CST Tech News

What's New

Have you ever wanted to hide? I mean check out for the day, week, month? Throw your cell phone away along with all your other technology so you can disconnect from the world? You are not alone. The last 30 days have been a challenge for me, many of which came at me quickly. Luckily, I am quick on my toes and have great reflexes or I would have received a few punches straight between my eyes.

Honestly, I love change. I have always been a fan. I think it keeps me sharp and allows me to grow both personally and professionally but if it comes at me too quickly, I have trouble navigating it all. Never a good thing!

Luckily, I have resisted the chaos and we have come through it with no major scars or blood loss. Without my family and the team here at CST, you may have found me huddled in some corner

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Shawn & Lisa Brown, Owners

CST Group Inc.

Our Mission:

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

The Easiest Way To Disaster-Proof Your Cyber Security

Though no one would dispute the increasing prevalence of cyber-attacks on businesses in recent years, many small-business owners believe themselves and their business to be immune to such attacks. Broadly speaking, many small-business owners are likely to think that cybercriminals will go after the bigger fish. However, the fact of the matter is that cyber-attacks are crimes of opportunity, and small businesses often have access to a good amount of sensitive data without many major safeguards. In other words, they're low-hanging fruit, ripe for the picking.

Back in 2019, two-thirds of respondents to a survey about cyber security didn't believe that their small to mid-size business (SMB) would fall victim to a cyber-attack. Consequently, only 9% of respondents said cyber security was a top priority for their business, and 60% didn't have any sort of plan for deterring a cyber-attack. All of this,

despite the fact that, according to a report from CNBC, SMBs endured 43% of reported cyber-attacks, and according to data from the Ponemon Institute and Keeper Security, 76% of SMBs in the U.S. alone reportedly endured a cyber-attack within the previous year.

Every small-business owner should have some plan for deterring cyber-attacks so they don't end up as another statistic. Here are a few strategies for keeping the cybercriminals at bay.

Boost Your Cloud Security
Storing data in the cloud is easy and cost-effective, but you should take care to find the most secure cloud storage platforms. Not all cloud platforms make security a priority, but some do. A few of the top-rated, most secure cloud platforms, according to Cloudwards.net, include Sync.com, pCloud and Icedrive.

Secure All Parts Of Your Network
Our computers and the many smart

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devices hooked up to our network can become weak spots for hackers to get in. Taking steps to safeguard each device in your network with strong passwords and robust authentication measures will go a long way toward keeping the hackers at bay. In fact, one of the most basic security measures you can take for your network is to restrict access to your WiFi with a strong password.

Invest In Extra Security Measures
Virtual private networks (VPNs) and firewalls are tools that are highly effective in protecting against cyber-attacks, even if they can't prevent 100% of them.

Pay Attention To Updates And Upgrades
When you get notified that one of the technological tools that you use has a new update, it's easy to ignore it. However, you should commit to regularly updating and upgrading these tools because developers will often add patches to their programs that make them more secure against attacks with each update. So, it behooves business owners to regularly install updates for their tech tools.

Back Up Your Data
With one of the most common forms of cyber-attacks being ransomware attacks, where hackers will hold your company data hostage until you pay them a ransom amount, having your company data stored on multiple

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backups can ensure that your business won't crumble due to your data's inaccessibility.

Limit Employee Access To Your Network
As much as we'd wish it were true, many cyber-attacks don't come from outside of your company. Instead, they originate from within. If you want to limit the amount of damage that someone inside your company can do in a cyber-attack, the best course of action is to limit their access to different parts of your network.

Train Your Employees
At the same time, just as many cyber-attacks occur not because of an employee's malicious intent, but because of their ignorance. They click on a link in a sketchy e-mail and fall for a phishing scheme, volunteer their password info without thinking about it or choose a weak password for their computer. That's why you need to dedicate time to training your employees on best practices when it comes to security.

Set Up A 'Security Culture' At Your Workplace
You need to make cyber security a top priority, not just for your IT department, but for every department at your business. When everyone works together to protect their workplace from a cyber-attack, you have a better chance of actually succeeding.

Will protecting your business from a cyber-attack require a good amount of time and money? Absolutely. Can you afford to ignore the prevalence of cyber-attacks any longer? Statistically, no. The sad truth is that 60% of SMBs that fall victim to a cyber-attack end up shuttering within six months. Don't put yourself in that kind of position. Instead, take your business's cyber security seriously.

somewhere. So, in this month of being grateful, I say Thank You to them; they are the team that holds me together. I am grateful to have their support in all the crazy chaos and it has reaffirmed my knowledge that we can do anything together.

One of the biggest challenges we were faced with was that our NY head quarters moved to 14923 State Route 30, Malone, NY. This was unexpected but we handled it with amazing grace. For all our local clients, please stop by and check it out. Once we are better organized and no longer working out of boxes, we will host a "Grand Re-Opening". Be watching for an email with the date once it is confirmed.

I also want to say Thank You to all of YOU! We celebrated 21 years in business in October and honestly, that is unheard-of for a technology company. So, THANK YOU! We are grateful to have you. We hope you enjoy and appreciate our level of service.

As the end of the year fast approaches, please reach out if you need help with your IT budget or need some assistance with end of year purchases. The cyber security challenges are getting more and more complex, and it is more important than ever to have someone who is accountable to you. We are glad to be your choice.

On behalf of CST, we wish you, your family and your "team" the best Thanksgiving holiday. We hope you enjoy the little things and appreciate all that is wonderful in your life. And remember, hiding is definitely not the solution!

Do You Have The Tools To Manage Effectively In The WFH World?

Gone are the days of managers wandering their office spaces, chatting with coworkers and spending time at the water coolers to get valuable information about the state of their teams. With the work-from-home life here to stay for many workspaces, managers must grow beyond their old ways of managing a work team in the office and get used to managing one effectively on Slack, Zoom and whatever other business platforms their company uses.

I believe I have some insights I can offer any managers looking to meet their goals despite only ever communicating with their teams while sitting at home. These insights come in the form of five different questions that, if you answer them affirmatively, mean you're probably an effective online manager.

Do You Set Clear Goals For Your Team?
Unclear goals aren't good anywhere, but at least in a physical office space, team members can clarify the goals with one another in person. That becomes a lot more difficult online, where means of communication can be limited to text messages. As a manager, make sure everyone on your team understands their goals.

Are You Good At Hiring The Right People?
When you hire someone who ends up not being suited for the job, it's pretty easy to tell when you can monitor them at the office. However, if you hire someone for an online remote role, it can take significantly longer to find out if you've made a hiring mistake, meaning you'll lose a lot more time and money.

Can You Delegate Your Work Well?
Delegating tasks in an office means that you can physically see if a team member is taking over those responsibilities. If they aren't, you can always step in and do the project yourself. When you're working from home, however, you'll need to give clear instructions and deadlines, while following up regularly, in delegating tasks to your team.

Does Your Compensation System Reward High Performance?
In a remote context, the forces that push your team to perform at their highest ability don't have as much of an impact. Since compensation and high performance are inextricably linked, a compensation system that directly rewards high performers is the only way that you'll ensure that your team works to the best of their ability.

Do You Follow Through On Doing The Things You Say You'll Do?
Building trust might not take a lot of work in the office, but in a remote setting, communication is key in building two-way trust with your team. When you say that you'll complete a task, complete it – and make sure your team is aware. That integrity, even though you're working from a place where no one can see you, will go a long way in building trust.

Management beyond the office space doesn't have to be a big mystery. If you want to improve your skills in managing remotely, many of our books, such as *Power Score, Who* and *The CEO Next Door,* can help you accomplish that.

Dr. Geoff Smart is the founder and chairman of ghSMART, which helps Fortune 500 companies, CEOs and successful entrepreneurs alike make smart decisions when it comes to curating talented teams. For three consecutive years, Forbes *ranked ghSMART as the best management consulting firm in its industry, and it has produced three best-selling books outlining its principles.*

It is the giving season here at CST and we are feeling generous as always. We have been so lucky to find our new office. It is beautiful with lots of parking but also spacious enough for our team to grow and really get back to what we love to do- which is helping you!

Having been blessed with this new building we are extra excited to kick off our giving season. Starting November 1 through the 19th CST will be accepting food donations to be given to the local Woman and Children center here in Malone, NY. We had so much fun collecting for them last year and want to continue the tradition.

So, if you have a few extra canned goods or find a great deal at the grocery store, please consider donating. We will have a drop box located here at our new office and would love to have you visit.

For all of our clients who don't live close enough to drop off donations but still want to help, feel free to make a financial donation and we will do the shopping for you!

Here is a list of some examples of food items that can be donated:
Peanut butter
Canned soup
Canned fruit
Canned vegetables
Canned stew & sauces
Canned fish
Canned beans
Pasta
Rice

New office is located at:

CST GROUP INC
14923 State Route 30
Malone, NY 12953