

## DO I NEED TO UPGRADE MY NETWORK?



### 4 Amazing Benefits You'll Experience

A business owner has many responsibilities within their business. They can be so busy that sometimes things are overlooked for an extended period of time. For example, many business owners may forget to upgrade their network infrastructure. In actuality, upgrading your network is extremely important – and it is one of the smartest things you can do as a business owner.

Technology has rapidly advanced over the past few years, and network traffic continues to grow. If you're still using the same network from even five years ago, you've probably noticed your network speed has decreased dramatically. In fact, old networks struggle to keep up with all of the advancements and traffic growth. They can even open your business up to a cyber-attack.

Your network infrastructure should be upgraded every few years for many reasons. If your business has grown consistently over the last few years and your current network can't keep up with your business needs, it may be time to upgrade. If you're continually running into issues with your current network, an upgrade will help. Some industries may even be legally obligated to upgrade their network in order to keep their customer or client information secure.

Upgrading your network comes with an abundance of benefits. Here are four of the best for any business.

#### Better Network Security



Cybercriminals are much more cunning than we often give them credit for. They continue to develop new cyberthreats and ways to attack various networks. If you haven't upgraded in some time, you are opening your business up to a cyberbreach. New networks come with a plethora of added security benefits that aren't possible with the old and outdated ones. You want to make it as difficult as possible for a cybercriminal to hack into your system and steal valuable information – and one of the best ways to stop a cybercriminal in their tracks is by upgrading your network. One cyberbreach can be incredibly detrimental to your business, so don't take that risk.

#### Faster Internet Speeds



Think about how much more productive your business would be if you had faster Internet speeds. Your employees can get more done without having to deal with lag from poor Internet services. Older networks can't keep up with the demands of modern technology. With an older network, you will see slower Internet speeds that won't allow your employees to utilize cloud storage systems and business applications at high speeds. Even your customers will notice improvements in the speed of your network if you use client-facing applications in your business. Everyone wins when you have faster Internet speeds.

## New And Better Hardware



One of the best parts of upgrading your network is that you'll receive new, more reliable hardware than what you've had in the past. You'll gain access to more computing power and larger storage space. More than anything else, your new hardware will be dependable, and you won't have to worry about it failing on you.

Upgrading your network is the best way to keep up with the ever-changing landscape of the digital world. If you haven't upgraded your network in a while, now is the best time to do so. Plenty of benefits come with it, so don't wait until you have to make a change. Be proactive!

## Improved Compatibility



Remember how we said earlier that technology has advanced rapidly? It's true – and there are new advancements made every day. Without an upgraded and updated network, you may be unable to use many applications and technologies that could improve your business. An upgraded network will allow you to connect with any apps you think will benefit your business. You can explore new tools without worrying about crashing your network. You'll also gain more freedom in choosing your new tech investments as you would be more limited when using outdated technology.

## THEY WILL LOVE YOUR REFLECTION

Would you love to be 20% better at persuasion, improve your chances of landing your dream job or maybe even become more well-liked socially? There is a very simple conversational tactic you can use, and it will help you accomplish these goals. You know what it is, but chances are that you aren't using it enough. It's called "reflective listening."

Reflective listening is the process of reflecting back what the person you are talking with is saying, feeling, aspiring to or worrying about. For example, let's say you're talking with someone at lunch and they say, "The energy stocks got hammered again today; my firm insists on staying long in this sector, but I feel it's time to go in another direction." You could reflect by saying, "It sounds like you had a hard day, and you feel trapped on a boat that's going in the wrong direction." They'll respond with, "Exactly!" and will appreciate that you cared enough and were confident enough to reflect their emotions.

Too often, people will try to offer a premature solution off the cuff, say something competitive or completely ignore their concerns and try to change the subject. When you reflect what you hear someone say, it makes the other person feel like you are not only respectful and attentive but that you are also empathetic and willing to put yourself in their shoes.

People who feel you understand them are much more likely to listen to your persuasive ideas, hire you for the job of your dreams or want to spend time with you socially. When you reflect, you aren't asking more probing questions; instead, you're meeting that person where they are. You're advancing a conversation on a topic that's important to them. Reflecting is easier to do, way more powerful and more about building trust and mutual understanding than it is about collecting details.

I didn't learn this valuable listening tactic from a book, seminar or class. I learned how to fully utilize this while working as a suicide-hotline volunteer during grad school. We weren't psychologists in this role. The best strategy for helping people decide to not commit suicide was to effectively reflect what they were saying – to genuinely empathize and understand while helping them sort out their goals, concerns and any reasonable next steps.

I encourage all of you to dial up the reflective listening in your professional and personal conversations. You'll quickly notice improvements in your persuasion skills. It might even seem as if people like you more or gravitate to you more often. They will love your reflection!

Dr. Geoff Smart is the chairman and founder of ghSMART, a leadership consulting firm that exists to help leaders amplify their positive impact on the world. Dr. Smart and his firm have published multiple New York Times best sellers. He stays active in his community and has advised many government officials.

# OCTOBER COMPANY HAPPENINGS



Attending Inc. 5000 Conference are Responsive's Steven McComas, CEO (L); Alex Muzafarov, CTO (M); Tom Glover, CRO (R)



Responsive CEO Steven McComas (L) with AOL Founder Steve Case (R)



2022 Inc. 5000 Conference



State of the Region Address, Georgia Southern University



Attending Robin Robins' Highpoint University Producer's Club Q4 Event



## MULTI-CHANNEL THREATS NEED MORE THAN AWARENESS TRAINING

As Cybersecurity Awareness Month concludes, October has certainly drawn more attention to the growing cyber threat landscape and persistent challenges with turning “security awareness” into action. According to the World Economic Forum, 95% of cybersecurity issues are traced to human error, which highlights the need for continuous awareness.



While awareness helps, there will always be malicious content that slips through. Opening emails and links from unfamiliar and unknown senders is a normal part of your (and your colleagues') day-to-day work. Add to that the fact that increasingly sophisticated threats, such as deferred and multi-channel phishing attacks, are becoming more evasive and prevalent.



The rise of multi-channel phishing attacks means more cybercriminals are exposing users to malicious content through multiple communication channels, such as email, SMS, messaging apps, and social platforms. With users now inundated with malicious content on all fronts, it's more critical than ever to employ a defense-in-depth strategy that relies on a balance of both awareness and security controls to minimize risk across a wide-range of attack vectors.

Take, for example, the recent multi-channel attack that targeted Cloudflare, which was initiated through an SMS text and baited Cloudflare employees into entering their credentials on a malicious site. Luckily, attackers left empty-handed thanks to the implementation of hard keys that are required for all Cloudflare employees. Attackers were able to pierce the first few layers of defense, but were eventually unsuccessful in their attempt to compromise user accounts.

Driving greater awareness can help reduce overall risk and limit attack vectors, but even the most effective training cannot be relied upon as the only line of defense.

~content courtesy of Cloudflare



### Financial Institutions: Prepare for FTC's Updated Safeguards Rule

- under GLBA, "financial Institutions" are defined broadly and can impact many businesses
- plan for December's deadline: get in compliance to ensure your customer's information is confidential and secure



Learn more about  
GLBA compliance  
here

