

# CST TECHNOLOGY TIMES

Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably



## 4 THINGS TO DO NOW TO PREVENT YOUR CYBER INSURANCE CLAIM FROM BEING DENIED

“Thank goodness” is probably what Illinois-based manufacturing company ICS thought about having a cyber insurance policy with Travelers Insurance after a data breach in 2022. But after claims investigators pulled out their microscopes, they found that ICS failed to use multi-factor authentication (MFA) across all digital assets, which they had agreed to do in their policy. Travelers sued ICS *and won*. The policy was rescinded, and so were ICS’s feelings of gratitude, which likely evolved into worried whispers of “Oh, crap.”

Smart businesses like yours are adding cyber insurance to their policies because they know good security hygiene is just as much a competitive advantage as a way to reduce business risk. But with cyber insurance premiums steadily increasing – they rose 62% last year alone – you want to make sure your claim is paid when you need it most.

### Why Claims Get Denied

“Most claims that get denied are self-inflicted wounds,” says Rusty Goodwin,

the Organized Efficiency Consultant at Mid-State Group, an independent insurance agency in Virginia.

Though we like to paint insurance companies as malicious money-grubbers hovering oversize “DENIED” stamps over claims, denials are usually the result of an accidental but fatal misrepresentation or omission by businesses or simply not letting an insurer know about changes in their security practices. However, there are simple steps you can take to prevent a claim-denial doomsday.

### 4 Ways To Make Sure Your Claim Doesn't Get Denied

#### 1. Find a broker to help you understand your policy.

There’s no doubt that insurance policies are tedious, filled with legal lingo that makes even the Aflac Duck sweat. Nevertheless, there are several parts to an insurance contract you must understand,

*continued on page 2...*

## “passionate NOT pushy”

By Lisa Brown, CEO & Founder

If you know anything about Shawn and me, you know that October is, by far, our favorite month of the year for a multitude of reasons. It is a month of celebration starting with CST’s 23rd birthday. It’s hard to believe we have been helping small businesses with their technology for that long and are still loving it. Next comes our 19th wedding anniversary, Shawn’s birthday, my birthday and yes, even Bella’s birthday is in October.

You would think that would be reason enough to party, but heck it’s OCTOBER in the Adirondack Mountains which means fall is upon us with beautiful colors and cool temperatures. Even our Florida crew is experiencing cooler temperatures. We have so much to be thankful for and this is the month that reminds us just how lucky we are.

October is also Cyber Security Awareness month. I know we are all sick of talking about it, sick of hearing about and sick of the added expense, but it is more important than ever. Hackers are getting clever by using AI as a tool to make their content more professional and harder to detect. This means you need even more protection.

If you have any  
(Continued on page 3)



CST Group Inc.

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



### OUR MISSION:

**CST Group Inc. is a PROACTIVE technology management firm that specializes in helping compliance-driven industries to SECURE, PROTECT and MANAGE their technology.**

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including the deck pages (the first pages that talk about your deductible, total costs and the limits of liability), the insuring agreements (a list of all the promises the insurance company is making to you) and the conditions (what you are promising to do).

“If your broker can help you understand them and you can govern yourself according to the conditions of that contract, you will never have a problem having a claim paid,” says Goodwin. Some brokers don’t specialize in cyber insurance but will take your money anyway. Be wary of those, Goodwin warns. “If an agent doesn’t want to talk about cyber liability, then they either don’t know anything about it or they don’t care because they won’t make a lot of money off it.” If that’s the case, he says, “take all your business elsewhere.”

**2. Understand the conditions.**

Insurance companies are happy to write a check if you’re breached *if* and only if you make certain promises. These promises are called the conditions of the contract. Today, insurance companies expect you to promise things like using MFA and password managers, making regular data backups, and hosting phishing simulation and cyber security awareness training with your employees.

Understanding the conditions is critical, but this is where most companies go wrong and wind up with a denied claim.

**“ Smart businesses like yours are adding cyber insurance to their policies because they know good security hygiene is just as much a competitive advantage as a way to reduce business risk. ”**

**3. Make good on the promises.**

If you’ve ever filled out a homeowners insurance application, you know you’ll get a nifty discount on your premium if you have a security alarm. If you don’t have one, you might tick “Yes,” with good intentions to call ADT or Telus to schedule an installation. You enjoy your cheaper premium but are busy and forget to install the alarm (nobody comes around to check anyway).

Then, your home gets broken into. “Guess whose insurance claim is not going to be paid?” Goodwin says. “The power is in our hands to ensure our claim gets paid. There’s really nothing to be afraid of as long as you understand the promises that you’re making.”

This happens all the time in cyber insurance. Businesses promise to use MFA or host training but don’t enforce it. As in the case of ICS, this is how claims get denied.

**4. Don’t assume the right hand knows what the left hand is doing.**

Goodwin sees companies make one big mistake with their insurance policies: making assumptions. “I see CFOs, CEOs or business owners assume their MSP is keeping all these promises they’ve just made, even though they never told their MSP about the policy,” he says. MSPs are good at what they do, “but they aren’t mind readers,” Goodwin points out.

Regularly review your policy and have an open and transparent line of communication with your IT department or MSP so they can help you keep those promises.

“We’re the architect of our own problems,” Goodwin says. And the agents of our own salvation if we’re prepared to work with a quality broker and make good on our promises.

**“FREE UP COMING WEBINAR”**

**Join Lisa for a 30-minute LIVE webinar on:**

**"Cyber Security Sucks - Here's What You Need To Know"**

**Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 10:00 am**

During the webinar, you'll learn...

- Changes in Cyber Security Requirements Now and Next Year
- What You Need to do NOW to protect your company
- Understanding Risk Assessments and Cyber Insurance Regulations

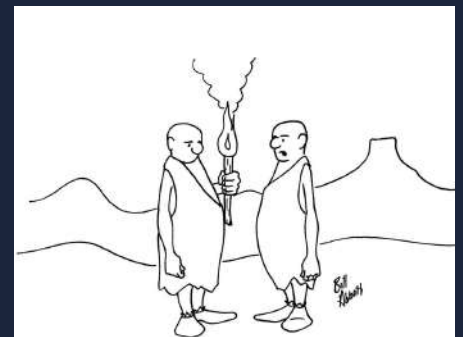
**Who should attend...**

Cyber Security is no longer optional for Small Business but you must understand the do's and don'ts to protect your business

**Secure your place by registering now at [www.cstsupport.com/webinar](http://www.cstsupport.com/webinar)**



**CARTOON OF THE MONTH**



“Congratulations on the discovery. Good luck getting it insured.”

# LEAD WITH YOUR HEART

How Kindness Transforms Workplace Culture And Boosts Profits

I firmly believe the key to sustained success lies in cultivating kindness within organizations. When leaders lead with compassion, they create an environment where employees thrive and overall business performance improves, elevating your bottom line. In recent years, we've been working on creating a more positive and kind culture in my workplace. Here are a few areas we've focused on and how it's panned out for us.

## Positive Work Environment

Kindness sets the tone for a positive work environment – somewhere your employees feel valued, respected and supported – and that helps us support you! Leaders who lead with kindness create a sense of psychological safety, encouraging employees to voice their ideas, take risks and collaborate effectively. As a result, team morale improves, and employees become more engaged, leading to increased productivity and innovation.

## Well-Being

Kindness in leadership extends beyond your day-to-day delegation because it also bolsters the well-being of employees. By demonstrating empathy, understanding and compassion, leaders can create a culture that prioritizes work-life balance, mental health and personal growth. When employees feel cared for and supported, their job satisfaction increases. Think about it: When you feel satisfied and cared for, you have it in you to go that extra mile. That's what your employees will do for you, too, which only improves the performance of your business.

## Relationship-Building

Kindness fosters strong relationships, both within your company and with customers. When leaders prioritize kindness, they build



trust and rapport with their employees, creating a supportive and cohesive team. Additionally, kind leaders understand the value of customer relationships and prioritize exceptional customer service. By treating customers with kindness and empathy, businesses can establish long-lasting relationships, boost customer loyalty and generate positive word-of-mouth referrals. Best of all, when you lead with kindness, the rest of your team follows your example.

## Increased Innovation

A kind leader promotes an inclusive culture that values diverse perspectives and encourages open communication. When employees feel comfortable sharing their ideas, they collaborate more effectively, leading to moments where they feel innovative and creative while also solving problems. That can tap into the collective brain trust, enabling them to drive growth.

After decades of experience, I've seen firsthand how leading with kindness is a powerful differentiator for small businesses. Small businesses that prioritize kindness and being human are financially successful and leave a lasting, positive impact on their employees, customers and communities.

*Mike Michalowicz has always believed that he had the formula to success and has proven it on multiple occasions. He is the creator of the Profit First method, which hundreds of thousands of companies across the globe use 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 currently leads two new multimillion-dollar ventures as he puts his latest research to the test.*



## EXIT INTERVIEWS:

A Goldmine Of Information For Your Company

Are you conducting exit interviews with your employees whenever they quit? An exit interview gives you a chance to hear an honest opinion from one of your employees about various aspects of your business.

Through an exit interview, you'll learn if an employee enjoyed working for your company, what areas of your business could benefit from changes and more. If you like the employee and don't want to lose them, you can try to figure out how to make them stay based on what they've told you. Failing to conduct exit interviews is only hurting yourself and your business.



### passionate NOT pushy..

Continued from page 1

concerns about what you have in place to keep your company safe, please reach out.

If nothing more, I can provide you with valuable information on how to proceed at your pace and your budget.

Speaking of budgets, October is also the start of fourth quarter, which means NOW is the time to start thinking about end of year tasks and next year's budget. You should be evaluating goals and determining the probability of achieving them by end of year. There are only three months left people – are you on track?

Remember, information is key to great decision making - reach out if you have any questions.

As always,  
"passionate NOT pushy"  
Lisa



# FALL INTO CYBER-SAFE HABITS

Happy Cybersecurity Awareness Month

This October marks the 20th annual Cybersecurity Awareness Month so, of course, this is our month to shine!

Nothing gives CST more enjoyment than helping to educate people on the importance of keeping their technology safe. We never want to hear horror stories about scams and businesses losing money.

Remember, we are here for you! Our Facebook will be full of posts giving you tips and tricks to prevent cyber disasters. Each week focuses on a different step you can follow to ensure you are keeping cybersafe. We really want to take this month to educate as much as possible on safe habits.

As always our website is a great resource for information, but this time of year we really focus on the education aspect of keeping you cybersafe. If you still feel like you could use a little extra help, we can provide training to your staff! We offer a multitude of training subjects to help you and your staff navigate the technology world.

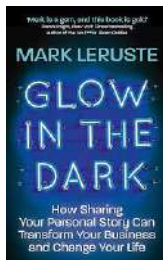
And as always #staycybersafe

—JESSICA—



## GLOW IN THE DARK

By Mark Leruste



When entrepreneurs and business leaders share their stories in books, marketing efforts and social media posts, they don't always speak in their authentic voices. They want others to perceive them in a certain way, so they write or speak in a manner that strengthens that perception. This could prove counterproductive to your marketing efforts, however. Storytelling marketing is a great tactic to grow your business, but you have to do it properly to see results. *Glow in the Dark* by Mark Leruste helps teach readers how to share personal stories using a genuine voice that will help them connect with clients and improve various aspects of their business.

## Calling All Creeps

Does anyone else feel like once school starts the rest of the year flies by?

It is already October and that means spooky season is upon us and summer decorations have been put back into storage. Now for bats, skeletons and of course pumpkins. Mums have replaced our flowerpots outside and I will slowly add the rest of our fall decorations.

Have you met Freddy? Well, we had a bit of an accident recently with our loveable Fred who suffered a spinal injury. So, we now have a new staff skeleton, Freddy. Of course, Carrie has already started taking Freddy onsite to visit clients but he does spend a few days in the office too. Feel free to stop by and say hello.

We would love to see what you have going on so tag us in all your Halloween fun. Do not forget to check our social media accounts for all our office shenanigans.

And as always #staycybersafe  
Happy Haunting Everyone.

—JESSICA—

