

TECHNOLOGY TIMES

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

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THE FIRE DRILL NO BUSINESS OWNER WANTS TO RUN



When a fire alarm goes off at a school, nobody stops to figure out what to do next. Students line up, teachers move them through the exits and everyone knows where they're supposed to go because they've done it before.

Your backup strategy should work the same way. But most businesses have never tested whether they can actually recover.

Why fire drills save lives and businesses

Fire drills do more than satisfy a policy. They prepare people before pressure sets in and answer one critical question:

Will this work when we need it?

When everyone knows what to do, panic stays under control. If the plan fails, they discover it during the drill, not during a real emergency.

That is the value of practice. It removes guesswork before it matters.

The business version of a fire drill

Most businesses have backups. Far fewer have tested whether they'll work.

They don't find out until something goes wrong and they're scrambling to restore systems and get the business running again.

That's when the real cost begins.

What recovery testing looks like

Recovery testing is not theoretical. We restore from your backups, measure how long recovery takes and identify which systems come back first and where gaps exist.

The process answers questions every business should know before an outage:

- Will your backups restore successfully?
- How long will recovery take?
- Which systems should come back first?
- Can your team keep working during recovery?
- Are there gaps in your backup strategy?

That is the difference between having backups and being ready to recover.

What happens when you skip the drill

When recovery has never been tested, even a routine disruption can become a major business problem. Employees lose access to critical systems, customer service can't help customers, sales can't process orders and leadership is left waiting for answers.

The cost isn't just lost time. It's lost revenue, damaged customer trust and unnecessary disruption.

Don't wait for the emergency

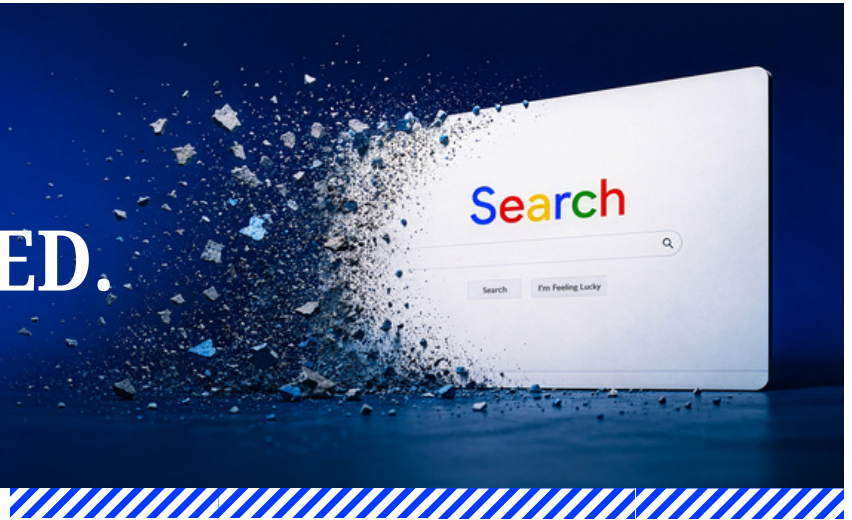
Nobody runs a fire drill because they expect a fire tomorrow. They do it because an emergency is the worst time to discover the plan doesn't work.

Backup and recovery deserve the same preparation. If you haven't tested recovery, you're relying on assumptions. A controlled recovery test will tell you whether your plan is ready before you depend on it.



THE SEARCH ENGINE CHANGED.

Did Your Marketing?



Think about the last time you needed a quick recommendation.

Maybe your AC stopped working or maybe your kid needed a dentist. A few years ago, you probably would've Googled it, skimmed a few websites, compared reviews and maybe asked someone nearby for a second opinion. Now, more people are skipping that whole process.

They're asking AI tools the same way they'd ask a trusted friend. "Who should I call?" "Which one is reliable?" "Who won't overcharge me?" "What's the best option near me?"

When the answer comes back, many of them don't keep searching. They call the name they were given.

That's the shift small business owners need to understand. Search isn't just about showing up on Google anymore. It's about showing up in the AI-generated answer.

For years, a solid website and a strong Google Business Profile did the heavy lifting. A customer searched "plumber near me" or "bakery near me," got a page of blue links and started comparing. Your job was to climb to the top of that list and stay there. From there, your site carried the visitor toward a call or a booking.

That faucet is shutting off, without so much as a warning.

Consider the numbers. Most B2B buyers already turn to AI tools before they call a vendor. On the consumer side, most Google searches now end without a single click, meaning the AI tool answers the question and the search is over before anyone lands on a website.

AI doesn't always recommend businesses in the same order Google ranks them.

Businesses that never crack page one are getting named by AI tools anyway, while page-one veterans get skipped. Even worse, most people don't double-check what the AI tells them. They just go with it.

That means when a user asks which plumber, dentist or accountant to use, the AI is making the call almost by itself, without ever seeing your reviews, your storefront or your years of good work. If your name doesn't come up, you're invisible, wondering why the phone stopped ringing.

The businesses that win this shift will do it the old way. They'll become so clearly credible that both the algorithm and the human on the other end have no real choice but to point their way.

That kind of credibility comes from good service, strong results and proof people can actually verify.

What that looks like in practice

First, ask a friend to open their own ChatGPT and ask for the best business in your category near them. See if your name shows up. If it doesn't, treat that as a wake-up call.

Second, take stock of your real proof: case studies with numbers, reviews with full names attached, press mentions, awards, anything specific and verifiable. If that list is short, you have a credibility gap, not a marketing gap.

Third, pick one piece of proof and build it out this month. A short book of customer stories, a real review push or a well-written piece in your own voice. Publish it now. Fourth, lean into strategies that build trust in person: partnerships, local events, direct mail followed by a phone call, referral programs. These still move faster than anything online.

The old rules of search are gone. The only question left is whether the machine finds you or hands your next customer to the business down the street with a fraction of your experience and a better AI footprint.

THE MOST EXPENSIVE BACKUP ASSUMPTIONS BUSINESSES MAKE



Mike Tyson once said, “Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth.”

In business, that punch often comes from a disruption you assumed you were ready for—a failed backup, unexpected outage or security incident.

That’s the problem with assumptions. They feel like facts until they’re tested.

Assumption #1: “We’re backed up”

Having a backup is important, but seeing green checkmarks doesn’t necessarily mean you’re ready to recover.

When was the last time you tested a restore? How long would recovery take? Are all critical files and applications included?

A backup proves its value only when you can successfully recover from it.

Assumption #2: “Someone would tell us if there was a problem”

Monitoring tools can detect problems and send alerts, but detection isn’t the same as protection.

Think of it like a weather alert. It can tell you a storm is coming, but it doesn’t board up the windows.

An alert only helps if someone knows what to do next. Without a clear response process, it’s just another notification while the problem continues.

Assumption #3: “Our team knows what to do”

Every team looks prepared until something actually goes wrong. When a critical system goes offline, questions come quickly. Who’s in charge? What gets restored first? How does the business keep operating?

If those decisions haven’t been made ahead of time, your team is forced to figure them out during the disruption.

A recovery plan gives people a process to follow so your business can get back on its feet faster.

Assumption #4: “It won’t happen to us”

Nobody expects to be the business dealing with an outage or cyber incident until they are.

Preparation won’t prevent every incident, but it can determine how quickly you recover and how much disruption your business has to absorb.

Test your backups. Review your recovery plan. Make sure your team knows its role. The businesses that recover fastest usually aren’t the ones that got lucky. They’re the ones that got ready.

SHINY NEW GADGET OF THE MONTH

A Monitor That Works Smarter:

BenQ RD280UG

Some upgrades don’t transform the way you work. They simply make every day a little easier. The BenQ RD280UG’s taller 3:2 display fits more on screen, so you spend less time scrolling and switching windows. Built-in eye care features, USB-C connectivity and an anti-glare display make long workdays more comfortable. It’s a thoughtful upgrade that helps you stay focused without adding complexity to your workspace.



CARTOON OF THE MONTH



“First day jitters never really go away.”



FREE REPORT DOWNLOAD

The Business Owner's Guide To IT Support Services And Fees

You'll learn:

- The three most common ways IT companies charge for their services and the pros and cons of each approach.
- A common billing model that puts ALL THE RISK on you, the customer, when buying IT services; you'll learn what it is and why you need to avoid agreeing to it.
- Exclusions, hidden fees and other "gotcha" clauses IT companies put in their contracts that you DON'T want to agree to.
- How to make sure you know exactly what you're getting to avoid disappointment, frustration and added costs later on that you didn't anticipate.



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