

SAFELETTER

I-TECH NETWORK SOLUTIONS | SEPT 2021

VOLUME - #3



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Remote work can be exhausting, so why not have a little fun gamifying your work from home experience with a BINGO game?

SAFEHOUSE

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A Word from the CEO



Dear Valued Customers and Suppliers,

September marked the return of a sense of normality amongst most Malaysians, with the Prime Minister lifting most of the COVID-19 restrictions in this country. As the majority of the nation's adult population have been fully vaccinated, most businesses were allowed to resume

operations in anticipation of the endemic phase which is set to begin in late October. It does seem the nation's economy is slowly getting back in gear, but that does not mean that things are going back to how it used to be – especially when it comes to workplace model.

After one and a half-year of 'new normal', local companies have experienced the true benefits of remote working, including flexible schedule, cost saving, and little to no commuting. Whilst some business owners plan on having workforce fully returned to the office, plenty of companies (including us!) will adopt a hybrid model of both on-site and remote locations moving forward.

And it goes without saying that this hybrid working model is in essence enabled by the use of cloud computing.

By hosting applications on the cloud rather than on-site, employees were able to access their working files, collaborate on the same project, and exchange ideas in real-time, from anywhere, on any device – as long as there's an internet connection. This allows workers to drive the efficiency of the team, as well as the quality of the work.

Cloud solutions are also much easier to scale compared to traditional IT infrastructure. A business could temporarily scale back or increase resources to accommodate current workforce or changes in traffic. The ability to pivot quickly allows businesses to adapt effectively to changing circumstances.

Contact

Company Name

i-Tech Network Solutions
Sdn Bhd

Street Address

Level 18, Wisma Mont' Kiara
No 1, Jalan Kiara Mont' Kiara
50480 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

Phone

03-6411 6288

Email

info@itns.com.my
info@safehouse.com.my

Website

<https://safehouse.com.my/>
<https://itns.com.my/>

As for accessibility, it is crucial that a company has a well-rounded cybersecurity strategy to allow the access of sensitive data from outside of the office. There is no doubt that cybercriminals are becoming ever more sophisticated with their attacks, and migrating to the cloud and away from legacy infrastructure allows organizations to reach a higher standard of security by hosting their critical data in enhanced data centres with enterprise-grade networking.

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly elevated the importance of cloud computing and persuaded many to spend on the technology. Moving forward, we firmly believe that cloud-based platforms and applications will continue to be the solution that empowers flexible working, with employees dispersed in multiple locations, may that be in the office, at home, or from their favourite cafes.

With my very best wishes,



Yap Ket Bin
Chief Executive Officer
i-Tech Network Solutions Sdn Bhd

The Future of Work at SAFEHOUSE: How We're Building a Hybrid Company



Covid-19 has fast-tracked workplace strategies to address a dispersed workforce and empower digital transformation. Many organizations are looking into re-designing their office layout and meeting mediums with an emphasis on social distancing, flexibility, cost reduction and employee satisfaction - all while trying to maintain a balance between working from the office and a remote location.

As organizations are thinking towards the future, SAFEHOUSE has taken this as an opportunity to innovate and disrupt old workplace models. Historically, there has been a perception in many organizations that if employees were not seen in an office, it means they were not focusing on the task in hand. However, the forced experiment due to the pandemic that revolves around remote working, and has shattered those perceptions to prove that employees are capable of getting their jobs done from home.

Take our company as an example: the pandemic has shed light on the resilience of “SAFEHOUSERS” — in particular, our unwavering drive and commitment to innovate and provide our customers and partners with responsive support and responses, regardless of the changing work environment. This is an encouraging sign, considering the fact that most staff had to deal with the intense and unprecedented stress of a worldwide global health issue, not to mention the additional

responsibilities of having children, partners, parents or housemates under the same roof, and yet employee productivity has not seemed to be impacted too adversely by the shift to remote working. If anything, it was the same or even higher than it was before the pandemic!

As we prepare to move to our new headquarters in January 2022, we are introducing a fully flexible hybrid work model for “SAFEHOUSERS” to determine the working environment that allows them to deliver the best work for their partners and customers. A small number of employees who perform administrative, reconciliation and customer service duties will be in the office for five days a week, whereas those who can work remotely will fall into a flexible model which involves coming into the office periodically for connectivity and collaboration purposes.

As a tech company that prides itself on flexibility, we are proud to say that we have had a head start on remote working. Most of our staff were already familiar with the tools and culture to work remotely — as many of our employees already did so before the pandemic. Rather, we believe the major challenge ahead will be to ensure the hybrid work environment works best for everyone in a new setting, and we will invest prudently into the necessary, innovative technology tools in anticipation of unforeseen logistical challenges.

In all sincerity, we hope that this transparency into how we are evolving our workplace culture and company for the future is helpful in evaluating SAFEHOUSE as a partner to collaborate with, or a vendor that you can rely upon. You can expect to hear more from us over the next few issues of SAFELETTER on how our staff is adapting to the new working environment. And in the usual SAFEHOUSE fashion, we will delve into the pros and cons, plus what we have learnt along the way in our journey to shape the ideal place to work from anywhere.

World's Mental Health Day 2021



This year's World Mental Health Day, on 10th October, comes at a time when our daily lives have changed considerably as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The past months have brought many challenges such as for healthcare frontliners, who sacrifice their days and nights for those who need help; for students, who struggle with home-based learning due to the lack of electronic devices or poor connectivity; for workers who are at risk of losing their livelihoods; for the underprivileged who were offered limited protection from COVID-19; and for people with underlying mental health issues, whose conditions have worsened markedly due to bereavement, isolation, loss of income and uncertainties in life.

There is no shortage of sobering news and statistics related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact of which are affecting people of all races, genders and age groups. As we enter into the final months of 2021, we would like to break the mental health stigma that leaves so many people suffering in secret by helping to spread mental health awareness amongst the public with an infographic on how to deal with stress and anxiety.

COPING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES FOR STRESS AND ANXIETY



1 Talk to Your Loved Ones Tip No. #1

It's normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry in times of crisis. Talk to people you trust. Spend time with your loved ones at home/remotely through video chat.

2 Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle Tip No. #2

Maintain a healthy lifestyle - eat healthy, get enough sleep, workout at home and stay hydrated. There are also many free resources available online to help you stay in shape.

3 Stay Away from Addictive Substances Tip No. #3

If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a trained psychiatrist or counsellor. Tobacco, drugs and alcohol might provide temporary relief, but it won't make the problems disappear.

4 Work Smarter, not Harder Tip No. #4

Working smarter means prioritizing your work, concentrating on the tasks that'll make a real difference. Accept that your in-tray will always be full, and don't expect it to be empty at the end of the day.

5 Take Control Tip No. #5

There's a solution to any problem. The act of taking control is in itself empowering, and it's a crucial part of finding a solution that satisfies you and not someone else.

Credits:
1. NHS England
2. Venngage Inc.



Work from Home
BINGO

USING LAPTOP	MAKE A TO DO LIST	ZOOM MEETING	AWKWARD SILENCE ON MEETING	LEARNED A NEW SKILL
"CAN EVERYBODY HEAR MY VOICE?"	PET ON KEYBOARD	FORGOT TO MUTE YOURSELF	USING COMPUTER	MUTE YOUR MIC
BAD INTERNET CONNECTION	FORGOT WHAT DAY IT IS	FREE	WEARS PYJAMAS	DOG BARKS DURING THE CALL
ONLINE SHOPPING	WEBCAM OFF	WORKING ON THE BED	CREATED A PLAYLIST	PET ON DESK
"CAN YOU SEE MY SCREEN?"	WEARS FORMAL TOP	TALKED TO YOURSELF	HEARD SOMEONE'S KID IN THE BACKGROUND	WORKIN ON THE DESK

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