

## IF YOU THINK YOUR BUSINESS IS TOO SMALL TO BE HACKED...THEN YOU'RE PROBABLY A CYBERCRIMINAL'S NO. 1 TARGET!

*Attacks on small businesses now account for over 70% of data breaches, a number that appears to be on the rise.*



**Your business is precious enough to protect.**

**Invest in your company's future, the safety of your customers, and the longevity of your livelihood.**

In a world of rampant cybercrime, hackers thrive on the blind faith of their targets. Despite high-profile digital security breaches showing up in the news nearly every week, most people assume they're safe from attack. The thinking goes that while Fortune 500 corporations like J.P. Morgan, Sony, Tesco Bank, and Target have lost millions of dollars of data breaches in recent years, my business is far too small to justify a hacker's attention... right?

Wrong. In fact, it's quite the opposite. According to StaySafeOnline.org, attacks on small businesses now account for over 70% of data breaches, a number that appears to be on the rise. Close to half of small businesses have been compromised, ransomware attacks alone have skyrocketed a whopping 250% since 2016, and

incidents of phishing have followed suit, as reported by Media Planet.

Owners of small businesses might be excused for erroneously believing themselves safe. After all, the hundreds of little guys paying out thousands of dollars in digital ransoms each and every day are a lot less newsworthy than, say, the CIA's recent hacking by the mysterious Shadow Brokers, or the 143 million sensitive customer records stolen in the recent Equifax fiasco. The lack of visibility of the more frequent, smaller-profile incidents plaguing the country can easily lull us into a dangerous false sense of security.

But why would a team of hackers zero in on a small-town operation when they could be targeting a giant like

Google? Well, which building is a petty thief more likely to target — the bank in the center of a busy downtown, packed with security guards and high-tech theft prevention equipment, or the house in an affluent part of the city, which the owners always keep unlocked while they're on vacation? Make no mistake — these hacker gangs aren't boosting a couple flat screens and a box of jewelry. They're gutting small businesses with ransoms that stretch to the very edge of their means, as much as \$256,000 for a single attack, according to one TechRepublic analysis.

Of course, any small business owner will struggle to afford the security measures implemented by giant corporations. However, there is a balance to be struck between affordability and vulnerability.

## Downtime can cause serious damage to your business, and your bottom line.

With just a little research, it's actually quite easy to find an array of robust and comprehensive digital security solutions to protect your company. Such programs can turn your business from low-hanging fruit into an impenetrable fortress.

Even if you've somehow managed to make it through the past few years without a data breach, statistically, you can be confident that hackers will come for your business one day. With that in mind, it's important to be prepared. Just because your car hasn't broken down since you bought it doesn't mean you shouldn't regularly change the oil and invest in car insurance. And just like your car, your network security requires regular maintenance and upkeep to stay effective. If you grab your security software from the bargain bin, install it and forget it, you're only marginally safer than you were before installing the barrier in the first place. Cyber security isn't something you purchase to check off a box and give yourself an imaginary peace of mind. Instead, it's an investment in your company's future, the safety of your customers, and the longevity of your livelihood.

If your business isn't too small to attract the attacks of hackers—and we guarantee it isn't—then it's certainly precious enough to protect. Cybercriminals will come for your business one day, but equipped with a set of up-to-date, powerful security protocols, you can rest easy knowing they'll go away empty handed.

**Cybercrime is on the rise.**



### Cybercriminals were more active in 2017 than ever before, with a staggering array of high-profile hacking incidents in the news each month.

One of the most common attacks was through Google Docs Phishing. In May 2017, hackers sent out false Google Docs editing requests to over 3 million individuals. When the recipients clicked the link, phishers gained access to their entire Gmail account.



# 9 APPS YOU MUST DOWNLOAD TODAY

1. Venmo: One of the simplest ways to send money to whoever you need to pay, especially when you're trying to split that dinner bill.
2. Overcast: One of the most popular non-Apple podcast apps, Overcast features smart playlists, voice-boosting technology, and the ability to recommend podcasts to you based on your Twitter pals.
3. Libby: If you're dropping hundreds of dollars a year on e-books, Libby may be your solution. The app connects to your local library e-book catalog to get you the best reads completely free of charge.
4. Omo: If you're looking to increase your mindfulness in 2018, check out Omo. It strips away the annoying extras of most meditation apps and syncs up to Apple's Healthkit to record time spent sitting.
5. MyFitnessPal: Of course, no app list would be complete without a health app. Still, MyFitnessPal is a great addition to your health-tracking routine, allowing you to catalog meals, exercises, and other factors to paint a holistic picture of your health. LifeHacker.com 11/23/2017
6. TurboScan: TurboScan turns your phone into a multi-page scanner for documents, receipts, notes, whiteboards, and other text. With TurboScan, you can quickly scan your documents and store or email them as multipage PDF or JPEG files.
7. Evernote: Evernote is the modern workspace that syncs between all of your devices. Work everywhere and stay productive: write notes, checklists, and research; organize web articles, docs, and photos; discuss your work with others, right within the app.
8. Feedly: Feedly is a personal space where you can organize your favorite blogs and publications, and connect to the news.
9. Waze: Waze is the world's largest community-based traffic and navigation app. Join drivers in your area who share real-time traffic & road info to save time, gas money, and improve daily commuting for all.

## PREFERRED IT SECURITY SPOTLIGHT

### How To Protect Yourself from Spectre and Meltdown

Spectre and Meltdown are two vulnerabilities found in computer processors. One of the researchers on this team described Spectre and Meltdown as "the worst CPU bugs ever found". This is partly because the vulnerabilities are in the hardware of the processor, and therefore harder to fix.

Meltdown breaks the mechanism that keeps your computer applications from accessing system memory. Spectre, on the other hand, tricks applications into giving up information. In either case, cybercriminals can use these vulnerabilities to get at your computer's memory and files.

Our advice to you:

Update your devices and applications (especially web browsers like Chrome, Firefox, and Safari) as soon as those updates are available.

Replace old computers and devices. Any device you own that is over 5 years old may experience detrimental slowness once these fixes are put into place. By purchasing new computers, you will save yourself the headache of slow or vulnerable machines.

Use your common sense. Don't open "phishing" emails or emails that look shady. Don't download 3rd party software like apps on your phone or on your browser without completely trusting the developer.

## Free Guide: What Every Business Owner Must Know About IT Support Services and Fees

Read this guide and you'll discover the 3 most common ways IT services companies charge for their services, and the pros and cons of each approach. Plus, how to make sure you know exactly what you're getting to avoid disappointment, frustration, and added costs later on that you didn't anticipate.

Download your FREE copy today at <http://www.preferreditgroup.com/> or call our office at 260-440-7377.

### IT BUYERS GUIDE

What Every Business  
Owner MUST  
Know About IT  
Support Services  
And Fees



What You Should Expect To  
Pay For IT Support For Your  
Business And How To Get  
Exactly What You Need

## OUR COMMUNITY

Spring is getting closer, and that means it's almost time for our annual Charity Poker Event to benefit the local Children's Sanctuary.

Every year, we host a charity poker game with a silent auction of some pretty awesome items.

Last year, we raised over \$5,000 for local foster children and their families. We want to do even better this year!

If you'd like to donate to the event or donate a gift to our Silent Auction, please give Courtney a call at our office.

We are looking for anything from gift cards to products and services.



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