

# Three ways small and medium businesses can improve operations in 2018

## CenturyLink executive shares essential business priorities

MONROE, La., Feb. 5, 2018 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Small and medium-size businesses are a major source of employment and economic activity in the U.S. Today, Vernon Irvin, president, government, education, medium and small business with [CenturyLink, Inc.](#) (NYSE: CTL), kicks off a seven-city roadshow to discuss the technology and tools empowering small and medium businesses. Here is what Irvin sees as priorities for these businesses in 2018:

- **Flexibility is fundamental:** In order to attract and retain a talented workforce, small and medium businesses need to provide mobility options that enable employees to work from anywhere at any time. With a powerful, low-cost tool like Voice over IP (VoIP), a laptop or cell phone can operate just like a desk phone, allowing employees to be reachable wherever they are. A VoIP service can also bring employees closer together with audio, video and web conferencing, as well as collaboration tools like file sharing and instant messaging.
- **Security is essential:** Most small and medium businesses think they have nothing of significance for hackers, but of the roughly 4,000 attacks each day, 62 percent<sup>1</sup> target small and medium businesses. If attacked, these businesses are often unable to recover due to financial losses and reputational damage. Small and medium businesses benefit the most from using technology solutions with built-in security. For instance, a dual-band Wi-Fi solution allows guests and employees to be on separate networks so one does not compromise the other, while deploying an SD-WAN solution can allow for security policies to be distributed across all business locations.
- **Digital marketing is crucial:** Marketing success requires a mobile-friendly website, local search and digital marketing tools like analytics and retargeting. With limited budgets, small and medium businesses should look to tools that are already in place, like Wi-Fi, to gain insight into the online behaviors of customers. With the right Wi-Fi solution, businesses can access a dashboard to see how customers are using the network and view aggregate data on the sites most frequently visited. With that information, businesses can determine the best social and digital tools to reach and attract new customers. Customers can also be redirected to a company website or social media page from the Wi-Fi login page, offering another way to connect.

Hear Vernon's 2018 priorities for small and medium-size businesses:

<https://youtu.be/kAFI7DWHgp8>

## Key Facts

- Roadshow cities include: Denver, CO; Salt Lake City, UT; Seattle, WA; Phoenix, AZ; Tulsa, OK; Minneapolis, MN; and Orlando, FL.

## Additional Resources

- Blog: [3 Business Trends SMBs Can't Afford to Miss](#), Vernon Irvin
- Blog: [Does Wi-Fi Matter? More Than You Might Think](#), Vernon Irvin
- Blog: [Why VoIP Is a Hot Topic among Small Business Owners](#), Vernon Irvin
- <sup>1</sup>Denver Post, "[60% of small companies that suffer a cyber attack are out of business within six months](#)", Oct. 23, 2016.

## About CenturyLink

[CenturyLink](#) (NYSE: CTL) is the second largest U.S. communications provider to global enterprise customers. With customers in more than 60 countries and an intense focus on the customer experience, CenturyLink strives to be the world's best networking company by solving customers' increased demand for reliable and secure connections. The company also serves as its customers' trusted partner, helping them manage increased network and IT complexity and providing managed network and cyber security solutions that help protect their business.

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