



Wealth Matters Newsletter

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Business Owners: Insuring Your Business Against Cyber Liability

As a business owner, your business is an important piece of your financial plan. It may also be one of the assets that requires your most attention, and there are many ways in which you must work to protect your business. One area that can be overlooked is insuring your business against cyber liability. Is your business protected?

According to one study done by the US Small Business Administration, 88% of small business owners feel their business is vulnerable to a cyber-attack.¹ These concerns may be well founded: according to another study, 46% of all small businesses have at some point been the target of a ransomware attack.²

Business owners are required to protect their customers' personal information. In all 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, The Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia, businesses are required to notify individuals of security breaches involving personally identifiable information.³

As evidenced by news of large-scale data breaches, online hacking has become another form of risk that businesses now face every day. Like many risks, businesses can insure themselves against the financial damage a cyber-attack may inflict.

Cyber liability insurance may cover a range of risks, including:

- **Data Breach Management:** Pays expenses related to the investigation, management, and remediation of an incident, including customer notification, credit check support, and associated legal costs and fines.
- **Media Liability:** Covers third-party damages such as website vandalism and intellectual property rights infringement.
- **Extortion Liability:** Reimburses for expenses associated with losses arising from a threat of extortion.
- **Network Security Liability:** Covers costs connected with third-party damages due to a denial of access and theft of third-party information.

Cyber liability insurance is fairly new so expect a wide divergence of coverage and costs. It may be purchased separately or as a rider to your current business insurance policy. Be prepared to comparison shop to get a better understanding of coverage and costs.

Small business owners might also keep in mind that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." There are steps you can take to protect your business from becoming a cyber victim.

Consider these steps to protect your data.

1. Maintain robust malware detection software and keep existing software updated.
2. Train employees not to open links contained in emails from unknown senders. Research shows that 30% of security-related incidents are caused by internal actors.⁴
3. Encrypt your important data, such as bank account information, customer credit card numbers, etc.
4. Perform a security audit.

As obvious and simple as these precautions may sound, some businesses fall victim to cyber-attacks because of their failure to take them. While this is not an exhaustive list of ways to protect your data, consider it a start in working toward a more secure business.

1. SBA.gov, 2021
2. StaySafeOnline.org, 2020
3. National Conferences of State Legislatures, 2020
4. SmallBizTrends.com, 2020

Balancing Work and a Special Needs Child

By Jessica Searcy Kmetty

Finding a great job is not always easy, and it can be even harder for a parent who is juggling responsibilities of caring for a child with special needs.

In the 2019/2020 school year, there were 7.28 million disabled 3 to 21 year olds in the United States who were covered by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). According to the US Census Bureau Report, 2 in 7 households report having at least one member with a disability and one in every 26 American families reported raising a child with a disability.

With regulations in place prohibiting employers from asking certain interview or health-related questions, you may wonder how much information you should openly share with an employer or a perspective employer.

- Do I tell them up front that I may need to take time off to take my child to a doctor or hospital on a moment's notice?
- How do I handle regular doctor visits or therapy sessions that interfere with working hours?
- Will they even hire me (or promote me) if they know about my son/daughter?

Sometimes the best way to address these things is to be up front about what hurdles you face, how they present, and how you plan to address them.

For example, if you routinely take your child to the doctor or therapist, and you know you'll need that time off work, be up front about it and offer to make up the time in other ways.

If your child has been hospitalized in the past and that's a possibility again in the future, think about how it would impact your job and employer and explain how you would deal with it should it happen again. Will you work remotely? Will you and your spouse trade off so that each of you are able to work half-days through the duration of the hospitalization?

Be creative and offer more than one solution if you have more than one available to you. In a post-pandemic world, where employers have become accustomed to having to find creative solutions for remote workers, they're more likely to be open to finding solutions that work for everyone.

One of the most critical things to remember is that people can't help you solve a problem if they aren't informed about it.

If you are able to be honest about your situation and let your employer (or prospective employer) know about the possibility of limitations you have, then you can gain their support. It's equally important to be open with and cultivate relationships with coworkers or other employees that you may be able to rely on in a pinch. Having a few people who can cover for you in an emergency can be a tremendous help and offer peace of mind to all involved, but remember it's a two-way street, so you also need to reciprocate and find ways to offer them support as well.

Finally, it's important to build up an emergency fund that can help you stay financially afloat if/when you need to take a leave of absence that is unpaid.

Many families who have children with health issues routinely run out of paid time off, so it's important to plan for that eventuality in advance. If a normative family (one with no extraordinary needs) is advised to save 3-6 months of living expenses into their emergency fund, it makes sense to set aside more than that. Ideally, you should save enough to cover your maximum out-of-pocket medical expenses plus a few extra months of unexpected expenses. For many families this ends up being about 12 months of savings instead of 3-6, but do the math and determine your own level of comfort.

Being vulnerable with an employer and coworkers can be scary, but it doesn't have to be. Create a balance in how much you share and be willing to open up to people over time. Usually, people will rise to the occasion and endeavor to be supportive in your times of need.

Sources:

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/236296/number-of-disabled-youth-in-the-us/>



Team Updates



We are pleased to announce that Marc Shaffer has been named a 2021 NextGen Leader by the Kansas City Business Journal. The program "seeks to recognize the budding talent and to connect these emerging leaders while helping build their knowledge and skill sets". Check out his profile to learn what guided his career choice, where he hopes to visit on his next bucket list trip, and how his 30-day health challenge went during the pandemic.



Searcy Financial Services is proud to support Growing Futures Early Education Center by sponsoring their inaugural Harvesting Hope event on Friday, September 17th at Shawnee Mission Theatre in the Park. For more information, visit <https://one.bidpal.net/harvestinghope/welcome>.

Webinar Recap



We had a great time with Alex Villalobos-McAnderson from Villalobos Vitality during our "Become Mindful" webinar. If you weren't able to join us, you can watch the replay here: <https://vimeo.com/567165649> Alex provided a worksheet that is a self-study on beliefs and energy blockages. If you would like a copy, email your request to cali@searcyfinancial.com

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