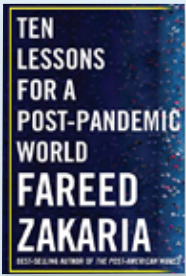


Technology Today

Insider Tips To Make
Your Business Run
Faster, Easier And More
Profitably

Ten Lessons For A Post-Pandemic World

By Fareed Zakaria



Many of us have wondered what the world will look like when the pandemic comes to an end. CNN host and best-selling author Fareed Zakaria takes a deep dive into the nature of post-pandemic culture and

the significant consequences that could unfold years down the road in *Ten Lessons For A Post-Pandemic World*. Zakaria looks at the changes we have made to combat COVID-19 and the effects it could have on Americans and a wider global population for years to come. Through research and years of experience, Zakaria notes that nothing is written in stone and that we can still make changes to improve the future.



3 Great IT Resolutions For The New Year

January 2022



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Jeremy Valverde, CEO of Affinity Tech Solutions.

Our Mission:

To build a community of success-minded entrepreneurs that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and expands the capacity of all members to achieve great things.

As the new year kicks off, many business owners and entrepreneurs are making their New Year's resolutions. Most of these business owners will be focused on increasing profits or expanding growth, but it would be wise to focus on some IT- or tech-related resolutions as well. Making sure that you are up-to-date on the most recent tech and security measures can go a long way toward growing and protecting your business.

While many companies make goals or resolutions that they hope to achieve in the new year, plenty of businesses fail to meet these goals because they do not take the steps necessary to achieve them. It often takes time and determination to make these resolutions

a reality, and business owners should not quit when the situations become stale or difficult.

Here are our three best IT and tech resolutions for business owners to make for the new year and how to make sure you achieve them.

Employee Security Training And Creating A Security Safe Culture

If your employees have not had any security awareness training, you should make it your focus to ensure that everyone is informed about potential information security breaches. Research suggests that human error is involved in over 90% of security breaches. By providing security awareness training to your employees,

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particular product or service, you need to have a solid online shop. A new report from Digital Commerce 360 took a deep dive into e-commerce and the features that users think are necessary.

About 76% of respondents said that a detailed description is important if they are going to make a purchase. It was also reported that most customers want a convenient and speedy checkout procedure. The pandemic has made finding many products difficult, and 68% of respondents said that they would like websites to mark their products as out of stock when applicable.

There are many things that you can do to make online shopping a better experience for your customers. When deciding what features to include, look at it from the consumer's viewpoint and decide from there.



Podcasts To Boost Your Productivity For The New Year

The New Year has arrived, so people are focused on meeting their resolutions. Whether it's business-related or personal, many people hope to be more productive and successful this new year. Everyone is different, and there is no tried-and-true way to boost productivity that works for everybody. You have to find what works best for you.

If you're unsure where to get started, here are five podcasts that will help you meet your resolutions and boost your productivity in 2022.

- ***The Psychology Podcast With Scott Barry Kaufman***
- ***NPR's Hidden Brain***
- ***Where Should We Begin***
- ***All In The Mind***
- ***Speaking Of Psychology***

Reimagining Your Business

The pandemic has changed the way that many small businesses operate. They have had to pivot and adapt in order to survive in a time of immense change. Many have had to implement new strategies, while some have even had to adopt a new environment. The change has not been easy for anyone.

When the pandemic first hit, many small-business owners were faced with two choices. They could wait it out and hope that everything would return to normal before long, or they could create a better future at that moment and attempt to continue to grow. Sometimes changing your marketing isn't enough, and you need to bring your business into a new light.

I have a friend named Jacob Limmer who owns Cottonwood Coffee, and he found a way to pivot his business and succeed during the pandemic. As the owner of a coffee shop business, Jacob knew that people would not be busting down his door at the beginning of the pandemic. Jacob owned two storefronts and an online store, so he knew that he would need to make some changes to survive.

He sent out a survey to his mailing list that asked what Cottonwood Coffee could offer to best support its patrons during this unprecedented time. The results came back, and it was astounding how many people requested something for "immunity." Jacob took this idea and ran with it by creating the Immune Booster Cold Brew. This allowed his customers to still get their coffee, but with an added bonus of a healthy supplement.

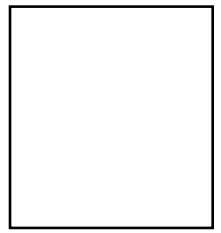


Even though Jacob had to close one of his storefronts, he is seeing success because he found a way to reimagine his business. He didn't wait around for things to get better. He took a risk that paid off and allowed him to stay in business.

If your business has faced difficulty and you're wondering if you should pivot and make a change to stay afloat, remember that you did not get this far only to get *this* far. You want to continue to grow and expand your business to its full potential. In order to get there, you may have to make some necessary changes.



Mike Michalowicz has always believed that he had the formula to success and has proved it on multiple occasions. He is the creator of Profit First, which is used by hundreds of thousands of companies across the globe to drive profit. He is the author of multiple books, including Get Different and The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur. Mike is a former small business columnist for The Wall Street Journal and served as a business makeover specialist for MSNBC. Mike currently leads two new multimillion-dollar ventures as he puts his latest research to the test. He also is a highly sought-after keynote speaker on innovative entrepreneurial topics.



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Free Cyber Security Audit Will Reveal
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New Year, New Problems

More businesses are returning to on-location work, and hybrid meetings are becoming more prevalent. As meetings start to occur that host both remote and on-location employees, you may be wondering how to keep everything managed. Thankfully, there are a few things you can do to ensure that everyone feels heard and respected.

Instead of having everyone on-site use one camera, have them use their individual laptops or computers. This will reduce chaos



and allow everyone an opportunity to speak without interrupting others. If this is not feasible with your company, you could assign someone to monitor the remote workers and pass along any questions or information to the employees working on-site. Having one-on-one meetings with remote workers and developing a connected culture both go a long way toward making everyone feel comfortable and appreciated.

It will take time to perfect hybrid meetings, but with patience, understanding and a desire to improve, your meetings can run smoother than ever before.

CHOOSING A VPN THIS YEAR?

Virtual private network (VPN) technology is essential for securing the Internet safely, whether it be for work or pleasure. VPNs are one of the only ways you can have end-to-end safeguard encryption that keeps

your information secure while browsing the Internet. If you don't currently use a VPN, you absolutely should. Here are a few things to consider before deciding on a specific VPN.

The VPN market is growing fast. It reached \$31 billion in 2021 and is slated to grow to \$90 billion within the next six years. When choosing a VPN, you want to consider server locations, speed, security policy, whether the VPN has reliable encryption standards, device compatibility and so much more. Choosing a VPN should not be a half-second decision. Take your time and do your research before deciding on a service.

E-COMMERCE IS THE NEW MARKETPLACE

If you're looking to start a new business or grow a current business that sells a

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