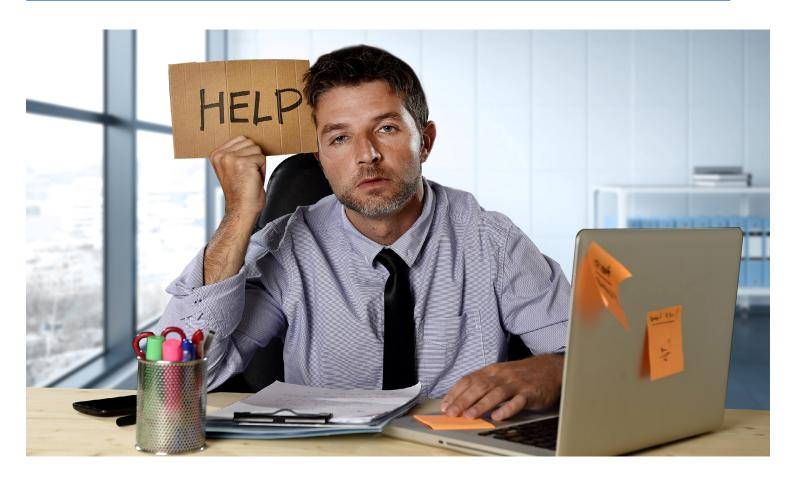# hAPPenings

*December 2018*

PIONEERING PROGRAMMERS

2018 has been a great year for MSPs. Business was booming and we are expecting to see that continue into 2019. Some financial analysts are pointing out the time for a recession to be quite near as the stock market has been seeing a downward trend, but for MSPs, this is the time when business development should be at maximum capacity. Keep up with your marketing and you shouldn't have a problem. Merry Christmas everyone!

## MSPS MUST TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SKILLS GAP IN 2019



The skill gap is a universal phenomenon affecting corporations worldwide. In the United States, MSPs are expected take advantage of the situation since companies are not expected to invest in developing the skilled workforce as much as they did in the previous years.

Several studies recently done about the skill gap in the job market pointed towards this as being the case. Even though corporates realize how much of a need there is for talented individuals, the willingness to focus on developing, acquiring and retaining that talent is at an all-time low.

Relocation packages are not even being offered as they once were for technical specialists. The ability to find a job in your own region for those who are technically qualified is hard enough as it is and having to relocate at your own cost is not a worth enough investment they are willing to make. This is where MSPs are expected to come into the scene, grow their own skilled workforce and continue to offer clients services which they are in dire need of having.

## IT Unemployment Rate Lowest Ever

While the most populated retail and service sector in the US is not doing so well, IT is one of the few which is continuing to boom in regards to having a low unemployment rate. This is easily understood as their being a much higher demand for IT personnel in and around the country, making it hard for many organizations to find and retain their own talent.

This will remain for the foreseeable future as IT related operations are expected to continue expanding and greater technology needs for corporations will have organizations investing more in the sector. A sharp increase of cyber security experts is also expected as more online threats become a risk to daily business running.
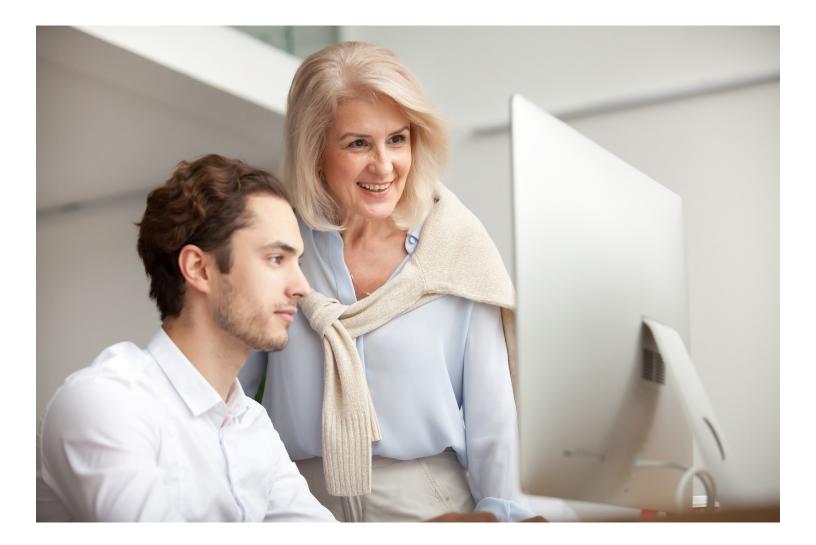
## MSPs Need to Invest in Human Capital

There can never be enough of great talent in an MSP anymore. Instead of further outsourcing all operations such as an NOC or helpdesk, invest in building your own team instead. Having capable IT personnel on the team at all times is a win-win situation for any MSP in today's business environment.

Keep the talent to attract more clients. Showing that you have a well rounded and highly capable team of tech specialists is bound to capture the attention of any potential client. Don't let the opportunity of having more talent on your team go to waste, or in this case, to another MSP or organization.

## Shortage of Talent: A Major Selling Point

Fixing technical problems isn't the only selling point MSPs have to market themselves on anymore. Fixing the shortage in the technical workforce is now another selling point to get clients on board. Hiring and retaining talent is costly now and companies could do without the extra costs any day.

Put together a new business strategy for the next quarter and see how the changes according to what you know now have an impact. Be the MSP which fills in the market gaps and there will always be clientele out there for you to cater to.

There is a high probability that any website, landing page and blog you have developed over the years has old content which may seem like it is too old to still be generating lead, but surprisingly for many MSPs, it turns out to be the best performing. Just go ahead and check what the data is saying. Don't be afraid to use Google Analytics or any other tool in determining where the traffic is coming from, which pages it is landing on and how it can be better optimized to even generate leads.

As a business, there is no way you don't want to generate more leads, especially if they come through content which is already there and just needs to be recycled. A little freshening up and that content from way back in the day should be doing better than any other piece out there. Why? Simply put, it has been indexed by Google and is a reliable source of information for being up so long. Use that advantage to increase business prospects for yourself.

Wondering how you can recycle old data? It really isn't that hard of a task to do. Even if you having hundreds of blog posts or landing pages from the past. Use each one to your advantage. It is easier and cheaper than having to develop new content any day.

## Get Those Links in There

Backlinking and linking in general is now considered to be a very important part of any content, especially for SEO purposes. Don't let that content continue getting visitors without sending traffic back to a website or landing page of your choice.

Infuse new life into the content by adding those links in there naturally. Since older content is usually higher ranking than newer pieces, it is a great idea to get that traffic working for you. The next added benefit of reusing older content is the fact that it is mostly visited by people looking for something very specific and ready to take action on the spot. Sounds like the most valuable and easily targeted customers to us!

By reusing and linking that content correctly, be ready for an increase in business!

## Call-to-Actions on Images, Banners and Videos

Not many MSPs know it, but the ability to have captivating call-to-actions right there on the images, banners and videos which you post and share on social media. The ability for potential leads and customers to be able to take action right away always needs to be there. Not having the chance to go through will not only hamper any new business potential but could also be a source of confusion.

Your older content is ideal to start and test how it performs. The great aspect about adding more meaningful CTAs to your older content is that it doesn't even have to be on a few things. Add CTAs to PDFs and all formats of media which is regularly shared to make it easier for customers to reach out to your business.

Recycling older content can even be just simply optimizing it with the latest keywords your MSP may be focusing on or making sure all of it is up-to SEO standards of today. Trends and requirements of search engines are always changing, which is why it is generally considered a good idea to have a content review every now and then.

# SOCIAL MEDIA CAN IMPROVE COMPANY MORALE AND PRODUCTIVITY

Do you know why more and more millennials prefer to work from home than ever before? It may not be the official reason, but it genuinely is up there coming from experience and that is freedom. The freedom to be able to work at your pace, get the job done and maybe open up Facebook to see what your friends are doing or YouTube to listen to a little bit of music.

Today's employers are so restrictive in nature that they are causing the workforce to literally run away from them. Millennials have just been the start of this trend of freedom at the work place and it is only going to get more widespread. Employers who are still in the habit of blocking and minimizing the use of social media while at work are learning the hard way that these are not really distractions, but ways for free company morale and productivity boosting.

It is completely understandable that social media usage and general smartphone use should be restricted when a job requires mostly being out and about. It could be a hazard while operating a crane or forklift, but if the job is just an office based one, then what's the point? Social media doesn't cause viruses to spread of networks to shut down. Bandwidth is also greater and more widely available cheaply, so that is not really a good reason either. What is keeping these companies in the dark ages of the 90s when the world was social media free and minimally tech controlled.

Over 20 years later, the world is highly dependent on uploading pictures of lunch to Instagram, dueling it out on Facebook and making useful connections on LinkedIn. If you're one of the many employers who continue to force employees off websites you believe are a waste of time, just know that it is actually hurting your employees instead of benefiting workplace productivity.

## Social Media Access is Virtually Impossible to Stop

If you think restricting access on a desktop or company laptop is going to do the trick, you have another thing coming. This is because limiting access to any website

in today's day and age is virtually impossible. There is always a way to get around it, which will end up forcing employees to take out more time during the day to explore those ways.

Whether they find VPNs which work to get around your strict firewalls or just make friends with the IT guys to be granted access, the access will come eventually. If all else fails, their very own smartphone will do the trick using a personal data connection, which cannot be stopped in any legally possible way.

Instead of making social media taboo and even more of an attractive venture to pursue, make it widely open and available. We guarantee it will have even half the effect it would being blocked and hard to access.

## It Gives Your Employees a Break

Think about it realistically. Does a 30-minute lunch break and two 10 or 15 minute breaks sound good to you throughout a day which can be typically hectic? It is highly doubtful, but companies continue to experiment with strange and most times, highly ineffective methods of trying to improve overall employee morale and performance levels.

For the human resources team, it is important that they show people performance in numbers. Even though satisfaction, happiness and fulfillment cannot be measured. That mixes in with having to keep management happy by showing more work is being done and lesser breaks are being taken.

If it were solely up to corporations, most would end up eliminating breaks altogether in the name of 'better productivity'.

If it is still surprising to hear recent studies suggest that only 4 hours a day is when actual work gets done and the rest is usually waste, than there is a problem here. Human beings were never meant to be stuck in between four walls for nearly half of the day.

Social media is one of those small things which can have a huge impact. It allows the newer generations to relax, wind down and easy up their minds to get back to work with a greater ambition. It can also be used as a tool to further recognize and reward the best employees because that is all what social media is basically all about. Attention!

Not only will that raise employee moral and productivity, but it will truly transform your employees into brand ambassadors. That recognition will breathe new life into their work spirit, which in return will great benefit the company. An employee is always considered to be a company mouth piece and the better they are treated, the better repute of that company will go around.

It is not the time to be narrow minded and focused on treating employees as if they are in a jail cell. Let the flourish and prove that they are capable of trust when given the freedom. You may be surprised at the level of true work ethic which you see from doing these experiments.