CST Tech News

What's New

Do you have a love/hate relationship with your technology? It might sound surprising but so do we. We work on IT problems all day, every day. Our clients never call us to tell us everything is amazing and working seamlessly. Nope, they call with problems expecting us to fix them. That is what we do and for the most part, we love it. Every staff member here, thrives on fixing people's problems.

But, like you, there are days we would like to throw it all out a 20-story window and watch it all explode into a million little pieces. Wow, that was refreshing to admit. As we end first quarter, we want to give you an update on what we have been doing to try to ensure you have fewer technology problems and are more secure than ever.

You see, the traditional cyber security measures are no longer enough. There are way too many risks, changing by the minute, for us to fall behind or look the other way. We can't afford to let that happen and our clients rely on us not to. It is all about layers of security now.

There are so many ways for attacks to impact your company. There are those that just hang out on the internet, running

March 2022

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 3 Options For IT Support And How To Choose The One That Fits Your Business

If you're a business owner or planning to open a new business, chances are you have looked into IT support options. For those unfamiliar with the world of IT support, it can be confusing trying to figure out which option is best for your business. You might be interested in the most cost-efficient option but worry that it won't offer enough support. Maybe you have looked at more extensive options and wondered what is truly necessary for your company's needs.

It can be problematic to look at cost alone to decide which option is best for you. When determining IT needs, there are three predominant options – that all come with different benefits and drawbacks – to consider before factoring in the cost of the company.

Time And Materials
Those in the industry who use the time-and-materials option are often referred to as "break-fix services." This essentially means that you pay an agreed-upon hourly rate for a technician to "fix" a problem when something "breaks." Many people like this option because it is the most straightforward and simple way to pay for IT assistance, but it often doesn't work in your favor and can even lead you to pay more for basic services.

The only time that I would recommend the time-and-materials approach is if you already have a competent IT person or team proactively managing your IT and you need additional support for a problem that your current IT team doesn't have the expertise to handle. Under the break-fix model, you'll find a fundamental conflict of interest between you and your IT firm. The IT company has no immediate need to stabilize your network because they are getting paid hourly. Computer networks absolutely need ongoing maintenance and monitoring to stay secure – something the break-fix model cannot supply. If you do have "in-house" IT, you may
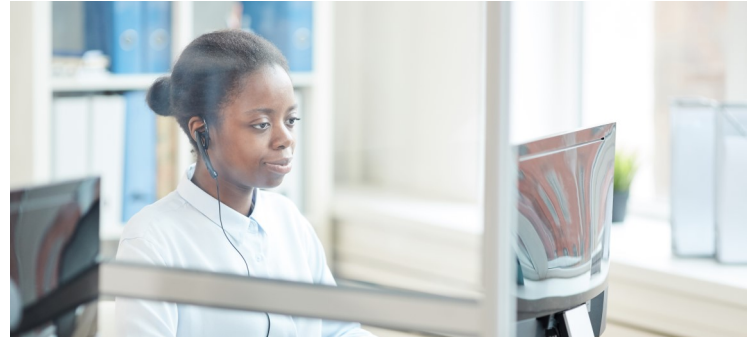
want to consider a "Co-Managed" solution. This allows you to use the tools and resources of an IT Firm, but it is all managed by your in-house staff.

Managed IT Services
In this option, the IT services company takes over the role of your in-house IT department for a fixed and agreed-upon monthly rate. They'll install, support and maintain all of the users, devices and PCs that are connected to your network on a routine basis. They will even take care of your hardware and software needs for an extra cost. This model works for many businesses because it allows them to plan for IT services in their monthly budget and provides the business with routine maintenance and IT support that they will need. With managed IT services that are offered by managed services providers, you need to pay attention to the services they deliver for their monthly fees. Sometimes your needs may cost extra or the services you truly need are simply not offered.

It's my sincere belief that the managed IT approach is undoubtedly the most cost-effective and intelligent option for any business. Managed IT services are all about protecting your business from IT-related problems while keeping your systems up and running. In our current age, cybercriminals are working around the clock, trying to gather valuable data. Hiring a managed services provider, like CST Group, will help protect your business and

> ## "Computer networks absolutely need ongoing maintenance and monitoring to stay secure."

prevent common "disasters" such as rogue employees, lost devices, hardware failures, fires, natural disasters and a host of other issues that can interrupt or outright destroy your IT infrastructure and the data it holds.

Technology As A Service
The final option that you will run into on your hunt for IT support is companies offering technology as a service. These companies offer everything that managed IT services offer but with the addition of new hardware, software and support. This service ensures that your business is always up-to-date with the newest technologies. You'll need to read the fine print, though since many of these companies do not cover third-party software. The greatest benefit of technology as a service is that you'll avoid the heavy cost of new hardware and software when you need it, but you will be paying far more for the same hardware and software over time.

Choosing the correct form of IT support for your company is incredibly important and something you want to attend to. Mistakes could have disastrous effects on your business. If you're unsure of which model will work best for you, give us a call. We'd be glad to help you find the perfect IT support for your business.

amuck waiting for you to click or just visit an infected site.   There are those that are targeting you, trying to get you to click a link or download a file and then there are those that specifically target you with customized emails and websites that look real but certainly are not.   DIFFERENT FORMS OF ATTACKS REQUIRE DIFFERENT LAYERS OF DEFENSE!

In the past few months, CST has updated and deployed new software and security protocols to protect our clients. We want to ensure they have the best possible protection when it comes to their technology. Also, remember we perform risk assessments daily so you can count on it all changing. We just want you to know that technology is never a one and done. Someone should be monitoring your updates, patch deployments, scans and security. That could be someone within your organization or it might be us, your friendly, reliable and responsive IT team. Either way, be sure it is happening.

If you aren't sure your credentials are already on the dark web, and would like us to do a dark web scan, I have a special offer for you. I am giving away 5 FREE dark web scans (a $199 value), first come, first serve. What this scan will do is tell us whether your domain is found on the dark web. Are your credentials already compromised? Do you have PII (Personal Identifiable Information) for sale on the dark web? Why not take a few minutes to request your FREE scan.

Visit www.cstsupport.com/darkwebscan. You will get a report indicating the results of the scan and I will personally review the results with you so we can take action if your credentials were found. All FREE of charge. Remember, the first five people to respond will get the scan.

On a separate note, March is Women's History Month. A celebration of women's contributions to history, culture and society as a whole. So, I want celebrate all those strong, independent women who change lives everyday and have a significant impact on everyone around them. As a female business owner in the world of technology, a primarily male dominated industry, I have faced lots of challenges and I'd like to believe I have had some positive impact on the lives of those I have touched. That is always my goal. No matter your gender, shouldn't it be yours as well?

Lisa

Get Different And Avoid Defeat

When I released my first book, *The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur*, I hoped that it would be met with instant success. Instead, nobody bought the book on its initial release day. I felt defeated like most would be in this situation. I quickly questioned my next step. Should I learn how to market effectively or simply give up on my hopes and dreams?

I knew that I wrote a good book and that it would help other entrepreneurs succeed, so it became my mission to properly market it. The lack of good and effective marketing is what holds many businesses back from reaching their goals.

If you want to beat the competition, you must differentiate yourself from the rest. My book *Get Different* explains ways that you can make your company more visible in the business marketplace. I truly believe that the three main steps from this book can help any company's marketing strategy be more engaging and effective.

The first thing you need to do is differentiate your business from its competitors. Strong word-of-mouth marketing is incredibly difficult to achieve and can lead to failure.

Instead, you should get out there and use your marketing tools to ensure that people know just how great your business is. Use your talents to stand out from the crowd. Consumers will surely take notice of your brand if you appear to be more knowledgeable or even funnier than the competition.

After you get your consumers' attention, you need to offer engagement opportunities. Give your campaign an authoritative, trustful or socially significant approach so they feel comfortable using your business.

Lastly, you need to be direct. Tell them what to do after getting their attention. Develop a call to action so customers and ideal prospects will take the next step. You can also measure the results and see how effective your marketing truly is when you pick a specific action.

Proper marketing can be very difficult to achieve, but with the right strategy, you will be on the road to business success.
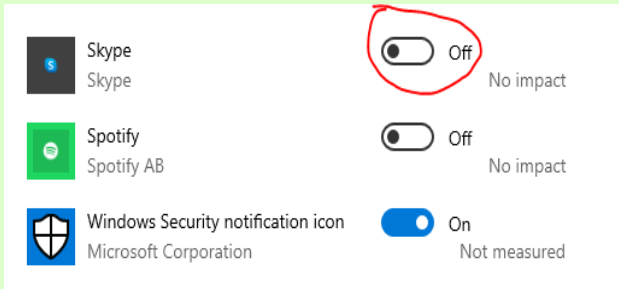
Mike Michalowicz has always believed that he had the formula to success and has proved it on multiple occasions. He is the creator of Profit First, *which is used by hundreds of thousands of companies across the globe to drive profit. He is the author of multiple books, including* Get Different *and* The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur. *Mike is a former small business columnist for* The Wall Street Journal *and served as a business makeover specialist for MSNBC. Mike currently leads two new multimillion-dollar ventures as he puts his latest research to the test. He also is a highly sought-after keynote speaker on innovative entrepreneurial topics.*

TYLER'S TECH TIPS

Does your computer take a long time to start up?

You might want to check to see if there are too many start up apps slowing it down.

1. Simply type "start" in your windows search bar and click "Startup Apps"
2. Then go through and turn off any apps that don't need to open when you first turn on your computer.

Programs and Apps like Spotify and Skype can be turned off at start up, which then frees up memory on your computer resulting in a faster experience.

Remember, you can always call the office if you need assistance. We'd be happy to take care of this for you.

Staff Birthday's

Sara: March 21st

Birthday wish challenge! Call the office and wish Sara a Happy Birthday—just because you can!

Important Dates:

March 13th Daylight Savings

March 17th St. Patrick's Day

March 20th First Day of Spring

REACHING YOUR GOALS SHOULD NOT FEEL LIKE YOU'RE CHASING THE END OF A RAINBOW.

You Just Need Help From The Right Leprechaun!

First quarter is coming to an end, and New Years resolutions are fading fast. This is your time to get organized!

No, I do not want you to set unrealistic goals for yourself. Instead, focus on a few small goals that will help towards the larger picture.

Post your goals somewhere you can easily see them from day to day. These goals should be obtainable, but also challenge you.

Maybe you want to buy a new car, for example. This is a great goal but think about what smaller goals will contribute to you getting that new car. What small steps can you take to help you achieve your final result.

Having a big goal for yourself is fantastic and CST loves a good challenge. But every big goal can be broken down into smaller more manageable goals. Focus on those and your main "Big" goal will come easily.

- Jessica