PRACTICAL GUIDE · CERT.GT

Basic security for small businesses

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Ten low-cost measures that stop most attacks against small businesses. You do not need an IT department: you need one person in charge, an afternoon to set them up and the discipline to keep them going.

The ten measures

1. Two-step verification	Turn it on for email, online banking, the business's social media accounts and WhatsApp. It is the measure that stops the most attacks.
2. Unique passwords	A different one for each service, stored in a password manager. Never on a note stuck to the monitor.
3. Automatic updates	On computers, phones, the router and the invoicing system. A device that is no longer supported must be replaced.
4. Backups	An automatic daily copy of what you cannot afford to lose, with one disconnected copy. Test a restore every three months.
5. One account per person	No shared users and no administrator permissions for everyday work. Delete the account when someone leaves.
6. Antivirus and firewall	The one that comes with the operating system is enough if it is turned on and up to date.
7. Separate Wi-Fi	One network for the business and another for customers and visitors. Change the router's factory-default password.
8. Verify payments through another channel	Every change to a supplier's bank account is confirmed by phone, on a number you already knew.
9. Train the team	Fifteen minutes every quarter: how to recognize a fake email and who to tell.
10. Know what to do if it happens	A printed sheet with the steps and the phone numbers: bank, IT provider, cert.gt.

If you can only do three

- Two-step verification on email and banking.
- Automatic backups with one disconnected copy.
- Automatic updates on all devices.

Warning signs

- An email that pressures you to pay, sign in or download something.
- A supplier that tells you by email that its bank account has changed.
- Someone asking for a code you received by SMS.
- A computer that suddenly runs very slowly or shows windows you did not open.

If something goes wrong

- Disconnect the affected device from the internet, without turning it off.
- Change your passwords from another device.
- Call your bank if money is involved.
- Report the incident at cert.gt/reportar: it is free and you will receive guidance.

Official text

Based on Implementation Group 1 of the CIS Controls and on the NIST CSF 2.0 guide for small businesses.

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