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TECH TALK

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

We are now hurtling closer to Christmas. The seasons are changing and nows 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

NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF DATA LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT

Data is one of the most valuable assets a business can have. Managing this data throughout its lifecycle can be challenging. Data lifecycle management (DLM) refers to several processes and policies that govern the handling, storage, and eventual disposal of data.

Businesses generate and store vast amounts of data. As this happens, effective DLM becomes more critical. Navigating the challenges of DLM requires a comprehensive approach that balances security, compliance, and operational efficiency.

Understanding Data Lifecycle Management

DLM involves the governance of data. It starts from its creation and continues to its eventual disposal. The lifecycle includes several stages:

- Data creation
- Storage
- Use
- Sharing
- Archiving
- Deletion

Each stage presents its own set of challenges. Mismanagement at any stage can lead to security risks, regulatory non-compliance and increased operational costs. Implementing a robust DLM strategy ensures proper data handling at every stage.

The Importance of Data Lifecycle Management

Effective DLM is crucial for several reasons. First, it helps ensure data security. A well- implemented DLM strategy includes security measures that protect data at every stage.

Second, DLM helps businesses follow regulatory requirements. Failure to comply can result in significant fines and reputational damage.

Finally, DLM helps improve operational efficiency. By managing data effectively, businesses can reduce storage costs, streamline operations and ensure that data is available when needed.

Challenges of Data Lifecycle Management

- Data Volume and Variety. There has been a proliferation of digital devices and platforms. The result is that companies are collecting more data than ever before. It includes everything from structured databases to unstructured text, images, and videos.
- Data Security and Privacy. Protecting data is a critical aspect of DLM. As data moves through its lifecycle, it is vulnerable to various security threats. Ensuring data privacy and security is not only a best practice but often a legal need.

- Data Quality and Integrity. Maintaining data quality and integrity is essential for effective DLM. Poor data quality can lead to several issues, including inaccurate analyses, poor business decisions, and wasted resources. Ensuring that data remains accurate and reliable throughout its lifecycle is a challenge.
- Data Retention and Deletion. Deciding how long to keep data and when to delete it is a critical aspect of DLM. Holding onto data for too long can increase storage costs and expose businesses to security risks. But deleting data prematurely can lead to compliance issues. It can also mean the loss of valuable information. When it reaches the end of its lifecycle, appropriate data destruction methods must be employed to prevent unauthorised access.

- Data Accessibility and Availability. Ensuring that data is accessible when needed is another challenge of DLM. As data moves through its lifecycle, users may have archived it. It can also be moved to different storage locations or deleted. Businesses should balance data accessibility and security by enforcing access controls, such as role-based access and MFA. Businesses must also plan for data availability during disruptions such as hardware failures, cyberattacks, or natural disasters through data backup and disaster recovery plans.

Data lifecycle management is a complex but essential aspect of modern business operations. Our team of experts can help you put commonsense solutions in place to improve data security.

Missy Duck has seen a busy end to the year….

Missy Duck has had a busy year so far and its not stopped yet! She has been out and about in Sheffield yet again doing her rounds. She has attended the unLTD Expo at Magna, attended the Chesterfield EXPO at Casa Hotel and has even managed to stop by Norfolk Park to Island networking for a Coffee. She has met lots of new Friends along the way too. She has a few more stops before the end of the year though and she has an update coming soon too in 2025….watch this space…

COPILOT IN TEAMS - NEW FEATURES, AGENTS & MORE

Microsoft Teams continues to evolve. It is a powerful hub for collaboration and communication in the modern workplace. With the integration of AI-driven Copilot, Teams is pushing the boundaries. It's innovating how we interact with technology to improve and unlock business value.

What is Copilot in Microsoft Teams?

Copilot is Microsoft's AI-powered assistant. In Microsoft Teams, Copilot acts as an intelligent agent. It helps users by doing things like:

- Automating processes
- Managing tasks
- Analysing data
- Providing real-time insights

Copilot provides actionable recommendations, transforming how teams collaborate.

New Features of Copilot in Teams

These features help users navigate complex tasks and much more.

Enhanced Collaboration Features

- **Automated Meeting Summaries.** A standout feature is generating meeting summaries automatically.
- **Intelligent Task Management.** It analyses conversations in chats or meetings, then automatically identifies task, assigs them to team members, and tracks progress.

Smarter AI Suggestions

- **Context-Aware Responses.** Copilot's AI has become more context-aware. This minimises irrelevant suggestions and keeps teams focused.

- **Personalised Insights.** As Copilot interacts with a team, it learns from past behaviors. For example, it can suggest the best times to schedule meetings.

Agents in Copilot: A New Way to Work

Copilot agents are task-specific AI-driven assistants. You can customise them to handle particular functions or workflows. Agents focus on specific domains such as customer support, sales, or project management. This makes them a valuable asset for small and medium-sized businesses.

Here are some of the key capabilities these agents bring to Teams.

- Automating Routine Tasks
- Integration with Business Tools
- Multitasking Capabilities

Benefits of Using Copilot in Teams

- **Increased Productivity.** Copilot frees up time for employees to focus on more important activities.
- **Improved Communication.** Copilot can summarize meetings, track action items, and offer context-aware suggestions.
- **Enhanced Decision- Making.** Copilot helps highlight trends, provide performance metrics, and identify areas of improvement
- **Better Workflow Management.** Agents and automation tools help manage workflows.

The future of AI in tools like Teams presents an exciting opportunity. By adopting these AI-powered tools now, businesses can stay ahead of the curve.

TOP TECHNOLOGIES TRANSFORMING CUSTOMER SERVICE TODAY

Customer service is at the heart of any successful business. Customer expectations continue to evolve. Similarly, companies must evolve to meet those expectations.

55% of customers like self-serve customer service over speaking to a representative.

Technology has become a game-changer in this regard. Here's how:

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning** are leading the charge in revolutionising customer service. These technologies are enhancing everything from customer interactions to backend processes.
- **Omnichannel Support.** Customers today expect seamless support across several channels. Omnichannel support ensures a consistent experience, regardless of the channel a customer chooses.
- **Cloud-Based Customer Service Platforms** are transforming the customer service landscape by offering flexibility, scalability, and accessibility.

- **Self-Service Technologies** empower customers to find answers and resolve issues on their own. This improves customer satisfaction and reduces the workload on service teams.
- **Data Analytics and Customer Insights.** By analysing customer data, businesses can gain valuable insights to provide more targeted and effective service
- **Robotic Process Automation (RPA)** is another technology making waves in customer service. RPA involves the use of software robots to automate repetitive, rule-based tasks. This frees up human agents to focus on more complex and value-added activities.

Let Us Help You with a Technology Roadmap

The technologies transforming customer service today offer many benefits, but it's not always easy to know where or how to get started. Our team of IT consultants can help you build a tech roadmap that makes sense.

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6 SIMPLE STEPS TO ENHANCE YOUR EMAIL SECURITY

1. Use Strong, Unique Passwords.
Use a password manager and avoid reusing passwords.

2. Enable Two-Factor Authentication (2FA).
Choose a 2FA and set it up for all accounts.

3. Be Cautious with Email Attachments and Links.
Verify the sender, scan attachments, and don't click on suspicious links.

4. Keep Your Email Software Updated.
Enable automatic updates.

5. Use Encryption for Sensitive Emails.
Encrypt emails containing sensitive information and educate recipients.

6. Watch Your Email Activity.
Set up activity alerts, regularly review account activity, and respond quickly to suspicious activity.

HOW AI IS HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES

- Streamlining Customer Support with AI Chatbots reduces response times and enhances experience.

- Improving Marketing with AI-Powered Analytics for targeted advertising and predicting trends.

- Automating Routine Tasks with AI Tools such as scheduling and expense management.

- Enhancing Inventory Management with AI Forecasting and automatic reordering.

- Personalising Customer Interactions with AI through customised marketing.

- Enhancing Recruitment and HR Processes with AI by screening resumes and predicting performance.

- Securing Data with AI- Powered Cybersecurity to detect anomalies and automate threat responses.

DATA BREACH DAMAGE CONTROL: AVOID THESE PITFALLS

Data breaches are an unfortunate reality for businesses of all sizes. When a breach occurs, the immediate response is critical. How you manage the aftermath can significantly impact your reputation and financial stability.

Effective damage control requires a well-planned approach. But there are common pitfalls that can exacerbate the situation:

- **Delayed Response.** The longer it takes to respond, the more damage can happen.

- **Inadequate Communication.** It leads to misunderstandings, frustration, and further reputational damage.

- **Failing to Contain the Breach.** Once your business detects a breach, take immediate action to prevent further damage.

- **Neglecting Legal and Regulatory Requirements.** Failing to comply can result in significant fines and legal action.

- **Overlooking the Human Element.** Addressing the human element is essential for a comprehensive response.

TECHNOLOGY TRIVIA TIME

Each month you have a chance to win a £25 Amazon Gift Voucher by being the first person to email us with the answer to our Technology Trivia Question of the Month!

The question this month is:

What is the name of IBM's AI that won the first ever chess match against a world champion?

The first person to email me at marketing@espprojects.co.uk with the correct answer gets a £25 Amazon Gift Card!

Winner announced in next issue!