

The IT Mill

Like Newsletters Should Be.



Business

Cyber Risk- A Broker's Perspective

By Josh Fentin, Commercial Account Executive, Westland Insurance Group Ltd. – Burlington Office

As cyber-attacks become a daily talking point within our brokerage and in the insurance world, the question has truly shifted from "IF" to "WHEN" your company will face a cyber threat, and to what degree you will be prepared to overcome it.

Business owners can obtain a high degree of confidence for dealing with cyber attacks using a two-pronged approach:

- #1. Security infrastructure, policies, and procedures coupled with back-end recovery capabilities.
- #2. A comprehensive Cyber Insurance policy to respond when systems are breached.

As with other forms of insurance, higher risk and more frequent claims can drive premiums to become prohibitively expensive and challenging to place. **With this new reality, how prepared is your organization to handle a cyber breach?**

A Canadian Underwriter article from September 2021 gives the perspective of a Cyber Insurance executive from one of Canada's leading Cyber insurers – Coalition Insurance: The cyber insurance industry is battling "a perfect storm between widespread technology risk, increased regulations, increased criminal activity and carriers retracting coverage"

According to George Bozanin, managing partner and head of business development for Coalition Insurance Canada, **"Cyber risk is set to become the defining risk of our age"**.

Bozanin continued "the average ransom demand made to Coalition's policyholders in the first half of 2021 was a staggering \$1.2 million". Within a 1-year period, Coalition reported an increase in claims frequency in multiple sectors:



- + 263 % for industrial business
- + 99 % for manufacturing
- + 53 % for professional services
- + 46 % for IT
- + 30 % for non-profits

To help combat the rising tide, our firm recommends starting with an internal review of IT security protocols, strategic partnerships, and insurance programs to determine readiness and risk appetite for your organization. The key with all of this is not to delay.

We recommend aligning yourself with a cyber-focused IT professional, have your staff trained on how to spot phishing attacks, and know what to do if something seems "off". As underwriting guidelines continue to tighten, measures such as employee awareness training, multi-factor authentication, and advanced threat protection, all help to protect your business and allow access to cyber-insurance.

Contact your insurance broker and IT expert to discuss how your firm should prepare.

Security Discussion

Cost of Data Breaches In Canada Last Year, 2021

By Scott Birmingham, Principal Consultant, C.E.T., C.I.M.

Towards the end of last year, we sat in on a presentation by a leading independent Canadian accounting firm on ways to reduce risk with cyber insurance. We've been discussing cyber insurance for a long time with clients and business owners; but what stood out to us were the updated 2021 costs associated with ransomware attacks. According to this accounting firm:



\$170,000

= Average ransom amount. Sample data ranges from a few thousand to millions of dollars.



\$2,000,000

= Average loss due to a cyber incident. Company sizes range from less than 10 employees to hundreds.



**5-10%
Of Revenue**

= Average ransom demand. Previous research showed it was less than 1%!

In addition, **Business interruptions costs average 5 times the ransom amount.** On top of these costs, businesses are discovering that insurance companies are refusing to pay if you don't follow their cyber incident response procedures EXACTLY. This means that even when (or if) a company can recover quickly to get operational, doing so could jeopardize an insurance claim.

Wondering if you're doing everything possible to protect your business? **Take advantage of our free and confidential cyber risk assessment at birmingham.ca/consult.**

"Best-In-Class Solutions, Support and Customer Service"



“After 15 years of in-house IT support for an industrial manufacturing facility, it was time to upgrade our infrastructure. Birmingham Consulting walked us through a process that identified our vulnerabilities and **provided a path forward.** Their knowledge of **best-in-class solutions, support and customer service** has proven that Birmingham Consulting was our best choice.”

Greg Dravis- ACP Solutions Inc.

Shameless Self-Promotion

21 Mill Street North: The Heritage Of Our Home



*"Old Vs. New" Reimagined Photo of 21 Mill Street North
by John Lepp and J. Peter Vance (Original Photo)*

Birmingham Consulting has the privilege of conducting business in an historical building within the heritage district of Waterdown, Ontario, at 21 Mill Street North.

A wooden church was first built on the site in the 1830's. But after 30 years, the building was showing it's age so the congregation opted to replace it with a new single-storey stone structure in 1865.

Though bigger, the new building only contained the sanctuary; so Sunday School was operated at 296 Dundas St. E. in Waterdown. In 1885, the church consolidated locations by expanding the church with a 2-storey addition at the back of the property.

The building is truly unique within Waterdown. Unlike most stone structures of the era where limestone was shaped into rectangles or squares during construction, both the initial building and the expansion used "raw" field stone. The result is a beautifully unique random stone pattern on every wall.

We acquired the property in mid-2017 and after further repairs, upgrades, and re-zoning, we moved into the main level of the 1865 expansion at the rear of the building. The internal layout changed slightly with the previous owner; but they kept the overall historical look and feel. We've also tried to honour the building's heritage with our own repairs and upgrades, blending history with modern technology.

We consider ourselves extremely fortunate to conduct business from one of Waterdown's landmarks. Located in the core of Waterdown, we have one of the largest parking areas of any property in the core, and are easily accessible. Feel free to visit our offices and enjoy a piece of history!



Technology

The Top 6 Concerns Online Professionals Should Know About Digital Asset Succession

By Christine Brunsten, President of Trusted Legacy & Lee Poskanzer, CEO of Directive Communication Systems

Digital assets are more important than ever, becoming a critical component for businesses (ie. Microsoft, Dropbox, Adobe, etc). **But, do you know what will happen to those accounts when the account holder (or sole admin) dies?**

This is where it's important to create a succession plan (personal and business) that specifically addresses digital property and online accounts. Doing so will ensure that data and ongoing management are seamlessly transferred to successors without any disruption or loss.

Here are the top 6 areas of concern you need to be aware of when it comes to digital accounts tied to your business operations:

#1. Terms of Service Agreements: Who owns your digital assets? You or your business? Are there any accounts that there's only one admin for? They need to be signed over to the business (or for an account holder's estate plan to name a successor) for a transfer to occur. Terms of Services Agreements are most often viewed as a private relationship and cannot be turned over without written permission.

#2. Lack of Standards: Each service provider has their own set of protocols and policies for handling an account holder's death. Thinking about the different types of service providers, from email management, domain registrars, hosting services, social media etc., this can be an extensive list of accounts to handle individually while complying with service provider policies.

#3. Business Reputation & Revenue: For professionals who have an online presence, continuity is vital. Being offline for even minutes can be catastrophic - account holders, potential clients, employees, vendors, and even government officials might question your reputation and result in loss.

#4. Investment: Operating a domain or other online accounts requires a large investment of time and money. Lack of succession planning could result in subscription expiration, inactivity, data auto-deletion, or content provider lockout - leading to lost revenue and value.

#5. Operational Failure: How much of your business is critically dependent on online services or digital software? Your successors may not be legally authorized to speak with the service provider to resolve any problems that arise with that service, and the potential impact could be disruptive.

#6. International, Federal and Local Jurisdictions: No single organization oversees the process of transferring digital assets. Numerous agencies could have jurisdiction over your online accounts, and they might be located all over the world. You may have to comply with different laws based on location, meaning your information and the transfer of the the digital asset may be governed by another country's laws.

Digital asset succession planning is a critical component in ensuring business continuity – it can also be difficult! Fortunately, there are professionals who can help navigate regulations and policies. For more information and to read an extended version of this article at www.trustedlegacy.ca. To learn more about digital asset succession management, please visit www.directivecommunications.com.

Kahn's Korner



Kahn joined the Birmingham team 3 years ago after we moved into our new home at 21 Mill in Waterdown.

Community

Hamilton Out Of The Cold Take Out Meals For Those In Need

Hamilton Out of the Cold is serving hot, nutritious meal distribution this winter at 8 spots across the city, including Waterdown. As a not-for-profit, non-denominational program, they provide meals for those in need in our community from November to end of March. The meals are healthy and provided to anyone in need, no questions asked.

Meal distributions at Knox Presbyterian Waterdown, 80 Mill Street North, take place Wednesdays from 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm. Learn more at www.hamiltonoutofthecold.ca.



Chelten Homes

www.cheltenhamhomes.com  (905) 689-2218

For Chelten Homes, "Where New Meets Neighbourhood" is not just a slogan; it is a passion. They look to revitalized underutilized pieces of land, preferably within walking distance of daily amenities, and build quality communities that people love to live in.

To see an example of this, look no further than Chelten's four recent developments in the heart of Waterdown; which consist of affordable rental units, high end town homes and a 7 storey mid-rise condo building. All in the downtown core.

Chelten is not only interested in quality communities but also sustainability. **They are a certified Net Zero builder and built one of the first Net Zero homes in Burlington, ON.** They are looking to build more custom Net Zero homes so that they can take what they have learned and apply the technology across all forms of housing. They are looking forward to great things ahead!

MyGlue

Our Like IT Should Be® Toolbox

MyGlue is a secure, easy-to-use hub for storing and managing passwords and key operating procedures, which makes it a critical documentation tool for our clients. Data is stored centrally and conveniently accessible via any device.

A large benefit for clients is they can let their employees use MyGlue but limit what each one of them can see. For example, some people may only be able to see their own passwords along with company policies; while others could also have access to role-dependent information. This makes MyGlue an important part to our Like It Should Be® Toolbox.

Why MyGlue For Our Clients?

*MyGlue enables us to share IT documentation with clients while also allowing them to store their private information that we can't see – **like a one-way mirror** (the client can access everything, BCI can only access what we are responsible for).*

Interactive Infotainment

Look for IT Geek Speak ACRONYMS in the word search below!
Find words placed forwards, backwards, up and down, and diagonal.

E	M	I	F	L	B	C	D	I	L	C	R	E	N	M	I	G	L	A	O
Q	U	S	O	N	V	O	I	P	U	O	U	M	S	F	V	G	N	P	T
H	T	P	N	N	G	A	A	E	O	L	I	F	M	A	C	S	P	J	W
N	A	P	G	I	B	A	D	V	K	R	P	O	I	K	L	K	V	E	L
L	R	A	W	O	S	H	V	D	P	M	B	S	U	K	C	O	S	M	T
H	N	X	S	N	D	M	R	A	E	L	D	T	B	C	D	R	U	A	D

RMM - Remote Monitoring Management - A platform designed to help IT companies provide remote and proactive assistance.

TBR - Technology Business Review - aka Quarterly Business Review, these are regularly scheduled meetings to review technology needs and upcoming projects.

VoIP - Voice over Internet Protocol - converts your voice into a digital signal that travels over the Internet.

USB - Universal Serial Bus - a "plug and play" device connection.

NGAV - Next Generation Anti-Virus - anti-virus with intelligence.

BCDR - Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery - processes to help a business recover from disasters & resume routine operation.

DNS - Domain Name System - translates human readable domain names (ex. birmingham.ca) to machine readable IP addresses.

ISP - Internet Service Provider - ie. Bell, Cogeco, etc.

MFA - Multi-Factor Authentication - users are granted access to an account or computer only after presenting additional evidence in addition to a password.

HAAS - Hardware-As-A-Service, aka TAAS (Technology-As-A-Service) - hardware, software, maintenance and, sometimes installation, for a monthly fee.

VPN - Virtual Private Network - secure way to remotely access company resources and data.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our last quiz: the False statement was "D. 4% employ advanced / enhanced protection"