

## Imminent Danger:

### Are you actually paying someone to cause your downfall?



Would you pay a criminal to break into your business? Would you hire a corrupt bookkeeper you know nothing about and then give them full access to your bank accounts and credit cards? Of course not! Yet we constantly see something far more damaging.

First, let me ask - what's worse? Would you rather have your business checking account completely cleaned out or would you rather lose all of your firm's data irretrievably? Everything. Payroll, customer database, all accounting, email... everything gone and have to start over from scratch. Could your business even survive? Do you even know what to pay your staff? Could you even work at all? I suspect, as horrible as it would be, most firms would rather have their bank accounts cleaned out than have their data destroyed.

People know to limit access to their bank accounts, checks, and credit cards. They are careful to hire only experts and even then, keep an eye on everything. Yet, the exact same firms will let anyone (without a second thought) have access to their most critical systems that can cause far more damage!

Their neighbor's son who "knows computers". A guy they met at a function that "does computer work". The guy that has been helping them so far without any issues. That person probably has the best of intentions, probably even some experience in a few areas. It's THAT guy we see running away when (not if) it all blows up. We get "that" call all the time – but by then it's too late.

Fortunately, it's easy to fix.

You're already done the most important thing – you've become aware of the danger. Just knowing that your computer systems are as important as, or even more important, to protect than your money is the first half of preventing a nightmare.

Let me be blunt, the computer industry is full of disastrous people. There is no license required to be a certified expert. There is no mandatory continuing professional education. Anyone can claim to be a computer expert and the most dangerous people often claim it and believe it – until that day their chips get called and something goes wrong.

So the first half is just being aware of the danger. The second half is knowing who should be allowed to even touch your computer network. So here are some quick tips.

Do they have a proven track record? A REAL proven track record. By this I mean have they supported lots of different kinds of businesses through thick and thin for at least ten years? Do they have client

testimonials praising them for firms they have worked with for a decade or longer? Hint: a person that gives you testimonial from a firm they are still in the honeymoon stage with means nothing. Shameless plug: Our single biggest pride at InfoStream is in our Long-Term, Fanatically-Loyal, clients. We'd take a bullet for them.

Do they have a team of certified professionals? Are there many top level certifications in IT (not the entry level stuff)? What about business degrees like MBAs and CPAs? Shameless plug again: We have all of that and I would argue we are more concerned and paranoid about YOUR own data than even YOU are!

Have they been through disasters? Do they have backups on their backups... and then even more backups? Are they recognized experts on security? Do you KNOW they would be there for you in a disaster – night, day and weekend? Are they recognized as top experts on business IT systems? Shameless plug... well... you get the idea....

We see it over and over again. It's horrible. A manager or owner virtually in tears. A firm dead in its tracks. The current computer person in full on panic and working around the clock to try and fix things but back at square one. No sleep. Lots of stress. They always think they had a good backup. They always thought that person knew what they were doing. They trusted them. Maybe for years they were problem free. And now they are facing bankruptcy.

The highly respected Gartner Group found that 43 percent of companies were immediately put out of business by a "major loss" of computer records, 51 percent permanently closed their doors within two years — leaving a mere six percent "survival" rate. Six percent survival! (Again, they always thought they had a good backup).

It's our experience that the percentage of firms and individuals doing IT support for business that are thorough and competent are in the single digits. A huge majority are either incompetent or are "firefighters" that know how to fix bugs but have no strategic planning expertise at all. They can apply a Band-Aid but will miss the cancer spreading until it's too late.

You wouldn't hire a guy that read some stuff online to do your heart surgery. You wouldn't hire a bookkeeper with a criminal record for stealing. You wouldn't trust your children with the guy you met in the park. Why are so many firms trusting an "IT Person" or firm that can literally end them?

**Now you know the secret formula. Awareness + the right team = saving your own bacon.**

If we can help or even just answer some questions, please feel free to contact us as we love to help! You can call us at 561-968-046 or e-mail us at [support@infostream.cc](mailto:support@infostream.cc). For many firms, we will even do a free network review and audit.