



# THE *INTEGRATED* AXIS TECH CHRONICLE

## What's New

### Events Around Town

- The Loft Cinema Kids Fest
- Independence Day Celebrations!
- Cool Summer Nights at the Desert Museum every Saturday
  - “The Linda McCartney Retrospective” at The Center for Creative Photography
- Dog Days of Summer at Tucson Botanical Gardens
- HarvestFest at Sonoita Vineyards



## Get The IT Help You Deserve

### 5 Questions You Should Hear ‘Yes’ To

As a business owner, you likely carefully vet every employee you hire to work for your business. You inspect their resumé and ask detailed questions during their interview to ensure they are the best fit. This is critical to growing your business and making it as successful as possible, but you shouldn't solely reserve this practice for potential new hires. You also need to carefully assess any third parties you work with, especially when it comes to your IT needs.

When most business owners attempt to hire an in-house IT team or an MSP, they let the third party's representative or salesperson do most of the talking since they're the experts in the field. In some cases, the owner wants the representative to convince them to do business with their organization. In others, the owner is too afraid to ask questions for fear of sounding uninformed. Failing to ask any questions when hiring an IT expert can put your business in a bad position and make you and your business

vulnerable to cybercriminals. An excellent salesperson can sell milk to a cow, so asking relevant questions is crucial to ensuring you get the best IT services for your business needs.

If you're wondering what questions you should ask when deciding which IT expert to hire, don't worry! We're here to help. Here are some simple yes-or-no questions you can ask any IT expert to determine if they offer the best possible support. If they answer no to any of these questions, it might be best to look elsewhere. It's not worth the risk of experiencing a devastating and expensive network disaster.

#### **Do They Answer Their Phones “Live” And Respond To Support Issues Within An Hour?**

One of the most frustrating situations you can experience is needing your IT expert's help and being unable to reach them promptly. If you are concerned about your network security or another IT need, you

*Continued on pg.2*

# CARE<sup>2</sup>

**Customer Focus  
Accountability**

**Respect**

**Excellence & Empathy**

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should get the assistance you need as soon as possible. It is a huge red flag if the IT expert answers no to this question because that means they work at their own pace instead of being readily available and responsive to your needs.

### **Do They Insist On Doing Regular Test Restores Of Your Backups To Ensure Data Is Not Corrupt And You're Covered If Disaster Strikes?**

Imagine that severe weather knocks out your network and your data appears corrupted when it comes back up. Ideally, you call your IT team, or they already know about the issue. They'll restore your corrupt or lost data, and everything will proceed as usual. But what happens if the backup fails or your IT team isn't regularly backing up your data? Some experts may be able to recover your data, but in many cases, you'll be out of luck, and your business might be in trouble because of it.

### **Will They Give You Written Documentation Detailing Your Software Licenses, Network Passwords And Hardware Information?**

This is vital information, and there's a reason the IT expert might not want to hand over this information

***“Failing to ask any questions when hiring an IT expert can put your business in a bad position and make you and your business vulnerable to cybercriminals.”***

willingly. It keeps them in control of your network and, in many ways, makes them irreplaceable. If they possess all the information and you want to go in a different direction, you'll likely have to reset everything, which will take time and could cost additional money.

### **Do They Tell You What They Are Doing In An Easy-To-Understand Manner?**

There's no question about it: cyber security and IT services can get incredibly complicated, and some experts prefer to talk using industry jargon, which is difficult for many business owners to understand. It's essential to know and fully understand everything the experts are doing to help your business and keep it protected.

### **Do They Proactively Offer Upgrades And Improvements To Your Services?**

The IT landscape is ever-evolving. New technologies and developments are introduced daily, and dependable IT experts stay up-to-date with changes in the industry so they can offer improved services to their clients. You shouldn't have to wait until disaster strikes to see these improvements implemented in your business.

These are just a few questions you should ask any IT expert you're considering hiring for your business. If they answer no to any of the above questions, you'll likely pay for substandard support and open your business up to additional risk.

## *Time For An Upgrade? How Financing Can Help You*



Upgrading technology equipment can bring numerous advantages to an organization, and utilizing financing options to support this upgrade can further enhance these benefits


1. Technology is constantly evolving, and staying up-to-date is crucial for businesses to remain competitive. Financing allows organizations to acquire the latest equipment without requiring significant upfront capital investment, empowering them to leverage cutting-edge tools for increased efficiency, productivity, and innovation.
2. Upgrading technology equipment can streamline workflows and enhance operational efficiency. Newer equipment offers improved processing power, faster data speeds, and enhanced functionality; enabling employees to work more efficiently and effectively. Organizations can reduce downtime, enhance productivity, and optimize overall operations.
3. As technology advances, so do cybersecurity threats. Outdated equipment has vulnerabilities that can compromise data security. New equipment often includes robust security features, encryption protocols, and improved safeguards against cyber threats. Allowing organizations can better protect their sensitive data, mitigate risks, and ensure compliance.
4. Financing options allow organizations to spread the cost of technology upgrades over time, making it easier to manage cash flow and maintain financial stability. Businesses can choose flexible financing plans that align with their budget. This helps organizations preserve working capital, invest in other areas of the business, and enjoy predictable monthly costs. By leveraging financing options to upgrade technology equipment, organizations can unlock these advantages, enabling them to optimize their operations, drive growth, and remain at the forefront of their industries.


## Technology In The News





Ransomware threats are hitting schools! A recent wave of ransomware attacks targeting school networks poses serious risks to our education system and the welfare of our students.

Why schools? Several factors make them an attractive target:

 **Valuable Information:** Schools store sensitive data, including student records, financial records, and intellectual property. Hackers exploit this data to extort funds, jeopardizing students' privacy and educational institutions' financial stability.

 **Lack of Robust Security:** Limited budgets and outdated infrastructure often make schools vulnerable to cyberattacks. Inadequate security measures, unpatched systems, and weak passwords create gateways for hackers to exploit.

 **Dependency on Technology:** Modern education heavily relies on technology, from online learning platforms to student information systems. The interconnectedness increases the potential attack surface and widens the scope for cybercriminals.

 **Impact on Communities:** Disruptions caused by ransomware attacks can halt classes, impede administrative functions, and hinder communication channels, impacting students, parents, and teachers alike. The consequences ripple through communities.

Take action today! Call us at IA and find out how to protect your school.

## 3 Questions Every Leader Should Ask on Monday Morning

What is the first thing you do on a Monday morning? Do you dive straight into responding to e-mails or use your first minutes of the week more strategically?

My colleagues and I at ghSMART have collected data on 3,052 leaders and their teams over a decade. We reached a surprising conclusion about what predicts team success with the statistical help of professors and research team collaborators at the University of Chicago, UCLA and Columbia University.

In that study, we isolated three things that matter most. Leaders with teams rated as “strong” at these three things (by professional evaluators using structured in-depth interviews with high inter-rater reliability) were 20 times more likely to report successful outcomes than teams that were not strong at all three things. Think of this pattern like a triathlon – you must be great at swimming, biking and running to win.

Following the research implications, consider reflecting on these three questions every Monday morning.

### Do We Have The Right Priorities?

Only 24% of leaders are strong at prioritizing, and 90% of the time, when they struggle with this leadership skill, it’s because they lack the analytical skills and decisiveness to narrow their team’s priorities down from a long list to a short list. When you have too many priorities, you don’t really have any priorities, and energy gets wasted.



Guest article provided by:

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 bestsellers. He stays active in his community and has advised many government officials.



### Do We Have The Right People?

Only 14% of leaders are skilled at hiring and developing talented teams. This is the most common weakness we observe in leaders and their teams. Flawed hiring methods yield a 50% hiring mistake rate vs. research-based methods that produce a 90% hiring success rate (e.g., having a consistent set of criteria to rate candidates; unbiased, structured, past-oriented interviews; reference validation; etc.).

### Do We Have The Right Relationships?

About 47% of leaders achieve good relationships with people within and outside their teams. “Trust” typically gets a lot of attention as a variable that predicts or even defines relationship quality, but our database suggests that 91% of leaders behave in a trustworthy fashion. Therefore, while important, it is not rare for a leader to build trust. Instead, the “special sauce” in building successful relationships in a professional context is to create relationships that are focused on achieving win-win results. Mutually beneficial results matter when forming and maintaining productive professional relationships, not just feelings of trust or empathy.

If you want to build a team that runs at full power for the good of your teammates and the constituents you serve, consider spending a few moments on Monday morning asking these three essential questions.



## Win-Win Solutions Grow Your Business And Keep Your Employees Happy

Business owners are well aware of the ever-evolving nature of the workplace. As time passes and new generations enter the workplace, priorities shift, causing business owners and managers to adapt to fit the needs of their teams. Two decades ago, most employees focused primarily on improving productivity, making as much money as possible and helping their businesses find success. But now we've entered a time where work-life balance and personal time are top priorities.

This has left many business leaders wondering how to keep their employees happy while maintaining a profitable business.

It starts by developing flexibility tactics to benefit you and your employees.

- Set baselines for yourself. It's great that you want to be flexible and help your employees, but don't compromise your standards for their sake. You know your business and what is necessary for it to thrive.
- Listen to what your employees say about you, the workplace and the business. Hold one-on-one meetings with your employees to see what they need in order to do their jobs better.
- Offer paid time off or unpaid time off to your employees so they don't feel burnout and frustration. Sometimes all your employees need is a little break from work to perform at their best.



"Hold it! That's not what they mean by 'reboot'."

## Quick And Easy Ways To Improve Your Mental Health

You face a lot of different stressors as a business owner. You have to worry about the well-being of your business and team, find ways to stay relevant and profitable and, of course, make time for your family and friends. Dealing with all this stress after a few weeks or months is enough to put you at your wit's end, but how can you maintain your mental health while attempting to grow and run a successful business?

Make sure you're not overworking yourself on a regular basis. Stick to a schedule that gives you plenty of time to complete your work while also leaving time for other activities outside of the workplace. Your business will survive without you dedicating 80 hours a week to it. When you do get free time, participate in your favorite activities, exercise regularly and spend plenty of time outdoors. Don't be afraid to schedule time on your calendar for personal reasons so that you can take time away from work. Schedule your nightly meals with your family or a weekly round of golf with a good friend. Making these changes will help you feel like you're getting your life back while still maintaining a profitable business. Remember that you have to make these changes – they will not occur on their own or without any effort on your part.