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How To Prevent Cyber Crime



Newtek - The Small Business Authority, CONTRIBUTOR

We provide solutions for small businesses across the country. [FULL BIO](#) ✓

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Prevention will always be your best line of defense against cyber criminals. Like any other criminal activity, those most vulnerable tend to be the first targeted.

Ideally, you'll want to work with a IT security expert to assess your specific needs and vulnerabilities, but there are certainly some universal steps you can take that will greatly reduce your likelihood of attack.

Prevention, Step One: Education and Training

You wouldn't let your unlicensed employees drive your company van, would you? Like driving, you and any employees that have access to your business network must have a foundational education before taking the wheel.

What are your security policies? Are they well defined?

Do all your employees understand the most common hacking tactics, such as phishing, social engineering, or packet sniffing (to name just a few)?

Education and awareness across your staff will go a long way to protect yourself against many types of cybercrime.

Prevention, Step Two: Securing Computers, Digital Assets, and Networking

How safe is your vehicle? Sure, small-business budgets are tight, and finding ways to save is always going to be a priority for small-business owners, but

most of us wouldn't drive without our seat belts securely latched or in a car without basic safety features.

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There are some things you can't simply cut corners on—and it will save you an incredible amount of money in the long run when considering the risks.

Is all software housed within your network continually up to date? Exploits in software are very common ways hackers gain access to systems and sensitive data. Updating software on network-connected machines should always be a top priority.

Do you have business-class antivirus software installed (and up to date) on all office workstations and servers? Leading antivirus software can detect, remove, and protect your machines and network from malware.

Do you scan your [website or web applications](#) for malware? Many of us are used to checking for viruses and malware on our personal computers, but don't realize that websites and web applications are just as susceptible.

Do you have reliable backups of all of your critical [data](#)? Recovering from many types of common cybercrimes often involves restoring your data from a point prior to the event in question. Not having reliable and securely stored backups of your data is a significant liability.

Is your network equipped to handle network-specific attacks? Earlier, we mentioned a common type of network attack called a DDOS. Unsophisticated networks are particularly susceptible to these, as DDOS mitigation devices

and tools often require enterprise-sized budgets. If you own a small business, this type of luxury wouldn't normally be practical, financially speaking. However, with the growing adoption of [cloud and utility computing services](#), [using a quality cloud-computing partner](#)— one that has already invested the necessary capital to protect its network—is a cost-effective solution.

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MAY 18, 2016 @ 12:06 PM VIEWS

This Entrepreneur Built His Business Through Social Media (You Can Too)



Cheryl Conner, CONTRIBUTOR

I write about small businesses doing innovative PR [FULL BIO](#) ✓

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When it comes to doing your own PR (particularly without overtly *promoting* yourself), author, business advisor and personal development/management

coach [Richie Norton](#) is surely one of the best.

I became aware of Norton earlier this year in the midst of helping a client (Greg Pesci, CEO of Spera, Inc. who is launching a new platform for freelancers) to develop a strategy for Influencer Marketing. As we identified the most influential people we could find and potentially engage to spread ideas in support of the freelance economy, Norton's name was one of several that rose to the top of the list.



Author and business advisor Richie Norton uses social media and email as his primary forms of PR (Image courtesy of [RichieNorton.com](#))

Then we met. Immediately I was taken not nearly so much by the reach of Norton's influence (to more than 70 nationalities), his status as a [bestselling author](#) ("*The Power of Starting Something Stupid*" and "*Resumes Are Dead and What to Do About It*") or the Tier 1 press he's achieved (*CNN*, *Forbes*, *HuffingtonPost*, *Entrepreneur*, *Inc.*) as by the fact he's achieved it all by himself.

Norton has yet to engage an agency, or as far as I can tell, to consciously pitch himself to the press. He is down to earth and non-promotional. Furthermore, he is open about what he's done, what's worked, what hasn't, and shares freely all that he's learned that could be of value to others.

He's a true thought leader, probably since before the concept emerged, and who doesn't appear to have ever aspired to the role. So of course I wanted to know his secrets. In a follow up interview call, here's what I learned.

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There is no Single Secret. “What have I done for PR? I’m continually figuring it out as I go,” Richie says. “As I look backward I connect the dots on what’s working and what’s not.” When Norton sees someone doing something effectively, he reaches out (much like I reached out to him, I assume). First, he and the executives he admires talk strategically, about goals achieved at a high level, and then the talk turns to the tactics that are serving them well. This is a goldmine of information as successful people are surprisingly willing to tell what they’ve done, especially when approached in the context of mutual sharing and respect for their exceptional achievement.

Social Media is Amazing. Norton appears to be one of the rare people who has truly captured social media’s power. “Medium, Twitter, Instagram and now Snapchat—people are people and are going to hang out wherever they choose to hangout,” he observes. “It used to be that if you had a message, you tried to bring the people to you. That’s incredible if you can do it. But far more likely, you’ll need to go to them, where they are. When you do, you can invite and bring them back to you. And this is where the magic begins.”

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