

“As a business owner, I know you don’t have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That’s where we *shine!* Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!”
-Adam Morris, Avagio IT Services



October 2011

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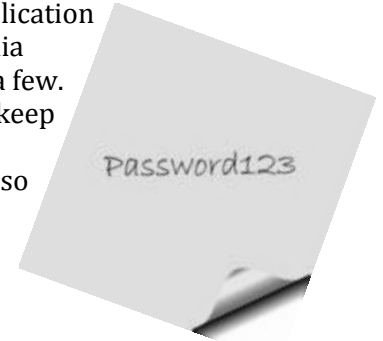
“Dictionary is the only place that success comes before work.”
~Vince Lombardi

SWITCHED ON

“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably”

7 Tips For Creating A Secure Password

You’ve got one for every site and every application you use--e-mail, online banking, social media sites, and your CRM system, just to name a few. With so many password protected sites to keep track of, the inclination is to always use the same password for every site or to make it so easy you can’t possibly forget it (like using Password123). Unfortunately, this compromises all of your data and makes it easy for cyber-attackers to steal sensitive, confidential information.



Studies have shown that password security is still the weakest link in keeping data safe. There are some simple things you can remember when creating a password that can help protect your information.

Here Are 7 Tips To Consider:

- 1) Use special characters and numbers.
- 2) Mix up upper case and lower case letters.
- 3) Make sure your password is a minimum of 8 characters.
- 4) Be sure it’s not something that can be guessed easily (postcode, phone number, birthdate, your name).
- 5) Randomly replace letters with numbers, e.g. shake becomes \$h@ke.
- 6) Pick a sentence or phrase, and reduce it to first letters of each word only, e.g. “A Golden Key Can Open Any Door” becomes AGKCOAD.
- 7) Reverse the spelling of a word, e.g. partnership becomes pihsnrentrap.

Not all cyber-attacks can be avoided, but don’t make it too easy for them. Be proactive and update all of your passwords so they meet the above criteria.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month: Bedphones



Just like when you were a baby, you can just drift off to sleep without a lullaby. While your lullaby preferences may have changed from songs like "Rock-a-bye-baby" or "Hush Little Baby" to tunes by Coldplay or perhaps the latest X Factor winner, the need for soothing still exists. And most likely you have been forced to go to sleep with standard headphones that cause a bit of discomfort.

Well not anymore!

Bedphones have cushy pads and ear-hook style buds that are extremely thin and held in place by a length of moldable memory wire. They also come with an app available on the Android platform that can shut off the music automatically when you fall asleep. There's also the ability to set a timer which gradually counts down music volume as the timer runs down.

Soothing music and comfort all in one! Get your Bedphones for around £27.00.

Learn more at:
www.ihadphones.co.uk/bedphones-3266.html

The Columbo Effect

The recent passing of Peter Falk brings to mind one of the most useful techniques in negotiation. It's called "The Columbo Effect."

As a homicide detective in Los Angeles, Lt. Columbo wore a aggedy trench coat, drove a beat-up Peugeot, told corny and heartwarming stories about his wife and dog, and had the habit of forgetting to ask a key question in every interview and interrogation.

In short, he put the other person at ease because they felt superior to Columbo. "How could this bumbling, scatterbrained misfit outwit me?" they all mused.

For the negotiator, whether you're trying to win a million-dollar contract or simply make a sale, it's advantageous to appear a "little less okay" than your respected opponent. It makes them feel comfortable and maybe even a bit smug.

Then you've got them right where you want them

This is not to say that you should be unprofessional. Leveraging The Columbo Effect simply means not being afraid of being less than perfect. Do you enjoy being around perfect people? No one does. If you show the other person that you're imperfect, they will be more apt to make mistakes. Think of Columbo. He always got his man or woman—and that's because they usually said too much, assuming he was inept, and then dropped clues right in his lap.

How do you act "less okay" than your opponent in a negotiation? Struggle a bit with your answer. Ask to borrow a pen and paper to take notes. Forget your business cards for the first meeting. Drop your glasses mid-discussion.

The tougher the negotiation, the more critical it is to understand that if someone in the room has to be not-okay, it will be you and not your adversary. When your adversary feels not-okay, the barriers go up much faster than you can break them down. But not-okay-ness on your part, or The Columbo Effect, breaks down barriers like magic.

If you have any doubts about the wisdom of this advice, it couldn't be easier to check out. The next time you find yourself in a situation in which your adversary is maybe just a little standoffish or doubtful, try being a little less okay than they are. Pretend your pen has run out of ink, or search your pocket for some paper and ask to borrow a slip of theirs. You will notice an immediate, beneficial difference in the atmosphere of this negotiation.

Guest article provided by: Jim Camp

Jim Camp is the world's number 1 negotiation coach and expert. His best-selling books are printed in 14 languages and required reading all over the world in the most prestigious business school and universities. His new Camp Negotiation Institute delivers his "Start With No" credentialed courses for Team Members, Team Leaders, and Camp Chief Negotiation Officer/Coach.

<http://startwithno.com>



The Lighter Side...



What Would You Do?

A Real-Life Interview Question

You are driving along in your car on a crazy, stormy night. You pass a bus stop and see three people waiting for a bus:

- ◇ An old lady who looks like she is about to die.
- ◇ An old friend who once saved your life.
- ◇ The perfect man or woman you have been dreaming about.

Which would you choose to offer a ride?

Think carefully, this is quite a moral dilemma...

You could offer the old lady a ride because she looks pretty pitiful so you probably **should** save her first.

You might want to take your old friend, after all he did save your life once.

But you must consider that you may never see the love of your life again so this may be your only opportunity.

This scenario has been used as an interview question by employers. In one experience, out of the 200 applicants, the one who was hired answered as follows:

"I would give the car keys to my old friend and have him take the old lady to the hospital. Then I would stay behind and wait for the bus with the woman of my dreams."

This is just a reminder that there are always several solutions in solving your problems. Sometimes you just have to be creative!

Client Spotlight

We are delighted this month to introduce Power Logistics. They have been a fantastic client of Avagio for around a year now.



Power Logistics provide reliable temporary electrical services, air conditioning, heating and lighting solutions to some of the largest and most prestigious music, corporate and sporting events in the UK, Europe and Worldwide. Our experience ranges from providing uninterrupted power to broadcasting companies such as the BBC to the planning and facilitation of major events that include the **Queen's Golden Jubilee** and **London's New Year's Eve Celebrations**, with which we have been involved for over ten years. This year has seen us at events as diverse as **The Royal Wedding, V Festival, the UEFA Cup Final at Wembley and the Welsh National Eisteddfod**. Our flexible and reliable approach has allowed us to provide services in challenging locations such as **Oman, Qatar, Hong Kong, Singapore, Maldives, Turkey and Russia**.

We are a close-knit, family run company which was born out of a "show must go on" ethic that prevails in the live music industry. To this maxim Power Logistics has added "on time and uninterrupted". Our dedicated customer-focused approach has seen the company reach the peak of its core market, live music, and expand into additional areas such as Exhibitions, Corporate Events, Sporting Events, Private Parties, Heavy Industrial Work and Special Projects.

We maintain a whole host of equipment and services in house from our depot at Draycot Cerne near Chippenham; from a fleet of dedicated event generators, suitable for use with bio diesel, to our extensive stock of cable, distribution and lighting equipment. In addition we also have the facilities and expertise to fabricate new products, as well as adapting existing equipment to meet a client's specific requirements.

Our willingness to get involved with our clients' wildest and often most challenging ideas, as well as providing small scale cost-effective solutions, makes us a positive choice when looking for a reliable event partner.

Problem free and easy to use IT is vital to our business as we have engineers and project managers working around the world. Our project managers require constant access to e-mails, the internet and project documentation at all times of the day and night, wherever they may be, to enable them to carry out their jobs effectively and efficiently. We have now been working with Avagio for almost a year having changed from our previous IT support company. **All the guys at Avagio are knowledgeable, helpful and never baffle us with "IT Jargon". The company has a real can-do attitude and a genuine understanding of our requirements. They always have innovative and forward thinking suggestions to tackle any issues we have thrown their way.**

It is no secret that 2012 will be an important year to a company like ours and having a reliable partner such as Avagio, gives us that added confidence that we can continue to deliver our services wherever we may find ourselves.

Protect Your Kids Online For Just £20

Nearly 90% of 8-16 year olds have seen inappropriate images online. Most of them stumble upon it as a result of conducting research for their homework. With frightening numbers of pornography, child predators, and other harmful online risks, protecting your children's online activity is a MUST.

With the following 4 features, Net Nanny Parental Controls software by ContentWatch (around £20 at www.netnanny.co.uk) helps you do just that.

1) Blocks "Mature" Games - The software scans the online game for its ESRB ratings (like movie ratings, but for computer games). If the game isn't kid-friendly, the computer blocks it.

2) Filters Facebook - Net Nanny can provide parents with a report on who their kids' "friends" are, what pictures and videos they are looking at, and their Facebook Instant Message conversations.

3) Prevents Proxy Sites From Working - Content filters work by making a "blacklist" of sites that it won't allow. If you tried to type in a blacklisted website address, you wouldn't get very far. But there's a sneaky way around this called a "Proxy Server."

Proxy Server web addresses are usually content neutral, so users can go there without flagging the blacklist system. Once in, your child can navigate to their original blacklisted site. Net Nanny prevents this by blocking both proxy server entries and the inappropriate website itself.

4) Keeps Parents Informed - Whenever your child is trying to gain access to something you have blocked, Net Nanny sends an e-mail notification to the parents.

Heroes Walk - Liam Broughton



Last Sunday (25/10/11) I took part in a walk to raise money for Help for Heroes.

It was a 26 mile cross country walk from Avebury to Stonehenge and 300 people took part.

This was the biggest challenge that I have under taken to date. Unfortunately, my training had not gone quote to plan, and after a problem with both feet and my right leg, I had some concerns about how this was going to go before I even started!

Thinking ahead, I got up extra early and I was one of the first to set off but soon I had only the medical team behind me as I struggled to walk up hills and along small tracks and my feet were killing me every step of the way. It was a relief to get to the first water stop where a doctor had a look at my feet and advised me not to continue. However, I was determined to succeed and not give up so we compromised and they took me to one of the later water stops.

The walk afterwards to the end was easier, as there were wider tracks along the Salisbury plains. It was fantastic when I could see Stonehenge after walking up the last hill. It felt like a massive achievement after walking for 8 hours.

To date I have raised nearly £300. If you would still like to sponsor me the link is <http://www.bmycharity.com/heroWalkLB>.

Many thanks
Liam Broughton
Helpdesk Manager

Trivia Challenge

Congratulations go to Richard Barham from Subacoustech Environmental who won last months trivia challenge and was rewarded with a £10 WHSmith eVoucher. A sheet music book was purchased - Richard enjoys playing the guitar in his spare time.

Last months answer was

The Panama Canal was unofficially opened on 15th August 1914.



Who Wants To Win A £10 Amazon Gift Voucher?

Take our monthly **"Trivia Challenge"** and you could win too!

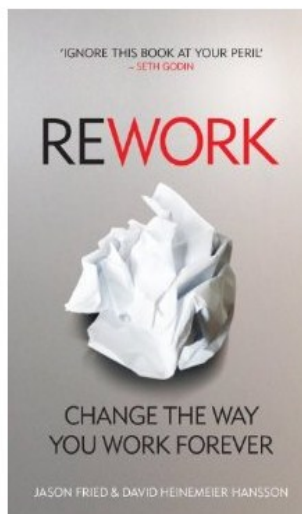
What was the name of the singing cowboy in the musical Oklahoma!?

- a-Curley
- b-Lucky
- c-Frankie
- d-Petey

Send your answer via email to triviachallenge@avagio.co.uk right now. The sender of the first correct e mail received will win the prize.

From The Avagio Bookshelf:

ReWork by Jason Fried and David Heinemeier Hansson



"ASAP is Poison, Meetings are toxic, Planning is guessing & Inspiration is perishable"

Re work is a compilation of short insights compiled by a small software company (37 Signals) over their growth from a 3 man company in 1999 to a 16 man company in 2010. It sets out to challenge much of the conventional wisdom around starting and growing a successful business and how we spend our time and structure our work. The writing style is very conversational and direct.

Whilst I do not agree with all of their opinions, I did find myself nodding with most of their views and because of the short sharp format, wanting to consume more and more of their insights as quickly as possible. I think I read this book in less than 2 hours. That's good.

So is this a book a manual on how to build a successful business? No. It is not designed to do that. Rather it lists out the ideas and visions that have worked for them and importantly in many cases breaks the rules of business. It certainly made me question some of the assumptions and beliefs I have and I will certainly be referring to this book again.

A couple of examples:

"How to say your sorry" - The authors explain the concept of the non-apology apology which sounds like an apology but doesn't accept any blame eg We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused. How many times have you heard that? If you spill coffee on someone on a train, would you say "I apologise" or "I'm so sorry!" The authors go on to explain how a good apology accepts responsibility and is not conditional.

Here's another nugget: "Make tiny decisions. Big decisions are hard to make and hard to change. And once you make one, the tendency is to continue believing you made the right decision even if you didn't. Instead, make small choices that are small enough that they are effectively temporary. There no big penalty if you mess up. You just fix it"

How does Avagio perform?

If you have logged a case with Avagio over the last week or so, you may have noticed that we now provide the opportunity for you to provide feedback on our performance on every closed case email.

This is part of our WOW initiative – our focus on continuous improvement of the services we provide and the way we deliver them to our clients.

It is really important to us to get constructive feedback from our clients and understand what you like and if there is anything we can improve upon.

Our quick feedback form is designed to provide an easy non-intrusive and timely facility to do this.

So please, next time we complete some work for you, just take a moment (it should not take longer than a minute) to answer the four simple multiple choice questions by clicking on the link in the case close email.

Thank you very much for your support – we will keep you posted on the results.

Avagio Referral Incentive

Our best clients come as referrals from satisfied clients just like **YOU** and we want to reward **YOU** for this.

Our ideal clients are businesses in the West of England with between 5 to 100 computers. Ideally we are looking for successful growing businesses that simply want their IT to work, to support their business plans and want their staff to be as productive as possible. Most of our target market will already be using an existing IT support company – probably with variable results.

We advise on and look after smaller businesses IT so that the business owners and managers can focus on their core business. We are there for day to day support but also to help our clients make the right long term technology solutions. We can help with most technology needs including strategy, security, telephone solutions, new office setups and competitive supply of hardware and software

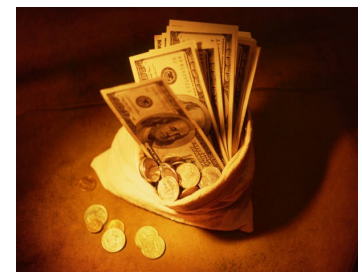
You Might Be Chatting With A Friend And Hear Them Say:-

“Our IT problems keep coming back and never really get resolved properly.”

“We can never get hold of our engineer, we get voicemail or we have to wait hours for a call back”.

“The last project was not executed properly - took too much time and cost more than we budgeted for”.

For each colleague that you refer to us that becomes an appointment we will send **£25** to **you** or **your favourite charity**. If your referral becomes a client, we will send an additional **£100** to **you** or **your favourite charity**.



If you pass on an introduction to us our process will be as follows:

1. Discuss with you who they are, what they do and your relationship with them.
2. Call the contact and all being well, arrange to meet.
3. If we feel there is a mutual fit, follow up and ask them if they would like to purchase our services.
4. We promise to treat your referrals with kid gloves and guarantee no high pressure sales tactics.

Just drop me an email at adam.morris@avagio.co.uk or give me a call on 01249 654871. I look forward to hearing from you.

Get More Free Tips, Tools, and Services At Our Web Site: www.avagio.co.uk