one and consider blocking employees from installing it on their own. You can either outfit workers with laptops with preinstalled apps you've vetted or have the software live in the cloud. Either way, you want to prevent employees from installing unapproved apps that could infect your network with malware.

To protect your network, control access to the network and apps, train employees on how to be safe and smart online and with email, and vet any third-party software you use.

4. Use multifactor authentication or single sign-on (or both).

Multifactor authentication means employees must verify their logins to your company platforms from other devices. For example, upon logging into your company's HR software, your employees might need to verify this login attempt via their work smartphone. This is an important security measure because your employee should be the only person with access to the verification device.

Additionally, through single sign-on (SSO), your employees can log into just one page to immediately unlock access to all your business software. If each of your employees' SSO passwords is ultra-strong, then SSO is highly secure. It minimizes the chances of your employees using the same password for multiple business logins — a major security weakness. Plus, with SSO, you can activate multifactor authentication at one point instead of across many different platforms. This results in more uniform cybersecurity for your remote employees.

5. Implement a virtual private network (VPN)

A virtual private network (VPN) allows you to mask your remote employees' IP addresses. In doing so, you encrypt all the information that flows from your employees' devices to your platforms and vice versa. This blocks hackers from accessing your business data and software. And despite its imposing-sounding name, you don't need a big server or any hardware to set up a VPN. Many of the best models are software-based, which makes them as easy to implement for secure remote work as multifactor authentication and SSO.

Remote work doesn't have to mean weak cybersecurity

Whether it means training employees or making changes to company infrastructure, you have plenty of options when bolstering your remote team's cybersecurity. Plus, with remote and hybrid work models dominating the business world, you have ample reason to prioritize these measures. Sure, maybe you can't make everything snap into place overnight. But a long-term investment in cybersecurity is a long-term investment in your business itself.

https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/15978-how-to-protect-remote-workers-from-cyberattacks.html

RDP Welcomes
New Businesses to Downtown

Compassionate Medical Transport, Inc.

Green-Go Landscapers

Oddly Manor (Retail, Antiques)

Olivia's Burger Cafe

SPSSM Investment, LP (Property Rental)

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

3666 University Avenue
Suite 100
Riverside, CA 92501

Ph.:   (951) 781-7335
Fax: (951) 781-6951
Email: rdpoffice@sbcglobal.net
www.RiversideDowntown.org

Submit press releases to:
Janice Penner by email at
Janice@riversidedowntown.org
or fax at (951) 781-6951.

Press deadline is the 15th of
each month prior to publication.

For Downtown News Alerts email
Janice@riversidedowntown.org

For Events email
Janice@riversidedowntown.org.

RDP Facebook Page