InTech News

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Fortnight ending 25 October 2026

Five things worth two minutes of your time.

Four things worth knowing from the past fortnight, and one worth doing something about.

INTERESTING

Google has loosened its promise not to use Gmail for ad targeting

On 16 October Google updated its privacy policy and removed the plain statement that it does not show personalised ads based on content from Gmail, Drive or Photos. Google says ads will not be based directly on your inbox and that connecting your apps to its AI features, known as Personal Intelligence, is opt-in. Ars Technica reads the new wording as leaving room for that data to shape ads shown in AI search once it has been connected.

What this means for you: If anyone in the business runs customer email through a free Gmail address, move it to a proper business mailbox, which is a job for your IT provider and not a rush. In the meantime, ask staff not to switch on Personal Intelligence on any account that holds work email or documents.

Source: arstechnica.com

CYBER SECURITY

ASD has published a new security framework, and it is not written for small business

On 15 October the Australian Signals Directorate published ASD Essentials, a framework built around principles, actions and the parts of an organisation they apply to. It is aimed at large organisations, critical infrastructure and government, and ASD describes it as replacing the Essential Eight, with Essential Eight work already done counting towards it. ASD points smaller businesses to its separate Small Business Cyber Security Handbook.

What this means for you: Nothing here needs action from you, and a vendor who says your business must now comply with it is selling something. The handbook's key actions are the right yardstick: multi-factor authentication, prompt updates, tested backups and staff awareness. Ask whoever looks after your IT to confirm each of those four in one line.

Source: cyber.gov.au

MICROSOFT WORLD

Windows Server 2016 stops getting security updates in January

Microsoft has confirmed that Windows Server 2016 reaches the end of extended support in the second week of January 2027, and the January 2027 update will be the last. That covers every edition, including Essentials, whose Essentials-specific features such as Remote Web Access stop being supported on the same date. Microsoft's advice is to plan an upgrade to Windows Server 2025.

> **What this means for you:** Ask your IT provider one question: do we run any server on Windows Server 2016, and what is the plan for it? A replacement takes weeks to plan, so it should be a budget item now. Hardware prices are up, as our last issue noted, so do not leave it until December.

Source: learn.microsoft.com

APPLE WORLD

The iPhone Duo is on sale in Australia from $3,499, and it is eSIM-only

Apple's first folding iPhone went on sale in Australia on 23 October, after pre-orders opened on 16 October. The 256GB model costs $3,499, well above the $2,299 starting price of the iPhone 18 Pro Max. It has no physical SIM tray anywhere in the world, so the number has to be moved to it as an eSIM.

> **What this means for you:** Treat it as a purchase for someone who wants one, not a standard issue handset. If a staff member is given one, ask your phone carrier to arrange the eSIM transfer before the old phone is wiped, so the business number does not go dark on the first morning.

Source: finder.com.au

BUSINESS SMARTS

Lock the three accounts that can reach your money

The Australian Signals Directorate's handbook for small business puts multi-factor authentication first among its key actions. The accounts that matter most are the ones that can move money or reset everything else.

> **What this means for you:** Before the end of November, switch on multi-factor sign-in for your own bank login, your accounting software and the email address that receives password resets. An authenticator app beats a text message where there is a choice. Then ask whoever manages your Microsoft 365 whether every staff account has it too, and keep the recovery codes somewhere other than the same inbox.

Source: cyber.gov.au

ALSO ON THE 1300 INTECH BLOG

AI Agents for Business: Where to Start and Who Owns It

Our explainer on what AI agents are, how they differ from chatbots and ordinary automation, and the four levels of independence they can be given. It is written for owners who have seen a demonstration and want six questions to answer, about access, data, checking and accountability, before an agent touches their systems.

Read it at **1300intech.com.au/blog/ai-agents-for-business**

Three ways to stay informed

Take the ones you want, leave the ones you don't. Free resources for your SMB.

- **The IT Essentials Digest** (monthly) A single business focus, four of our best articles, condensed into a four-minute read: the key insight from each, what you might be missing, and how to apply it to your own business.
- **InTech News** (every second Wednesday) **This one.** Five things worth two minutes of your time. Something interesting, something on security, Microsoft, Apple, and one practical thing a Melbourne business owner can act on.
- **Blog posts** (every 2-3 weeks) An email whenever we publish. Longer pieces, one subject at a time, written for owners rather than IT departments.

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