Business Communicator

Coffee, Baked Goods, & More

701.385.3100

gathering
GROUNDS

M-F 6:30-4:30
Sat - Sun CLOSED

vivint.

This Shop in Kenmare Has a "Latte" to Offer

RTC

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Business Communicator

What's most valuable to your business? As RTC's Human Resource Manager, my first response — not surprisingly — would be, "our employees." I suspect you feel the same way about the talented and dedicated people who work at your business.

Following close behind on the list of valuable things, however, would likely be your data. Which is why this issue of *Business Communicator* looks at the topic of data security from two angles. On page 3, we ask the question **How Safe is Your Data?** and explain **Online Backup vs. Online Storage**. On page 7, we remind you that **Hackers Don't Cause All Security Breaches** and offer strategies to guard against other threats.

You'll find a Business Spotlight on Gathering Grounds on pages 4 and 5. This combination coffee shop, café, and gift shop has proved to be a valuable addition to the square in Kenmare. It's a place for people to gather, whether for a relaxing meal or to get a little work done. To help with the latter, RTC provides 100 Mbps internet and a Wi-Fi network.

Another valuable asset for any business is the local community of residents and other businesses. We feature **The Buy Local Loop** on page 6 and encourage you to support each other for the good of everyone.

RTC is committed to providing our business customers with the valuable expertise and advanced technology required to help you achieve your goals. Contact us with your questions, and we'll get to work.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Edwards

Gretchen Edwards
Human Resource Manager

How Safe is Your Data?

Online backup protects the information that's critical to your business

What is your small business doing to protect and back up your valuable data? If your answer to that question is, "I'm not exactly sure," you could be putting your business at serious risk for lost productivity and financial damages. When it comes to technology, it's not a matter of if something will go wrong, but when.

While the most common cause of data loss is hard drive failure, there are many other incidents that could cause it:

- Liquid or heat damage
- Virus infection
- CPU failure
- Theft
- File corruption
- Software error
- Power outages
- User error
- Accidental deletion, modification, or overwriting

Data loss can be extremely disruptive to your business, resulting in frustration and worry among employees and the inability to efficiently perform required tasks. The potential financial costs are also significant, stemming from lost revenue as well as the fees paid to try and recover data.

The best ways to safeguard against data loss is to back up your data every day and store it in the cloud or at an off-site location. If you choose an off-site location, make sure the building is in a different part of the country that would not be affected by natural disasters in your area. It's also important to keep your hardware and software up to date, and for your business to create a disaster recovery plan.

If you need a better way for your small business to handle data backup and storage, ask us about FileHopper Plus. It enables you to store and share files in the cloud, and is available as desktop software or a mobile app. For more details, visit www.rtc.coop/internet/online-backup.

ONLINE BACKUP VS. ONLINE STORAGE

Online backup and online storage are two different services that are often confused with each other. Here are the basic definitions:

Backup is a manual or automated way to have information kept secure and made available in the event of a disaster. Online backup is usually done with software that is down-loaded and installed on your computer. This software encrypts your files and uploads them. Once installed and configured, the backup process is more or less automatic.

Storage is simply the capability to put files somewhere else. This is done so as to share the files with others, save space on the local drive, or have a way to access files from anywhere with an internet connection.

Gathering Grounds owner Cassie Golde (left) with Shelby Kittelson, a hobby baker who sells cookies to the coffee shop. Kittelson also operates a cake business called Whisked Away.

Gathering Grounds

It's where to gather in Kenmare for coffee and so much more

Since October 2014, customers have enjoyed Gathering Grounds on the square in Kenmare (101 1st Ave. NW) for its quaint, rustic store atmosphere, full espresso bar, variety of breakfast and lunch items, and eclectic gift shop. Clearly, this local treasure has a "latte" to offer!

Delicious Food and Delightful Gifts

The menu at Gathering Grounds includes freshly made muffins and scones, breakfast bagels and wraps, homemade soup, made-to-order sandwiches, and salads. While waiting for their food, customers can browse around the wide array of handcrafted items in the gift shop — from jewelry to unique interior décor. Gathering Grounds partners with vendors including Just Raggedy Me, Dakota Vintage, Amy's Signs & Designs, and Emmascents, and also offers pieces for sale from local artists. The business is open Monday – Friday from 6:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Before starting Gathering Grounds, Owner Cassie Golde was an office manager at the city's dental office. Now she manages a staff of three employees in this popular 90-seat establishment. Golde says, "I want to thank the people of Kenmare and the surrounding communities for their ongoing support these last three years. It's always a pleasure to serve our regulars as well as see new faces."

Fast Internet for Employees and Customers

Service at Gathering Grounds is fast, and we're not just talking about food and beverages. Customers also have access to fast internet via the Wi-Fi network. "RTC provides our phone and internet services, and we recently upgraded to 100 Mbps internet speeds for both downloads and uploads. Fast internet is so important to Gathering Grounds because we would not be able to do sales transactions without it. The internet service is also important to our customers, because a lot of them utilize our coffee shop to do work or school-related projects and need a fast and reliable connection," notes Golde.

What does Golde appreciate most about the customer service and support from RTC? She replies, "Everyone I have had the pleasure of dealing with at RTC has always been very friendly and extremely helpful. I especially would like to extend a big thank you to Combination Techs Jeff Shobe and Scot Ness. They have been so good to me during the whole process of getting my shop set up. If there is ever a problem, they are here to help right away."

" RTC provides our phone and internet services, and we recently upgraded to 100 Mbps internet speeds for both downloads and uploads. Fast internet is so important to Gathering Grounds because we would not be able to do sales transactions without it."

—CASSIE GOLDE, OWNER, GATHERING GROUNDS

Convenience for Customers

Golde encourages people to check out the Facebook Page (www.facebook.com/ggroundsknd) to see the daily specials and learn about promotions. She adds, "In May, our kiosk location called Gathering Grounds on the Go will open back up next to Modern Woodworks/Northern Appliances. It offers the same drink menu and baked goods as our main location. The hours for Gathering Grounds on the Go will be Monday – Saturday from 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m."

Are you planning an office breakfast or lunch? Gathering Grounds delivers locally for $2.00 and to surrounding communities for $10.00. Visit www.gatheringgroundsnd.com for more details.

TIME TO PERK UP YOUR INTERNET?

RTC has a variety of internet speeds on our menu:

1 Gig x 1 Gig (1,000 Mbps)

• For large businesses and organizations with many power users

• Easily accommodates advanced hosting platforms, enterprise applications, and other data-intensive tools

Business Plan: $299.95*/month

Up to 500 Mbps x 500 Mbps

• Ideal for medium to large businesses

• Supports video conferencing and large data transfers

Business Plan: $199.95*/month

Up to 250 Mbps x 250 Mbps

• Meets the needs of small to medium businesses

Business Plan: $149.95*/month

Up to 100 Mbps x 100 Mbps

• An affordable option ideal for small businesses

Business Plan: $99.95*/month

To learn more, call RTC at 888.862.3115 today.

*Fees do not include County, State, and Federal charges or taxes. Activation fees may apply. Speeds are not available in all areas and are limited in some areas. Offer subject to change.

THE BUY LOCAL LOOP

Why it pays to think twice before shopping online

The phrase "what goes around comes around" applies to many things, including your local economy. When your company and other businesses keep your dollars local, you benefit the community, local nonprofit agencies, friends and neighbors, and, ultimately, your own business. Here's how it works:

1. **You Buy Local.** Sure, the convenience of online shopping is compelling, and sometimes it even costs less. But consider seeking out the same products and services close to home. You get to bring needed items back to the office the same day, skip the shipping costs, and get an opportunity to know other business owners and employees in your community who often provide better personal service and advice.

2. **More business creates more jobs.** When you support those local businesses, you're also supporting neighbors, friends, and relatives who can find jobs within them. Small businesses provide over half of all jobs in the U.S., but they can only do it if they keep their doors open. By spending locally, your business does its part to make sure that happens.

3. **More jobs create more spending power.** With more jobs come more residents who can stay in the local area, ensuring vitality and diversity. These citizens can also afford to spend money locally, supporting the economy, enlarging the tax base, and creating a better community with enhanced schools, roads, and parks.

4. **Successful businesses mean support for nonprofits.** Nonprofit organizations receive twice as much support from small businesses as from larger ones. So, when you support the local economy, you're also supporting needed services for groups like children, veterans, and the elderly.

5. **Local individuals and businesses support you back.** With a "buy local" mentality in your community, you'll get the benefit, too. If your business provides products or services to consumers, more of them will have the spending power to purchase them. If your company is business-to-business, other companies that need your products or services will seek them out.

6. **You see the benefit and continue to buy local.** As your business benefits from the positive "buy local loop," you have all the more reason to start the cycle again.

In addition to these benefits, shopping locally reduces environmental impact, ensures a wider variety of shops and products, and contributes to community health and diversity. If you're not already in the buy local habit, consider making your next purchase from a vendor close to home.

YOU GET MORE CUSTOMERS

YOU BUY LOCAL

MORE SPENDING POWER

$

MORE JOBS CREATED

SUPPORT FOR NONPROFITS

MORE LOCAL TAXES

Hackers Don't Cause All **Security Breaches**

Unhappy or careless employees also pose a threat to your data

When you think of security breaches, anonymous hackers probably come to mind first. They certainly are responsible for many computer viruses and phishing attacks. But hackers are not the only culprits. Security breaches can also occur from inside a business—ranging from deliberate actions by disgruntled employees to accidental breaches caused by human error.

Don't wait for a problem to occur. Review these basic precautions to help protect your company data from internal threats:

1. **Revoke account access when an employee leaves.** This is the single best thing you can do to prevent security breaches. Here's a cautionary tale: In one case, a system administrator was terminated for cause. As he cleaned out his desk, he deleted one file—the file that held all the encryption keys for the employees and the corporate escrow key for all the encrypted files held by the company. The 20-plus employees who used the key from the server lost access to all their encrypted files. With one keystroke, everything those employees had done for the previous three years was lost.

2. **Do your backups.** An essential safeguard against internal data sabotage is having an effective backup system to keep mission-critical data secure. This statement can't be repeated often enough.

3. **Account for data and tech devices your employees own.** The proliferation of personal devices (such as smartphones and tablets) used for work purposes has led to a business environment where personal activi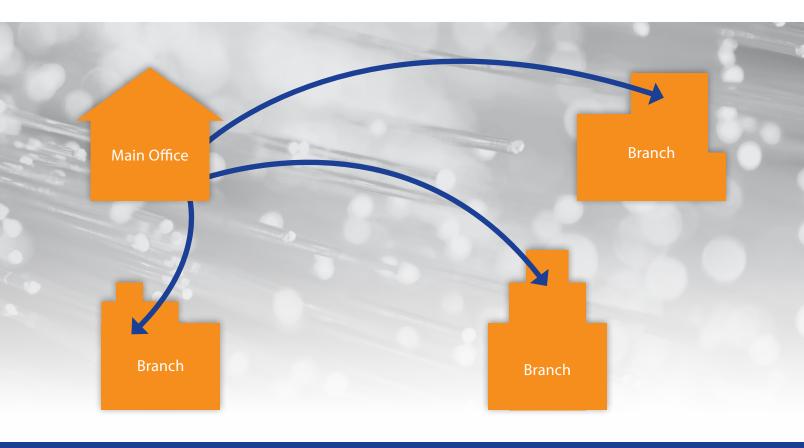ties commingle with work. By allowing employees to use their own equipment, your businesses some control over security issues. You may want to have employees sign an agreement regarding the proper use of such devices.

4. **Protect against downloading of malicious content.** The average employee in a small business spends up to an hour a day surfing the Web for personal use—perhaps looking at video or file-sharing websites, playing games, or using social media websites. And it's not just lost work time that's involved. Malware and virus threats can be inadvertently introduced to a computer network by employees via a rootkit hidden in a game or a video clip. The best advice is to constantly update and patch your IT systems to ensure protection.

5. **Educate employees about social engineering.** One of the most common ways for attackers to gain access to a network is by exploiting the trusting nature of your employees. Make sure your employees know not to provide their password over the telephone and teach them how to recognize a phishing email.

Threats to data security can come from many places. If you take a multi-faceted approach that address both external and internal issues, your business can reduce the odds that a breach will take place.

Secure Site2Site
Enhance security with a dedicated Ethernet connection between your locations

Does your business have two or more office locations? Consider our Secure Site2Site service to help guard against the data security threats of the open internet and provide you with reliable, high-speed connections.

www.rtc.coop
888.862.3115

Not available in all areas. Other limitations may apply.