

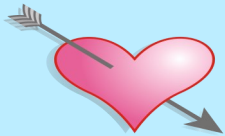
# CST Tech News

## What's New

February is a month for giving LOVE, showing LOVE and yes, receiving LOVE. It shouldn't be limited to one month so let's just use it as a reminder to "show the love" all year long.

CST has some exciting things happening that will allow us to better serve YOU, our clients. You will be getting some information via email so be watching for that. Shawn and I want to give our staff a huge thanks for taking on the challenge of new tools, procedures and processes along with the day-to-day workload.

We are so proud of our incredible team.



## February 2020



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Shawn & Lisa Brown, Owners of CST Group Inc.

Our Mission:  
To provide outstanding technology services to our customers allowing them to focus on their business.



## Top 3 Ways Hackers Will Attack Your Network – And They Are Targeting You RIGHT NOW

You might read the headline of this article and think, "That has to be an exaggeration." Unfortunately, it's not. Every single day, small businesses are targeted by cybercriminals. These criminals look for vulnerable victims, then attack.

This is the world we live in today. It's one where cybercriminals regularly take advantage of small businesses. Why small businesses? They're the favorite target of hackers, scammers and other cybercriminals because small businesses have a bad habit of NOT investing in cyber security.

Hackers have many methods they use to break into your network, steal data or put you in a position where you have to pay them money to get your data back. They use a combination of

software and skill to make it happen. Here are three ways hackers and cybercriminals attack your network in an attempt to get what they want.

### 1. THEY GO THROUGH YOUR EMPLOYEES.

That's right, they'll use your own employees against you, and your employees might not even realize what's happening. Let's say a hacker gets ahold of your internal e-mail list, like the e-mails you have posted on your website or LinkedIn. All the hacker has to do is send an e-mail to everyone at your company.

The e-mail might be disguised as a message addressed from you asking your employees for a gift card, which is becoming an increasingly common scam. Another e-mail tactic is making a message look like it's from a fellow employee, asking everyone else to

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open an attached file, which is likely malware or ransomware. A third e-mail scam is directing people to a phishing website, which is a website that scammers have designed to look like popular websites in order to get login information to hack accounts. All it takes is a single click from any employee to let the bad guys into your business.

### 2. THEY ATTACK YOUR NETWORK DIRECTLY.

Some hackers aren't afraid of forced entry. Hackers and cybercriminals have access to black market tools and software that helps them get into networked devices – particularly *unprotected* networked devices.

For example, if you have a PC that's connected to the Internet and your network doesn't use any firewalls, data encryption or other network protection software, a hacker can break in and steal data from that PC and potentially other devices connected to that PC, such as portable hard drives. This method of entry isn't necessarily easy for hackers, but the effort can be worth it, especially if they can walk away with sensitive financial information.

### 3. THEY HOLD YOUR DATA HOSTAGE.

Hackers are relying on ransomware more and more to get

what they want. Hackers rely on e-mail, executable files and fraudulent web ads (such as banner ads and popups) to attack networks with ransomware. It goes back to the first point. All it takes is someone clicking a bad link or file and the next thing you know, you're locked out of your network.

This has happened to dozens of businesses and even city governments in the last year alone. The thing is that even if you pay the ransom, there is no guarantee the hacker will restore access. They can take the money and delete everything, leaving your business high and dry! This destroys businesses!

All of these points are why you need to take a hard look at IT security solutions *and use them*. For instance, if you had all of your data *securely* backed up to the cloud and a hacker came in and tried to hold your data hostage, you wouldn't have to worry. They don't really have your data. You can tell them "no," then all you'd have to do is work with an IT team to get your network back up and running while scrubbing it of any malware or ransomware. Then, it would be a simple matter of restoring data from the cloud. Sure, you might be out of commission for a day or two, but in the grand scheme of things, it's *much* better than losing your business to these jokers.

Hackers are just looking for easy targets and, sadly, a lot of small businesses fit the bill. Just because you haven't had any major problems yet doesn't mean you won't in the future. The threats are out there and they're not going to go away. Invest in security, partner with an IT security firm and protect yourself. This is one investment that is truly worth it!

**"Hackers are just looking for easy targets and, sadly, a lot of small businesses fit the bill."**

## Free Report Download: The Business Owner's Guide To IT Support Services And Fees

You'll learn:

- The three most common ways IT companies charge for their services and the pros and cons of each approach.
- A common billing model that puts ALL THE RISK on you, the customer, when buying IT services; you'll learn what it is and why you need to avoid agreeing to it.
- Exclusions, hidden fees and other "gotcha" clauses IT companies put in their contracts that you DON'T want to agree to.
- How to make sure you know exactly what you're getting to avoid disappointment, frustration and added costs later on that you didn't anticipate.

### IT BUYERS GUIDE

What Every Business Owner MUST Know About IT Support Services And Fees



What You Should Expect To Pay For IT Support For Your Business And How To Get Exactly What You Need

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## February's Lunch and Learn



When we started to work on the concept of a “Lunch and Learn”, we knew we wanted to give you helpful

information and present it in a way that would be relaxing and “conversational”. Because we work with your problems every day it is relatively easy to find topics that matter to you.

We have hosted two lunch and learns so far and WOW, the response has been incredible. The feedback has been great, and this just reinforces the fact that you all need information to make better decisions.

All our lunch and learns are held the last Tuesday of each month, so be sure to save the date. We will be moving the event to different locations so be sure to read your invite carefully.

Our next event will be held February 25<sup>th</sup> at Hosler's Restaurant at Noon. We will be discussing everything Email! Should you be using a Gmail or Yahoo mail as a business account? How do you tell if an email is bogus? What about links and attachments?

Remember, these events are all FREE of charge and as a February “show the love” challenge, we are encouraging all invitees to bring a friend. This friend cannot be from your company/organization so bring someone you know may benefit from the information and the services we provide. Thanks everyone and let the challenge begin!

P.S. Be sure to RSVP early to ensure your spot is reserved.



## The First Mistake Bad Leaders Make In A New Job

The first mistake bad leaders make in a new job is subtle, common and avoidable: they come into an organization and they don't narrow the priority list.

In our research for *Power Score*, we found that only 24% of leaders are good at prioritizing. And when a leader is bad at prioritizing, 90% of the time it's because they let too many priorities stay alive.

In short, great leaders **prune priorities**.

What does priority pruning look like?

It looks like taking a weed whacker to the overgrown mass of useless priorities that grow inside organizations.

It looks like what Steve Jobs did when he returned to Apple and trimmed the number of products from hundreds to under 10.

It looks like what In-N-Out Burger (for those of you who have enjoyed this delicious West Coast treat) does in only

giving you a menu of burger, fries and a drink.

It looks like what Scott Cook, founder of Intuit, did in making QuickBooks as easy as using your checkbook.

There are so many leaders I see who lack the analytical horsepower, the courage or the decisiveness to prune priorities, so they just let dozens, hundreds or even thousands of priorities live on in their organizations and distract people away from the small set of things that matter most.

If you want a simple way to prune priorities, use the one-page discussion guide straight out of our *Power Score* book. Have your team rate your priorities 1-10. If you are scoring a nine or 10, keep doing what you are doing. If you score less than a nine, then it's time to get out the weed whacker!



Geoff Smart is chairman and founder of ghSMART. Geoff is co-author, with his colleague Randy Street, of the New York Times best-selling book, *Who: A Method For Hiring*, and the author of the No. 1 Wall Street Journal best seller *Leadocracy: Hiring More Great Leaders (Like You) Into Government*. Geoff co-created the *Topgrading* brand of talent management. He is the founder of two 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations. SMARTKids Leadership Program™ provides 10 years of leadership tutoring, and the Leaders Initiative™ seeks to deploy society's greatest leaders into government. Geoff earned a BA in Economics with honors from Northwestern University, and an MA and PhD in Psychology from Claremont Graduate University.

## ■ Top Ways To Protect Your Remote Employees From Cyberthreats

Allowing employees to work remotely comes with its share of benefits, like increased productivity and employee happiness. But it comes with challenges as well, including staying ahead of cyberthreats. Here are three ways to protect remote employees who work from laptops, tablets and smartphones.

1. Avoid unsecured public WiFi. It may be convenient, but cybercriminals can use unsecured networks to steal data. Instead, remote workers should utilize a virtual private network (VPN). Personal hotspots are another option.
2. Require endpoint security, such as firewalls and malware protection, installed on remote workers' devices. All remote employees should use the same endpoint security so you know everything is up-to-date.
3. Develop 'cyber security best practices' for your business.

Everyone, including remote workers, should be on the same page when it comes to cyber security. Make sure your employees know the threats and how to stay vigilant online. *Inc.*, Feb. 12, 2019

## ■ 6 Ways To Make Your Business More Efficient

1. **Cut the clutter.** Have any outdated systems and processes that are cluttering up your business? Get rid of them. Look for inefficiencies or redundancies you can eliminate, then do it!
2. **Block interruptions.** When you need to work, it's okay to put up barriers. Block out your calendar when you don't want calls. Turn off all phone notifications. Only check e-mail twice a day. Set limits!
3. **Look to automation.** Whether you're scheduling e-mails or social media posts, look at what you can automate to avoid wasting time.
4. **Balance tech and traditional.** It's okay to rely on texting, e-mail and online chat to communicate with

customers, but don't forget the power of real, face-to-face communication.

### 5. Say no to multitasking.

Multitasking is a myth. You can either do several things at once and deliver mediocre results or do one thing right the first time and deliver stellar results.

### 6. Invest more in cyber security.

There are countless threats out there, so don't get caught without good IT security across the whole of your business. Don't risk it! *Small Business Trends*, Nov. 4, 2019

## ■ 3 Simple Ways Introverts Leverage Their Strengths To Thrive In The Workplace

Introverts can be drained by social interaction and stimulation. They need to recharge regularly, so days off are important in order for them to be at their most productive. Here are three ways introverts can be at their best in the workplace:

- Manage energy more than your time. When you feel most energized, that's the right time to focus on creative work that requires more brainpower. Structure your days around your energy.
- Cultivate the right environment. Work in a space that calms you and energizes you. Set the right light (such as natural lighting) and invest in noise-canceling headphones.
- Say what needs to be said. Introverts constantly think but don't always speak up. Don't let communication fall to the wayside. Remember, we're all working together. *Business Insider*, Nov. 19, 2019



"Do you mind if I call you back? I can't talk right now."