TECH TALK MONTHLY

YOUR MONTHLY DOSE OF TECH & BUSINESS NEWS

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Monthly update from Mark

Let's talk about ditching the manual grind for a sec – automating things is like giving your workload a magic wand. Seriously, who needs to spend hours doing repetitive tasks when we've got tech that can do it like a champ?

Whether it's sorting through emails, handling data entry, or whatever your daily hustle involves, automation is the superhero that swoops in to save you time and sanity. Plus, fewer chances of data errors – bonus! So, next time you're stuck in a manual maze, think automation. Your productivity levels will thank you!

Need some help automating manual processes? Reach out to us at mark@phrixus.com to schedule a chat.

Until then, stay safe,

Mark

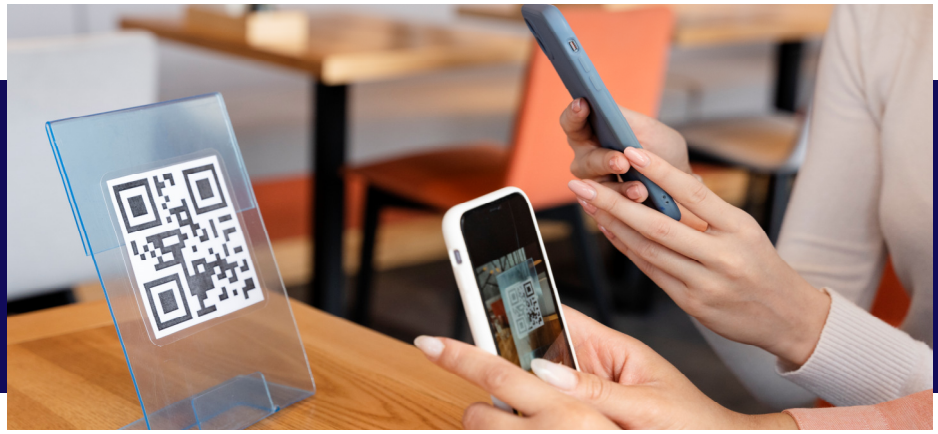
DID YOU KNOW

The word technology was coined in 330 BC by the one and only Aristotle.

Phrixus Technologies

PO Box 266
Berowra NSW 2081
phrixus.com
02 9457 6416

02 BE CAREFUL WHEN SCANNING QR CODES



QR codes are everywhere these days. You can find them on restaurant menus, flyers, and posters. They're used both offline and online. QR codes are convenient and easy to use. You just scan them with your smartphone camera. You're then directed to a link, a coupon, a video, or some other online content.

With the rise in popularity of QR codes comes an unfortunate dark side. Cybercriminals are exploiting this technology for nefarious purposes. Scammers create fake QR codes. They can steal your personal information. They can also infect your device with malware or trick you into paying money.

It's crucial to exercise caution when scanning QR codes. This emerging scam highlights the potential dangers lurking behind those seemingly innocent squares.

The QR Code Resurgence
QR codes were originally designed for tracking parts in the automotive industry. They have experienced a renaissance in recent years as a result, they're used as a form of marketing today.

They offer the convenience of instant access to information. You simply scan a code. Unfortunately, cybercriminals are quick to adapt. A new phishing scam has emerged, exploiting the trust we place in QR codes.

How the Scam Works

The scammer prints out a fake QR code. They place it over a legitimate one. For example, they might stick it on a poster that advertises a product discount or a movie.

You come along and scan the fake QR code, thinking it's legitimate. The fake code may direct you to a phishing website. These sites may ask you to enter sensitive data such as your credit card details, login credentials, or other personal information.

Or scanning the QR code may prompt you to download a malicious app. One that contains malware that can do one or more of the following:

- Spy on your activity
- Access your copy/paste history
- Access your contacts
- Lock your device until you pay a ransom

The code could also direct you to a payment page. A page that charges you a fee for something supposedly free.

Here are some tactics to watch out for.

Malicious Codes Concealed
Cybercriminals tamper with legitimate QR codes. They often add a fake QR code sticker over a real one. They embed malicious content or redirect users to fraudulent websites.

Fake Promotions and Contests
Scammers often use QR codes to lure users into fake promotions or contests. When users scan the code, it may direct them to a counterfeit website.

Malware Distribution
Some malicious QR codes start downloads of malware onto the user's device.

STAY VIGILANT: TIPS FOR SAFE QR CODE SCANNING

Verify the Source
Verify the legitimacy of the code and its source.

Use a QR Code Scanner App
Use a dedicated QR code scanner app rather than the default camera app on your device.

Inspect the URL Before Clicking
Before visiting a website prompted by a QR code, review the URL.

Avoid Scanning Suspicious Codes
Trust your instincts. If a QR code looks suspicious, refrain from scanning it.

Update Your Device and Apps
Keep your device's operating system and QR code scanning apps up to date.

Be Wary of Websites Accessed via QR Code

Don't enter any personal information on a website that you accessed through a QR code. This includes things like your address, credit card details, login information, etc. Don't pay any money or make any donations through a QR code.

Google Chromecast

Unleash the power of your screens with Google Chromecast! This nifty device is not just about streaming your favourite shows, it's a productivity powerhouse!

One of its many functions include screen mirroring to let you share the content playing on your mobile device to a larger display. This is ideal for enhancing office collaboration, training, and presentations.

03 WHAT IS MICROSOFT SECURITY COPILOT?

It can be challenging to keep up with the ever-evolving cyber threat landscape. Companies need to process large amounts of data. As well as respond to incidents quickly and effectively. Managing an organisation's security posture is complex.

That's where Microsoft Security Copilot comes in. Microsoft Security Copilot is a generative AI-powered security solution. It provides tailored insights that empower your team to defend your network. It also works with other Microsoft security products.

Microsoft Security Copilot helps security teams:

- Respond to cyber threats
- Process signals
- Assess risk exposure at machine speed

A big benefit is that it integrates with natural language. This means you can ask questions plainly to generate tailored guidance and insights. For example, you can ask:

- What are the best practices for securing Azure workloads?
- What is the impact of CVE-2024-23905 on my organisation?
- Generate a report on the latest attack campaign.
- How do I remediate an incident involving TrickBot malware?

Security Copilot can help with end-to-end scenarios such as:

- Incident response
- Threat hunting
- Intelligence gathering
- Posture management
- Executive summaries on security investigations

How Does Microsoft Security Copilot Work?

You can access Microsoft Security Copilot capabilities through a standalone experience as well as embedded experiences available in other Microsoft security products. Copilot integrates with several tools, including:

- Microsoft Sentinel
- Microsoft Defender XDR
- Microsoft Intune
- Microsoft Defender Threat Intelligence
- Microsoft Entra
- Microsoft Purview
- Microsoft Defender External Attack Surface Management
- Microsoft Defender for Cloud

You can use natural language prompts with Security Copilot.

Should You Use Microsoft Security Copilot?

The Pros:

- Advanced Threat Detection
- Operational Efficiency
- Integration with Microsoft Products
- Continuous Learning
- Reduced False Positives

The Considerations:

- Integration Challenges
- Resource Requirements
- Training and Familiarisation

THE BOTTOM LINE

Microsoft Security Copilot represents a leap forward in the realm of AI-driven cybersecurity.

It has an advanced capacity for real-time threat detection and operational efficiency as well as extensive integration capabilities. These factors make it a compelling choice especially for businesses seeking to fortify their digital defenses.

Your unique business needs should guide the decision to adopt Microsoft Security Copilot. Consider factors such as existing cybersecurity infrastructure and resource availability as well as the commitment to ongoing training.

04 TACTICS TO REDUCE CLOUD WASTE AT YOUR BUSINESS

Cloud computing has revolutionised the way businesses operate. It offers scalability, flexibility, and cost-efficiency. But cloud services also come with a downside: cloud waste.

Cloud waste is the unnecessary spending of resources and money on cloud services. These services are often not fully utilised or optimised. About 32% of cloud spending is wasted. This can lead to budget concerns as spending skyrockets.

But that figure also holds opportunity. It means that you can reduce nearly a third of cloud spending by optimising how you use cloud tools.

Here are some smart tactics to reduce cloud waste and save money:

- Conduct a Comprehensive Cloud Audit – Before implementing any cost-cutting strategies, conduct an audit.
- Put in Place Right-Sizing Strategies – Analyse your workload requirements and resize instances accordingly.
- Use Reserved Instances and Savings Plans – Cloud providers offer cost-saving options like Reserved Instances (RIs) and Savings Plans.
- Install Automated Scaling Policies – Dynamic workloads have a need for dynamic resource allocation. Install automated scaling policies.
- Track and Optimise Storage – Regularly review and delete unnecessary data to free up storage space.
- Schedule Your Cloud Resources – Schedule your cloud resources to run only when you need them.
- Delete Unused or Orphaned Cloud Resources – Regularly audit your cloud environment to delete any unused or orphaned resources your business is not using.
- Weed Out Duplicate Services – Centralise cloud resources and remove duplicate tools.
- Embrace Serverless Architecture – Serverless computing allows businesses to run applications without managing the underlying infrastructure.

05 CYBERSECURITY PREDICTIONS FOR 2024 YOU SHOULD PLAN FOR

Cybersecurity is a constantly evolving field. There are new threats, technologies, and opportunities emerging every year. As we enter 2024, organisations need to be aware of current and future cyber threats. Businesses of all sizes and sectors should plan accordingly.

Staying ahead of the curve is paramount to safeguarding digital assets.

5 cybersecurity predictions for 2024 that you should consider:

1. AI Will Be a Double-edged Sword
2. Quantum Computing Will Become a Looming Threat
3. Hacktivism Will Rise in Prominence
4. Ransomware Will Remain a Persistent Threat
5. Cyber Insurance Will Become More Influential

06 9 SIGNS THAT YOUR SMART HOME DEVICE HAS BEEN HACKED

Smart home devices are becoming more popular and convenient. But they also pose some serious security risks. Hackers can target these devices to access your personal information. As well as spy on your activities or cause damage to your home.

How can you tell if a hacker has compromised your smart home device? Here are some signs to look out for.

- Unexpected Behavior
- Unusual Network Traffic
- Strange Sounds or Voices
- Device Settings Modification
- Unexplained Data Transfers
- Device Inaccessibility
- New or Unknown Devices on the Network
- Frequent Software Glitches
- Emails or Messages Confirming Changes You Didn't Make

07 EYE-OPENING INSIGHTS FROM THE 2023 ANNUAL CYBERSECURITY ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS REPORT

Often, it's our own actions that leave us most at risk of a cyberattack or online scam. Risky behaviors include weak passwords and lax security policies and also thinking, This won't happen to me.

The National Cybersecurity Alliance and CybSafe published a report on cybersecurity attitudes and behaviors. The goal is to educate both people and businesses. The report reveals some eye-opening insights.

Here are some of the key findings from the report:

- We are online a lot: 93% of respondents are online daily.
- We store sensitive stuff online: 47% of respondents have ten or more sensitive online accounts.
- Online security makes people frustrated: 39% of people feel frustrated when trying to stay safe online.
- People need more access to training: Just 26% of the survey respondents had access to cybersecurity training.

WE LOVE REFERRALS

The greatest gift anyone can give us is a referral to your friends. Referrals help us keep costs down so we can pass the savings to our clients.

If your friend's business ends up becoming a client - we'll gift them their free first month of service (for being a friend of yours) AND we'll gift you $500 cash/ gift voucher.
Simply introduce me via email to **mark@phrixus.com** and I'll take it from there. I personally promise we'll look after their business with a high level of care and attention (just like we do with all our clients).

What are SPF, DKIM and DMARC?

DMARC, DKIM, and SPF are three email authentication methods. Together, they help prevent spammers, phishers, and other unauthorized parties from sending emails on behalf of a domain* they do not own.

DKIM and SPF can be compared to a business license or a doctor's medical degree displayed on the wall of an office — they help demonstrate legitimacy.

Meanwhile, DMARC tells mail servers what to do when DKIM or SPF fail, whether that is marking the failing emails as "spam," delivering the emails anyway, or dropping the emails altogether.

Domains that have not set up SPF, DKIM, and DMARC correctly may find that their emails get quarantined as spam, or are not delivered to their recipients. They are also in danger of having spammers impersonate them.

Many clients have recently been notified they must add a DMARC record, this requirement came into effect on Feb 1, 2024 and helps with email deliverability.

NEED A LAUGH?

Why are Microsoft employees never relaxed?

Because they're always

TECHNOLOGY TRIVIA

The question this month is:

What is the programming language developed by James Gosling at Sun Microsystems and named after the type of coffee from Indonesia?

The first person to email me at **mark@phrixus.com** and give a correct answer gets a $50 Amazon Gift Card!

Each month you have a chance to win a $50 Amazon Gift Voucher by being the first person to email us with the answer to our Technology Trivia Question of the Month!

Mistake of the month

Danny works in IT. He has been at his new job about three months. His company had been working hard to get him up to speed on all of the different platforms and tools they utilized. They provided Danny with a four-hour video that explained how to use these platforms. One of them was a cloud storage system that Danny was unfamiliar with. He let the training slide for the time being as he had many other things to do. He didn't realize just how important the cloud storage system was. It housed all the company's important files and their clients' files. When Danny's computer started working slower than normal, he assumed it had to do with the thousands of files in the cloud storage. He decided to delete most of the files, assuming they were just copies of the real files. He ended up deleting over 100,000 files, videos, and records that were crucial to the business and their clients. The company had not backed up the files in a secondary location, so the files were lost for good.