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**Inquiring Minds... Seasons Greetings!**



**Don't Let Thieves Drag Down Your Holiday Spirit.**  
 A study by Checkpoint Systems shows that holiday shoplifting accounts for about a third of all losses during a retail year. The Retail Holiday Season Global Forecast shows that 37% of a store's annual shrink loss comes from shoplifting, employee theft, and fraud during the holidays. Oh, we know what you're thinking, "That's terrible, but what has it got to do with my business? I don't sell retail."

**Thieves wait until the most opportune times.**  
 Shoplifting is at an all-time high during the holidays because thieves can blend into larger groups of people and there are not enough eyes to watch every patron. Electronic accessories, electronics in general and other accessories are among the top five items in the most stolen list from Checkpoint. Shoplifters are looking for top dollar items they can sell quickly for a profit or use themselves. Computer equipment has a fantastic resale value on the street as long as it is in good working condition. So, do you see it now?

**Shoplifting is easier during the holiday season.**  
 Stores are more crowded and businesses are left empty. Thieves are more likely to hit your office when your closed over the holidays. So, make sure you lock everything up tight and backup your data before you head out



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the door for your holiday time away. There is nothing worse than a break-in spoiling your vacation and recovering from a theft can be extremely costly. Here is a quick checklist to make sure you're ready to close the office:

- ∂ Notify your security company, IT department, staff and clients of the time away.
- ∂ Change the greeting on your phone system.
- ∂ Reduce the temp on your thermostats and turn off any office equipment that is not essential for use over the vacation (including printers, monitors, and computers).
- ∂ Check your backup data before you go. Make sure you have a full account of your information on file to reduce your exposure to a natural disaster or prying eyes.
- ∂ If you have any questions, give us a call. We're here to help.

*Merry Christmas  
 And Happy Holidays To All!*

**Wishing you joy and peace!**

It's common these days to complain during the holidays about how commercialized the season has become. In fact, complaining about the holidays has become as much of a tradition as the holidays themselves. Well let's break tradition for a moment. Call it commercial if you want, but when your family members gather around the Christmas tree, each one hopes the gift given delights the receiver. Call it commercial, but when you light the last candle of the menorah and give the last gift, you hope you have given light and joy.

We are hoping this year you'll enjoy the fruits of all your good work for the year. You are appreciated by your family, your employers and our great nation.

So this year, maybe we should complain a little less, delight in the giving just a little more, and open up our hearts to be thankful for the seasons delights. This time of year is a little commercial, but also a lot of fun for everyone. Wishing you a joyous holiday season.

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**JR-Tech Times**



Take advantage of big year end tax savings on IT equipment via Section 179 deductions. Learn more at [www.jr-tech.com/taxbreak.com](http://www.jr-tech.com/taxbreak.com)



**7 Essential Security Lessons We Can Learn From The 146 Million People Impacted By This Epic Security Breach**

*If you are anything like us, we just hate hearing about terrifying security breaches that hang personal information out in the open. It's like Christmas morning with no batteries for your toddlers new toy. These scenarios remind us just how important a little forward thinking truly can be to keep things kosher.*



as the Internet is involved. Anything connected to the Internet like network devices, routers, cell phones laptops, and even security cameras may be a means for attackers to infiltrate your network and play with your data. Take a proactive approach to security.

**Nuggets to take away from this breach.**

We'd like to take this opportunity to share seven essential security lessons to help your business protect your most precious asset, your data.

**1. Cover your weak points.** Do you have a firewall and is it up-to-date? If you aren't sure, ask the appropriate party or request a network audit to see the current state of your affairs. There is

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**Equifax breach!** That's right, we said Equifax. Can you believe it? And, the breach was possible because a single employee failed to ensure proper software fixes were implemented. Now whose fault is that? Really? Equifax, a company that employs almost ten thousand employees worldwide has just one bloke in the backroom applying software fixes for their IT? Not good.

**Reassure your clients; take action now.** With the massive attacks over the past few years, many clients and business owners are feeling less than par with the security measures in place to safeguard their personal information. Unfortunately, there will always be a virtual risk as long



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**New Holiday Trends**

*Holiday decorations have really taken off. In fact, it is a \$6 billion dollar industry. What's new this year? Take a look at our quick run down.*

**New color trends.**

The traditional red and green has a few new color trends to contend with these days. Black and white, blue and silver, pink and gold, white and brown, even rainbow color schemes for decorations and Christmas trees are hot on the market these days.

**Ornaments.** Often times Christmas trees are decorated with sentimental ornaments styled to fit each beloved family member. However, today, the possibilities are endless. People are decorating with birdhouses, toy soldiers, large glittery letters, even tiny flags, cars or accessories. One lady even put up a pink Christmas tree in her office and covered it in ribbons and shoe ornaments. It seems our passions are bleeding through on the holiday.

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## 7 Essential Security Lessons ...

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nothing like letting your security devices become stale hockey pucks, like my aunt Suzie's fruitcake, to give you a wake up call. Firewalls need maintenance and licensing renewals to stay abreast of current vulnerabilities.

**2. Secure your valuable equipment.** Take time to create a standard operating procedure for your employees to follow. Make sure they know to lock their computers if they are not actively working on them. Require all business devices to be secured with antivirus and antispyware software. In addition, set expectations upfront that all employees are required to keep their devices updated or bring them into the office for regular maintenance.

**3. Use a password manager.** We're not in the 90's people. There isn't one login for all the worker elves to share. We all have between 10 and 100 passwords or more to juggle our personal and business lives. Don't keep a

book, paper under your keyboard, or contacts in your phone with user names and passwords. It's time to implement a secure password manager. Multi-factor authentication requirements can be an additional layer of security too.

**4. Control who does what.** Every business has some sort of hierarchy. Only open up your network completely to authorized personnel. Employees should only have access to the specific data they need to be successful in their job. Also, make sure employees seek permission before installing new resources for your organization.

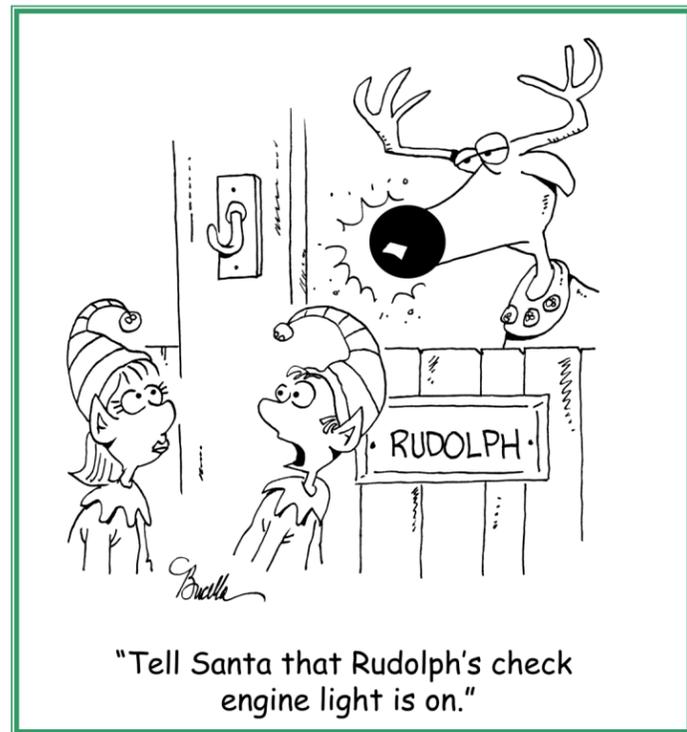
**5. Make backups a routine just like cookies for Santa.** All businesses have sensitive data. Even if you're not storing medical records, imagine trying to operate your company with incomplete records restored from some historical date. We can't even pin our hats on knowing what we ate for breakfast a few weeks ago, we'd be amazed if you could pinpoint every change between your backup from last week and today.

**6. Keep those scrooges from peeking in on your network.** Encrypt your stuff! If you don't know how or if there is any encryption going on in your office, now is the time to find out. Encryption is pretty common these days. Layering encryption over the top of your standard passwords will help keep your sensitive data from falling into the hands of villains.

**7. Create, maintain, and update a standard for security.** Security should never be a one man show. Everyone is involved in keeping your organization secure. Create an IT security policy that shows the proper steps and procedures to keep your company data safe. Everyone needs to know what is expected for things to run smoothly.

**Have questions?** Give us a call. We offer a FREE Network Security Audit to help you see the in's and out's of your network. We will even suggest ways to help you tighten up on security and keep your company safe.

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## Tech Gifts

Well, here goes, the hottest tech gadgets hot on the marketing for this holiday season.

**Bose SoundSport Free Wireless Earbuds** These wireless earbuds are lightweight and water resistant, fit seamlessly and have a battery life of five hours. The bundled battery case gives you an additional 10 hours of playtime too. ~ \$250

**Fitbit Alta Fitness Tracker** The best selling Fitbit for 2017, the Fitbit Alta, tracks workouts, heart rate, distance, calories burned, floors climbed, active minutes and steps. You can even monitor your sleeping habits and receive texts or calls. ~ \$150

**Amazon Echo (2nd Generation)** This is by far one of the coolest tech gifts in this price range. It is so versatile. Boasts better sound quality and has seven built-in microphones to ensure you will be heard. ~ \$99

**Tile Anything Finder** Always misplacing your keys? Cellphone missing again? Lost your purse or wallet? This nifty gadget will help you find them in Bluetooth range and the battery lasts for a full year. ~ \$60

**Belkin Qi Wireless Charging Pad** These handy new cordless charging stations are quite a hit. ~ \$25

## New Holiday Trends...

(Continued from page 1)

**It's a material thing.**

It's not about the best money can buy, it's more about texture, context, and your personal preference. Things like burlap, scrapbook tags, silk flowers, and even feathers are showing up more on Christmas trees this year. Even Etsy.com is filled with creative additions for your home.

**Bold tree stands.** Even the base of the tree is receiving a little something extra. Many families have tossed aside the traditional tree stands and opted for a more vintage look. Buckets or re-purposed objects for smaller trees as well as larger baskets, tree pots or galvanized tubs for larger trees are making a hit this season.

**Spreading joy in every room of your home.** Christmas shouldn't just stop at the family room. Why not add a small tree to your kitchen and decorate it with cookie cutters or miniature cooking utensils. A few gingerbread cookies and candy canes will spruce up your space.

**A little holiday cheer.** From all of us to all of you, we wish you a delightful holiday season.

Seasons Greetings!

## 4 Ways To Spread A Little Extra Joy At The Office

We're not suggesting you give things away here, but it is the end of the year. 2018 will be blowing through the front door very soon. So, why not spruce things up a bit in the office and stock up on those tax credits. You'll be surprised how much a small investment in new equipment will boost productivity.

**1. Replacement computers boost productivity.** Have you been holding off on replacing a few of those old computers? Now is the time. Take advantage of the year end tax breaks and bring all your machines up to date. Stop fighting low disk space warnings, continual reboots, and frustrating error messages. Replace those dinosaurs that are slowing down productivity.

**2. New laptops to mobilize your workforce.** Ready to make a few more of your employees mobile? Take a look at the deals on fresh new laptops. December is a great time to surprise your staff with a new laptop so they can keep up on their work even at home.

**3. A few new monitors or a few more?** Tired of that old monitor flickering while you work? Worried every time you turn it off that it may not turn on again? It's time to dive into a new

monitor or even a dual monitor setup. It's a proven fact, workers multiple displays are able to increase productivity by about 25%. A second or third monitor helps them switch between the programs and information they need faster. Things like data entry, emailing, comparing products, invoicing/accounting, even keeping in touch with coworkers is easier with more room. Honestly, I'd give up a big desk and a single monitor for a small 3-4ft desk with multiple displays any day of the week.

**4. Replace your keyboards.** Keyboards are the most grimy, bacteria ridden, dysfunctional pieces of equipment. It takes very little to gum up a keyboard so why not freshen up your office with new keyboards for your employees. Give them a new surface to work from. Ask everyone about their keyboard needs too.

**Ready to shop?** Give us a call. We are happy to work up a quote for you to spread a little extra joy throughout your office. Everyone will be excited to be using new equipment come January and you could see a significant increase in productivity too. It's truly a win-win.

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## Annoying Bug Found In Wi-Fi Connections

Researches have found an annoying bug in Wi-Fi network encryption that could expose everything you do. Be careful during your travels this holiday season.

**WPA2 exposures.** If you or your colleagues use a laptop, smartphone or other device that connects to Wi-Fi, be aware of the risks. Researches found a bug that allows attackers to break through the WPA2 encryption that protects most wireless networks. What does this mean? Anything you send using this type of encryption could be exposed.

**Naughty hackers found an annoying way around it all.** The worst part about this bug is that attackers figured out how to do it on the fly. This issue isn't just tied down to one manufacturer or device, it is specific to the WPA2 encryption type.

**Maybe a little silver lining in the fix.** Of course, there is a fix for this issue and it is an easy one too. It's as simple as downloading the updates for your wireless device. So, take time to review any updates you receive regarding your wireless devices; they should be applied immediately to button up your network.

**Be aware for now.** Until manufactures catch up, we are all at risk. Avoid sending sensitive data on public Wi-Fi connections even if they are encrypted or use a VPN to add an additional layer of protection. VPNs encrypt all the information you send from your computer over the Internet outside the Wi-Fi Network.

## \$1,000 CASH Referral Program

We strive to provide exceptional customer service and as a natural result, we hope business owners who know us, would refer JR-Tech to other business owners in their community.

That's why when you refer a business owner to us and they become a client, we will give you

\$1,000 CASH!

For more about our referral program, please visit our website:

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