



TECHNOLOGY TIMES

Insider Tips to Help Your Business Run Faster, Easier and More Profitably



Thomas Hill, President & Founder

"Get the big 3 of your day off your plate first before you use up all your time and energy on the small stuff!"



MAKE TAX SEASON LESS MISERABLE



Ah, February – love is in the air and Cupid may just have his arrow pointed toward you and a special someone. But Cupid has competition. It's also tax season and scammers are out looking for their special someone(s), too. As if taxes weren't horrible enough on their own, criminals are devising new ways to trick us into tax scams, with horrific consequences.

According to IRS data, tax scams spike in January and February and intensify through April. Last year, scammers targeted numerous business owners by misrepresenting the Employee Retention Credit (ERC), charging hefty fees for assistance with applications – even for a credit many victims didn't qualify for. There were so many business owners that got attacked that the IRS set up an ERC withdrawal program to help those who realized they had unknowingly submitted fraudulent claims.

Popular Tax-Time Scams

Tax scams are particularly tricky because no well-meaning taxpayer wants to make a mistake and get in trouble with the government. Scammers and cybercriminals prey on our fear of compliance issues by posing as IRS agents, tax software providers or even colleagues in financial departments, with urgent messages demanding payment or Social Security numbers.

It may be only February, but these scammers are likely already in your inbox. Take a few minutes to read about these common tax-time scams and what you can do to prevent them.

1. Phishing And Smishing Scams

Scammers love pretending to be the IRS to get your personal information. They'll send fake e-mails or texts

continued on pg.2

TRIVIA
CONGRATULATIONS
 Joe Grubb
 BrightStar Care
 BrightStarCare
 Who knew that the invention we were talking about last month is the microwave.
TURN TO PAGE 2 FOR THIS MONTHS TRIVIA

continued from cover

promising refunds or threatening legal action, hoping you'll click on their links or share sensitive details. These scams don't just target individuals – they often go after tax pros and businesses because those can give access to loads of valuable data.

How to prevent it: Never click on links or reply to unexpected messages claiming to be from the IRS. If something feels off, report suspicious e-mails to phishing@irs.gov, and always verify messages directly with the IRS through official channels.

2. Online Account “Help”

Scammers are targeting taxpayers by offering help setting up an IRS online account. Their goal is to steal your personal tax and financial information, which they can then use for identity theft. These criminals may pretend to be “helpful” third parties, tricking you into handing over sensitive details like Social Security numbers or IDs, which they can use to file fake tax returns and steal refunds.

How to prevent it: Only create your online account directly through IRS.gov and avoid any unsolicited offers for third-party help. If someone



reaches out offering to assist, it's probably a scam.

3. Fuel Tax Credit Scams

The IRS is warning taxpayers about popular scams pushing Fuel Tax Credit claims, which are only available for off-highway business or farming use. Scammers will mislead you by fabricating documents or receipts for fuel to make false claims, often charging hefty fees in the process. While these scammers profit, you are left with the risk of facing IRS scrutiny and potential penalties.

How to prevent it: If you're considering claiming a Fuel Tax Credit, make sure you're eligible, as incorrectly claiming it could lead to serious consequences like fines or criminal charges. Always consult a qualified tax professional to ensure your claims are legitimate.

“CD Technology has been a life saver for my small veterinary hospital. We started with 3 employees and now have 20! They have been there for us in every stage of growth, from helping set up new equipment to networking all systems and troubleshooting everything. They have excellent response time and are very friendly and helpful. I highly recommend CD Technology.”

Dr. Amanda P.
Animal Wellness and
Rehabilitation Center

You Know The Saying: If It Sounds Too Good To Be True, It Probably Is

Many of these scams are plastered all over the Internet, often with promises of tax savings that sound too good to be true. But the old saying still rings true: If something seems too good, it probably is. These schemes might look tempting, but they can land you in hot water with the IRS and lead to serious legal trouble. This year, make tax season a little less miserable by sticking to legitimate, proven methods. You can also check out the IRS Dirty Dozen list with details on all the common tax scams and tips on how to stay safe this tax season.

Free Report Download: The Business Owner's Guide To IT Support Services And Fees

You'll learn:

- The three most common ways IT companies charge for their services and the pros and cons of each approach
- A common billing model that puts ALL THE RISK on you, the customer, when buying IT services; you'll learn what it is and why you need to avoid agreeing to it
- Exclusions, hidden fees and other “gotcha” clauses IT companies put in their contracts that you DON'T want to agree to
- 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

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The Influential Personal Brand:

How To Turn Your Reputation Into Revenue

Many business owners dismiss building personal branding as unnecessary or time-consuming. Yet Rory Vaden, co-founder of Brand Builders Group and author of *Take The Stairs* and *Procrastinate On Purpose*, argues that a personal brand is essential for earning trust and growing your business. His practical approach makes creating a personal brand much simpler than you think.

Credibility + Recognition = Your Personal Brand

At its core, a personal brand is what people think of when they think of you. Vaden defines it as "the digitization of your reputation." According to recent studies, 74% of Americans are more likely to trust individuals with a personal brand. This trust impacts consumer action, with 63% more likely to buy from companies whose leaders have personal brands.

So why do so many business owners avoid it? Vaden explains that branding is often linked to posting on social media or YouTube - activities that seem annoying or irrelevant. However, he emphasizes that personal branding builds "celebrity authority," a blend of authentic credibility and recognition that is necessary to convince consumers to work with you.

Why Most Personal Brands Fail

"Just because it's simple doesn't mean it's easy," says Vaden. A common mistake is to imitate others' success, leading to diluted focus. "When you have diluted focus, you get diluted results," he says. Instead, the key is to home in on what makes you unique.

How To Stand Out

"Find your uniqueness and exploit it in the service of others," Vaden advises. Start by answering one crucial question in one word: What problem do you solve?

For example, after 10 years dedicated to

research on shame, Brené Brown now "owns" the problem of shame and is recognized as the leading authority on the topic. Similarly, Dave Ramsey built an empire by focusing entirely on solving personal debt. "Become an ambassador of the problem," Vaden says. "That's how this works."

To deeply understand your uniqueness, Vaden suggests answering each of the following questions in one word:

1. What problem do you solve?
2. Who do you solve that problem for?
3. How do you solve that problem?
4. What one revenue stream matters most?

If you're struggling to answer those questions, Vaden offers this shortcut: "You are most powerfully positioned to serve the person you once were." Sharing your journey makes your message authentic and relatable.

Content That Converts

There's no point in creating a personal brand unless it helps you connect with more customers. Once you're clear on your uniqueness, Vaden says, it's time to create content that builds trust. Your content should help customers to:

1. See you (understand what you do);
2. Know you (understand who you are);
3. Learn from you (solve their problems).

Focus on the "Three E's," Vaden says, creating only content that entertains, encourages and educates. Share relatable stories, inspire your audience and provide practical advice. Standing out isn't simply about what you do but who you are. By focusing on your unique value and creating meaningful content, you can build a personal brand that earns trust and transforms followers into loyal customers.

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- Small Business Phone Systems
- HIPAA Compliance Service
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- 24x7 Help Desk
- Online Training
- Encrypted VPN Solutions
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thill@CDTechnology.com

Here is your chance to win Lunch On Us!
This Month's

TRIVIA

Reported losses to **romance scams** have surged. How much money was reported lost to romance scams in 2023?

Email your answer to
RHill@CDTechnology.com

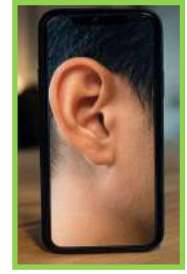
HEART HEALTH MONTH
INFORMATION FROM AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

- REDUCE EXCESS LEVELS OF SODIUM
- MOVE MORE: TRY TO GET 150 MINUTES OF MODERATE INTENSITY EXERCISE EACH WEEK
- REDUCE YOUR STRESS BY TAKING SLOW DEEP BREATHS OR LISTENING TO RELAXING MUSIC
- MUSCLE? YES PLEASE
- ADD STRENGTH TRAINING 2 DAYS A WEEK
- SLEEP: MOST ADULTS NEED 7-9 HRS EACH NIGHT
- EXERCISE HELPS TO REDUCE STRESS LEVELS

Yes, Your Phone IS Listening To You

Apple has agreed to a \$95 million settlement on a lawsuit alleging that Apple used its digital assistant, Siri, to listen to users. A judge must approve the settlement this month.

Apple iPhone users could get \$20 per Siri device used from September 2014 to December 2024, with a maximum of five devices per user.



It seems that saying 'Hey Siri' isn't necessary for your phone to listen to conversations. This won't come as too much of a surprise to many people who have noticed that advertisements related to their conversations seem to pop up regularly.

Now this might seem like a lot of money, and it is but Apple is worth more than \$3 trillion. For further perspective, consider that the company earns \$95 million in about nine hours.



Announcing...

Exclusively for CDT clients! Do You Have a special event you would like to share with the community? Are you planning an open house, blood drive, block party, anniversary celebration, meet & greet... or any lead generating event open to the public? Let us help you get folks there. We would love to help you promote your special occasion by putting it in our next newsletter and share on all our socials! Just give us the details - make sure to include contact info and we will share your news.

WWW.ANDERSTOONS.COM



"If you could fill out the attached survey that would really help me out."



WELCOME

Drs.
Joslin & Joslin
EYE CENTER

We want to officially welcome Drs, Joslin & Joslin Eye Center to our CD Technology community. Located right down the road in the beautiful foothills of the Tennessee Smoky Mountains, Joslin Eye Center is a full service eye center committed to providing patients the best vision possible and helping protect eye health for a lifetime of good vision. Joslin Eye Center has proudly served the Seymour and surrounding areas since 1998.

WE ARE MAKING A BIG MOVE



CD TECHNOLOGY

COMING SOON
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TECHNOLOGY COMMAND CENTER



THE END IS NEAR!

Windows 10 Support Ends In 2025



What Does This Mean For Your Business?



No More Security Updates

Your systems will be at risk for cyber-attacks.



Software Compatibility Issues

Programs you rely on might stop working properly.



Compliance Risks

Running outdated systems could lead to fines or legal troubles.

Are You Prepared? Don't wait until it's too late. Talk to an expert about your options.

SET UP YOUR FREE DISCOVERY CALL
Call us at 865-909-7606 or visit CDTechnology.com

IMPORTANT NEWS:

Windows 10 Support Ends In 2025 – What Are Your Options?

In 2025, Microsoft will stop providing critical services like security updates, leaving your business vulnerable to threats and potential downtime.

Here Are Your Options:

- Upgrade To Windows 11**
Not all devices will be compatible, so make sure to check with an IT expert.
- Buy A New PC**
For businesses with older machines, a hardware upgrade might be your best bet.
- Pay For Extended Security Updates**
Only available for up to three years (and it's not free).
- Switch To Linux**
For those willing to explore new systems.
- Do Nothing (NOT RECOMMENDED!)**
This could expose your business to cyber risks and compliance violations.

Thank You!

Thank You Tobin Fontenot, M3 Technology Group for your recent referral. We appreciate having great partners like you in our network!

YOUR
Referrals
ARE OUR GREATEST
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Don't Gamble With Your Business!
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Take action for a healthier YOU!



February is Healthy Heart Month!



CD TECHNOLOGY
AFFORDABLE IT
HELPDESK AND CYBER
SECURITY SUPPORT IN
20 MINUTES OR LESS



February 2025

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IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO LOVE YOUR PHONES!

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- More Productive
- More Collaborative
- More Mobile



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CYBERSIDE CHAT



Love isn't the only thing in the air... Apple fixes AirPods' Bluetooth eavesdropping problem.

A flaw was found on Apple AirPods that allowed attackers to connect to your device and even eavesdrop on your conversations. Apple released a new firmware update for AirPods and Beats, so make sure your devices are up-to-date!

Pay for new stuff with your old stuff!

One of the founders of Postmates is back with a new payment service called Tiptop that lets you pay for online purchases by trading in something old. Soon you'll be able to see the service alongside PayPal and Apple Pay when you check out online and you can use it to trade in anything

TV-sized or below (sorry, no husbands) to help pay for something new.

Concerned your spouse is ignoring you? Use AirPods to test their hearing.

Millions of people are living with hearing loss and have no idea, so Apple has designed a convenient way to test our hearing. To take the test, you'll need a specific model of AirPods 2 (A2931, A2699, A2698, A3047, A3048, A3049) and an iOS-compatible iPhone or iPad. For full instructions, you can go to www.apple.com/airpods-pro/hearing-health/.

Big nostalgia, tiny screen

TinyTV 2 is a nostalgic novelty - a fully functional mini-TV combining retro charm and modern convenience. This teensy TV has a 1.14-inch screen, working rotary knobs and authentic static effects when changing channels, just like the '80s portable TVs we loved. You can even upload up to 10 hours of your own videos, making it as practical as it is delightful when you're craving a tiny trip down memory lane.

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