



IT Times

Insider Tips To Make
Your Business Run
Faster, Easier &
More Profitably

Building A StoryBrand

By Donald Miller

Communication is essential in the world of business. You will never see growth or success in your business if you can't communicate with your customers or other businesses. Whether you're writing copy for your website or promotions for your products, the language you use needs to be easy to understand while also making the reader feel like they're gaining something beneficial from it. Donald Miller's *Building a StoryBrand* can help any business leader communicate better through their writing. This author aptly teaches his readers how to simplify a brand message for understandability as well as how to create effective wording for websites, brochures and social media. Miller's book is a helpful resource for anyone who is trying to effectively communicate with their potential customers.



Internet Safety Tips For Parents

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Brian Bratchie, president of **B&L PC Solutions, Inc.**

Our Mission:

We Take Care Of Technology,
So You Can Take Care Of Business.

In today's climate, is there anything more prevalent than the Internet? In fact, we've grown so accustomed to using it that the Internet now seems to help us meet any need or want. Unfortunately, we don't often think about the effect that has on our kids, who have never known a world without this level of technology.

For the most part, the Internet is an incredible boon to our children. They can look up anything they're curious about and will be met with more information than previously fathomed. Many of us remember visiting the library to research topics, and even then, resources were limited compared to what can easily be found online today.

While the Internet offers many benefits for kids, there are risks. That's why it's important to keep your children protected. Before your kids get a social media account or dive headfirst into the web, take the following security measures.

Parental Restrictions

Nearly every device that can connect to the Internet has some level of parental control. With computers and laptops, you can restrict what websites and apps your children visit. You can also specify which websites you want totally blocked. This is an option on many tablets and smartphones as well. With those, you can actually set time constraints and limits that make it so your child can only use the device

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for a certain amount of time, and you can even completely restrict usage at night.

Potential Risks

When your children first start using the Internet, you must ensure they understand any potential risks. We all know people aren't always who they say they are on the Internet. Similarly, not all information found online is true. When your kids visit websites or use apps, remind them not to share any personal information about themselves. They should never give out their address, school information, phone number or even their e-mail address to anyone online. Even if the person requesting this information claims to be someone they know, they might not be. If your child is using social media, inform them not to accept friend requests from people

they don't know. It's important that kids understand all of the risks to ensure they stay safe in the digital and physical world.

Get Familiar

If your children are using the Internet, you should become familiar with the websites and applications they use. Make sure all websites have the little padlock icon by them, which indicates they are safe websites. Look through the apps and websites your children frequent to ensure they're safe for them to use and do not contain any inappropriate content.

Lead By Example

Your children's first interactions with the Internet will most likely stem from you, so do your best to set a great example for them.

“Your children’s first interactions with the Internet will most likely stem from you, so do your best to set a great example for them.”

This is your opportunity to model positive online habits for your children. Your social media posts should also be appropriate and not break any of the online rules you set for your own child. In their eyes, it won't be fair if you or someone else in the family can do things they cannot.

Our children are some of the most important people in our lives, so it makes sense that we would do everything in our power to keep them protected. Just make sure your protective efforts extend from the physical world into the digital world as well.



Free Cyber Security Audit Will Reveal Where Your Computer Network Is Exposed And How To Protect Your Company Now



At no cost or obligation, our highly skilled team of IT pros will come to your office and conduct a comprehensive cyber security audit to uncover loopholes in your company's IT security.

After the audit is done, we'll prepare a customized "Report Of Findings" that will reveal specific vulnerabilities and provide a Prioritized Action Plan for getting these security problems addressed fast. This report and action plan should be a real eye-opener for you, since almost all of the businesses we've done this for discover they are completely exposed to various threats in a number of areas.

To get started and claim your free assessment now, visit www.BLPC.com/free-network-assessment

Cartoon Of The Month



“Is that computer, down there, the one you were having problems with?”

SHINY NEW GADGET OF THE MONTH**Oura Ring Generation 3**

For the past few years, fitness trackers have become all the rage. Between Fitbits and the Apple Watch, nearly everyone has or is familiar with fitness trackers. One of the most common complaints about many fitness trackers is comfort. Oura decided to take the wristband out of the equation with the Oura Ring. The Oura Ring is a fitness tracker that you wear on your finger. It tracks sleep, activity and readiness measurements.

This device is even more accurate than other fitness trackers since the finger is a better spot to record heart-rate data. Through temperature sensors, a library of informational resources and much more, the Oura Ring is the perfect fitness tracker for just about anyone who is looking to improve or maintain their physical health.

**Practicing Self-Care In A Leadership Position**

It can be difficult to take your eyes off your business, even for a moment, to focus on yourself and your needs – but it's a necessity. You can't be a successful leader if you aren't properly maintaining your mental and physical health. Thankfully,

there are steps you can take if it feels like your work is damaging your personal health.

First, you should acknowledge that you can't do everything on your own.

You must work on delegating some of your responsibilities so you can take care of yourself. It's also essential that you create the time and space to care for yourself.

Additionally, don't forget to prioritize yourself. Worry about your needs before trying to fix everyone else's problems; this will make things much easier in the long run.



3 Ways To Run Meetings Like A CEO



In my opinion, most meetings are a complete waste of time. Although the relayed information might be important, it isn't always delivered in an effective way, since most managers do not know how to run meetings. Successfully leading huddles or meetings is an important part of building great relationships and leading talented teams. If you want to start getting more from your employees and your meetings, try utilizing the following three methods to run your meetings like a CEO.

Always Request An Agenda

Early in my career, an acquaintance invited me to a business lunch. I can remember wondering, "What does he want to talk to me about?" After a little bit of small talk, he unveiled his agenda. He wanted to sell me a new insurance policy. It ended up being a huge waste of time for both of us. After that meeting, I made sure to only accept invitations that had an agenda – this comes with three distinct benefits.

The first is the fact that you can see what will be discussed in the meeting, and you can decline the invite if it doesn't pertain to you or your work. The second is that you can actually prepare for the meeting. The final benefit is that it makes you appear competent. Since you can come prepared, it will look like you have everything under control.



Dr. Geoff Smart is the chairman and founder of ghSMART, a leadership consulting firm that exists to help leaders amplify their positive impact on the world. Dr. Smart and his firm have published multiple New York Times best sellers. He stays active in his community and has advised many government officials.

Ask Questions And Avoid Talking Too Much

One of the biggest mistakes managers make when leading a meeting is trying to dominate the conversation. You may be thinking, "Aren't CEOs supposed to tell their attendees what to do in meetings?" The answer is no; the great CEOs don't. In fact, the best CEOs will spend their time asking questions that are strategic, reflective and related to accountability. This helps them brainstorm new ideas with their team, ensure everyone is on the same page and put the responsibility on others so they can follow up in the future.

Discuss, Debate And Decide

The beginning of your meetings should focus on your strategy and what needs to be discussed. After a topic is introduced, CEOs will say things like "Let's debate what we should do about this. Who has some ideas?" That brainstorming will help develop the best solution, and the CEO will then make a decision about what to do or who should handle each responsibility. Your meetings need to be focused on production. If you give people the freedom to speak openly, you will accomplish much more.

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4 Ways To Better Protect Your Personal Information

Most people keep their personal information as secure as possible. They don't post their passwords on social media or share Social Security numbers with untrustworthy sources. These practices seem obvious, but there are smaller things we can do to provide better protection. You'll find four of those tactics here.

Dangers Of Unsecured WiFi – Hackers can use this connection to download malware on your devices.

Password Manager – You shouldn't use the same password between multiple accounts. Utilizing a password manager will help you keep track of different passwords.

Breached Companies – When a company's security is compromised, all of its customers' personal information can be exposed. Avoid working with these companies until they've offered improved security.

Think Before Posting – Be careful about what you share on social media. Revealing too much personal information can leave you vulnerable to a cyber-attack.

TECH TRENDS TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER LOYALTY

If you want your business to succeed, you must build a solid customer base. Over the past few years, advancements in technology have made it easier for companies to improve their relationships with their customers. One such way is through the use of AI chatbots. If someone has a question about your service or product, you don't

want to leave them waiting for an answer. Chatbots can be programmed to answer common questions until a live representative is available, if they're even needed.

Additionally, you should make an effort to monitor content created by people outside your company. If someone is spreading false information about your business, you need to combat it. If disinformation is allowed to fester, it can quickly sink a small business. Simply replying

to misinformed reviews or reporting inappropriate content about your business can go a long way toward becoming a more trustworthy source in your industry.

