

Emerging: A New Version Of Business In 2020



Thomas Fox is president of Tech Experts, southeast Michigan's leading small business computer support company.

Signs of hope are emerging across the globe as economies slowly begin to reopen,

but the sad reality is there will never be a return to the "old normal."

Re-opening phases will look different for each industry and business type. B2C will have different challenges in reopening than B2B. Different regions have been affected in different ways and some more than others.

There is no cookie cutter model to reopening

McKinsey and Company has developed the CEO's guide to reopening (<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-restart>) based on research they have done across the globe, specifically in Europe and Asia. One of the biggest differentiators will be if you are B2B or B2C.

The impact COVID-19 has had on the typical household budget is significant. McKinsey has reported that 44% of French consumers and 45% of British consumers plan to significantly reduce the amount of discretionary spending over the next

weeks and months. This means, that as we consider re-opening our doors, we need to modify the anticipated traffic projections and customer base so we can accurately anticipate both our income and resources needed to successfully re-launch as restrictions begin to lift.

Another consideration that will primarily affect B2C is the social distancing recommendations that are still in place in almost every corner of the country.

Traffic flow within your retail location will need to be scrutinized and possibly re-designed to take into account the need for 6 ft of social distance between consumers, mandatory maximum capacity numbers, and ensuring that customers do not go opposite directions in the same aisle.

PPE or personal protective equipment, and access to it is another crucial consideration for businesses looking to reopen. Employees who

are looking to return will want to know that it is safe for them to do so and that they can minimize their exposure in light of the high contagiousness of the virus.

Things such as temperature checks prior to entering, the requirement of masks and other protective gear for your consumers will need to be considered. Additional access



to cleaning materials and hand-washing stations will need to be considered as well to decrease the likelihood of contamination within your storefront.

Restaurants will need to consider



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Remote Workforce Or Not - You Can Securely Protect And Back Up Your Corporate Information

“The best and most reliable way to prevent a phishing attack from affecting your business is through effective employee training. As another protective measure, you can install URL filtering software on your employees laptop or home computer to further reduce the risks of falling victim.”



Jason Cooley is Support Services Manager at Tech Experts.

One of the most common objections heard when talking with businesses about moving towards a remote

work strategy is the supposed security risks posed by not having all data contained within the physical confines of the office building.

While this has widely been debunked, the myth still remains. But the tide may be moving in the other direction now that many businesses were forced to move to an entirely remote workforce during the COVID-19 shutdown.

CNBC has reported that 85% of businesses are now operating 50% of their workforce remotely, and with tech giants Twitter and Facebook both reporting plans to move towards a continued remote strategy, the reality is that remote work in a larger capacity is going to become the norm instead of the exception.

Now is the time to prepare for the “new normal” that will become our reality.

Sadly, along with the threat of COVID-19, cyberattacks have grown as attackers realize that home networks are not as secure as corporate networks. However, security and back up firm Acronis shares 5 things that you can do to

protect your business data moving forward with a remote work strategy.

Five “must do’s” according to Acronis

Acronis is a leading cloud backup and security provider and one that we recommend widely to all of our customers. They list 5 “must do’s” as you set up your remote workforce, and as always, we are here to help you put these processes in place.

Must-Do #1: VPN - or Virtual Private Network

You have most likely heard of this technology as it has been around for a while. But if not, a VPN will encrypt all data while in transit to protect it from cyber-attackers.

Must-Do #2: Keep an eye out for phishing

Hackers are known for taking advantage of highly stressful events and we have seen an increase of COVID-19 themed phishing attempts and we expect this number to continue to rise as businesses reopen.

The best and most reliable way to prevent a phishing attack from affecting your business is through effective employee training. As another protective measure, you can install URL filtering software on your employees laptop or home computer to further reduce the risks of falling victim.

Acronis says, however, that you should always ask yourself if you were really expecting that email before opening or clicking any

links contained in the message.

Must-Do #3: Anti-Malware

Virus and malware protection has always been a standard recommendation, but with the wide net that is cast with remote work, it has become even more important that every endpoint that touches your corporate data has this protection installed on it.

Must-Do #4: Patch, patch, and patch

Regardless of your operating system, whether it be Microsoft or Apple, you need to ensure that you are operating under the most recent operating system. Many attacks occur by taking advantage of unpatched vulnerabilities.

Must-Do #5: Keep your password, and your workspace, to yourself

Just because the office location is at home does not automatically mean people can’t access sensitive information when you step away. Limit access to your computer even when you are at home and do not tell anyone your passwords.

Prepare for the future now

There is no question that the future we anticipated at the close of 2019 is different than the one that will ultimately surface.

By making the assumption that remote work will continue to be the norm instead of a return to the standard office environment will help your business be agile and meet challenges head-on.



Top Reasons To Record Your Business Calls

The 3cx Phone System, the voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) phone system that Tech Experts sells and services, has a call recording feature that's quite popular. The service has been available for quite a while now.

However, many small- and medium-sized businesses don't take advantage of the technology that lets them prioritize customer interaction. When used properly, call recording can strengthen your company's reputation and boost customer satisfaction.

Here are a few reasons to consider a 3cx Phone System with call recording:

Improve customer service

One of the most important reasons why businesses should always record their calls, no matter its significance, is to ensure high-quality customer service.

By reviewing calls, managers can understand how their agents have been dealing with customers, find out whether or not they've followed company protocol, and pinpoint any aspects that can be improved on.

Without call recording, managers would have to listen to each call in real time, which is a time-consuming process. By recording each call, not only will your managers save time, but your employees will also be motivated to perform at their best every time they're on the phone because they know their calls can always be reviewed.

Upgrade employee performance

According to Edgar Dale's Cone of Learning, people only remember 10% of what they've read, 50% of what they've seen and heard, and 90% of what they've done. By providing your agents with actual recordings of good and bad calling examples during training sessions,



and have them simulate calls afterwards, they'll be able to learn better and provide high-quality customer service faster.

Retrieve missed details and prevent litigation

With hundreds of phone calls daily, it's understandable if your employees don't catch every single detail. And for companies that require their agents to manually input information during calls, there's always a possibility that they'll forget or miss certain information. Needless to say, this could lead to disgruntled customers. If not properly handled,

this can harm your reputation, reduce work opportunities, and if things escalate, proceed to litigation.

VoIP's call recording feature lets you replay saved audio files to make sure you haven't missed any details, ensuring that all customer demands are met. And if you ever get into a dispute with your clients regarding who said what, you can always retrieve the exact audio file and have both sides listen to it, saving you thousands of dollars in legal fees.

Understand customer preferences

Have you ever received an inquiry about a product or service that's not included in your offerings? While your agents usually jot these requests down and pass them on to the relevant personnel, they may end up forgetting some if

numerous calls are being made that day. Tiny issues like this can lead to potentially huge losses. With call recording, you can review all your calls at the end of the day. You'll have a better picture of what certain customers are looking for so you can address them better.

VoIP allows businesses to make on-demand calls affordably, and its call recording feature helps companies improve their customer service and prevent litigation. If you think business VoIP is right for you, or if you have any questions, give us a call at (734) 457-5000.

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the above but also take into consideration the fact that they will not be able to serve as many people at one time due to the social distancing restrictions.

Dining space will be at a premium and a plan needs to be devised on how to effectively manage that reduced space while still keeping prospective diners happy even during what could amount to extreme waits.

Another thing for B2C businesses to look into is how to incorporate more electronic purchases and curb pickup options. The more you can provide your consumer with minimal contact, the better your odds of maintaining your the customer base.

B2B businesses will have more complex challenges. Different industries have been impacted in different ways and some more than others.

McKinsey is a bit vague in their advice here, but recommend that B2B businesses take a good look at their commercial priorities moving forward.

They also believe that B2B businesses that have been able to develop strong emotional relationships with their customers will be in a stronger position during the economic rebound process.

Three models for moving forward

Consulting firm BCG has laid out three main ways that governments are tackling the challenge in moving forward to reopening, and there are some key insights that we can tap into at a corporate level that can help determine your timeline for reopening.

The three ways are: the full reboot,

full reboot with restrictions for vulnerable populations, and the graduated approach.

The most difficult model to implement would be the full reboot, as is being seen in New Zealand. Under this model, new cases would be at zero before restarting social and economic activity with some minor restrictions (such as international travel.)

On the opposite end of the spectrum is the graduated approach as is being done in China and here in the United States. This model has governments lifting restrictions in graduated phases based on three factors: progression of the virus, public health system capacity, and public readiness.

And somewhere in the middle is the full reboot with restrictions. For this strategy, businesses would reopen, but vulnerable populations like the elderly and people with compromised immune systems would be under strict quarantines and is not something that would be sustainable for long periods of time.

Taking a deeper dive into a graduated restart

The graduated restart requires that we identify when is the right time to reopen. For your business, this may mean you need to look at the conditions of the virus in your area. Are cases increasing or decreasing? How is the capacity of your local health care facilities? Do they have enough capacity to help should you or your staff become ill?

The same way that our governments are tasked with keeping us safe, businesses have the responsibility of keeping our customers safe. This may mean reopening with restricted hours, or hours dedicated to vulnerable populations.

Determining the right time to open depends largely on your local region and conditions. Just because the government deems it the right time to open does not mean it is the right time for you.

Only you and your unique set of circumstances can be the true indicator as to the timeline to reopen.

A personal note...



President Roosevelt once said, "A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor." One thing 2020 has shown us so far is that we are in for a bumpy ride - but hopefully while 2020 opened with a lion, it will close with a lamb.

As we've discussed in the articles this month, the only certainty about the future right now is that it will be different than the future we imagined at the dawning of this year.

The rollercoaster is far from over.

I have watched all of our clients pivot and move. They've danced and fought their way through these uncertain times. It has been inspiring and something I think about often, especially when I hear yet more bad news about how this pandemic is causing an unbearable loss of life and economic devastation. Thank you for the inspiration and for your continued business. Don't hesitate to reach out if there is something we can do to help your business get through to the other side a little less scathed.

-Tom Fox