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| Northeast New Jersey

# Technology Essentials for Startups

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# About SCORE

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As a resource partner of the SBA, we help small businesses by:



Providing free  
business advice  
and mentoring



Offering low or  
no-cost business  
training



Sharing free business  
templates and  
resources

Request a SCORE mentor at [www.score.org/find-mentor](http://www.score.org/find-mentor)

# Your Presenters

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Strategy committees at SCORE HQ

# Agenda

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- Enhancing Your Small Business with the Right Technology
- Hardware Needs
- Essential Software
  - Operating Systems, Productivity Software, Web Browsers, Artificial Intelligence
- Cybersecurity
  - Threats Antivirus, Browser Protection, VPN, Password Managers
- Backup Tools
- Business Software
  - Accounting, Customer Relationship Management, Email and Social Media Marketing, Websites
- IT Support
- Key Takeaways

# Enhancing Your Small Business with the Right Technology



## Tailored IT Solutions

One-size-fits-all solution can fall short.  
It's important to consider the unique aspects of your business.



## Efficiency

Technology can aid in streamlining processes and reduce manual labor.  
Technology can reduce human error and save costs.



## Productivity

Appropriate tools can enable employees to perform task more effectively.  
Productive employees can handle for tasks.



## Customer Satisfaction

Technology can affect the customer experience.  
Faster responses and personalized experiences make for happier customer.

# Enhancing Your Small Business with the Right Technology

## People

- People do the work
- Without people, nothing can happen
- People make decisions and take actions whether, or not they are informed enough to do so (Subsidiarity)
- The most important part of the paradigm

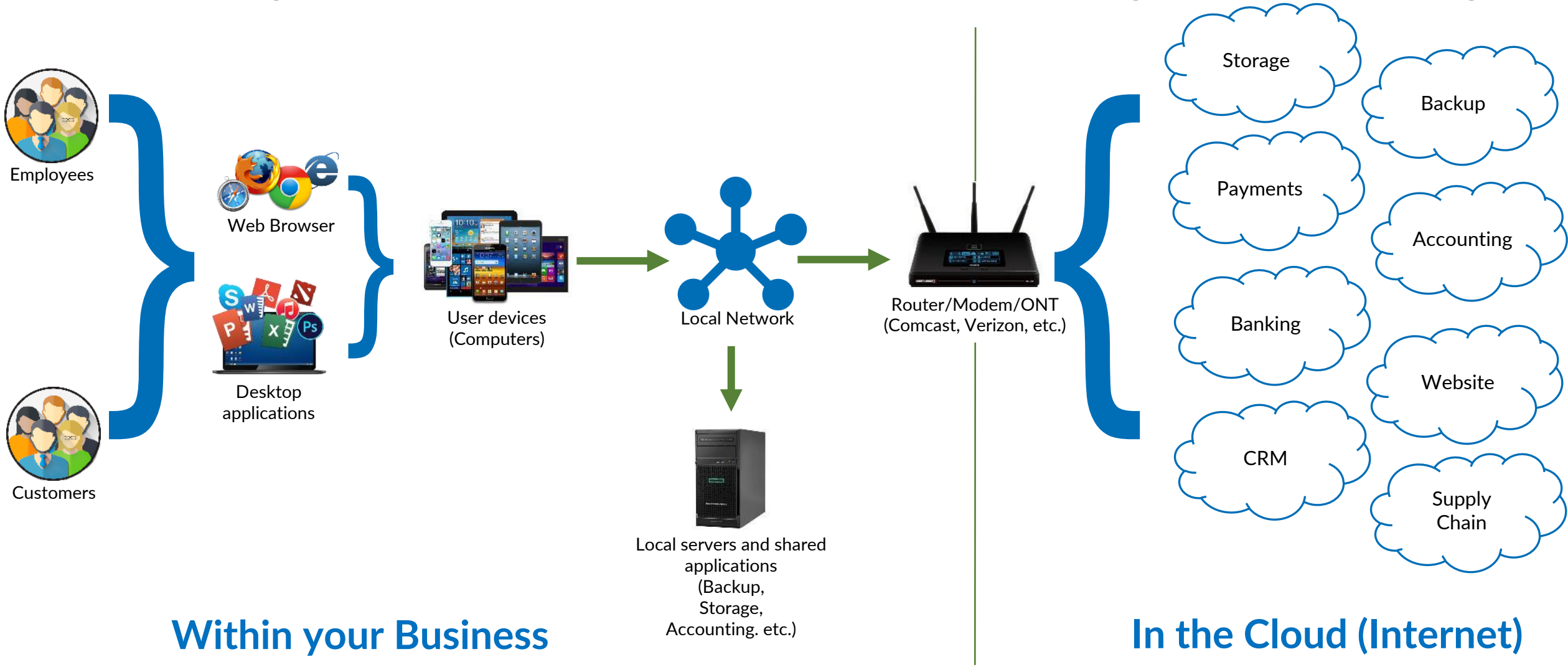
## Process

- Actions or steps that need to happen in order to achieve a particular goal
- Identify key steps
- Provide training on processes
- Ask yourself how to measure success

## Technology

- Technology by itself does not solve problems and should be applied judiciously
- Be sure to get buy-in from those who must use technology
- Beware the “solution in search of a problem” trap

# Enhancing Your Small Business with the Right Technology

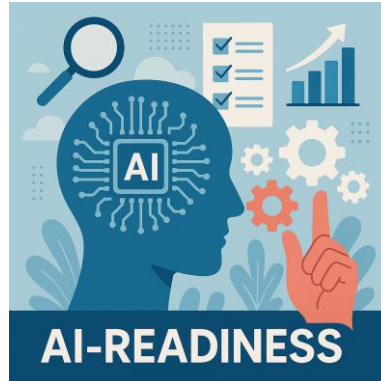


**Within your Business**

**In the Cloud (Internet)**

# Hardware Needs

- Basic Computer Requirements (laptop or desktop)
  - Processor (and Neural Processing Unit NPU)
    - Intel Ultra 5 (series 2) (Copilot + PC)
    - Qualcomm Snapdragon X (CoPilot + PC)
    - AMD Ryzen AI
    - Apple M4
  - Memory
    - 16 GB
  - Storage
    - 512 GB solid state disk



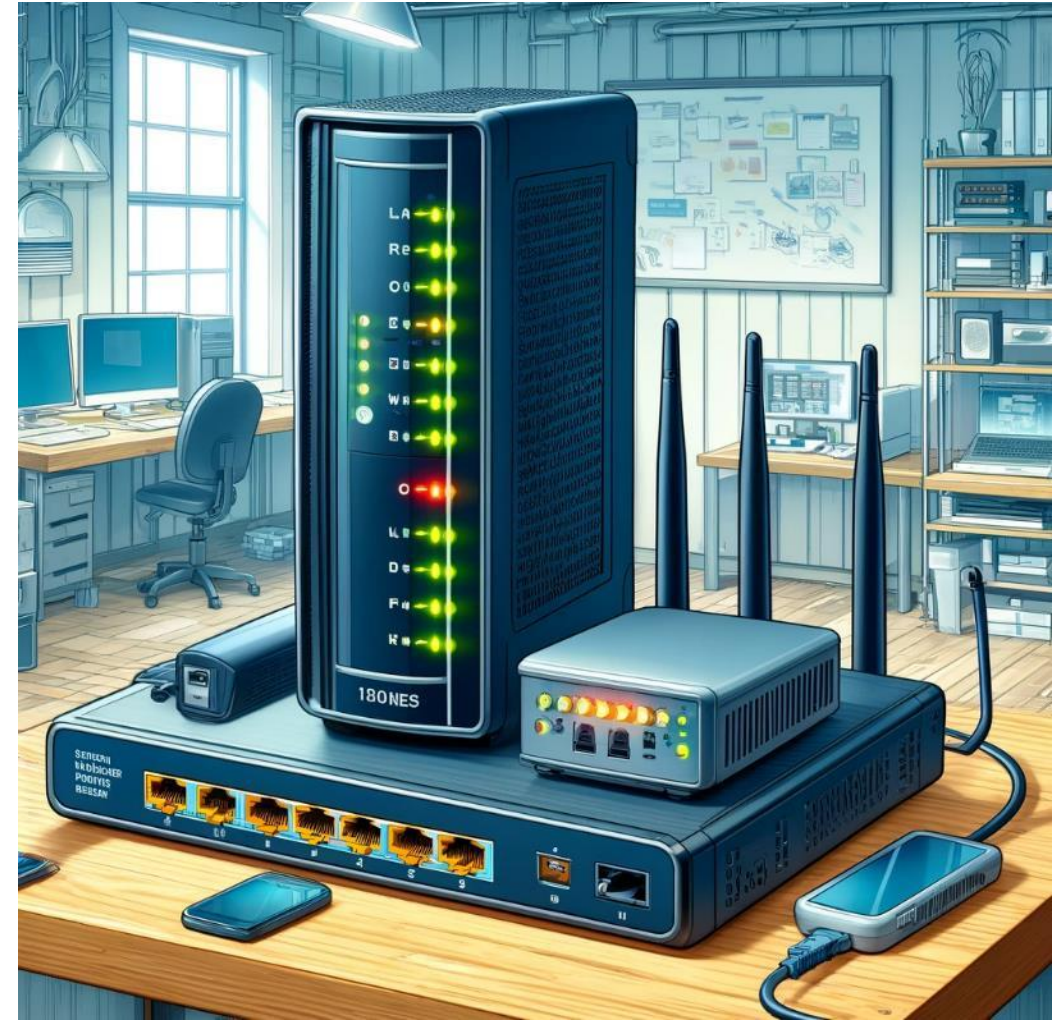
## Recommendations:

- Laptops are best for versatility and can rival a desktop for power
- Newest laptops support existing/upcoming AI features
- Chromebooks are not recommended due to limited capabilities






# Hardware Needs





- Networking
  - This is best left to an IT professional
  - Service (Verizon, Comcast, etc)
  - Cable Modem/O NT – Typically provided by service provider
  - Router
    - Can be provided by service provider for a rental fee
    - Can be purchased separately by the business
    - Typically provides
      - Wired ports
      - WiFi service
      - Firewall protection







# Essential Software – Operating Systems

Feature	 macOS	 Windows	 ChromeOS
<b>General Office Work</b>	Good support with native and third-party applications.	Excellent support with a wide range of software options, including Microsoft Office.	Good for cloud-based tasks, with efficient handling of web-based applications.
<b>Creative Industries</b>	Preferred in creative sectors (graphic design, video editing, music production) due to high-quality graphics and industry-standard software availability.	Supports creative applications, but traditionally second to macOS in this sector.	Limited offline capabilities for demanding creative tasks. Best suited for light editing and design work.
<b>Cost</b>	Generally more expensive due to hardware costs. Less flexibility in hardware selection.	Wide range of hardware options at various price points, from affordable to high-end.	Typically more affordable, with a focus on low to mid-range hardware. Ideal for budget-conscious businesses.
<b>Hardware Compatibility</b>	Limited to Apple hardware, which is high quality but comes at a premium.	Highly compatible with a wide range of hardware from various manufacturers.	Compatible with budget-friendly and lightweight devices, with a focus on internet-based applications.
<b>AI Capabilities</b>	Apple Intelligence – Built into Siri and Apple iWork Apps – Can be augmented with ChatGPT account	Microsoft Copilot – Built into desktop and Office Apps	Gemini Advanced – Built into Google workspace apps

# Essential Software - Productivity

Feature	 Microsoft 365	 Google Workspace	 Apple iWork	 LibreOffice
Office Productivity	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Publisher, Access	Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms	Pages, Numbers, Keynote	Writer, Calc, Impress, Draw, Base, Math
Email/Calendar Integration	Outlook	Gmail, Calendar	Mail (via integration, not part of iWork directly)	No direct integration (supports various email clients through extensions)
Cloud Storage	OneDrive and One Drive for Business	Drive	iCloud	No dedicated cloud storage (can be used with third-party cloud services)
Collaboration	Teams, SharePoint, Real-time co-authoring	Meet, Chat, Docs/Sheets/Slides real-time collaboration	Real-time collaboration across all iWork apps	Limited to commenting and track changes (no real-time co-authoring)
Price	<b>Business:</b> \$6-22/user/month	<b>Business:</b> \$7-22/user/month	Included with macOS, Additional iCloud storage costs extra	Free

# Essential Software – Web Browsers

Feature	 Google Chrome	 Mozilla Firefox	 Microsoft Edge	 Apple Safari
Based On	Chromium	Quantum	Chromium	WebKit
Privacy	Incognito mode, tracker blocking in enhanced protection	Strong privacy with Enhanced Tracking Protection, Private Browsing	InPrivate browsing, tracking prevention	Strong privacy features, Intelligent Tracking Prevention
Extension Support	Extensive, supports a wide range of Chrome Web Store extensions	Wide range, including privacy and security-focused options	Supports Chrome extensions, Microsoft add-ons	Limited compared to others, mainly Apple approved
Integration	Google services (Gmail, Google Drive, etc.)	Limited to Mozilla services	Microsoft 365, Windows features integration	Apple ecosystem (iCloud, Apple Pay, etc.)
Device Compatibility	Windows, macOS, Linux, Android, iOS	Windows, macOS, Linux, Android, iOS	Windows, macOS, Android, iOS	macOS, iOS
Performance	<b>Fast</b> Can use lots of memory	<b>Medium</b> limited memory use	<b>Fast</b> Can use lots of memory	<b>Medium</b> Does not scale well with extensions

# Essential Software – Artificial Intelligence

- Large Language Models have become indispensable for small businesses
- Minimum tooling
  - One general purpose Large Language Model for creative purposes
    - ChatGPT (Open AI)
    - Gemini (Google)
    - Claude (Anthropic)
    - Copilot (Microsoft)
  - One search aggregation tool for research
    - Perplexity.ai



<https://www.score.org/washingtondc/event/chatgpt-ai-and-how-they-can-help-your-small-business-0>

# Cybersecurity - Threats



## RANSOMWARE

Encrypts files and holds your computer hostage for money



## (SPEAR)PHISHING

Lures users into opening emails and/or disclosing personal information



## FRAUDULENT APPS

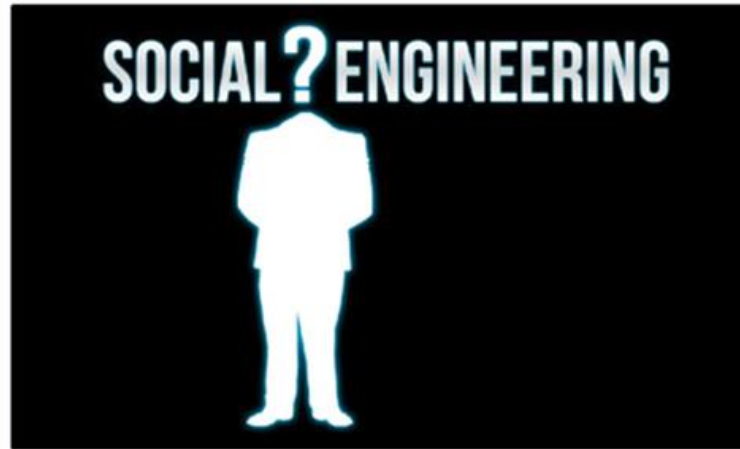
Applications, even from the app store, that may contain threats

# Cybersecurity - Threats



## WEAK PASSWORDS

“123456”  
Vs  
“7Y\*i6dsgy!2\$”



## SOCIAL ENGINEERING

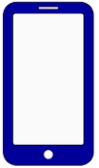
Fraud by impersonation



## LACK OF AWARENESS

Users doing the wrong thing

# Cybersecurity – How Attacks Proliferate



- Accessing a malicious website
- Opening an attachment in an email
- Allowing an insecure device to access your network
- Plugging an insecure device into your computer
- Installing and running software from an unknown source
- Having inadequate safeguards

# Cybersecurity



## Firewall

- Blocks internet traffic into and out of a business
- Can be deployed on a computer (usual for very small businesses)
- Can be deployed on a router (usual for > very small businesses)






## Antivirus/Malware Protection

- Sits on a local computer
- Continuously scans file system for threats
- Virus = Established threat
- Malware = Newer threats
- Most products now check both
- Two solutions ARE NOT better than one

## Browser Protection

- Extension to Web Browser
- Detects and block ads, malware, and scams.

# Cybersecurity - Antivirus

Antivirus	Top Feature	Starting Price
 Norton Small Business	Best overall antivirus	\$59.99/year for 3 employees
 Bitdefender	Top-notch small company antivirus	\$59.99/year
 ESET Protect Enterprise	All-size business threat detection and response	179.00/year for 5 devices
 Avira Prime	Small company protection with a VPN	\$59.99/year for 5 devices
 Surfshark Antivirus	Comprehensive antivirus solution	\$2.49/month

<https://cybernews.com/best-antivirus-software/antivirus-for-business/>

# Cybersecurity – Browser Protection, etc.

- Adware and Malware blocks are helpful in browsers as a first line of defense
  - Examples – Malwarebytes Browser Guard, Adblock Plus, uBlock Origin, Ghostery
- Apple computers also should have antivirus protection
- A word about Microsoft Defender
  - Comes with Windows for free
  - Included with Microsoft 365 and there is a Mac version
  - It's a decent tool if used in layers with other tools like firewalls and browser protection



# Cybersecurity – Password Managers



- Password managers are an essential tool for anyone managing many logins
- Key features
  - Securely save all usernames and passwords so you don't have to remember them
  - You just need to remember one username and password (and always use Multi-factor authentication)
  - Auto-fills login screens in most web browsers
  - Generates and saves strong passwords (e.g. "xESDALNgL6Iz#INi")
  - Provide audits of your passwords to detect reuse
  - Some have emergency feature allowing you to hand over the account to a designee in case of emergency
  - Some allow secure storage of key documents

# Cybersecurity – VPN

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- Virtual Private Networks (VPN) provide a service that helps you stay private online by encrypting the connection between your device and the internet
- Key features
  - Security and Privacy
  - Multiple Device Support
  - Geo-Restrictions Bypassing
  - Ad and Tracker Blocking
- Things to consider
  - Can slow your access to the internet
  - Some websites detect their use and might try to block you
  - Cost



# Backup Tools

- Backups are probably the most important and neglected aspects of technology
- Develop a backup strategy
  - Local Backups
    - Faster to backup and recover
    - Must take backup offsite for safety
    - Some local backup devices do cloud backups too
  - Cloud Backups
    - Slower to backup and recover
    - Automatically “offsite”
- Test your backup strategy
- Don't forget the automatic cloud synchronization tools the come with the Productivity suites (One Drive, Google Drive, iCloud)

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**CRASHPLAN**  
For Small Business

**Acronis**



# Accounting



**TOP 3**

- Many vendors and choices
- Currently **cloud-based** programs sold on subscription basis look best
  - Range from few dollars per month to hundreds
  - Need to shop online for what you need and can afford
  - Many offer free trial to get started
- One key factor is the person who will use the software; are they familiar with a particular vendor and/or product
- Help setting up the chart of accounts and training may be needed

# Customer Relationship Management



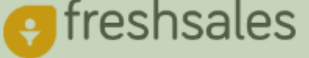


Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems help manage a company's relationships and interactions with current and potential customers. A CRM tool helps companies stay connected to customers, streamline processes, and improve profitability.






- **Sales Management:** Track all customer interactions and automates various sales tasks to increase sales team productivity and enable more effective follow-up on leads and customer inquiries.
- **Marketing Automation:** Helps in segmenting customers, planning and managing marketing campaigns, and tracking their effectiveness to increase customer engagement.
- **Customer Service:** Maintains detailed information on customer preferences, history, and concerns, a CRM system enables companies to provide personalized and efficient support.
- **Analytics and Data Reporting:** Analyze data about customers' interaction patterns and business processes to help make informed business decisions.
- **Project Management:** Manage projects directly from within the platform, ensuring customer requirements are met within designated timelines.

# Customer Relationship Management

TOP 3

CRM System	Top Feature	Starting Price
 Zoho CRM	Best task management	\$20/month
 Salesmate	Best contact management	\$29/month
 freshsales	Best artificial intelligence	\$11/month
 pipedrive	Best email marketing	\$24/month
 nimble	Best CRM pipelines	\$29.90/month

CRM System	Top Feature	Starting Price
 Agile CRM	Best free plan	\$14.99/month
 monday sales CRM	Best CRM dashboards	\$12/month
 Apptivo	Best document management	\$20/month
 insightly	Best security and privacy	\$29.00/month
 salesforce	Best software integrations	\$25.00/month

<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/software/best-crm-small-business>

# Email Marketing Software

- Many vendors and choices. *SCORE* uses *Constant Contact*
- If you use eCommerce software, check for integration
- Currently cloud-based program sold on subscription basis look best
  - Range from few dollars per month to hundreds, some offer free tiers
  - Need to shop online for what you need and can afford
  - Many offer free trial to get started
  - AI is beginning to show up in the tools
- One key factor is the person who will use the software; are they familiar with a particular vendor and/or product



<https://www.g2.com/categories/email-marketing/small-business>

# Social Media Marketing Software

- Many vendors and price points. *SCORE Uses SOCi*
- Can be important to automate social media posting if you use multiple channels
- Some email marketing platforms include this including Constant Contact
- Not all vendors support all social media platforms
- Some social media platforms handle automated posts differently from native posts
- X (Twitter) has some unusual posting rules (e.g., cannot do automated posting to multiple accounts)



<https://www.g2.com/categories/social-media-marketing>

# Websites - Basics



- Websites are at the core of most small businesses
- Many business owners want to build it themselves
  - Some can
  - It can be a distraction from running the business
  - There's frequently more to it
- Approaches
  - Custom from scratch using a developer (Angular/JS, JQuery, etc)
  - Customized using a platform (Wix, Weebly, WordPress, Squarespace, GoDaddy)
  - Configurable using a platform (Cardsetter, Durable.io)
  - Dedicated eCommerce (Shopify, WooCommerce, BigCommerce)
  - *It depends upon your needs and complexity*

# Websites – Building a Website

- **Do it yourself**
  - Simple websites can be done using drag and drop tools (Wix, Weebly, Squarespace, Durable)
  - Requires basic technical skills and can be time-consuming
  - Monthly costs start at about \$15/month and go up with more features
- **Hire a design agency**
  - Handle requirements gathering, design, development, hosting, maintenance
  - Typical cost for a basic website ~\$1200
  - Annual maintenance ~ \$600/year (hosting, upgrades, content management, etc.)
- **Hire a designer/developer**
  - Hiring sites: Upwork, Fivver, Freelancer
  - Hourly rates vary widely
  - You manage the project and figure out hosting, maintenance, etc.
- **Hybrid – Guided configurable platform**
  - Guides you through requirements
  - Configures platform
  - Hosts website - \$49 - \$129/month + setup fee (Cardsetter)



# Websites – Caveats

- Pick design agencies and developers carefully
  - Examine their portfolio
  - Get references
  - Retain ownership of all intellectual property
  - Review agreements
- Purchase everything in your name
  - Domain name
  - Domain hosting
  - Any required tools
  - Maintenance agreements
  - This will prevent your website from being held hostage if the relationship with the vendors goes sideways



## Top IP Mistakes of Startups and How to Avoid Them

<https://www.score.org/washingtondc/event/top-ip-mistakes-startups-and-how-avoid-them>

# IT Support

- Having reliable IT support is important for maintaining productivity and protecting against technical issues.
- Items to consider
  - Choose the right provider
  - Understand the Service Level Agreements (SLAs)
  - Set Up Regular Maintenance and Monitoring
  - Train Your Staff
  - Budget Appropriately
  - ASK your SCORE chapter if they have referrals
  - SCORE mentors can help you assess options



# IT Support

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- Choose the right provider
  - **Research Providers:** Look for IT support firms or consultants with good reviews and experience in your industry.
  - **Check for Certifications and Experience:** Ensure the provider has certified professionals and a track record of effective support.
  - **Evaluate Their Offerings:** Make sure they support your hardware and software (Microsoft, Apple, Google, etc.) Check if they provide 24/7 support, disaster recovery, cybersecurity, and other services you might need.
- Understand the Service Level Agreements (SLAs)
  - **Response Times:** The SLA should clearly state how quickly the IT support will respond to your requests.
  - **Resolution Times:** Understand how long it typically takes them to resolve issues.
  - **Escalation Procedures:** Know the process for escalating issues if they are not resolved satisfactorily.

# IT Support

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- Set Up Regular Maintenance and Monitoring
  - Preventive Maintenance: Schedule regular checks and updates to prevent issues before they arise.
  - Monitoring Services: Consider services that continuously monitor your IT systems for any signs of trouble.
- Train Your Staff
  - Basic Troubleshooting: Train staff in basic troubleshooting and whom to contact for IT support.
  - Security Best Practices: Educate them on cybersecurity best practices to minimize risks.
- Budget Appropriately
  - Cost Management: Understand all costs involved, including potential fees for emergency support or additional services not covered in the regular plan.

# Key Takeaways



- Choose the right technology can aid in efficiency, productivity, customer satisfaction.
- Always consider the People, Process, and Technology model since technology is about helping people do more.
- With the exception of hardware and essential software, most software products are cloud-based making cybersecurity and user training essential.
- Have a backup strategy.
- Have a website developed can be tricky. Avoid common pitfalls.
- Understanding your cloud vendors' data and privacy policies is important.
- Consider hiring and IT firm to help support your operation.
- SCORE mentors can advise you.

# Questions

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# Helpful Links

- Find SCORE resources for small businesses at [www.score.org/templates-resources](https://www.score.org/templates-resources)
- Find more SCORE live and recorded workshops and courses at [www.score.org/get-business-training](https://www.score.org/get-business-training)
- Helpful links:
  - <https://cybernews.com/best-antivirus-software/antivirus-for-business/>
  - <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/software/best-crm-small-business>
  - <https://www.g2.com/categories/email-marketing/small-business>
  - <https://www.g2.com/categories/social-media-marketing>
  - <https://www.score.org/washingtondc/event/top-ip-mistakes-startups-and-how-avoid-them>
  - <https://www.score.org/washingtondc/event/chatgpt-ai-and-how-they-can-help-your-small-business-0>
- Book an appointment with a SCORE mentor at [www.score.org/find-mentor](https://www.score.org/find-mentor)



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION



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