



How to Protect Your Smart Office

1. Know What You Have

You can't protect what you don't know exists. Walk through your office and write down every smart gadget—printers, cameras, speakers, thermostats. Record the model name and who uses it. This list will be your "map" when updating software or checking for problems.

2. Change Default Passwords

Most smart devices ship with easy-to-guess passwords like "admin123." Hackers know this. Change every password as soon as you set up a device. Make it long and unique, and store it in a secure place where your team can find it when needed.

3. Separate Your Networks

Your printer doesn't need to connect to your payroll system. By creating different Wi-Fi networks

(or "segments"), you give each device its own lane. If one gadget is hacked, it won't spread across your whole office.

4. Keep Software Updated

Just like your phone, IoT devices need regular updates. These updates often fix security holes. Set reminders to check monthly, turn on auto-updates if possible, and replace devices that no longer get updates from the manufacturer.

5. Watch Device Behavior

Keep an eye on how your devices "talk." If a smart lock suddenly tries connecting to a strange website, that's a red flag. Many low-cost tools can alert you when something unusual happens so you can act fast.



Letter from the Editor



Hello Family & Friends!

We made the most of the last month of summer!



We used August to its fullest! Before school started, we had the kids list all the things that we did this summer, and there were so many that we kept adding to the list, there were too many activities to count!

My brother, Eric, had a family reunion where we all got to meet Mikasi, their new daughter-in-law from Japan. Their son, Andrew, teaches English in Japan and that's where they met. So, one of the highlights of the summer was "meeting a lady from Japan"!

I got a good deal, so we took the kids to Margaritaville, the renovated Cape Codder in Hyannis. Although the kids had never heard of Jimmy Buffet, they knew all the words to several of his most popular songs by the time we left.



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While we were on the Cape, we took them to the Wellfleet Drive In! It was spur of the moment, so we weren't prepared like most of the attendees. It was still a fun night with too much junk food and not enough room in the back of the car. How did our parents do it?

During the last week before school started, the kids decided to have a lemonade stand in front of the office to raise money for the Plymouth South Elementary's school supplies.

The day was overcast and cool, so we didn't expect much. We were so wrong!

First, ladies from Wareham's Garden Club stopped by for a cold drink. They had been out beautifying Main Street.

Then, so many people passing by stopped, including a bicyclist who turned around when he saw them, a man and his daughter who were towing a boat, people walking, and so many other kind people who knew that were making Xander's and Sarah's day!



We love Wareham!

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink.

6. Have a Response Plan

Things go wrong sometimes. If a device fails or gets hacked, you don't want to panic. Make a plan: Who do you call? How do you disconnect a suspicious gadget? Do you have a backup option? Having these steps written down saves time and reduces stress when problems pop up.

7. Limit Permissions

Not every device needs full access. Turn off features you don't use, block remote access if it's not needed, and only allow each gadget to do its specific job. Fewer permissions mean fewer ways for hackers to sneak in.

8. Approve New Devices

It's tempting to add a cool new gadget—like a smart coffee machine—but every addition brings new risks. Before connecting anything, ask: Does it need Wi-Fi? Does it store sensitive data? If you can't secure it, don't use it.

9. Encrypt Important Data

If devices send or store sensitive information, make sure that data is encrypted. Encryption is like putting your information in a locked safe—only people with the right key can open it.

10. Re-Check Regularly

Cybersecurity isn't a one-time project. Every six months, review your passwords, networks, and devices. Replace anything outdated and confirm that your setup still meets current security standards.

Why This Matters

Cyberattacks are on the rise, and many target IoT devices because they're often left unprotected. A hacked thermostat or speaker might not sound serious, but it can give criminals a path into your business data.

Securing your smart office isn't about buying fancy equipment. It's about taking simple steps:

- Creating strong passwords
- Updating regularly
- Watching for unusual behavior
- Limiting device access

These small moves add up to big protection.

Final Thoughts

Your office is smart—your security should be too. Hackers don't need much to cause damage, but you don't need to be a cybersecurity expert to stop them. With a little planning, you can enjoy the convenience of IoT without sacrificing safety.

And if this feels overwhelming, that's where a trusted IT partner comes in. The right team can help manage your devices, keep your network safe, and give you peace of mind. That way, you can focus on running your business, not worrying about what's lurking on the Wi-Fi.

Would you like a simple checklist to help you complete these steps?

Download a free copy here:

<https://actsmartit.com/iot-checklist/>



DENTAL PRACTICE LEGAL UPDATE

Care Quest Institute Says Medicaid Cuts Hurt Access to Dental in Mass.

The Medicaid cuts in the Trump Administration's "Big Beautiful Bill" enacted into law on July 4, will likely have a negative impact on Massachusetts dental health access, according to the Care Quest Institute for Oral Health.

The MassHealth program, which administers Medicaid benefits for dental care for low-income residents in Massachusetts, relies on Community Health Centers and private practice dentists to provide dental care to MassHealth participants. Cuts will make it difficult for state and private providers to make up the monetary differences without federal funding.

The cuts will likely force states to reduce or eliminate Medicaid adult dental benefits (MADB), and with nearly 72 million people relying on Medicaid for healthcare, the Care Quest Institute says that it is a critical lifeline to dental care for people with disabilities, children, older adults, and families with low incomes.

Massachusetts is one of those states that will have to shift costs to Community Health Centers, resulting in a difficult burden to maintain service to many residents and also keep financially stable.



Private practice dentists, who already are given significantly lower reimbursements from MassHealth than in the private sector, will see their revenue drop even further, making it even more burdensome to keep their membership, which is voluntary, as a MassHealth provider.

The Care Institute calls provisions to cut Medicaid in the new law "a short-sighted decision that harms patients, burdens healthcare systems, and ultimately costs more in the long run." In any scenario, changes to dental care through MassHealth is sure to change.

New Nonprofit Started for Dental Safety Role of CDC

Closure of the Center for Disease Control (CDC)'s Division of Oral Health has prompted the formation of a new non-profit organization by the Association for Dental Safety (ADS) called the ADS Institute for Dental Safety and Science.

The Institute will be tasked with managing infection control guidelines and best practices. Already in the works are plans for an advisory committee to update the 2003 guidelines and collaborate with public and private entities to improve patient safety.

Dental organizations in the U.S. will be asked to

participate in fulfilling the ADS goals of creating educational content, risk tools, training programs, and position papers.

Budget cuts resulted in the elimination of the CDC Division and the ADS Institute hopes to modernize its efforts using A1 tools for dissemination of patient safety information and soliciting the public for input to increase awareness of its mission and the resources it has available in the dental community.

Funding for the new Institute will come from private foundations and individuals.



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The low-hanging fruit



In PR, that refers to going to your local sources to get coverage for your client, the implication being that it's an easy thing to do.

Why it matters

Low-hanging fruit can create a snowball effect that can translate into coverage on bigger media outlets. The recent coverage enjoyed by Murdick's Fudge for its Shark Bite fudge—just in time for the 50th anniversary of *Jaws*—is a great example.

Going deeper

The release went out in May to provide editors with enough time to include the release or do a piece prior to National Fudge Day on June 16 (the day after Father's Day). As part of the release rollout, we sent it to the Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce. Murdick's Fudge is a longtime member. The note was short and sweet:

"I know the Chamber has a lot in the works for the 50th anniversary of *Jaws*. Here's what we're up to at Murdick's Fudge."

The note included several photos of the Shark Bite.

That was the end of it for a while. Then, some media outreach landed coverage in the *Cape Cod*

Times, aka local news, and more low-hanging fruit.

It was a nice piece.

Fast Forward

As we got closer to the 50th anniversary, we received word that Good Morning America would be shooting from the Vineyard a few days before the anniversary and that the Shark Bite would be among the local products featured.

Score!

It doesn't end there

Back to our low-hanging fruit, the local newspaper, the *Cape Cod Times*, which Gannett owns along with *USA Today*. So when an article appeared on the 50th anniversary of *Jaws* in *USA Today*, it included a few paragraphs on Murdick's Fudge.

The *Cape Cod Times* has a circulation of 54,611; 35,391 on the weekend.

USA Today has a circulation of 163,036.

Conclusion

The low-hanging fruit of sharing news with your Chamber of Commerce and the local daily can have a snowball effect of coverage.



Joe D'Eramo

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Out of Sight = Out of Mind

Why Email Marketing Keeps You Top of the List

OUT OF SIGHT = OUT OF MIND: WHY EMAIL MARKETING KEEPS YOU TOP OF THE LIST



Your customers are busy. Their inbox is full, their attention is short, and their loyalty can shift with a single click. That's why staying in touch with them through consistent, well-crafted email marketing isn't just a "nice to have"—it's a business essential.

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- **Build trust** – Consistent communication shows you're active, reliable, and invested in your customers.
- **Drive action** – Exclusive offers and timely updates can turn readers into buyers.

Measure results – With trackable opens and clicks, you know exactly what's working.

The key isn't just sending emails, it's sending the *right* emails, at the *right* time, to the *right* people. That's where we come in.



Todd Philie, Chief Marketing Officer

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A for Apostrophes

Of all the punctuation marks in American English, the apostrophe has to be the most misunderstood and misused.

Tiny though it is, it wields a huge power to confuse users and readers.

But there are just 3 basic rules for using an apostrophe, at least in American English:

1. It shows one or more letters missing from two words that have been connected, and it always goes right where the letter or letters would be.

Examples

It is = it's because we removed the second "i" and we need to account for it.

there is = there's ... where's = where is ...
What's that? = What is that?

BUT: *its'* (with the apostrophe after the three letters) is **NOT** a word, although spellcheck here is not showing us that.

2. It shows a **possessive form** of a word, and that's sometimes tough for writers.

Example: The **dogs** ears were huge.

This could be "The **dog's** ears were huge" OR it could be "The **dogs'** ears were huge."

The first version is about just one dog; the second includes more than one.

You have to ask yourself: What am I writing about? Ears of the **dog** or ears of the **dogs**?
One thing / person / animal ...
or more than one?

Basic rules:

For most single nouns, add just add an apostrophe and an s.

For most plural nouns, add just an apostrophe.

But when a plural noun does NOT end in an s, add '**s**.

Example: The children's toys are all over her room!

For some other rules and ideas: <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/punctuation-capitalization/apostrophe/>

3. When using possessive pronouns, though, we do not use an apostrophe. They're just fine as is.

Example: That book is yours (NOT your's or yours'). And as I'm typing this, I'm noticing that the first word (your's) is underlined in red as the spellcheck knows it's **WRONG**. But the second one is seen as OK, and it's just plain **not**.

The second group is the toughest one because

there's no difference in how we say those words, whether they're being used in a singular or plural way. Our ears may not be able to remind us of the differences in the words!

Next month I'll prepare another quiz to see how you're doing with what we've talked about so far!



Grammar Goddess Communication

I will help you look and sound as smart as you are.



Editing / Proofreading of
Annual Reports — Blogs — Business / Nonfiction
Books — Podcast Transcriptions — Websites

Never ask: How smart is that person?
Always ask: How IS that person smart?

September 2025—In This Issue:

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- **And MORE!**

This newsletter was thoughtfully edited by Susan Rooks, the Grammar Goddess, so we can look and sound as smart as we are.



Susan Rooks

The Grammar Goddess

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/susanrooks-the-grammar-goddess/>

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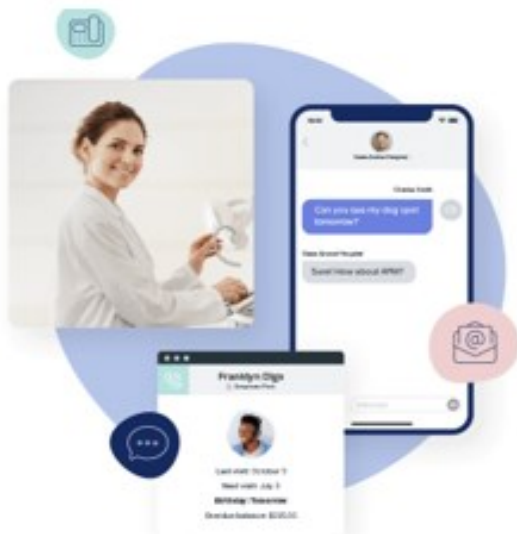
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