



# Entrepreneur Incubator

## Reference Article

---

### Tech Trends that Challenge and (Sometimes) Disturb You

By Anita Campbell

The widespread use of technology requires small business leaders to have more knowledge about how to use these tools -- and avoid their pitfalls -- than ever before.

Technology is a good thing. It helps you be productive and save money. But I've noticed two technology themes recently that, depending how you look at them, are not always such positives in business. First, the increasing availability of technology requires more knowledge by small business owners about technology and how to use it than ever before. Second, it's a jungle out there and technology is being used as a weapon by some, requiring that you be forewarned -- and forearmed.

Let's look at five technology trends that can place extra demands on business:

#### 1. More browsers

Once upon a time there were two browsers, Netscape and Internet Explorer. Then the browser war ensued, and for a while there was one main browser. Fast forward a few years and it seems like everyone is getting into the browser act, with Microsoft, Apple, and Mozilla now offering browsers. Even Google recently jumped into the browser fray, releasing its brand spanking new [Chrome browser](#). And business associates of mine swear by the [Flock browser](#) for social media activities. Wikipedia lists [dozens of browsers](#), although market share resides in a handful.

*The upshot:* With today's emphasis on software as a service, eventually you will run into online applications that don't work properly on a given browser. That means you may need to have two or three browsers installed on your computer, so you have a backup if one doesn't work. That also means two or three browsers you have to keep updated for new releases, keep your bookmarks and settings updated, etc. And if you are running a website or Web application, you now have more browsers to worry about testing for compatibility. Even a small design tweak can throw off how your site looks or operates in certain browsers.

#### 2. Scraper sites

RSS feeds are wonderful, because they make it more convenient for you as the reader to monitor and read content. However, they have given birth to a particularly putrid form of parasite called the scraper site (sometimes affectionately known as a splog, or spam blog). Scraper sites "scrape" RSS feeds advertising revenue off of YOUR content.

*The upshot:* Trying to deal with scraper sites can make you feel like you are playing the carnival game "Whack a Mole." As soon as you report one scraper site to Google and it goes away, another pops up. But don't let that dissuade you from reporting them. Also, make sure you delete trackbacks from scraper sites (no sense sending traffic to them). You might also embed links back to your site in your RSS feed. With WordPress, for instance, the ["RSS footer" plugin](#) will insert the URL for each original article inside your feed, making it harder for some to scrape your feed without giving you credit.



## Entrepreneur Incubator Reference Article

---

### 3. Twitter spam and Facebook imposters

Even the social networking sites are attracting spammers, hackers, and other bad actors. Twitter accounts that consist of spam, XXX-rated content, and other offensive or unnecessary things are growing in number. Twitter and Facebook imposters are fairly common -- even [Seth Godin says](#) that the Twitter account under his name is not him. Facebook accounts have also gotten hacked or hijacked. For instance, a hacker managed to compromise a Facebook app and placed a highly offensive image on my Facebook profile. I could not block or delete the image. Eventually Facebook had to step in and delete it.

*The upshot:* Today you and your business increasingly have a presence on or through multiple social sites and applications. That's good, because it spreads your brand. But it also brings the burden of monitoring your presence regularly, or you could end up "following" a XXX-rated thread or displaying on your profile a racially offensive image that could smear your reputation by association. And you should take preemptive action, going out to popular social media sites and signing up for the use of your name and/or business brand, to prevent imposters from profiting off of your hard work.

### 4. Hacking epidemics

Not long ago, I was checking out a friend's blog and saw a strange homepage. Instead of a blog, the homepage now was a link farm. If you clicked on any links they took you to a Russian website. Turns out, an iframe code had been inserted in the blog, hijacking it. This sleazy tactic is just the latest in an all-out epidemic of hackings hitting small business blogs and other websites. It used to be that you didn't need to worry much about hackings unless you had an ecommerce site or collected credit card or sensitive customer data. Now, informational websites and blogs are a target.

*The upshot:* Blogging and having a small business website have become more complex. And if you do not have outside tech help, it's up to you to educate yourself about security issues and take steps to protect your site. (As if you needed one more thing on your plate.) For those of you using WordPress, I've [written some tips](#) for protecting your WordPress site.

### 5. Intrusive anti-malware apps

Anybody who doesn't know by now that they should have antivirus/firewall/Internet security software installed on their computers needs a bop on the head. There's no excuse not to protect your computers -- and avoid inadvertently spreading malware. But sometimes good things go wrong, as this post pointed out about an Internet security program that in its efforts to protect you, interferes with your work, slows down your system, and [forces you to do things its way](#) rather than your way.

*The upshot:* Look for security programs that manage a balance between security and protecting you from malware. Read user reviews online specifically touching that issue.

Technology is a wonderful thing, but it WILL take more of your time and knowledge to be effective in an increasingly tech-centric world.



## Entrepreneur Incubator Reference Article

---

*Anita Campbell is a writer, speaker and radio talk show host who closely follows trends in the small business market at her site*