

Trinity Worldwide Technologies, LLC

Enriching your business through technology!

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Think of a password as the combination to protect your valuable data files and personal information. Many small businesses neglect to enforce rules to make and keep them secure. Here are five tips to share with your colleagues that should go hand-in-hand with other security measures you already have put into place:

1. **Don't be obvious.** Never use personal information such as names of family members, pets, relatives, dates of birth, etc. to create a username, login, or password. Identity theft experts have become savvy at using the Web to reveal these details (think about your Facebook, Linked In, Twitter, company or personal website page.) It is vital to choose usernames and passwords that are disassociated from your personal history.
2. **Different is good.** Avoid using the same login and password across multiple sites and/or cards and accounts. If a thief gains access to one, it will enable them to quickly wreak havoc across your entire financial portfolio.
3. **Don't be short!** Studies have consistently shown that a large fraction of all user-chosen passwords are easily guessed automatically. Shorter passwords are more susceptible to commercially available password recovery tools. Such software is capable of testing millions of passwords/second. To improve the "strength" of your password, longer passwords are better. Include a minimum of eight characters, using both upper and lower case letters and a mix of letters, numerals, and symbols.
4. **Clever is better!** Don't even think about using an overly simplified password such as "12345678," "111111," or "abcdefg." Avoid sequential passwords or using passwords derived from adjacent letters on your keyboard. Also avoid using only look-alike substitutions of numbers or symbols. Malicious users who know enough to attempt to crack your password will not be fooled by common look-alike replacements, such as replacing an 'l' with a '1' or an 'a' with '@' as in "P@ssw0rd." But these substitutions can be effective when combined with other measures--such as length, misspellings, or variations in case--to improve the strength of your password. You may also want to consider using the first letter of each word in a phrase and then using the substitutions.
5. **Use a Password Manager.** There are many good applications on the Internet that will safeguard your passwords. Avoid using the one built-in to your browser since these have been exposed for their security flaws. Instead use a password manager that memorizes, encrypts, and protects each username and password that you enter on a Web site. Whenever you return to that site, the software should also automatically complete your login information. An excellent one that I have been using for years is RoboForm (www.roboform.com). For a nominal yearly fee, it not only keeps all of your passwords safe on your PC, but makes them available to other devices you may have such as a Smartphone or iPad.

Once you have followed all of these suggestions, don't even think about writing your password down and sticking it to your monitor, under your keyboard or mouse pad, or in your desk drawer.

"Tech Talk" is authored by Chamber member John Kalli, proprietor of Trinity Worldwide Technologies, and will cover important technical topics that we believe can help our members/readers. Typical topics can range from be alerted to possible threats, to learning how to get the most out of your system/network and learning about new technologies, software and online offerings. Basically, our goal is to provide you with the knowledge that can save you time, money and potential disaster. Trinity is a Microsoft Certified Partner, Microsoft Small Business Specialist and has vast experience in all realms of computer networking, repairs, installation and



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more. If you have a suggestion for a topic or would like to submit a question for possible inclusion in a future column, please contact John at JKalli@trinityww.com. To inquire about their services and see if you qualify for a no cost, no obligation assessment of your business' technology, you can reach them at services them at 732-780-8615 or via www.trinityww.com.



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