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News & Info from ...



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WELCOME!

Welcome to our new subscribers! If you recently subscribed and did not receive your free download, my sincerest apologies. Please contact me and I'll send you the link.

Well that's January done and dusted! Second month of 2012 is here already and my To Do list for the 'quiet period' didn't seem to have anything marked off it at all!

My baby started high school this year (Year 8 in Queensland) and I think by the time we get over the shock she'll be graduating university.

I felt a shift in energy as we entered 2012 and have decided this year to refocus myself and ensure I do a bit more for me and pursue some of my own interests this year. That doesn't mean that I won't be working as a VA anymore! But it does mean that I won't be taking on one-off jobs this year for new clients, instead focusing on ongoing regular client work. If you're looking for assistance with a one-off type project then the directories at [AVBN](#) and [VA Directory](#) will help you source someone to assist.

I'm also looking at making some changes with the AVBN - the network I began five years ago and those changes are pretty exciting! More on that later!

What about you? Have you felt a need this year to refocus your energy or make changes in your business or personal life? Perhaps my feature article on *Taming the Tech* will help you get started!

Virtually yours

Lyn PB

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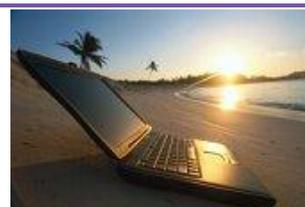
Taming the Tech

As we begin a new year now might be the time to re-assess whether your tech is working for you ... or controlling you.

It seems that managers and executives are busier than they've ever been, working longer hours, burning out faster, and complaining they have no time. And this seems to correlate with advances in technology. But isn't tech supposed to make our lives easier? So what's going on?

Remember the 'old days' when a manager had a secretary who filtered all the work? She looked after all the calls, correspondence and document production, allowing the boss to get on with what he was supposed to be doing - business generation. Then along came computers, followed shortly by personal (or desktop) computers and every desk had one - including the boss. That brought with it document production software that not only enabled the boss to start doing some of the document production, but also a self-imposed expectation that he should.

Next came email - the supposed saviour and time-saver - and everyone in the office had an email address. Now the boss was looking after about half his incoming correspondence. Secretaries then morphed into project managers, office managers and customer service



"True love comes quietly without banners or flashing lights. If you hear bells, get your ears checked."

- Erich Segal

PODCAST

Don't have to time read articles? Prefer to download podcasts to listen to in the car or at the gym? Then check out the shows at the Virtual Business Show ? Click the titles to be taken to the latest shows!

- [What do I Charge?](#)
- [A Question of Ethics](#)
- [Carbon Tax - Small Business Has a Voice](#)
- [Multi-VA Practices](#)
- [Q and A with Ken Phillips](#)
- [Sham Contracting](#)

Remember : You can subscribe to the show via RSS, iTunes, Zune, or download the podcast at the iTunes Store. You can also subscribe via email for email delivery of whenever a show is uploaded!

BLOG



officers because half their traditional job was now being done by the boss.

What's been happening at the blog? Latest articles:

- [New Year Changes to SME Regulations](#)
- [Question of Ethics](#)
- [Recruiters Using Social Media](#)
- [Tis the Season for Scams](#)
- [ATO Benchmarking Reviewed](#)
- [Free Small Business Training](#)

And finally we move into today - where just about every manager or executive has a smartphone at the very least, or a Tablet or iPad. No wonder they're time poor. They carry their office with them everywhere they go!

So here are some tips for taming the tech to allow you to get back to what you are supposed to be doing - generating business!

1. **Remember: You control the tech** - not the other way around. Every device has an 'off' button. Use it.
2. **Ignore the beep.** Just because a text or email comes in doesn't mean you have to answer it immediately. It'll still be there when you finish whatever it is you're currently working on.
3. **Set aside time for emails**, checking them maybe two or three times a day (morning, lunch, before leaving). Seriously if something is THAT urgent the sender should be calling you.
4. **Better yet, don't have your email publicly available.** I can't believe the number of websites that list the emails of all the partners or the CEO of the business. Allow your people to do their jobs. Your team - and your assistant - should be filtering all email and passing through to you only what is most important/critical for your attention. You don't need to see everything and people should not be able to access you too easily. Your website should list only a contact for information (eg contact@, info@) managed by your assistant or receptionist. Depending on the size/type of your business, you could also have one for sales/marketing, HR, and media. But you don't need to manage them all. Same goes for your phone number. Relinquish control!
5. **Don't have an assistant? Get one.** It's money well spent. You should be like the guru on the mountain - no one should be able to get to you without first passing through the nine circles of hell. Okay maybe not but just because the tech enables you to do it all doesn't mean you have to, or that you should. And with a virtual assistant you don't have to employ one - they'll only be there when you need them - but you still need to relinquish some control to them (see step 4!).
6. **Just because you can doesn't mean you should.** I hear it all the time. "I don't need an assistant because I can type". More and more executives are looking after their own correspondence, documents, presentations - because they can type. There's a lot more to document creation (as the name implies) than typing. But remember, you're the boss! You worked hard to get there and you're not being paid to do the job of the staff. And you know, let's be honest - sometimes you're doing those jobs because it gets you out of the ones you don't like or want to do ...right?

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It's all about working smarter, but that has to come from you because the tech can't do it for you. Tame the tech, relinquish control and allow your support staff to do just that - support you - and you just may be able to get some free time back.

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Planned Obsolescence



You got that shiny new toy from Santa - but how long is it going to last? And do you know what happens to it when it eventually gives up the ghost?

Planned obsolescence is the deliberate building in to a design or product a limited useful life so that it passes its use-by date long before it actually needs replacement. It's not that the item actually needs replacing at that time - but it's a great manufacturer's trick to ensure repeat business

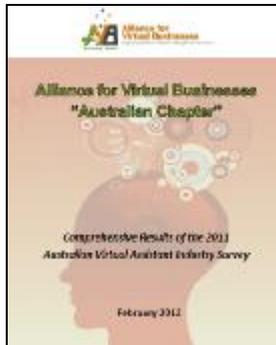
from customers. Instead of creating a truly quality product that lasts a lifetime, they ensure a continual stream of customers by deliberately orchestrating failure.

Check this article - and very interesting YouTube video.

Do spend the time looking at the documentary if you missed it on SBS - and remember, next time you go for that shiny new toy spare a thought and perhaps ask do you really need it ... or only want it?

Australian VA Industry Survey Results

The results of the first-ever comprehensive Australian VA industry survey are in!



The Australian Virtual Assistant Industry Comprehensive Survey is the first national comprehensive study of the Australian Virtual Business industry to document its development, growth and impact on small business, entrepreneurs and solopreneurs.

Over 300 professional, self-employed VAs provide remote business support services Australia-wide and were invited to participate in the survey - 146 responded (48.6%).

The Survey is a tool that can be used both as a benchmark for professional business growth and as an industry promotion tool, the results of which will offer an important reference document for VAs, the media and businesses seeking documented data on

one of the fastest growing work-from-home industries not just in Australia, but worldwide.

Pick up a copy at the A4VB Australian Chapter site for US\$59.97.

Free Webinars

Have you checked out the free online learning opportunities available in Australian time via the Alliance for Virtual Businesses-Australian Chapter? The webinars take place the third Friday of every month at 1.00pm Australian Eastern.

Topics covered so far have been:

- Money Mindset Breakthroughs - Charge What You're Worth
- Communicate with Confidence
- The Importance of Contracts

Recordings of the webinars are available from the Alliance Shop should you miss one - and they're just \$5.

Upcoming webinar for February is one not to be missed: **How to Eliminate Email Overload and Triple Your Productivity** scheduled for Friday 17 February.

Register online at the [Webinars Page](#) and [check the calendar](#) for upcoming events!

Future webinars will cover Cloud Computing, LinkedIn and PowerPoint Presentations that don't suck!

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