

# CST Tech News

## What's New

Welcome to 2021! Usually there is a bit of remorse with another passing year but this year, not so much! I am happy to see it go and with it, some of the crazy, lonely, uncontrollable, political, impactful, sadness that COVID19 and our election brought us.

Life has not been easy.

Shawn's sister, Lynanne, passed away in February at the age of 56 (not COVID related), I lost a dear friend, Marcia Hennessy, in April who is in my thoughts every day (she is reminding me to slow down and meditate), we have had serious medical issues going on in our families (not COVID related), we are missing our children and grandchildren so deeply that my heart hurts thinking of it. Even time with family and friends, that are just a few minutes away, has been minimal. Not to mention the COVID rules where masks and hand sanitizer are always in reach. Staff changes and growing pains of being in the technology world in the middle of a pandemic where your technology is now more important than ever. It is exhausting.

Don't get me wrong, I know the risk is real and I understand COVID has brought



## Finally Shed The Old This Year – It's Costing You Much More Than You Think

When was the last time you updated your technology? Between your hardware and software, if you are still doing business on older technology, you could be putting yourself at risk, and it could end up costing you big. As we begin a new year, it's time to take a close look at the tech you rely on every day.

While many small businesses tend to put off major technology purchases due to the upfront costs, by doing so, you may be opening yourself up to major costs down the road. These are hidden costs that businesses don't always consider when they decide to "hold off" on investing in new equipment or the latest software.

Here are five ways outdated technology can take a toll on your business:

**1. It leads to a loss in productivity.** Old technology has a habit of getting slow. This means your team has to waste time waiting for their PCs to turn on and their apps to load. Even well-maintained equipment is going to wear out over time. This problem is only compounded when your team has to use software that no longer works as it once did.

Eventually, programs that once worked well together start to experience hiccups, and you risk losing data.

**2. It leads to a loss of customers.** Your customers want to know your data (which may also be their data) is secure. If you're using outdated tech, there's a good chance that data IS NOT secure. One Microsoft survey revealed that 91% of consumers would end their relationship with a business that was relying on outdated technology.

## January 2021



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.



CST Group Inc.

*Continued on pg.2*

Get More Free Tips, Tools and Services at Our Website: [www.cstsupport.com](http://www.cstsupport.com)  
or give us a call at 877.954.4100

Continued from pg.1

**3. It leads to a loss of employees.** If employees have to deal with slow hardware and poorly-integrated software every day, they're going to get frustrated. They're going to get even more frustrated if nothing is done about it. The end result is high employee turnover. This alone can be a huge cost for a small business to absorb.

**4. It leads to a loss of support.** Over time, developers stop supporting their older products so they can focus on their new products. This also means they're devoting more attention to the customers who are using the newer versions. This can leave you in the dark if you run into a problem that you need help with. You may have to call in a third-party specialist to answer your question and fix your problem, and they will charge you accordingly.

**5. It leads to a loss of security.** A loss in support also means you aren't going to see security patches for your aging hardware or software. This makes you highly vulnerable to all kinds of cyberthreats, including data breaches, malware infections, and all kinds of other cyber-attacks. Hackers want to break into your network, and if you're using outdated tech, you make their job much easier.

When you factor in the costs associated with these losses, it



can be staggering! It's enough to put some companies out of business (and it has). After a year that has left many businesses more vulnerable than before, you should be taking steps to avoid these kinds of losses.

**Here's what you can do:** as we head into a new year, take stock of your technology. It's unlikely you have to replace everything, but look at where you are most vulnerable. What issues are your employees experiencing? What hardware or software is no longer supported? Where are the gaps in your IT security?

The great news is that you don't have to answer these questions on your own. Even better, you don't have to drop a pretty penny to make it happen! You can work with a managed service provider (MSP) or a dedicated IT services firm that can help bring your business back up to speed. They can even help you mitigate some of the cost that comes with upgrading your technology. In the end, you, your employees, and your customers **GAIN** complete confidence in your business as you head into 2021!

**“One Microsoft survey revealed that 91% of consumers would end their relationship with a business that was relying on outdated technology.”**

## 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

Claim your FREE copy today at [www.cstsupport.com/ITbuyersguide](http://www.cstsupport.com/ITbuyersguide)

Get More Free Tips, Tools and Services at Our Website: [www.cstsupport.com](http://www.cstsupport.com)  
or give us a call at 877.954.4100

painful tragedy to families across the world. Our world is a hot mess and honestly it is hard to trust the media and powers that be; it is something we have little control over. We have had to pivot, adjust, and keep our head above water, and our masks on, to ensure our business will get through this. The challenge is certainly real.

AND....we did it! At least I think we are through the worst of it. Congrats to all of us! Not only did CST make it through the year but we were able to grow in this crisis, implement new processes and procedures, add security measures to ensure all of you are safe from harm (at least the technology kind) and get those who needed it, working from home in a secure fashion. Not to mention we did not lose ONE client! In fact, we gained 12 clients from February-December. Clients who came to us either as a referral from you, our client (there is no greater complement) or because of the realization that the risk is real and who understand the value in having their technology and data protected. Plus, having a team of technology people within a phone calls reach is priceless. This is a true measure of how my team manages the day-to-day tasks and the occasional crisis and how we are preventing so much from happening before you, our client, ever realizes it was an issue to begin with. I am thankful that you all see the value in what we do and understand the role your technology plays in your business. For this I am so grateful.

This is not to say, COVID19 is in the past. I think it is far from over but my prayer for 2021 is that we find our way back to family gatherings, dinners with friends, and relationship building. Although our QBR's (Quarterly Business Reviews) are something I cherish, I am looking forward to hosting these face-to-face. Learning about the ways CST can help you grow, advise and consult when changes are necessary, and then implement, deploy and manage it all. This makes my heart happy and it is something I, Shawn and our staff take great pride in. Our level of service is outstanding, and it will continue for many years to come in part, because of you.

Cheers to 2021!

May we be blessed with  
LOVE and LAUGHTER!

# Stop Recurring Problems

Some of the biggest challenges with companies today are "RECURRING PROBLEMS." I'm talking about situations, hassles and mistakes that happen **over and over again** and never get resolved. These occurrences are worse when they happen to customers because if they happen too often, customers will quit doing business with you. Consider what **RECURRING PROBLEMS** do to employees - frustration sets in, morale plummets and so do productivity and profits.

**I heard it once stated that recurring problems eat up more than 40% of the average productivity of a company.** That may seem a bit high to you, but consider the fact that rarely is a problem just one person's problem. The employee who discovers the problem will most likely get others involved in dealing with it. What they were originally doing will come to a halt, causing that productivity to be lost while a remedy is figured out.

To make this an even bigger problem, according to estimates based on a recent University of California Irvine study, refocusing your efforts after just one interruption can take up to 23 minutes. So, every time you come up with a quick fix, you are adding an **additional 23 minutes** of lost productivity with every occurrence.

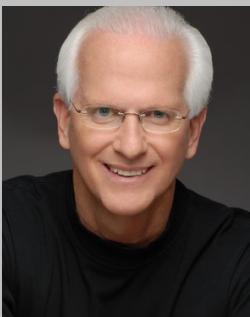
Time, which is money, is a precious commodity that we can't afford to waste. It is imperative to gather data on problems that are **RECURRING** and hassling employees and customers so you can address them. You want a process to be hassle-free, so get your employees involved in identifying recurring problems. Your



employees are closest to the problem and can give you valuable insight into what is really going on. In turn, this will reduce costs, increase profits, and improve efficiency across the board.

The Ritz Carlton Hotels requires employees to log all incidences of customer or employee problems or concerns and turn them in daily. **This information helps them make improvements that will save them time and money, improve working conditions and morale and increase customer satisfaction.** A problem identified is a blessing because you can't fix what you don't know to be wrong. No company wants frustrated employees or customers, and a 40% loss in productivity is a scary statistic that needs to be addressed.

But understand this: do not start this process if you have no intention of following through on correcting the recurring problems. Be responsive to the issue identified and fix it. Eliminate **RECURRING PROBLEMS** and watch your morale go up, efficiencies improve, complaints go down and profits soar.



*Robert Stevenson is one of the most widely recognized professional speakers in the world. Author of the books How To Soar Like An Eagle In A World Full Of Turkeys and 52 Essential Habits For Success, he's shared the podium with esteemed figures from across the country, including former President George H.W. Bush, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, Tony Robbins, Tom Peters and Stephen Covey.*

## ■ A Scary New Threat To Your Network's Security

More people are working remotely than ever before. Many businesses had to make a huge shift in 2020. At the same time, cybercriminals used the shift to attack as many people as possible. They knew that with more people working at home, there would be a window when cyber security wasn't a priority – and they were right.

Because businesses had their hands full getting their teams set up for remote work, IT security slipped through the cracks. Cybercriminals used their greatest tool to their advantage. That tool? Human error. Hackers sent out phishing emails and attacks at an unprecedented rate. *Infosecurity Magazine* reports that phishing attacks increased upwards of 30,000% over the last year!

This highlights the need for strong IT security for the remote workforce. Remote workers must

be trained up on the latest cyberthreats, especially phishing scams. They also need serious endpoint security on their at-home devices (such as antivirus software and other malware protection). If you need them to access your network, security **MUST** be in place, and that includes the use of a VPN. *usecure, Oct. 8, 2020*

## ■ The Very First Thing You Must Do This Year

Before you turn your attention to the big goals you've set for your business in 2021, **there's one very important thing** you need to do ASAP: **a cyber security audit**. You need to know where you and your business stand against today's many cyberthreats. An IT security assessment will tell you how capable you are of withstanding or blocking data breaches, malware infections and much more. When you know where the gaps are, you can fill them, giving your business the edge in 2021.

## ■ Is Reading On Your Resolution List? See Unexpected Reads From The Top CEO's In 2020

If it's time for a new reading list, look no further than some of the top reads from 2020, as picked by CEOs. Here are a few of their picks according to the online library, Perlego.

- *The (Honest) Truth About Dishonesty: How We Lie To Everyone – Especially Ourselves* by Dan Ariely: This is a book about cheating. Why do people do it? Does it have a purpose?
- *How To Make Anyone Like You: Proven Ways To Become A People Magnet* by Leil Lowndes: This is a book with a self-explanatory title. The author walks readers through ways to get people on your side and how to better interact with others.
- *Great Speeches Of The 20th Century* by Bob Blaisdell: If you want to be inspired, look no further. This is a collection of speeches that captivated audiences at the time and in years following.
- *The Shallows: How The Internet Is Changing The Way We Think, Read And Remember* by Nicholas Carr: This book is a thoughtful look into current technologies and how they shape the way we think, form relationships and interact with the world. *Business Insider, Sept. 1, 2020*

