CST Tech News

What's New

As we end another year, Shawn and I always look back at what we have accomplished, evaluate those things we didn't and reflect on how we could have done it all better. Are you doing that as well? We know you are tired of cyber security topics being forced upon you daily. We understand! We also know, firsthand, the impact of a breach. We have personal experience with clients losing thousands of dollars, weeks of work and years of data; one closed its' doors, two survived but lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines, fees and they are still trying to recover. Unfortunately, that was the reason they hired us – they thought they had "enough" protection and ignorance is no longer an excuse.

I talk to prospective clients every day. I provide them with lots of information stripped down to make it make sense and yet, some still refuse to acknowledge the risks are real. So, here are my thoughts. **THE RISK IS YOURS**! That's right folks, the risk is all on YOU – the owner, CEO, Supervisor, CTO or IT Director. If you understand the risk and knowingly acknowledge that you are accepting the

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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.

Give Your Business An Advantage In 2023

By Paying Attention To Important IT News And Trends Of 2022

The year 2022 was a big one for IT, experiencing growth in all areas, especially for infrastructure in remote work due to the pandemic. When businesses fail to have updated IT infrastructure in place, regardless of company size or location, their customers' and employees' sensitive information is at risk. By investing in proper IT infrastructure, businesses can improve productivity while saving money. It's a win-win situation.

Keeping that in mind, business owners need to be aware of changes in the IT industry so they can best protect their businesses and customers. The IT industry is continuing to grow, so you must make necessary updates. Here, you'll find the most important IT news and trends of 2022.

Understanding these trends will help foster success into 2023 and beyond.

Increased Need For IT Services Due To Remote Employees

One of the biggest challenges for many industries was the need for reliable IT services for remote employees. Businesses had to send their employees home, so they needed to find ways to ensure their information would stay protected.

To fix this issue, many businesses started working with MSPs (Managed Service Providers) like us to help with their IT and cyber security needs. MSPs can install, support and maintain all the users' devices and PCs connected to the network. Since they manage devices remotely, they're

available to help employees with their concerns as soon as they arise. MSPs are also incredibly beneficial when it comes to protecting information from hackers and other significant problems. They'll be there to assist with issues such as lost devices, hardware failures, natural disasters and many other situations.

A Need For More Automation

Between rising costs due to inflation and staffing issues, many small-business owners are doing more of the repetitive but necessary tasks that don't bring much value to the business. However, many things can be automated, including email marketing and data entry. Business owners don't have to do everything on their own, especially when they can automate many of these essential daily tasks. Implementing automation leaves business owners and employees less stressed while freeing up time for higher-valued tasks.

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Cyber-Attacks Of 2022 To Be Aware Of

Cybercriminals are getting smarter and bolder. In 2022, we saw cyber-attacks against the Israeli and Polish governments; the school system in Albuquerque, New Mexico; and large businesses such as Uber and Crypto.com.

No business is exempt from cyber-attacks. Many small businesses don't prioritize cyber security, and cybercriminals know this. They will try to target and compromise businesses that they think are an easy target. Proper cyber security training for employees, as well as hiring an MSP, can reduce the risk of hackers gaining access to critical information.

If you're a small-business owner, it's essential to include your business's IT needs in your plans for 2023. Doing so will allow you to stay ahead of your competition while ensuring your employees and customers are well protected.

risk – then great. We respect that – sort of! But, like all other kinds of insurance, why would you want to?

Let me explain it this way…how many of you have insurance? Homeowners, vehicle, boat, ATV, even health insurance? You bought that insurance not because you are expecting a fire, theft, damage, or sickness but because you are AFRAID to be without it. A "just in case" scenario. Now, just because you have insurance doesn't mean you are exempt from bad things, but having it makes you feel safer. I get it, Shawn and I have insurance and yes, we do feel better knowing we have it. However, we also take precautions against never having to use it. We drive cautiously and respectfully, following the rules of the road, usually. We lock our doors at night and activate our security system (yes, just another "insurance" to keep us safe). We make sure our oven is off, candles are out, and we don't run the dryer unless someone is home. How many of us take a stroll through our homes every single night to ensure everything is safe and secure?

Now, take your business – the one thing you built from scratch, pour your soul into, spend thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours nurturing all while expecting a return on all that hard work – money!

Being in the world of technology, change is constant. We always try to ensure that what we are doing for our client is "enough" to keep you all safe. That will not change. But we want to do better than that. We want to be ahead of any nasty stuff coming our way and we want to innovate how we do it. We work with an incredible group of peers weekly to stay ahead of it all. We are very thankful for them for the open dialogue and sharing of information. Our team of cyber security experts are constantly keeping us updated and we are adapting accordingly. Our team here at CST is

3 Mistakes Leaders Make With Job Descriptions

Leaders often make common mistakes with job descriptions when hiring and reviewing performances, leading to more errors that can become irritating and reduce productivity. These mistakes are entirely preventable and easily overcome, which leads to better hiring processes.

Here are three common mistakes you're probably making right now:

Describing A Job In Vague Terms
Watch out for "-ing" verb tenses – they are often too basic. "Supporting the marketing team in promoting our products" is undefined. What does "supporting" or "promoting" mean? What level of performance is considered poor, good or great?

Instead, consider a more specific description, such as "To help our customers modernize their inventory management systems by increasing sales of existing customers by 20% per year through new product introduction." This is a high-level but specific explanation of why the job exists.

Focusing Only On Actions, Not On Results
Some leaders make the mistake of wording their expectations in terms of only actions, not results. "Contact at least 20 existing customers per week and conduct an account review with at least five per week." That is a perfectly good expectation of an "action," but it is insufficient if all of the expectations do not outline any results. The risk is that people perform required actions without feeling the urge to deliver a specific outcome.

Focusing Only On Results, Not On Actions
Other leaders make the mistake of wording their expectations in terms of big-picture results without specifying the actions an employee should take. "Grow revenue at least 15% per year" is a very specific goal. But to make that goal more achievable, it is helpful to also list several of the necessary actions needed to reach that result.

To avoid making these mistakes, we encourage colleagues and clients to practice writing a "scorecard." A scorecard has a clear mission for the role. It identifies five to seven outcomes you expect a person to achieve by a certain date. The outcomes are a mixture of actions you want the person to take and the results you expect them to achieve. And you can easily "score" whether someone achieved the outcomes.

Using a scorecard will improve your ability as a leader to hire and coach people to exemplify the organization's purpose and values and take actions that achieve results.

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incredible and just as passionate about this company and its' clients as Shawn and I. We truly are blessed!

So, as 2023 approaches think about how you can minimize your day-to-day stresses. You have worked hard to grow your company so evaluate what level of risk you want to take and be sure you are willing to live with the "worst case scenario" if something were to happen.

What would decrease your technology stress? Would you like someone to call when things go wrong? Do you want someone to keep track of your technology accounts and passwords? Where is that data now? I pray you have it somewhere and not just in "your head" or worse, the head of an employee (Join me January 11th for a Live Webinar on this topic). What about compliancy? Is someone helping you with that? If you are in the Insurance, Legal, Accounting, Medical, Automotive industries there is some compliancy you MUST meet. Who's doing that for you? Who is updating, monitoring, and protecting your technology? If not YOU, then WHO?

As a FREE offer to all of you who are not yet clients, why not reach out to me and let's talk about how we can provide that piece of mind. It truly is affordable, and information is key in all decision making. I will provide you with all the information you want with a simple phone call. All with ZERO risk.

To all our existing clients, Shawn and I hope that we provide you with peace of mind knowing we truly do have your back! Call us anytime for any tech-related issues and we will take care of you. As a reminder, if you need assistance and it is an emergency, please call us! That is the fastest way to get help. Texting or emailing myself or my staff is difficult to track and manage and interrupts are already busy schedule. If it is a non-emergency, please email support@cstsupport.com as that automatically creates a ticket every member of my team will see and can respond to.

On behalf of Shawn and I and our entire team, thank you for a successful 2022. Be prepared for all that is to come in 2023 because there will be change…after all, it is the only real constant in our lives. We look forward to continued growth in 2023 and our hope is that we get to watch your business grow as well.

Have a joyous holiday season and a beautiful, peaceful New Year.

As Always,

"Passionate NOT Pushy"

Lisa

The End of 2022!

What a year! We've gone through thick and thin together in 2022, but as always, we have come out on top. We really do make a good team!

Of course, the holiday preparations are in full swing around here. The lights are coming on, the smell of baked goods are in the air and Holiday music is everywhere. Let's enjoy all the time with family and friends this December and start next year with renewed energy and vigor.

The end of the year is time to celebrate all our achievements over the past 12 months and make our goals for 2023. So don't forget to take the time to plan for the new year.

What do you want to accomplish next year?

We hope you have a beautiful holiday and an amazing New Year.

Jessica

If you know Shawn and Lisa well then you understand their love for Crown Royal. So in honor of our fearless leaders, here is a holiday cocktail featuring their favorite after hour whiskey.

Bartenders Choice: **PARTRIDGE IN A PEAR TREE**

This is a 2-1 ratio so plan based on your glass size. Fill your glass 1/4 with Ice. Add 2 parts pear nectar or pear juice (nectar or concentrate works best). Add 1 part Crown Royal. We prefer the original but feel free to try with Apple. Add a float of Ginger Ale, Stir and enjoy.

*If you get fancy for the holidays add a cinnamon and sugar rim with a slice of pear to garnish.