

LeeShanok Tech Times

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

(602) 277-5757 • (520) 888-9122 • www.leeshanok.com



Which university offered the first-ever academic program in Computer Science?

- A. M.I.T.
- B. Harvard University
- C. University of Glasgow
- D. Cambridge University

Answer on Page 2

DECEMBER 2025



This monthly publication is provided courtesy of Eric LeeShanok, President of LeeShanok Network Solutions.

OUR MISSION:

To provide exceptional IT and cyber security services with Efficiency, Expertise and Excellence!

HOLIDAY SCAMS IN DISGUISE:

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR WHEN DONATING ONLINE



Even in good times, scammers circle around generosity. But during the holidays, when giving increases and emotions run high, they truly pounce.

A few years ago, a massive telefunding fraud was shut down after authorities discovered that the perpetrators had made **1.3 billion deceptive donation calls** and collected **over \$110 million** from unsuspecting donors. (Source: Federal Trade Commission)

At the same time, academic researchers from Cornell University found that on social media alone, more than **800 accounts** operated donation scams, pushing victims toward fake fundraisers over platforms like Facebook, X and Instagram.

For a small business, one misstep in charitable giving can do more than lose money – it can connect *your name* to fraud, damage your reputation and erode trust with clients, partners and your community.

Here's how to vet fundraisers, spot red flags and keep your business (and goodwill) safe this season.

How To Vet A Fundraiser Before You Donate

A legitimate fundraiser should answer these clearly:

- Who is organizing this, and what's their connection to the recipient?
- How exactly will the funds be used, and over what timeline?
- Who is controlling withdrawals? Is there a clear path for funds to reach their target?
- Do close contacts of the recipient (family, friends) publicly support the campaign?

If any of those are vague or missing, ask for clarification first. Silence or evasive answers is a red flag.

Red Flags That Often Signal Scams

If you see any of these, pause and investigate:

- Misleading or patently false information on the fundraiser page

Continued on Page 2 ...

... continued from Cover

- Funds not being used for the stated purpose in a reasonable time frame
- Impersonation of another person or copying someone else's story
- Stories that seem *too perfect* or emotionally manipulative

When you spot multiple warning signs, report the fundraiser and don't donate.

Vetting Charities (Not Just Crowdfunds)

Even established charities can have sketchy practices. Here's what to look for:

- Transparent program descriptions, financial breakdowns and annual reports
- Clear information about how much of a donation goes to programs vs. overhead
- Charity names that appear in searches with words like "fraud," "scam" or "complaints"

A lack of detail or negative reviews should spark caution.

Common Tactics Charity Scammers Use

Watch out for:

- Demands to donate via **gift cards, wire transfers or crypto** – Legitimate charities accept credit cards or checks.

- Websites missing "**https**" (look for the "s") – That means insecure data transmission.
- Pressure to donate *right away* – Urgency is a trick to stop you from thinking.
- Claims you already pledged or gave without remembering – Always double-check before you pay.

Scammers are clever. Even polished websites and thoughtful-sounding headlines may hide malicious intent.

Why This Is Important For Your Business

When your business gives to charity – publicly or privately – that generosity becomes part of your brand. A donation to a scam, or even an employee giving through your company name, can drag your brand into a fraud story.

Worse: The same tactics fraudsters use in charity scams – urgency, impersonation, phony websites – are also used to target businesses. That overlaps with phishing, invoice fraud and wire transfer scams. Teaching your team to spot fake fundraisers is training them to spot fraudulent tactics across the board.

How To Protect Your Business (And Your Goodwill)

These steps help ensure your giving is safe and smart:

1. **Donation Policy For Your Business:** Define how and where the company will donate, and put approval thresholds in place.
2. **Employee Awareness:** Educate your team on fake fundraisers, urging them to double-check and verify before donating under your company name.
3. **Use Trusted Channels:** Donate via charity websites, not through random links in e-mails or social media.
4. **Transparency:** If your business publicizes that it donates, it's worth verifying the charity you publicly support.
5. **Ongoing Monitoring:** After donating, check that funds are used as promised (many charities publish impact reports).

Keep Your Holidays Generous – Not Risky

The holidays are a chance to give back, not a season for regret. Smart checks and policies protect your money *and* your reputation.

Make sure your team knows how to spot these scams – whether it's a fake fundraiser, a phishing e-mail or a bogus payment request.

Because the best gift you can give your business (and your community) is trust that cannot be taken.

FREE REPORT DOWNLOAD

If You Are Considering Cloud Computing For Your Company, DON'T, Until You Read This ...

If you are considering cloud computing or Office 365 to save money and simplify IT, it is extremely important that you get and read this special report: **"5 Critical Facts Every Business Owner Must Know Before Moving Their Network To The Cloud."**

This report discusses in simple, nontechnical terms the pros and cons of cloud computing, data security, how to choose a cloud provider and three little-known facts that most IT consultants don't know or won't tell you about cloud computing that could end up causing you MORE problems and costing you more money than you anticipated. Even if you aren't ready to move to the cloud yet, this report will give you the right information and questions to ask when the time comes.



Get your FREE copy today call (602) 277-5757

Answer: D. Cambridge University. The University of Cambridge established the world's first computer science degree program, the Cambridge Diploma in Computer Science, in 1953.

CARTOON OF THE MONTH





BRAND-BUILDING ADVICE FROM KISS CO-FOUNDER GENE SIMMONS

Gene Simmons, legendary KISS co-founder and the mastermind behind the band's merchandising success, shares seven trade secrets that helped him create the iconic KISS brand and build his wealth.

1. Embrace Money Unapologetically

"Every step you take is either going to make you money or cost you money," he said. "I prefer to make money. You have an inferred fiduciary duty to yourself."

2. Work Harder Than Everyone Else

"Some of the least intelligent people I've met are also some of the wealthiest individuals," Simmons revealed. "The only difference between them and you is they work longer and harder. If you do nothing on [the] weekends — that's 104 days out of the year where you're doing nothing except spending money."

3. Choose Your Circle Wisely

"Get rid of all your loser friends," Simmons said. "Anybody who wants to go drinking, hanging out — get rid of them. They are vampires. They will suck you dry of any energy that you should be fully devoting to yourself. Surround yourself with better-looking people, richer people, smarter people. Yes, it's all surface stuff, but it works."

4. Master Communication And Branding

Clear communication, speaking with authority and maximizing your brand are important. "If you've got a brand that works, there are almost no limitations," he said. "In fact, KISS has done everything from KISS condoms to KISS caskets. We'll get you coming, and we'll get you going."

5. Diversify Income Streams

"Always have something else that makes you money," Simmons advised. "You can, and you

should, have passions. Whatever that passion is, there is a market for it."

6. Protect Your Assets

Simmons recommends trademarking your business and products. "The first thing in building a business is a nice, clear fence," he said. "Good fences make good neighbors."

7. Approach Life With Fresh Eyes

Pointing out that innovation often comes from unqualified outsiders, he encouraged the audience to approach everything like it's brand-new. "All businesses were invented in garages," he emphasized. "All businesses were created by people with vision. It's always about people with passion, the fire in their belly and vision who refuse to quit no matter how many times [they] fail."

Keys To Success

For Simmons, the path to success is paved with deliberate actions and unwavering commitment. He stressed that self-education and professional development form the foundation, particularly in understanding financial literacy and the language of money. As demonstrated by KISS's evolution, marketing prowess and differentiation are crucial elements. Simmons advocates for brand maximization, income diversification, strategic tax management, and protecting your intellectual property through trademarks and legal structures. He also emphasized the value of strategic partnerships, telling the audience to "liaise with everybody" and "grab contact information from interesting potential collaborators."

Most importantly, Simmons insisted that success isn't about natural talent or inherited privilege. It's about relentless drive, continuous learning, strategic thinking, unapologetic ambition and

the willingness to work longer and harder than everyone else.

"You have a fiduciary duty to educate yourself — to be in the right place with the right thing at the right time," he said. "It's all up to you to make life worthwhile and make a lot more money, because you can, and you will."

SHINY NEW GADGET OF THE MONTH

Tech Gadget: LG Smart InstaView Microwave



Blending innovation with entertainment, the LG Smart InstaView Microwave transforms everyday cooking into a connected experience. Featuring a 27-inch touchscreen, built-in speakers and Wi-Fi connectivity, it brings media streaming and smart functionality right to your kitchen counter.

Whether you're following a recipe, watching your favorite show or syncing with other smart appliances, this microwave redefines what a kitchen essential can be. Sleek, modern and multifunctional — it's a tech upgrade your kitchen didn't know it needed.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Holiday Scams In Disguise:
What To Watch Out For When
Donating Online ... **1**

Brand-Building Advice From KISS
Co-Founder Gene Simmons ... **3**

Your Customers Are Your Best
Marketers ... **4**

WHEN CUSTOMERS SPEAK, LET IT ECHO

USER-GENERATED CONTENT CAN BOOST YOUR BUSINESS



Marketing has always been challenging for business owners to master, but social media has provided an easier solution to their concerns. By creating a social media account for your business, you can communicate with your clients more effectively, see how they interact with your brand and products, and discover their concerns with your company. People love sharing their views on social media, which you can use to better your business. You can easily turn posts and messages about your business into quality user-generated content (UGC).

You may wonder where to start if you've never used user-generated content. Chances are that you already have the materials you need to put together a quick UGC campaign.

Leverage reviews and testimonials.

What are your clients saying about your business? Look through your reviews on Google, Yelp, or any other place where people discuss your business. Pick your favorites and start using them in your marketing efforts. They'll look great in your newsletter or website, but you can go even further by creating social media posts highlighting good reviews. If you

don't have many reviews or testimonials, encourage your current customers to leave some. Offering a small discount or gift in exchange for a review will generate more interest.

Create opportunities for interaction.

You can't expect your clients and customers to do all the heavy lifting. You have to create opportunities for them to interact with you and your brand. One of the best ways to do this is by creating polls or asking questions on social media. Not only can this give you valuable information about your business, but it also has the potential to boost your brand awareness. As more people answer a poll, the more visible it becomes, introducing even more potential clients to your business.

Another great way to accumulate user-generated content for your marketing campaigns is to create contests for your customers. Ask them to submit images of them using your product or service, or anything else related to your business. Offer a prize to increase participation. Just like that, you're gaining more brand awareness while stocking up on images you can use for future social media posts or marketing campaigns.