

# CST Tech News

## What's New

First Quarter 2021 is ending and Shawn and I have spent some time reflecting on CST's history. What we discovered is a lot has changed.

So, I'd like to take this opportunity to explain our new business model as a Managed Service Provider (MSP) in hopes that all of you get a better understanding of how you can leverage our services.

CST has two types of clients. You are either a Managed Services client or you are a break/fix client.

So, what does "managed services" mean? Basically, it means your company has hired my company as your IT department. We "manage" everything technology including cyber security protection, Microsoft updates and patch deployments, ensuring backup of data is happening and manage cyber security certifications if necessary. We ensure your technology is working at its best and it is the most secure we can make it. We also remote in when something goes wrong providing you with fast fixes and very little downtime, if any. We even provide you the ability to remote in while working from home. We also consult on new technologies coming in, manage project work to ensure timelines stay intact as well as budgets. We provide you with equipment that includes warranties that save you money and each month you receive a Detailed Health Report (DHR) that holds us accountable. We also maintain and update a Detailed Technology Manual (DTM) that includes all of your technology assets so we can properly manage all your equipment inventory. Quarterly Business Reviews (QBRs)

April 2021

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



CST Group Inc.

### Our Mission:

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



## What Is Co-Managed IT? Is It Right For You?

When it comes to IT solutions, most businesses rely on one of three options. They have a dedicated in-house IT employee or team, an outsourced managed services provider (MSP) like CST or nothing at all. There is, however, a fourth option: **co-managed IT**.

This hybrid option gives you an on-site IT manager or a small team AND access to an off-site IT services firm like CST. For any business that takes IT seriously, this can prove to be an efficient and reliable option. It's not as costly as a full on-site team which would include payroll and benefit costs but it can be more comprehensive than relying on an MSP alone.

Simply put, the co-managed IT solution gives your business more options when it comes to getting IT and network stability and security *right*. It keeps you nimble when it comes to on-site issues. For instance, having an on-site IT manager means you have someone who knows the quirks of your business and its very specific needs.

But depending on the scope of your business and the size of those needs, the job has the potential to get complicated fast. This is where having access to an off-site expert IT staff can be useful. An outsourced IT firm alleviates that pain point. Your IT manager has someone to call when they need to and suddenly you have a full IT staff.

CST employs experts in IT who understand a range of issues, from system management to industry regulations – and just about everything in between. We might not be familiar with the quirks or intricacies of your specific business or industry, but you already have that taken care of in the co-managed model.

### Co-Managed IT Brings Everything Together.

You can have someone on-site who you can count on day to day, but when they need assistance, they have someone they can reliably call. They have access to an incredible knowledge and experience base. But it gets better!

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or give us a call at 877.954.4100

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One of the benefits of this approach is employee retention. Co-managed IT can completely shift your company culture for the better. Here's why: small or single-person IT teams can get overwhelmed and overworked *fast*. This is common in IT. As a result, small-business IT departments often seem like a revolving door for those employees. It creates a broken culture.

If your on-site team lacks access to the proper tools or resources, it won't take long for them to become overwhelmed and, eventually, burn out. If there's a crisis, like a ransomware attack or a storage failure, and your internal IT team isn't given the support they need to succeed, it puts undue stress on them.

While they might succeed in the end, they'll be unhappier for it and will likely start looking for a new job. With IT in such high demand, especially in 2021, it's likely they'll find another job, leaving you left to pick up the pieces.

Co-managed IT helps you avoid this. Plus, there are many other ways businesses can benefit from this hybrid model.

**You Have Someone Who Can Address Issues *Immediately*.** While you can generally rely on an MSP to deliver a quick response time, it might not always be as quick as you'd like or need. With this model, you have someone to get on the

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issue in seconds – and they can bring in the MSP as needed.

**Having An IT Manager On-Site Puts Much Of The Responsibility On Their Shoulders.** While you can still be hands-on when it comes to your company's IT, they do what needs to be done, including coordinate with your MSP. This frees you up for everything and anything else.

**Regulatory Compliance Becomes A Breeze.** Depending on your industry, you may have to deal with all kinds of compliance terms and regulations. CST is versed in everything they need to know – and they stay on top of it as things change.

**You Have To Hire Fewer People.** While you may have at least one person on staff, or maybe a small team, you may not want to grow any larger – and it doesn't need to. Not when your on-site team has access to all the tools, resources and expertise they need to get any IT job done. The tools that are necessary to keep your company updated and secure can be costly. Why not let your MSP provide those? Saving you thousands of dollars.

**You Have A Healthier Company Culture.** This is a big one that often gets overlooked. When your on-site IT team has access to those outside resources, they're a lot happier. Happier employees are more likely to stick around for a longer period of time, adding to the overall stability of your business (plus, less frequent hiring is another way to keep costs down).

If you haven't yet considered co-managed IT, give us a call. You may find the IT solutions you've been looking for. And in a time when cyber security is more important than ever before – with more teams working remotely and cybercriminals working overtime – every business can use all the help they can get.

# Free Cyber Security Audit Will Reveal Where Your Computer Network Is Exposed And How To Protect Your Company Now



At no cost or obligation, our highly skilled team of IT pros will start with a 15-30 minute phone discovery call where we will learn your concerns and current network layout. Then, if feasible, we will come to your office and conduct a comprehensive cyber security audit to uncover loopholes in your company's IT security.

After the audit is done, we'll prepare a customized "Report Of Findings" that will reveal specific vulnerabilities and provide a Prioritized Action Plan for getting these security problems addressed fast. This report and action plan should be a real eye-opener for you, since almost all of the businesses we've done this for discover they are completely exposed to various threats in a number of areas.

**To get started and claim your free assessment now,  
call our office at 877-954-3520**

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or give us a call at 877.954.4100

are also done with our managed services clients which gives us the opportunity to talk about technology changes and goals for the next quarter. Sharing this information makes for a smooth transition and keeps me in the loop on changes and growth projections. As you can see, we cater to YOU! Each Managed Services client pays us a monthly fee to ensure everything works as it should and we prioritize our day based on you.

Our break/fix clients are just that. You all break something, and we fix it! We have no control over your technologies, we often have no idea why configurations were done or why you have certain technologies to begin with. We are normally not your first call. Nope, you all try to fix the issue yourself or you call your brother-in-law's sister's best friend to try to fix the problem for you. By the time you call us, the problem has escalated to something that would have taken us 15 minutes to fix but because all this other crap happened, it is now an ordeal. Your rate is a little different because we have no control over your technology environment making it much more difficult to help you. We do not remote in and fix anything so we either try to help you over the phone or you have to bring your equipment to us or we go to you which costs significantly more. Our goal is to convert all our break/fix clients to managed services clients but sometimes this is just not in your budget or you believe your technology is not a priority or worth the investment. All of which is completely understandable. Our services might not be a good fit. Although you may not feel like a priority, we certainly want to help and will do our best to assist in a timely manner but understand our Managed Services clients take priority.

So, if this hasn't convinced you to consider our Manager Services suite, here are few more things our Managed Services clients get.

1. Free, unlimited phone support
2. Remote Assistance which includes ONE FREE hour per month
3. Priority service including off hours contact numbers
4. Easy problem reporting by email
5. The monthly DHR and quarterly business reviews (QBR)
6. The Detailed Technology Manual (DTM) (Schematic) which keeps all your technology documentation in one place
7. Affordable monthly costs making it easy to budget
8. Compliancy – CST's services are modified to meet your company's cyber security requirements

No matter what, our goal has always been, and will always be, to ensure your technology is not hindering your ability to do your job. We want to be your technology "department"; we want to be your first call when things go wrong, and we want to make sure you always have a resource to give you guidance. Your technology should never be the source of your stress.

Break/Fix client are all about **reacting** to a problem. Managed Services clients are all about **preventing** the problem. So, how much time do you spend on fixing those issues which may take you away from making money in your business? How much is that worth?

# The Core Value Equation

Your core values are the most valuable asset you have. They help define your business, but more than that, they define your team and the work they put into the success of the business. That success can be broken down into the Core Value Equation.

**Core Values = Words = Conversations = Decisions = Actions = Results**

Or distilling it further: core values = results.

If you can define your values, everything that happens in your life is a direct correlation of your values, whether those things are good or bad. Your core values should be stated to and by your team and your customers should be aware of them – and they should be memorable.

Companies fail at core values when they are implemented poorly – or aren't implemented at all. In other words, they come up with a list of values and don't live up to them.

You and your employees should all be on the same page. You should see the core values around the office, they should be talked about regularly and they should be a part of the day-to-day aspects of your business. Don't let them just be words on paper. Give them real meaning!

Developing core values is a five-part process:

1. **Discovery Process:** What matters most? Core values don't have to be "nice" – they need to be authentic to the company.
2. **Design Process:** They need to be sticky, viral and memorable to the team – make a sign for the office and put them on the website.
3. **Rollout Process:** You want customers and employees to fall in love with the core values, so make it all about them. Make



sure that the core values are visible to the company – on the wall, on the website or even in your email signature.

**4. Implementation Process:** Have your team forget about past experiences with the company. Your core values are about reorienting and reenergizing your employees and getting them on the same page.

**5. Measurement Process:** Survey your employees and get their feedback. Review employees based on a core value rating. Put it to work and make it tangible.

How can you make sure your team remembers the core values?

**Keep It Simple.** Miller's Law states that most adults can store between five and nine items in their short-term memory.

**Keep It Short.** Choose a word, then you can have a meaning behind those words.

**Keep It Clear.** Avoid jargon, keep it conversational and use words everyone uses.

With that, you have the foundation to develop a strong set of core values for your companies – core values that will define your team, who they are and their future success.



*Andy Bailey is the founder, CEO and lead business coach at Petra, an organization dedicated to helping business owners across the world achieve levels of success they never thought possible. With personal experience founding an Inc. 500 multimillion-dollar company that he then sold and exited, Bailey founded Petra to pass on the principles and practices he learned along the way. As his clients can attest, he can cut through organizational BS faster than a hot knife through butter.*



## DIGITAL EASTER EGGS

This month at CST Group Inc, we are dying our eggs, breaking open bags of jellybeans, and hunting around for all the bunny-shaped chocolatey surprises. Around here, we take Easter, and our sweet tooth, very serious.

Our festivities during this season don't just stop at the treats either! Here we love a good digital Easter egg too. And we cannot think of a better way to celebrate than to explore the appeal behind digital Easter eggs for marketers!

"What exactly are digital Easter eggs?" you say.

Wikipedia explains, "An Easter egg is an intentional inside joke, hidden message, or feature in an interactive work such as a computer program, video game or DVD menu screen. The name is used to evoke the idea of a traditional Easter egg hunt."

This Easter, to make your season "egg-stra" special, we have done our research and found a few reasons on what gives digital Easter eggs their marketing appeal.

1. Easter eggs will pull people in. With less of us going out and more staying home, most of the time on the internet, your audience craves something different while scrolling the web.
2. Easter eggs add an element of surprise, excitement and secret knowledge. These Easter eggs give your visitors and readers the feeling that they are part of a secret. As if they are the only ones included in your fun, hidden message.
3. An Easter egg hunt on your website drives deeper engagement with content. It forces visitors on your website to search through your links and pages to find potential Easter eggs. This in turn exposes them to more of your information creating potential leads.

Want some Easter Egg Examples?

Google is notorious for hidden secrets. From mini arcade games to screen tricks, you will not be disappointed. Here is a list of some of their most popular Easter Eggs:

<https://searchengineland.com/the-big-list-of-google-easter-eggs-153768>


A few more of our favorites...

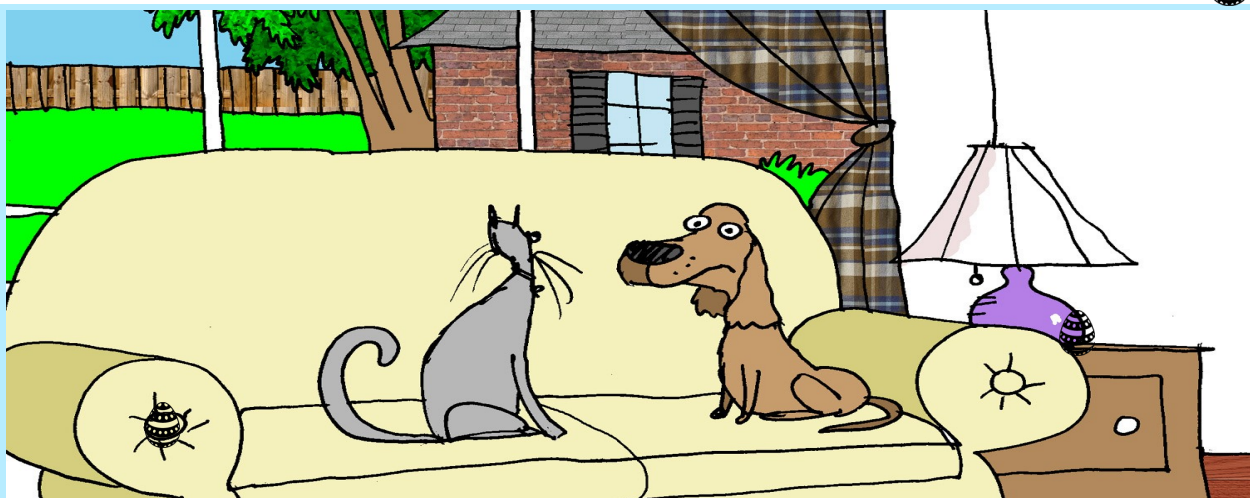
If you search for [easter egg \(media\) on Wikipedia](#), the page will show a photo of 2 rabbits looking at a hedgehog. Click on the hedgehog to reveal an Easter surprise!

Hate when you are disconnected from the internet and try to access a website in your browser? Then the "Unable to connect" T. Rex pops up. If you guessed the T. Rex is an Easter egg, extra points for you. Press your spacebar and it turns the T. Rex into a game to play while you wait for the connection to come back.

\*Check out our website to find our Digital Easter Egg!

Need a little break? Can you find them all? Take a few minutes and search for all the Easter Eggs in this newsletter. Email me at [Jessica@cstsupport.com](mailto:Jessica@cstsupport.com) with the count of how many eggs you find. Everyone that gets it correct will be entered into a raffle for some goodies on us. HAPPY EGG HUNTING!

Jessica 



"Your name is 123456. That's the reason they use my name instead of yours for their password. It's a security issue."