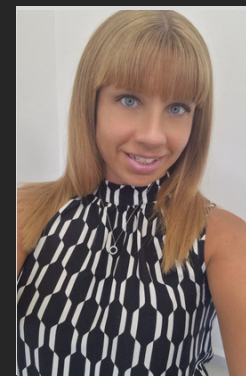


# TECH TALK

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

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Summer is in full swing and holidays are here. Wouldn't it be good to know your IT is in good hands while your away!! Now's a good time to make those changes to your business and update your IT! Give me a call today **0330 2020 101** for a quick chat to find out more.  
**Donna Aplin**  
Marketing Manager

## WINDOWS 10: THE FINAL COUNTDOWN – IT'S TIME TO UPGRADE YOUR PC

Windows 10 has served us well. But its time is running out. Microsoft plans to end support for Windows 10 on October 14, 2025. This means no more security updates, no more patches, and no more support.

It's time to upgrade to Windows 11. This is especially true for business users with many systems to check and upgrade. This change isn't just about getting new features. It's about ensuring your PC stays secure, fast, and capable.

### Why You Need to Upgrade Now

#### Security Concerns

No more updates mean no more security patches. Upgrading to Windows 11 ensures you receive the latest security updates.

#### Enhanced Performance

Windows 11 is designed to be faster and more efficient. It optimises your hardware, providing better performance.

#### Improved Features

The redesigned Start Menu and Taskbar offer a fresh, modern look. Snap Layouts and Snap Groups help you organise your workspace. Virtual Desktops allow you to create different desktops for different tasks. These enhance productivity and make your PC experience more enjoyable.

#### Hardware Requirements for Windows 11

Not all current PCs can run Windows 11. Here are the basic hardware requirements:

- A compatible 64-bit processor with at least 1 GHz clock speed and 2 or more cores.
- 4 GB of RAM or more.
- 64 GB of storage or more.
- UEFI firmware with Secure Boot capability.
- TPM version 2.0.
- DirectX 12 compatible graphics with a WDDM 2.0 driver.

If your PC doesn't meet these requirements, consider upgrading.

#### Upgrading Your Computer

**Opportunity to Modernise:** Newer PCs come with better processors, more RAM, and faster storage.

**AI-Enabled PCs:** Consider PCs that offer advanced features powered by AI.

**Energy Efficiency:** Modern PCs use less power without compromising performance.

#### Benefits of Upgrading to Windows 11

**Better User Interface:** Windows 11 offers a cleaner UI with a centered Start Menu and simplified Taskbar.

**Improved Multitasking:** You can easily organise open

windows, switch between tasks and create separate desktops.

**Integrated Microsoft Teams:** Quickly start a chat or video call directly from the Taskbar.

#### What Are the Risks of Waiting to Upgrade?

**Increased Vulnerability:** Waiting to upgrade increases your vulnerability. As the end-of-support date approaches, the risk of security threats grows. Upgrading now minimises this risk.

#### Potential Compatibility Issues:

New applications and updates may not be compatible. By upgrading now, you ensure compatibility with the latest software.

#### Business Disruption:

Starting an upgrade for your office now gives time for a smooth rollout.

#### How to Upgrade

- **Check Compatibility:** Check if your PC meets the requirements using the PC Health Check tool.
- **Backup Your Data:** Avoid losing important files during the upgrade process.
- **Follow Upgrade Instructions:** This may involve downloading the installation file and running the setup.
- **Seek Professional Help:** If you're unsure about upgrading, seek the help of tech experts.

The countdown to the end of Windows 10 has begun. Ensure your PC stays protected and up to date. Don't wait until the last minute!



### Missy Ducks Summer Adventures...

Missy Duck aka #ESPDuck has been extremely busy so far this summer, she has been visiting lots of new destinations such as Sweden and Norway and a few more places to visit too - she might even make the other side of the world this year!! You can still get involved in our summer competition this summer - simply take Missy away with you take a picture and share to our socials - you be automatically entered into our competition to win a £50.00 Amazon Voucher!!! Come on let's see your pictures....

## STREAMLINING SUCCESS: A GUIDE TO TASK AUTOMATION FOR SMALL ENTERPRISES

Running a small business is a whirlwind. You juggle a million tasks and wear countless hats. You also constantly fight the clock. What if you could reclaim some of that precious time?

Enter task automation. It's your secret weapon for streamlining your workflow and boosting productivity. By automating routine and repetitive tasks, small businesses can gain many benefits such as freeing up valuable time and resources. Every minute saved can translate to increased productivity and profitability.

### What is Task Automation?

Task automation involves using technology to automate repetitive, manual tasks. Imagine software handling data entry, scheduling appointments, or sending out invoices. All this without your constant oversight. This frees you up to focus on strategic initiatives that drive growth.

*88% of small business owners say that automation helps them compete with larger companies.*

### What Tasks Can You Automate?

You can automate many tasks across different departments in a small business. Here are some examples:

- **Marketing:** Schedule social media posts and send automated email campaigns. You can also generate personalised marketing materials.
- **Sales:** Generate quotes and send automated follow-up emails. Track sales performance through automated reports.
- **Customer Service:** Set up chatbots to answer frequently asked questions. Automate email responses for order confirmations. Have automation manage appointment scheduling.

- **Human Resources:** Automate payroll processing and manage employee onboarding tasks. Send out automated reminders for performance reviews.

- **Finance:** Automate data entry for invoices and receipts. Schedule recurring payments and generate automated financial reports.

### Getting Started with Task Automation:

#### Identify Repetitive Tasks.

Analyse your daily workflows and pinpoint repetitive tasks. Ask employees what manual tasks take them the most time.

#### Choose the Right Tools.

There's a vast array of automation tools available. You'll find everything from simple scheduling apps to complex management platforms. Research and choose tools that integrate seamlessly with your existing software.

### Start Small.

Don't try to automate everything at once. Begin by automating a few key tasks and gradually expand as you get comfortable.

### Invest in Training.

Provide your team with proper training. You want them to feel comfortable integrating them into their workflow.

### The Future of Automation for Small Businesses

Automation technology will continue to evolve. Small businesses will have access to even more powerful tools to boost productivity. Automating now gets you ahead of the competition.

## UNMASKING THE TRUE PRICE OF IT DOWNTIME

Imagine this: you walk into your office on a busy Monday morning, ready to tackle the week. But something's wrong. Computers are unresponsive. Phones are silent. The internet is a ghost town. Your business has come to a grinding halt – victim of an IT outage.

It's a scenario every business owner fears. But beyond the initial frustration are expenses you may not immediately see. IT downtime carries hidden costs that can significantly impact your bottom line. Let's peel back the layers and expose the true price of IT outages.

### The Immediate Impact: Lost Productivity

When IT systems go down, your employees are effectively sidelined. Sales can't be processed. Emails pile up unanswered.

### Customer Impact: Frustration and Lost Trust

An IT outage isn't just an internal inconvenience. It directly impacts your customers. Frustrated customers can't place orders or access their accounts.

### Reputational Damage: A Hit to Your Brand Image

IT outages can tarnish your brand image. Customers expect businesses to be reliable and accessible.

### Hidden Costs: Beyond the Obvious

The financial impact of IT downtime extends beyond lost productivity and sales. It includes:

- Employee Demoralisation
- Emergency Repairs
- Data Loss or Corruption
- Compliance Issues

### Investing in Uptime: Building Business Resilience

IT downtime is a threat every business faces. By understanding the true cost and taking proactive measures, you can reduce the risk. Remember, downtime has the potential to damage your reputation and customer relationships.

So, focus on IT security and invest in preventative measures. Every minute counts when it comes to technology.

## 8 TIPS FOR SAFEGUARDING YOUR GADGETS WHILE TRAVELING

Traveling with technology has become a necessity. Whether for work, communication, or entertainment, we rely heavily on our devices. But traveling exposes these gadgets to various risks. Theft, damage, and loss are common concerns.

We've put together some helpful tips to mitigate the risk of any tech mishaps on your next trip. Follow these eight best practices to ensure your devices remain safe when traveling.

1. Use Protective Cases
2. Leverage Tracking Apps
3. Keep Devices Close
4. Use Strong Passwords
5. Be Cautious with Public Wi-Fi
6. Back Up Your Data
7. Be Mindful of Your Surroundings
8. Use Anti-Theft Accessories

## TOP 6 SMART OFFICE TRENDS FOR AN IMPROVED WORKFLOW

Gone are the days of sterile cubicles and monotonous routines. Today's smart offices are hubs of innovation. They're designed to empower employees, optimise workflows, and foster collaboration.

This shift is driven by technology, including smart features that seamlessly integrate into the physical workspace. But with so many options available, where do you begin?

Here are the top six smart office trends you should consider adopting. They can power productivity and boost employee satisfaction.

1. Internet of Things (IoT) Devices
2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning
3. Collaborative Technologies
4. Remote Work Solutions
5. Smart Furniture
6. Data Analytics

## WHAT THINGS SHOULD YOU CONSIDER BEFORE BUYING A USED LAPTOP?

Buying a used laptop can be a great way to save money. But it comes with risks. You need to be careful and thorough in your evaluation. Otherwise, you could end up wasting your money.

These tips will help you know what to look for when buying a used laptop (or desktop PC), so you don't end up with a lemon.

- **Determine Your Needs.** Identify your purpose and set a budget.
- **Check the Laptop's Condition.** Inspect the physical condition.

- **Check the Battery Life.** Use software to check the battery's health.
- **Assess the Internal Components.** Consider the processor, RAM, and storage.
- **Verify the Software and Operating System.** Verify that the OS is genuine and licensed.
- **Research the Seller.** Look for reviews and ratings.
- **Test the Laptop.** Perform a thorough test and use diagnostic tools.
- **Compare Prices.** Research the market and factor in extra costs.

Do your homework to get the most out of your money.

## Meet the Team...Introducing Ian Barwick Software Development Manager at ESP Projects



Ian is our Software Development Manager here at ESP Projects and has been with us for the last 20 years.

Ian looks after our Software Team here at ESP Projects. Ian and his team have been working on our very own Software Solution called CORE - this has all been designed and built here in our offices in Sheffield. It helps revolutionise business processes!! Game changer!!