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similar attack would mean for his firm. "Our primary goal is business continuity," he says. "We have to make sure that all systems are go, or we can't operate."

A cyber breach can be as devastating as a natural disaster. And while large company data breaches may grab headlines, small and medium-sized businesses are especially vulnerable. Security and research firm Ponemon Institute reports that 61 percent of small and medium-sized businesses experienced a cyber attack in 2017, and 54 percent experienced a data breach.

The median monetary loss of a cyber attack on small businesses is \$2,000, according to the Better Business Bureau. But data theft or information loss affects your credibility, too. "Cyber security is about creating trust in the marketplace," says Bill Fanelli, chief security officer with the BBB. "It's being able to demonstrate to your customers that you are a safe vendor to do business with."



and federal laws regulate how businesses safeguard client information.

Follow these steps to ensure you've properly secured your company's data:

### **1. Secure your network**

You probably have some kind of firewall and antivirus software. But since hackers constantly find new methods of entry, you need to regularly download antivirus updates so you don't miss any patches (turn on update alerts so you know when updates are available). Also, check with your email provider to ensure that filters are turned on and configured properly.

One particularly vulnerable area: your Wi-Fi network. You should have two: one for company use that's hidden, encrypted (set this up by choosing the password-protected, WPA2 option in your Wi-Fi settings). The other Wi-Fi network should be for customers or visitors. For the visitors' network, set the password for one-time use, and update it daily. This protects customers while preventing



personal cell phones used for company business, should have anti-virus software and virtual private network, or VPN, encryption, which protects the device even if it's on a less secure, public Wi-Fi network.

"Any outside device must meet your security standards before you allow it to connect to the company network," says Adam Levin, founder of CyberScout and author of "Swiped."

Require that all devices used for business have a six-digit passcode and biometric (fingerprint or face recognition) authentication, where possible. That will keep a criminal who finds or steals an employee's cell phone from easily accessing data.

*"The best anti-phishing and malware blocker is user training*

### **3. Train staff**

Over half of data breaches at small and medium-sized companies are caused by negligent employees or contractors, according to Ponemon.



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consultant phishing scam. (The  
**Howie** Federal Trade  
**See** Commission offers  
some free  
educational  
programs on [its website](#).) "The  
best anti-phishing and malware  
blocker is user training and  
user education," says IT  
consultant Howie See.

Require workers to enable two-factor authentication, which uses a password and a second piece of information, such as a code sent by text or email, on work email accounts, and only access them via secure networks or VPN-equipped devices. Depending on your budget and the sensitivity of your data, you might consider providing employees with separate devices used for work only.

Review best practices for storing, saving, and sending sensitive information. This not only safeguards against hackers, but also against employee errors like losing data or sending sensitive information to the wrong person, Levin says.

#### **4. Store in the cloud**



protects you from other risks like fire or burglary.

None of the larger cloud providers have had any serious breaches to date. Before selecting a vendor, ask whether they include storage backup for data, and what type of liability protection they provide.

Hershkowitz, the real estate technology consultant, has implemented two-factor authentication, switched to encrypted emails for transmitting sensitive documents, and signed on with a cloud access security broker. He's also exploring additional steps to protect against a breach or ransomware attack. "I feel like I have put in place a substantially improved level of security," he says.



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*Beth Braverman is a Chase News contributor.*



**MANAGE YOUR BUSINESS**

# Is your small business ready for a



## help you determine how to set up a program

By **Liz Kozak** • Posted: 05/07/18

For designer Ellie Day Spoerer, the sole proprietor of her bridal and evening wear business, taking on an intern doubled the team. "Having an intern allows me to focus on design," she says. She's freed up from tasks like selling online, mailing out postcards to clients or making cold calls to boutiques.

The help researching industry news, organizing inventory or planning events can be a boost for small businesses. For those seeking to up their game on the web, a young digital native can help with coding and social media. Plus, finding out what your intern is interested in—which apps they can't live without and what products are their go-tos—can provide invaluable insight into the younger consumer's mindset.

When considering hiring an intern, consider which business goals you want help achieving—





projects you can create to fulfill them.

Then, whether you need an intern to free you up to focus on the big picture, or to help create a vibrant social media feed, ask yourself these questions to help set up your internship program:

### **1. Who can help with recruiting?**

Colleges, universities and even high schools can help scout prime candidates. Bottle Rocket Media, a Chicago video production company, routinely works with intern and career services coordinators at Chicago schools. "We talk specifically with their TV and film production departments," says Brett Singer, the company's co-founder, and a Chase customer. "They are very helpful connecting us with the right interns."

### **2. What attributes should you look for?**

Consider what qualities are most important to you and your business. For Singer at Bottle Rocket Media, "it's all about personality. While there will be naturally on-the-job training, we



Singer developed a questionnaire for prospective interns that veers away from traditional questions about GPAs and schedules. "We ask, 'What was the last book you read? What's your favorite app on your phone?' I'm looking to be a little surprised," he explains.

**3. Are you willing to make it a two-way street?**

Business owners have to be willing to put aside time to mentor interns. Fashion designer Spoerer, a Chase customer who was herself an intern at Betsey Johnson in New York, says company employees helped her understand everything from working with pattern makers to record-keeping, systems she still uses today in her own business. And she passes on the same knowledge to her interns.

*"If I can train someone then that has a lot of value to us."*

**Brett Singer, Bottle Rocket Media**



needs or prepping equipment for a shoot—allows Singer to have flexible help available based on the company's needs.

#### **4. Do you need a talent pipeline?**

Hiring an intern is a great way to try out an employee. Spoerer ended up working for Betsey Johnson for three years. Bottle Rocket Media now employs a former intern. "If I can train someone," says Singer, "then that has a lot of value to us."



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**[Shark Tank's Daymond John, on how to motivate employees](#)**



**[Chase intern shares in, outs, of her start](#)**



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your team in the new year](#)**

*Liz Kozak is a Chase News contributor.*