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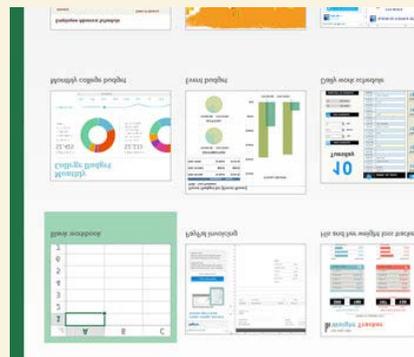
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OPTIMIZING TECHNOLOGY

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3 MICROSOFT EXCEL FUNCTIONS CERTAIN TO MAKE YOUR COMPANY MORE PRODUCTIVE



Microsoft Excel is such a powerful tool. We all know it, but most of what we use the program for are simple calculations and data collections even though we know that there is so much more there. **The problem for most of us is that there are TOO MANY functions and tools to use**, so we get lost, don't know what we could or should use and, don't even try.

To help you out, we've picked 3 of our favorite functions to share with you. Using any one of these functions is certain to improve your company charts and make you more productive.

Conditional Formatting:

Did you know that you can apply this simple tool to a collection of data and Excel will automatically format your data via color coding so it will "pop out" based on any criteria you choose? If you have any size data set that you need to analyze, this function greatly simplifies your job.

CountIF, SumIF and AverageIF:

These rarely used functions are amazing when you apply them. If you have a spreadsheet that's full of data with common classifications or labels, you can easily count, sum or average each label using these 3 formulas. The best part? If you update any data, your functions will automatically update based on your changes. If you've never used any of these 3 IF functions, give them a whirl on your next spreadsheet.

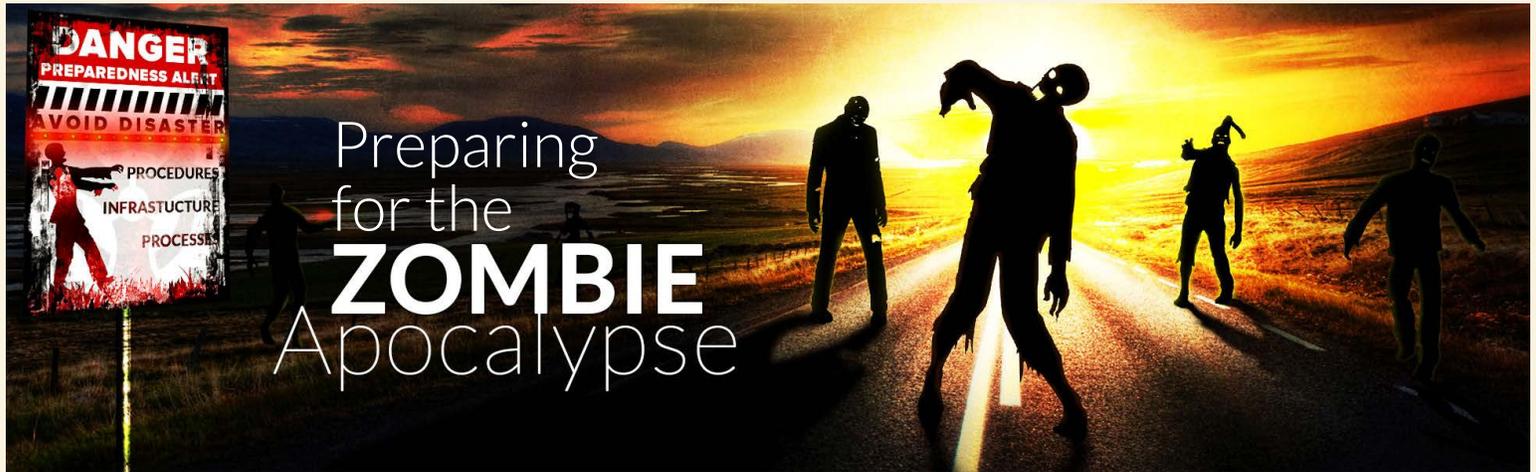
Paste Special:

I'm sure you may have used this function before, but you probably never realized half of its power comes from the part that we hardly use! Use the paste special function to convert your spreadsheet data from rows to columns (and vice versa), divide (or multiply) a whole series of numbers and more!



Dan Edwards, CEO & Founder
Pact-One Solutions

PREPARING YOUR DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN IS LIKE



This time last year, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention launched a “Zombie Apocalypse” campaign to educate citizens on disaster-preparedness. The campaign pushed the idea that if citizens were well-equipped to deal with a zombie pandemic, then they would be prepared for just about any type disaster, both natural and man-made. This campaign sparked an idea within us: preparing your business continuity plan is just like prepping for a zombie invasion! Here’s how!

1. Make a list of mission critical items: When you’re preparing for an invasion, you often identify mission-critical items and their locations, in order to ensure that you have what it is that you need to move forward. The same tactic can be approached when you are prepping your backup. Figure out the data, applications, and services that you’ll need to keep your business running. Those will be the items that you save first when hit with disaster.

2. Expose vulnerabilities in your current infrastructure: They say that the key to a good offense is an even better defense and when protecting yourself from the walking dead, you’ll need a safe haven. Stay away from open spaces and seek places of high elevation. Zombies can’t climb! In regards to your network, run a discovery program or meet with a technology expert to determine the weak points in your existing setup and develop a plan to mitigate the potential damages you’ll face.

3. Follow enforcement procedures: In states of chaos, like a zombie invasion, the only way to keep the peace and remain calm is to have a set of rules and regulations to follow. You’d need to be able to clearly specify the roles and duties of each person during recovery and there must be policies that each person must follow. The same can be said for your business. There needs to be enforcement policies to ensure that government regulations are being met such as HIPAA or SEC guidelines.

4. Create specific survival processes: When things are running amuck, you’ll need step-by-step procedures to follow in order to get from point A (where the zombies are) to point B (where the zombies aren’t). When your business faces a security breach, you’ll need the same thing. What are the first things that you will encrypt? Who is the first person that you will call? What are the first things that you will back up?

5. Follow your plan: While it could be easy to stray from your recovery plan, especially when faced with unforeseen circumstances, it is vital that you stick to the plan that you already have in place. Think about it. If you’ve taken the proper steps ahead of time, you should have a response or action to deal with any disaster thrown your way, whether physical (a zombie chasing you or having your desktops stolen) or internal (your secretary being bit, and turned into a walker of the night, or employee theft). Tip: If faced with the nightwalkers, head towards the water. Have you seen a zombie swim? Yeah, neither have we.

6. Strengthen your infrastructure: You’ve taken the time to find out where your security vulnerabilities lie, now is the time to strengthen those weak points. While zombies are not known for their intelligence, one may accidentally discover that they need to “pull” instead of “push” on that front door. Hackers are a bit more intelligent. They’ll realize exactly what safeguards you are missing and exploit those, so if you make your technical organization as strong as possible, you’ll run a better chance of survival.

The team here at Pact-One are experts when it comes to disaster recovery planning—we’ve got your business covered when it comes to any type of disaster, even the Zombie Apocalypse! Before the walking dead and technology brain eaters arrive, give us a call and we’ll prep you and your business to survive!

6 TOOLS TO BETTER MANAGE YOUR IN-BOX



In 2013, over 100 billion business e-mails were sent every day. According to the Radicati Group, that number is expected to exceed 132 billion e-mails per day by 2017.

That means approximately 100 e-mails will hit your in-box per day!

No wonder it's so hard to keep your in-box relatively clean. Here are some tools that can help:

MAILBOX:

Mailbox makes it easy to organize your in-box from your smartphone. You can quickly archive, delete or save messages for later. You can even add e-mails to your to-do list so you never forget about a message that you didn't have time to address when it first arrived.

THE EMAIL GAME:

The Email Game turns responding to and archiving e-mails into – you guessed it – a game. Skip an e-mail and you lose 25 points; respond to one and you gain 175 points. You can also challenge yourself to sort through your e-mail in a set time period.

UNROLL.ME:

Sorting through all the e-mail you've subscribed to (or been subscribed to) can be tough. This service takes all your subscription-based e-mails and transforms them into a daily digest.



SANEBOX:

SaneBox moves unimportant e-mails out of sight so you can focus on your most important tasks. Using an algorithm to filter through your e-mails and nonessentials, SaneBox sorts your non important information into a folder that you can look at later. Say goodbye to productivity loss!

ACTIVEINBOX:

If you use Gmail, ActiveInbox turns your inbox into a task management system. You can categorize tasks as "action," "waiting on" or "overdue." If you need something done on a certain day, you can schedule it on your calendar and receive a reminder.

OUTLOOK TASKS AND CALENDAR:

Microsoft Outlook allows the user to right click on any email item and choose "Move" and select an alternative folder to move the item to. So you can move the email to your calendar if it's related to an event or to your task list where you can assign a start and end date.

Gadget of the Month: NEO GRAB

It's amazing how quickly technology evolves. When the GPS devices for cars first came out, did you imagine that we would reach a point where our phones could do that job? It's astonishing! More and more, we see people using their phones to navigate in the car and though convenient, holding on to the phone while driving can be dangerous. This has resulted in the mass production of a series of phone-holding apparatuses that cling to the car in the same manner that our GPS's did.

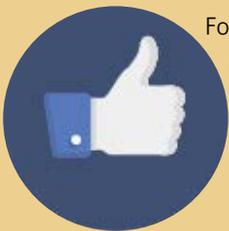


A personal favorite mobile device holding apparatus of ours is the Neo GRAB. Fully functional and beautiful, the NEO GRAB allows you to mount and remove your phone one-handed and it works for you in ways unimaginable, not only in the car, but also in the kitchen, office, bathroom, bedroom, garage, at work, etc. With its extreme suction cup, the NEO GRAB is easy to attach to any smooth, non-porous surface, like glass, drywall, plastic, wood and metal.

The NEO GRAB fits devices with LCD screens up to 6 inches and can be used for smartphones, mini-tablets and even your GPS device. Needless to say, this is the ideal accessory for any smartphone user.

It comes in 5 colors and can be purchased for \$34.99 from www.NeoGrab.com.

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Fun Facts



It's time for an office pizza party! October is National Pizza Month and based on the results from a 2013 Zagat survey, America's pretty pizza obsessed. Among people surveyed, 83% revealed that

pizza is one of their favorite foods, consuming a pie or a slice an average of 4.3 times each month. All that melted cheese and gooey crust, mmm, we're getting hungry just writing about it! Here are a few facts about the American staple that you might not have known!

- People in the United States eat the equivalent of about 23 lbs., or 46 slices, of pizza every year.
- America's first pizzeria was Lombardi's, opened in 1905 in New York City by an Italian immigrant.
- In the U.S., 60% of pizza orders included pepperoni, the most popular pizza topping. In Europe, tuna is the most popular topping.
- The most popular days for ordering pizza are Super Bowl Sunday, Halloween, the day before Thanksgiving, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

THE BUSINESS INNOVATION TECHNIQUE OF BLENDING

BY: MIKE MICHALOWICZ

Entrepreneurs are natural innovators, but even the most forward-thinking people sometimes need a little nudge to help open their minds to new possibilities for growth.

One of the best ways to think outside of the box is to start asking "what if" questions. **Here's a "what if" question I've been kicking around lately:** What if we took 2 disparate businesses and blended them to make something new? I'm not talking about merging or partnering with another company; I'm talking about blending business methodologies from 2 (or more) industries to create a new business, or dramatically improve an existing business.

A classic example of this is Commerce Bank. Founded by Vernon Hill in 1973, Commerce Bank blended 2 industries: fast-food restaurants and banking. The owner of a fast-food restaurant franchise, Vernon Hill's bright idea was to bring the convenience and perks of fast food to banking.

For example, fast-food restaurants are open every day, and they start early and close late; Hill implemented extended hours at Commerce Bank and kept the doors open 7 days a week. No other bank had done this before.

Hill blended other systems from his fast-food franchise when he launched his blended business. He installed a "Penny Arcade" coin-counting machine in his lobby, which had the same effect as video games in family restaurants. Kids could count money and win a prize, and the adults loved it too.

One of my favorite examples of Hill's blending genius is when you use the drive-thru window at Commerce Bank and get a treat for your dog, just like the toy in a kid's meal. Is it any wonder people call it "McBank"? By blending 2 industries, Hill created the fastest-growing bank ever.

Commerce Bank grew from one location to more than 400, and the franchise sold for \$8.5 billion in 2007. See what a little game of "what if" can spark?

What if you blended your business with hallmarks from another industry? Start thinking WAY outside of the box, looking at winning concepts from industries that may seem to have nothing to do with your business. (Of course, you do have something in common with businesses in ALL industries: customers.) You never know—you just might make billions.



Consider yourself nudged.