Over a Decade of Cyber Essentials: The Impact on Businesses

Over the past 10 years, Cyber Essentials has helped businesses strengthen their defences against the rising threat of cyberattacks. With cybercriminals constantly finding new ways to exploit vulnerabilities, having a solid cybersecurity framework in place is more important than ever.

So, what impact has Cyber Essentials had on businesses?

- **Protecting your Business Against Attacks:** By adhering to Cyber Essentials standards, businesses reduce their vulnerability to cyber threats. Organisations with Cyber Essentials certification are **92% less likely to claim their cyber insurance than those without it.**

- **Education & Awareness:** Cybersecurity isn't just about having strategies in place, it's also about people. Cyber Essentials has empowered businesses by improving their understanding of cyber risks. **85% of certified organisations report a stronger grasp of cybersecurity**, making them more proactive against emerging threats.

- **Trust & Reputation:** In an era where data breaches frequently make headlines, customers, suppliers, and stakeholders want to know their information is secure. Achieving Cyber Essentials certification demonstrates your business is taking cybersecurity seriously, reinforcing trust and confidence that their data is safe with you.

- **Continuous Improvement:** Cybersecurity isn't a one-time thing; it requires regular updates. With Cyber Essentials requiring annual renewal, businesses must continuously review and improve their security measures, ensuring they don't fall behind.

AI Innovations: Boost Productivity in Microsoft Office

Microsoft Office is transforming the way we work by integrating AI that makes everyday tasks more efficient.

Here are some key features that can enhance your workflow:

- **Word:** Need help with writing? Microsoft Editor checks grammar, spelling, and even suggests better ways to phrase things. CoPilot can go a step further by drafting content, summarising text, and even generating ideas based on your input.

- **PowerPoint:** Still creating basic and boring PowerPoints? AI suggests layouts, colour schemes, and image placements to make presentations look professional and on brand with minimal effort.

- **Excel & MyAnalytics:** If you're juggling a lot of data, MyAnalytics gives insights into work habits, helping you manage your time better and be more productive.

- **Outlook & Meeting Insights:** AI can summarise meeting notes and suggest follow-ups, so you never miss an important action item.

- **Automate Repetitive Tasks:** AI can take care of time-consuming tasks like cleaning up data or creating basic reports, freeing you up to focus on more important work.

Embrace the Future of AI

AI is evolving fast, and it can be overwhelming to know how it fits into your business. At Mother, we help our customers stay up to date with the latest innovations. AI isn't just an advantage—it's becoming essential for staying competitive. From improving customer service to increasing productivity and providing key market insights, AI is changing how businesses operate. Don't let your business fall behind!

Stay Online, Stay Operational: Backup Circuits & Failover

With the cloud featuring so heavily in today's business operations, staying online is imperative.

Minimising risk by ensuring your internet connection is not broadband but business-grade Ethernet is essential for business continuity but, irrespective of its grade, it will fail. That's almost guaranteed.

Ethernet circuits are generally accompanied with response and resolution times superior to lesser circuits and the provider will typically compensate you for the outage if their SLA's are not met. The maximum compensation will never exceed your monthly payment for the service and this won't touch the sides of the consequential loss to your business.

How Do Backup (Failover) Circuits work?
A failover solution works by automatically switching to a backup connection if your primary internet goes down.

Here's how it works in simple terms:

Primary Connection: Your business runs on a high-speed Ethernet circuit (i.e. leased line) for high quality, reliable business-grade Internet access.

Backup Circuit: A secondary internet connection (ideally from a different Carrier) that can be used in the event of a primary circuit outage.

A backup circuit doesn't need to match the attributes of your primary circuit, it just needs to keep you online. It could be broadband or a 4G/5G connection.

Automatic Failover: When your main connection goes down, the failover system quickly switches to the backup circuit, ensuring your business stays connected. This switch can be so seamlessly that employees and customers won't even notice. When the primary connection is restored, your traffic will return to your primary circuit and the back circuit will switch back to standby mode.

Why Does Your Business Need It?
Eliminate Downtime: Keep your systems running when your primary connection fails.

Protects Productivity: Employees can keep working without disruptions.

Maintains Customer Trust: Ensures customers can still access your services.

Prevents Financial Losses: Reduces lost revenue from internet outages.

Peace of Mind: You're always connected, no matter what happens.

As businesses switch from legacy phone lines to VoIP many users face call quality issues. Broken audio, delays and dropped calls are commonplace.

Traditional (legacy) phone lines
Traditional phone lines (Analogue and ISDN) were dedicated voice circuits that worked independently of data connections. Today, voice is carried by our internet circuits which are designed to carry both voice and data.

Our Managing Director uses a plane English analogy: *"A data connection is equivalent to a road. Data traffic is analogous to the cars, trucks and buses that use the road. Voice traffic is comparable to the cyclists that use the same road."*

It's a marvellous analogy because we know that cyclists are particularly vulnerable on our busy roads. When the roads are of poor quality or congested, cyclists get knocked off their bikes. That's exactly what happens to our voice (VoIP) traffic when it competes with data.

What are the signs?
Dropped calls: Calls cutting off, especially during busy times.

Poor sound quality: Audio sounds robotic, has echo and delay.

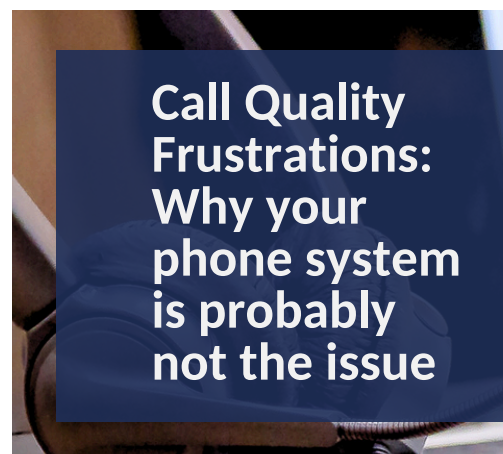**Broken Voice:** Sound breaks-up resulting in incoherent audio.

Video Calls: Video Freezing, pixelated images & choppy audio.

How can we fix it?
Eliminating congestion would do wonders, but it's quite impractical. You can't switch everything else off because you're on the phone.

Many applications now prioritise voice traffic over data traffic. Your data circuits can be configured to prioritise voice as well. That's equivalent to cyclists being given a cycle lane that protects them from other road users.

You can upgrade your circuit to allow for greater traffic flow, thus eliminating congestion. That's a simple and cost-effective fix.

Call Quality Frustrations: Why your phone system is probably not the issue

Another option is routing voice traffic through a secondary circuit. This eliminates voice and data competition and provides voice with an uncontended path.

Many organisations use their secondary (failover) data circuits for their voice traffic. This is a smart way of tackling the problem, but it can be complex.

VoIP has introduced wonderful flexibility in the communications space, but voice quality will always be compromised if the infrastructure that supports it is not carefully considered.

A Bigger, Better Edinburgh Office

Mother is excited to announce the relocation of our Edinburgh office to a new, larger space. Our Edinburgh branch, which opened in 2018, has experienced remarkable growth, prompting the need for a facility that is now double the size of its previous location.

As our business has evolved, so have the needs of our clients. This expansion reflects our commitment to providing first class service, enhanced support, and innovative solutions to businesses in Edinburgh and the surrounding areas.

The new office, located in Leith, provides enhanced facilities and enough space to accommodate our growing team and customer base, positioning us well to continue our business growth in the coming years.

Exciting Growth at Mother: Meet Our New Engineers

Alongside a new office, we also have some new engineers to introduce!

Meet Seann

If you read the previous edition of The Mother Tongue, you may remember that we introduced Seann before he officially joined us. Now, nearly three months into his 12-month placement, he's settled in and making a real difference!

Seann has been busy getting hands-on experience, not just with troubleshooting and resolving technical issues but also with interacting with customers and learning from our experienced engineers. He's been out on-site visits, assisting with installations and maintenance, and gaining valuable insight into the problem-solving process in real-world scenarios.

Here's what he has to say about his time at Mother so far:

"Since starting this role, my skill set has grown exponentially, and I've really enjoyed working alongside my co workers. The experience has been incredibly valuable, allowing me to troubleshoot and resolve issues remotely while also developing my on-site problem-solving skills. Speaking directly with customers has helped me build confidence and improve my ability to explain technical solutions in a clear, understandable way."

We're thrilled to see Seann is loving his role, and we can't wait to watch him continue to develop over the coming months!

Meet Thomas

Thomas became one of the newest additions to the Mother team in February, and he's already making an impact! A graduate from Abertay University with a degree in Ethical Hacking, Thomas brings a strong technical expertise to the role.

Despite being just one month in, Thomas has already helped customers troubleshoot issues both remotely and on-site, set up and installed computers for clients, and assisted businesses in getting their new employees ready to work by ensuring they have the right tech in place.

Here's what Thomas has to say about his time at Mother so far:

"Working at Mother has been full of experiences. In just my first month I've learned so much working alongside the experienced engineers, every day has presented new challenges and valuable lessons. I'm excited to continue learning and contributing to the team as I develop my skills further."

Meet Martin

We're delighted to welcome Martin Meszaros to Mother! Originally from Hungary, Martin's path into IT has been anything but ordinary! After studying Software Engineering, he moved to Scotland in 2012, working in the fast-food industry before returning to education to pursue his passion for Cybersecurity. He earned an HND with an A grade and an SQA award, before graduating from RGU with an Honours degree in Cybersecurity with Network Management. He also placed 2nd in the national finals of the WorldSkills IT Support Technician competition.

Martin has already made a great impression, with one customer sharing:

"Really happy with him – very willing to help, very smiley, which is great for staff. He's ticked off a good few tickets that had been sitting for a long time.

He's got a real 'can-do' attitude, getting stuck in with contacting PowerSchool support and handling everything confidently. Really couldn't be happier!"

Outside of work, Martin enjoys hiking, fishing, and repairing computers for fun. His technical skills and proactive approach are already making a difference, and we're excited to have him on board!

We're thrilled to see our team growing with the addition of Seann, Thomas, and Martin. Their unique skills and energy are already strengthening our customer support and team dynamic. Having them in the Mother offices is a fantastic boost to our team.