



“Insider Tips to Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier and More Profitably”

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

How Automation is Transforming our Service - With a Human Touch	Page 1	5 New Trends from a Study on the State of AI at Work	Page 2
Certifications Galore	Page 1	Our Top Cyber Tips for a Safe 2025	Page 2
Smart Windows 11 Settings for Productivity	Page 2	4 Reasons Why Ongoing Cyber Awareness Training & Simulation Beats One Off Training	Page 2
Ushering in a New Era	Page 2	Our Partnership with EE	Page 2



Wishing You All a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!!

- Lee Hewson
Managing Director

HOW AUTOMATION IS TRANSFORMING OUR SERVICE – WITH A HUMAN TOUCH

In the fast-paced world of IT support, finding ways to work smarter, not harder, is critical.

Over the past year, we've embraced the power of automation which has revolutionised the way we handle routine tasks for our clients.

By streamlining processes, reducing errors, and freeing up time for our engineers, automation has become an essential part of how we deliver on our promise of being Fast, Easy, and Personal.

Streamlining Common Requests

One of the most significant impacts of automation has been on routine change requests.

Whether it's onboarding a new employee or offboarding a departing one, these tasks require multiple steps that must be completed flawlessly. Automation ensures these processes are handled from start to finish without missing a step.

For example, as soon as a customer knows a new hire's start date, they can schedule the onboarding process.

Similarly, offboarding can begin as soon as an employee hands in their notice. This eliminates delays, ensures no steps are forgotten, and allows us to deliver a consistently high-quality service.

The Role of Automation in Error Reduction

Human error is an unavoidable part of repetitive tasks.

Distractions, fatigue, or simple oversight can result in missed steps or incomplete processes.

Automation removes this risk entirely. It doesn't get tired, it doesn't forget, and it always follows the same instructions.

This reliability has not only improved the quality of our service but also provided our clients with greater peace of mind.

For instance, when adding or removing users from systems, automation ensures every account is created or closed, permissions are applied correctly, and no sensitive data is left vulnerable.

The results? Fewer mistakes, quicker turnaround times, and happier clients.

Balancing Automation and Human Expertise

While automation has proven invaluable for handling repetitive, process-driven tasks, it's important to recognise its limits.

Automation doesn't understand cause and effect. It can't ask probing questions, analyse the broader context, or think critically about a complex issue. These are skills only humans possess.

This is where our engineers come in.

By taking routine tasks off their plates, automation gives our team more time to focus on what they do best—solving complex problems, thinking creatively, and providing the personal touch that builds trust and long-term relationships with our clients.

For example, while automation can run basic troubleshooting steps, diagnosing the root cause of an issue still requires human insight.

And when a client needs advice or guidance, no algorithm can replace the understanding and empathy of a skilled engineer.

Automation With a Human Touch: Our Future Vision

We're proud to sit at the forefront of this technology. Not only has automation transformed how we work internally, but we're also helping other MSPs harness its potential.

As the technology evolves, we'll continue to develop new automations that make life easier for both clients and engineers.

However, no matter how advanced automation becomes, it will never replace people.

Our strapline - **Fast, Easy, Personal** - captures this balance perfectly. Automation will always help us deliver services faster and more efficiently, but the personal touch will always come from our people.

A Smarter Way to Work

Incorporating automation into our service delivery isn't just about working smarter; it's about creating a better experience for everyone involved.

Our clients benefit from faster, more reliable service, while our engineers can focus on doing what they love—solving problems, building relationships, and driving innovation.

As we look to the future, we're excited to see how automation can continue to help us deliver exceptional IT services. But one thing is certain: at the heart of everything we do, there will always be people.

Certifications Galore



At Your IT we love learning and we're celebrating a host of new qualifications over the past couple of months.....

Our Head of Sales & Marketing, Craig, achieved the Chartered Institute of Marketing Level 6 Specialist Award in AI Marketing, Senior Business Advisor, Angus completed his Watchguard Sales Training, Kritika from the Service Desk got her Acronis Fundamentals certification and Automation Guru Gareth got his Rewst-200 certificate

SMART WINDOWS 11 SETTINGS FOR PRODUCTIVITY

The newest Windows OS is fast gaining ground on Windows 10. As of August 2024, Windows 11 had over 31% of the Windows market share. That is bound to increase fast as Windows 10 retires in 2025.

Already upgraded to the new operating system or planning to soon? You'll love these tips on optimising your Windows 11 experience and transforming your daily workflow.

1. Start Menu Customisation

- Pin Frequently Used Apps: Right-click on any app and select "Pin to Start." to keep your most-used applications just a click away.
- Organise into Folders: Drag and drop apps on top of each other to create folders.

2. Virtual Desktops

- Create a New Desktop: Click on the Task View button or press Win + Tab.

Click on "New Desktop" to create a new virtual space.

- Switch Between Desktops: Use Ctrl + Win + Left/Right Arrow to switch between desktops.

3. Snap Layouts and Snap Groups

- Use Snap Layouts: Hover over the maximise button on any window to see available snap layouts. Choose a layout to snap the window into place.
- Create Snap Groups: Snap windows into a layout. Windows 11 remembers the group. Hover over the taskbar icons to see and restore the snap group.

4. Focus Assist

- Enable Focus Assist: Search "Focus" from the taskbar and click Focus Settings. Choose your options and click to start a session.

- Set Automatic Rules: Configure automatic rules to enable Focus Assist during specific times. For example, when duplicating your display or when playing a game.

5. Taskbar Customisation

- Pin Apps to Taskbar: Right-click on any app and select "Pin to taskbar" for quick access.
- Adjust Taskbar Settings: Right-click on the taskbar and choose "Taskbar settings" to customise taskbar behaviors like hiding it in desktop mode or showing badges on taskbar buttons.

6. Keyboard Shortcuts

- Win + E: Open File Explorer.
- Win + I: Open Settings.
- Win + D: Show or hide the desktop.
- Win + L: Lock your PC.
- Alt + Tab: Switch between open apps.

7. Power and Battery Settings

- Adjust Power Mode: Go to Settings > System > Power & battery to choose a power mode that works best for you.
- Battery Saver: Enable Battery Saver to extend battery life. Use it when your device is running low or you're away from power for an extended time.

8. Storage Sense

- Enable Storage Sense: Go to Settings > System > Storage. Turn on Storage Sense and configure it to run automatically.
- Configure Cleanup Schedules: Set up schedules for several tasks to clean up your storage.

Looking for more IT tips? Our team of tech experts has many other productivity tips to share. Don't hesitate to reach out to us for more productivity enhancers.

USHERING IN A NEW ERA

Whilst it's with heavy hearts we say goodbye to one of our founders, Simon Cox, we're happy to announce a series of employee promotions.

The changes mark the start of a new chapter for us as we celebrate our 15th anniversary this year.

The promotions include:

Charley Clarke - from Service Desk Manager to Head of Service Delivery.

Nathan Harris - becomes Team Leader for the Technical Services Team.

Fern Ritchie - becomes Security & Compliance Team Leader.

In addition, Senior Business Advisor **Angus Unwin-Rose** has joined the Senior Leadership Team. There are now two under-35's within the senior leadership of the business.

Charley Clarke is our second-longest serving employee and his promotion involves taking over the management of the Technical Services team as well as running the Service Desk team.

Both Nathan and Fern joined Your IT Department as apprentices.

Managing Director, Lee Hewson, said the changes demonstrated the company's commitment to the development of its employees.

"It's important to us that all our staff have the opportunity to progress," said Lee. "We have our own in-house training programme which gives employees the chance to develop their careers. That way, we can retain high quality staff and continue to provide excellent customer service."

The changes follow the decision by founding director, Simon, to retire following a period of ill health. Simon and Lee established Your IT Department in a small office in Nottingham in 2009.

From that initial partnership, the business now employs 24 staff and has an annual turnover of £2.4M.

"I've thoroughly enjoyed my time helping to develop Your IT Department into the successful business it is today," said Simon.

"I'm proud that we've created and secured local jobs and helped employees to develop their careers. The decision to retire is not one I've made lightly, but it's the right time to let other people flourish within the company."

5 NEW TRENDS FROM A STUDY ON THE STATE OF AI AT WORK

Microsoft and LinkedIn released a joint report providing valuable insights into the current state of AI in the workplace.

The study sheds light on how AI is transforming the way we work. Here are the main trends identified:

- Employees want and expect AI at work. AI helps them do certain things faster.
- AI skills are becoming more in demand. Companies are seeking AI-skilled staff.
- The evolving role of employees using AI. Companies can benefit from their AI power users.
- Things can get messy fast without a plan. It's the "Wild West" without a use policy in place.
- For the ethical considerations and trust in AI, there must be clear communications to employees and customers about how AI is used.

OUR TOP CYBER TIPS FOR A SAFE 2025

- **Improve your passwords.** Make them long & complex and don't reuse them. Consider a password manager.
- **Implement two factor authentication.** Everywhere you can. That includes Facebook, WhatsApp, and your personal email as well as all of your business apps.

- **Be careful what you share.** Hackers and scammers love you to share important dates, pets names and anything else you might use in a password!

- **Back up your data.** Back up regularly and test backups can be recovered quickly. And remember whilst Microsoft 365 offers robust features, it doesn't provide comprehensive backup solutions for your data. Accidental deletions, or malicious attacks, could still result in data loss.

- **If in doubt don't click!** Scammers emails and texts are so difficult to spot nowadays so exercise extreme caution. If you're not sure call whoever the communication is from. Better safe than sorry!

4 REASONS WHY ONGOING CYBER AWARENESS TRAINING & SIMULATION BEATS ONE-OFF TRAINING

Improved Retention Through Repetition

Cybersecurity threats evolve rapidly, and a single training session won't make employees experts for life. Ongoing training reinforces critical concepts, ensuring employees stay sharp and prepared for new challenges. Repetition solidifies knowledge.

Adaptability to Emerging Threats

Cybercriminals constantly adapt their tactics, making outdated knowledge ineffective. Continuous training ensures employees are educated about the latest threats, such as ransomware, deepfake phishing, and social engineering schemes.

Measurable Progress and Risk Mitigation

Regular training and simulations allow you to track improvements over time. Metrics provide tangible insights into the organisation's cybersecurity posture, highlighting areas that need more focus.

Fosters a Culture of Security Awareness

One-off training can feel like a tick-box exercise, ongoing initiatives create a culture where cybersecurity is prioritised daily. Employees remain engaged and aware, reducing complacency and ensuring security is a shared responsibility across the organisation.



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