



Replacing Lost or Damaged Electronic Devices

When an insurance claim involves technology, the valuation that the lost or damaged item receives can be surprising to the insured. It is important to get the right coverage so there are no disappointments at claim time.

For years, the cliché about buying a new automobile was that it lost a fourth of its value just driving it off the lot. Well, technology can make new cars seem like underachievers. With constant and rapid advancement, a

given device may depreciate so rapidly that it has practically entered the category of “disposables.” A model from two years ago

might no longer exist, or it might have been replaced by a far more powerful version. Its actual cash value could be almost nothing,

and its replacement value could be very low. Moreover, most businesses would prefer to replace it with the newest version.

Our specialists can help you address these problems by finding business property coverage that responds best to your needs. Different insurers offer different programs. Sometimes an



endorsement to the policy can be added to meet your specific needs. Call us for a look at your options.

Are You a Talker or a Doer?

No skill or strategy is worthwhile if it isn't actually implemented and performed. And it's exactly the same with a proper safety and protection program for your business. Far too many businesses talk a good safety and protection game but, in reality, never take action.

Take this short inventory to see if your company is a talker or a doer.

1. How often do you enforce safety rules or administer penalties for violations?
2. Would a visitor to your workshop find excellent safety equipment still hanging on

wall pegs or stored in lockers while workers operate machinery without it?

3. If an impartial observer were to watch your employees on the job, would they be able to tell that you have provided safety training or risk management guidelines?

4. When was the last time you sat down for a comprehensive review and update of your current insurance protection?

While there are several steps in any effective risk management process, the key to success is summed up in just one word: implementation.

Cell Phones and Driving



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that more than 20% of crashes in the United States that result in injuries involve allegations of distracted driving. Eighteen percent of fatalities in such accidents involve the use of a cell phone. Another study indicates that, regardless of whether the device is hand-held or hands-free, a driver's reactions are delayed as much as having a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08%, the standard legal limit for "driving under the influence" charges.

Many businesses are now taking steps to reduce the risk of car accidents involving employees who drive on the job. By setting written guidelines and/or requirements for cell phone use while driving, you can help prevent injuries to your employees, damage to your property, and third-party claims that your business is liable for their injuries or property damage.

Consider running an audit of cell phone records against driving times, too. Enforcement of your policies is critical.

Creating a Culture of Safety

Even a cursory study of great organizations shows that each has worked diligently to create a "learning culture." Their goal is to get beyond basics and turn every employee, regardless of age, into a lifelong learner. This keeps the focus on continuous improvement.

Creating such a culture doesn't have to be a huge expense. Below are some low-cost or no-cost training possibilities for your business from popular trainer and consultant Steve Anderson:

- **Use internal talent.** Ask those who have an expertise in one area to train others. You may even have some ex-teachers/educators as part of your staff.

- **Invest in a "Train the Trainer" course.** These are good opportunities for employees to highlight safety concerns they have that are not part of the current training program.

- **Promote information sharing.** Devote a portion of regular staff meetings to sharing information on ways employees have reduced risk in their functional areas.

- **Offer specific skills practice.** As opposed to pure information sharing, these are "hands-on" sessions, in which proficient employees pass their learned skills on to others.

Experts and successful businesses agree: Effective training will pay big dividends now and in the future.

Participating in Trade Shows

If you actively pursue the marketing opportunities available in trade shows, be sure your insurance protection follows you to the event.

Remember that you could be held liable for any injuries or damage caused by your display or your employees who run it. You will also be responsible for your employees themselves—any injuries they suffer while on travel for your company could be considered your liability. If the show is outside of your state, you may have special auto and workers compensation issues to consider.

You'll also need to be sure your business property is insured while at the show and in transit to and from. Risks include theft and damage, but there could be more involved depending on the type of products you are showing. For example, what if you pay for a booth, get to the show and the computer or other electronic equipment needed to display your offerings fails?

In some cases, the host of the event will require a contract that stipulates insurance requirements. In those circumstances, you may do best by consulting both your insurance professional and your attorney.



Exploit Social Media for Risk Management

Is your risk management program boring? Is the manual full of vapid and elongated business theories?

Try improving your efforts with brevity. A little “tweet” to employees or a one-line e-mail or post on the company’s Facebook page can offer that brief reminder on reducing risk at the start of the day.

A popular or “right on the money” quote is a time-honored method of making your points more current, more colorful and more attention-grabbing. For example, if your subject is injury prevention, you might post this one: “While on a ladder, never step back to admire your work.” Follow it with a brief exhortation to make safety a priority that day.

If you are emphasizing accuracy in contracts or customer dealings, you might post this: “Accuracy



of language is one of the bulwarks of truth.” You can be funny, or you can be deep. Whatever you choose, try to make a one-shot impression that sticks for the rest of the day. If you can’t commit to something new each day, try

picking a theme each week and using the same line every morning for five days. You can find quotes based on themes throughout the Internet, and books are available by the dozens if you want a desktop reference.

But We Don’t Own Any Autos!

If you are among the majority of small-business owners, your business doesn’t own any autos. So why would you need business auto insurance?

Because your business doesn’t have to own a car to get sued for injuring someone with one.

Sometimes, under “vicarious liability” or the “master-servant rule,” the person responsible for an activity can be held just as liable for injury arising from that activity as the person who actually caused the injury.

For example, if your employee

uses his own car to make business calls and, while on his way to an appointment, causes

The entity responsible for an activity can be held just as liable as the person who actually causes an injury during the activity.

an accident that injures someone, the injured party can sue him for causing the injuries. But the

injured party can also sue you for the same event, arguing that your employee was operating under the direction of your business at the time of the accident. The rule is not restricted to the actions of employees. It applies to any person pursuing activities on behalf of your business.

A non-owned auto policy can insure against this exposure. For further information on how this type of coverage applies to your company, please call to schedule a review of your business insurance program.

Thank you for
your referral.

If you're pleased with
us, spread the word! We'll
be happy to give the same
great service to all of
your friends and business
associates

Today's Remote Workforce

Whether due to economic considerations, generational shifts or technological innovation, there is no longer any question that the virtual workforce is a growing part of business considerations. Recent studies indicate that roughly 42% of all organizations currently provide flextime, telecommuting, job sharing or other alternative work arrangements.

Has your current insurance program kept pace?

For example, how would your property coverage respond to loss relating to an employee working from home or traveling? Would your liability policy protect you from suits arising from injuries to prospects or clients resulting from a home-office visit? Do your current safety programs provide training under the old assumption that all your employees spend their entire workday at your office location? What safety guidelines have you provided employees who work from home?

These are just a few of the issues our professionals stand ready to discuss with you. Don't let your changing workplace leave you exposed due to unchanging protection. Call today.