## This Month's News:

## February 2017

This monthly publication provided courtesy of Paul Riendeau, CEO of Southern New England Computer Services.

"Looking to sync your **emails, calendars and more** across underlined multiple devices? Take advantage of **our Office 365** services! Get the best business **email and productivity suite** offered by Microsoft. Don't worry about outdated versions of **Word, Excel & Outlook** since Office 365 includes the newest versions at all times. **Contact us for more info!"**

# Cloud Computing: Good, Bad & Ugly

When a network of IoT gadgets like routers, DVR machines and closed-circuit TVs can take down hardened, well-provisioned Internet giants like Twitter, Spotify and Amazon – as happened last October – you've got to think twice before moving your data to the cloud.

Yes, a move to the cloud can yield big payoffs in terms of cost savings, increased efficiency, greater flexibility, collaboration for your workforce and more. Yet there is a dark side. It would be naive to think otherwise. Your choices about whether and how to use cloud technology in your network merits serious consideration.

*So, just what is "the cloud"?*
Instead of constantly buying new equipment and software, cloud computing allows you to pay for just what you need. Just as with a utility company, you get software and storage on a monthly basis, with no long-term contracts. Chances are, most of the software you now use is cloud-based. You simply access it on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Similarly, you can store data in the cloud, where it can be easily accessed when you need it. This reduces the need to buy and manage your own backup gear and software, thus reducing overhead. Yet, as with any major decision, it's critical to be aware of both the benefits and pitfalls of putting your company's data in the cloud.

*The Pros*
There are three major advantages offered by cloud computing:

1. **Flexibility.** Scaling up or down can be done without major investment or leaving excess capacity idle. It also enables your entire workforce to get more done, where and when they need to.

2. **Collaboration.** With data and software in a shared cloud environment, staff can collaborate from anywhere.

Everything from HR to accounting, and from operations to sales and customer relations, can be managed from diverse and mobile environments, giving your team greater power to collaborate effectively.

3. **Disaster Recovery.** Typically, data stored in the cloud can be easily retrieved in the event of a disaster. It also augments local backup and recovery systems, adding protective redundancy.

*The Cons*
While the cloud offers obvious benefits, it also increases your company's potential "attack surface" for cybercriminals. By spreading your communications and access to data beyond a safe "firewall," your network is far more exposed to a whole bevy of security concerns. Many of them can be addressed with these three best practices:

1. **Social Engineering Awareness.** Whether you go cloud or local, the weakest link in your network

*"Keep verifiable anti-malware software in place throughout your network at all times."*

is not in your equipment or software; it's in the people who use them. Cybercriminals are aware of this fact. And you can count on them to come up with an endless variety of ways to exploit it. One day it's a phone call ostensibly from your IT department requesting sensitive data, the next it's an e-mail that looks official but contains malicious links. Make sure your employees are aware of and trained to deal with these vulnerabilities.

2. **Password Security and Activity Monitoring.** Maintaining login security is absolutely critical any time you're in a cloud environment. Train your staff in how to create secure passwords and implement two-factor authentication whenever possible. Take advantage of monitoring tools that can alert you to suspicious logins, unauthorized file transfers and other potentially damaging activity.

3. **Anti-Malware/Antivirus Solutions.** Malicious software allows criminals to obtain user data, security credentials and sensitive information without the knowledge of the user. Not only that, some purported anti-malware software on the market is actually malware in disguise. Keep verifiable anti-malware software in place throughout your network at all times, and train your employees in how to work with it.

**Free Network Assessment Reveals Benefits And Pitfalls For A Move To The Cloud**

This month, we're offering a FREE Network Assessment for any company with 10 or more computers on their network. We'll come to your office and conduct a complete review of your computer network, data, software and hardware and how you work. We'll then give you helpful answers and insights about what cloud computing options you have for your business – all at no cost or obligation to you.

Contact us directly at **401-684-3036** or email **support@itsupportri.com** and schedule an assessment today!

# Technology Spotlight: Hello Egg!

Are you lacking some skills in the kitchen? Maybe you stick to the same couple of meals you know how to cook? Well, if this sounds like you, perhaps you may want to get this little buddy for your kitchen.

The "Hello Egg!" is riding the wave of digital assistants and becoming a blend of Alexa, YouTube and teacher for your culinary needs. It promotes variety, self-teaching and organization for better eating habits.

Starting with some of the basic features, it is a small, egg-shaped device that has a built-in speaker, microphone, and screen. This allows for video-guided tutorials to cook any recipe you find. The magic is that everything is hands-free so you can watch, navigate and follow along without a single touch.

If you want to jazz up your weekly meal rotation, you can plan your meals out in advance. The Hello Egg! will help you create a shopping list to get all your ingredients the next time you stop by the market.

There will be a few different versions of the Hello Egg! but for now, we have to wait since it is only available as a pre-order.

# 3 Ways Leaders Build Trust In Their Teams

Warren Buffett once famously said, "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it." While that may be true of public perceptions held by those outside of an organization, a leader's reputation within their company should be far more stable – as long as that person is working daily to build a reputation among team members as dependable and trustworthy, that is.

Trust is contagious. If team members are to become more honest and reliable, a leader needs to start by demonstrating those qualities. Building trust within an organization must be intentional. When leaders get it right, it boosts productivity, increases positivity and builds positive relationships throughout the company.

Here are three steps to building trust within an organization:

**Do What You Say**
This is the foundation. It may seem obvious, but not following words with actions is often the first mistake leaders make. Because there is not always someone holding the person in charge accountable, it can be easy for higher-ups to feel entitled to do something other than what has been promised. Let's face it – employees can be too intimidated to call out the boss (out loud to their face, anyway).

A leader should always be honest and reliable in their words and actions – even when it comes to things as simple as showing up to meetings and sticking to agendas. People are watching, and it matters to them. If team members feel they can't trust someone on the small stuff, there's no way they'll trust their supervisor with larger or more important things.

**Ask About the Personal Things**
It can be difficult to know whether someone deserves a celebration or needs help without making it a point to find out what's going on with team members. Setting up a recurring time to ask how things are going can encourage people to share.

Some may be reticent to voice personal information at work, but there are ways to open the conversation. Ask questions like "What were your personal highs and lows over the past week?" If a team member has difficulty opening up, lead by example. Sharing a personal story first demonstrates that you have sufficient trust in your team to share their personal lows. Then team members will be more likely to follow.

**Learn Together**
Nothing works to build trust in a team as much as learning together does. Find opportunities to travel to a seminar, go to trade shows or even hold recurring lunch-and-learn meetings with a different leader each week. The benefits of traveling and learning together are numerous, but the most important, positive outcome just might be the deep trust that can develop through those shared experiences.

Trust is essential in order to have a healthy organization – between executives, team members and among the entire staff, no matter how large or small. By being an active participant, and staying reliable and open, leaders help their teams work more efficiently and with greater passion for their work.
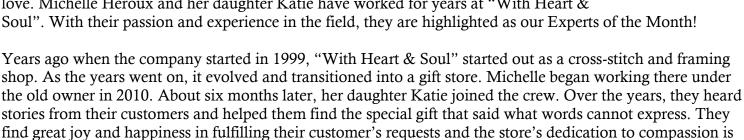
Andy Bailey can cut through organizational BS faster than a hot knife through butter, showing organizations the logjams thwarting their success and coaching them past the excuses. After all, as he tells his clients, 100% annual growth is only 2% growth every week. It's not easy. But possible. Andy learned how to build great organizations by building a great business, which he started in college then, grew into an Inc. 500 multi-million dollar national company that he successfully sold and exited. He founded Petra to pass on to other entrepreneurs, business owners and leaders the principles and prac-tices he used to build his successful enterprise, which are rooted in the Rockefeller Habits methodology.

# Experts of the Month: Michelle Heroux and Katie Bibeault from "With Heart & Soul"

Love is in the air for the month of February and with that comes the holiday some people have tons of trouble with; Valentine's Day. However, this mother and daughter team has your back if you are having a hard time picking out that perfect present for the one you love. Michelle Heroux and her daughter Katie have worked for years at "With Heart & Soul". With their passion and experience in the field, they are highlighted as our Experts of the Month!

Years ago when the company started in 1999, "With Heart & Soul" started out as a cross-stitch and framing shop. As the years went on, it evolved and transitioned into a gift store. Michelle began working there under the old owner in 2010. About six months later, her daughter Katie joined the crew. Over the years, they heard stories from their customers and helped them find the special gift that said what words cannot express. They find great joy and happiness in fulfilling their customer's requests and the store's dedication to compassion is above all else. They truly put their heart and soul into helping everyone find that uniquely special gift.

Last summer, Michelle and her family took over as the owners and stayed true to the original mission of the store: "To serve their customers in a personable, caring fashion." As a local small business, they give back by offering many RI based brands including Alex and Ani and John Medeiros and selling products that donate to charities like Love Your Melon and Lokai bracelets. Aside from the wide and fashionable selection available, they also offer free gift wrapping on all purchases, making every gift-getting trip that much easier.

We asked Michelle what she liked about working with us, she said "I don't hesitate to call you guys. You are so prompt with answering our questions. I used to find myself spending hours trying to figure something out. Now, I just call you. I love the response time, it's really easy and the answers you give are always great!"

If you are looking to make your next gift-giving experience trouble-free, you can visit them at 3751 Mendon Rd. Unit #3 in Cumberland RI, call them at 401-658-3470 or visit them online at www.withheartandsoul.net.

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**Traditional home security firms hope you won't try this system.** If you want to protect your home from break-ins, you can pay monthly fees of $45 or more and lock yourself into a long-term contract with a traditional home security firm. Or, for $230 you can get a five-piece Simplisafe Starter System, featuring an entry sensor, motion detector and keychain remote. It takes about 30 minutes to set up and triggers a 105db alarm in the event of a break-in. Upgrades include extra sensors, "panic button" for your bedroom and surveillance video camera. You can also add a cellular connection that notifies police if and when a break-in occurs, for just $14.99 per month – less than a third the cost of traditional systems.  -*ASecureLife.com*



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"The arrow is free, but for a small fee I also offer an upgrade with flowers and candy."

**These glasses open up a whole new way to share your world.** Snap Spectacles let you shoot video from your glasses. Which may not set off a tech revolution, but they've got us thinking… When you combine spontaneous, inconspicuous video with face recognition and AI, well, who knows what you could do? The premise is simple: wear Specs, click to shoot, share on Snapchat (or not, you choose). Specs let viewers truly see the world through your eyes. But beyond that, Spec's camera lenses could reinvent computing the way the keyboard and mouse or touchscreen already have. Computers now recognize images: type of bird, location in Yellowstone, person in your video, etc. Practical or not, these glasses make sharing your world easy and fun. -*Wired*

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