

CST TECHNOLOGY TIMES

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

"passionate NOT pushy"

By Lisa Brown, CEO & Founder

What are you thankful for? I am hoping you will take just a moment and think about the incredible things you have in your life that just make you a better person. That's the goal, isn't it? That we surround ourselves with people that make us better?

Shawn and I just returned from a three-day conference in Nashville, TN where we were surrounded by 700 of the most highly successful MSP businesses in the world. We are proud to be a part of this group where, yes, we may be competitors in one sense, but we are more allies than enemies.

In addition, we have a smaller circle of business owners in our accountability group that challenge us on a weekly basis. We discuss our goals, offerings, and service levels. They constantly push us to be better and to grow as quickly as we desire. We know and appreciate that this is a unique group that most industry's do not have, and we thank God every day we have them. Do you have someone that pushes your business growth? Who challenges you?

(continued on page 4)



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.



HERE'S WHAT GOOGLE MAPS TIMELINE KNOWS ABOUT YOU (AND IT'S MORE THAN YOU THINK)

It's 10 p.m. – do you know where your children are? Google probably does. Thanks to Google Maps' Timeline feature, the tech company probably knows where your whole family has been – down to the GPS coordinates. The feature was first rolled out in 2015 on Android devices and two years later on Apple, but many people still don't know how much information the app actually collects. Before you hit the road this holiday season, take a minute to review your privacy settings to see if the risk is worth the benefits.

What Google Maps Timeline Can See

With Google Maps Timeline, you can go back to any day and see in detail where you were, when and for how long. For example, the map will show you when you left work, got home and any pit stops you made. It can also tell if you traveled by bike, car, train or bus. If you haven't changed the settings, this information may have been stored for YEARS. This kind of tracking is helpful if you forget the name of a lunch place

you visited last month with an amazing chicken wrap. However, if you care about your privacy and prefer not to have your home address or daily jogging routine under Google's watchful eye, you need to turn this feature OFF.

Pros And Cons

Under the guise of being a digital assistant, Google collects that information to make your life easier. At the same time, it's creating detailed profiles of all of us. In some ways, this makes our lives easier. In other ways, it invites severe risks.

Upsides

- Find what's lost: Has your kid ever lost their phone during an errand spree and is not sure if they left it in the cart at Target or the bathroom at The Cheesecake Factory? Yeah, it's not a good feeling. If your phone is connected to the Internet, Google Maps Timeline can retrace your steps.

continued on page 2...

...continued from cover

- **Peace of mind:** Many parents gain peace of mind about their children’s safety by knowing where they are and where they’ve been.
- **In business:** Employers can also use the feature to ensure employees working remotely are where they are supposed to be when they are supposed to be there.
- **Tailored ads:** Because Google apps speak to each other, your ads and recommendations are customized to your lifestyle.

Downsides

- **Peeping Toms:** Anyone who gets hold of your account can build a profile of you. They know where you live, work and hang out. Threat actors weaponize profiles in extortion schemes or impersonate people to commit other heinous crimes.
- **Not 100% accurate:** You must be connected to the Internet and logged in to Google for the feature to work.

“

Before you hit the road this holiday season, take a minute to review your privacy settings to see if the risk is worth the benefits.

- A lot less privacy: It’s creepy when an app tracks and stores personal information!

“Manage Location History,” and selecting an auto-delete option.

How To Turn Tracking OFF

If you don’t feel like having Google’s eyes on your every move, follow these steps on one of your devices to update the settings. Here’s how to do it from your computer:

Change Settings Using Your Computer:

1. Log in to your Google account.
2. Tap your profile icon or initials, and select “Manage Your Google Account.”
3. Click on “Data & Privacy.”
4. Scroll to “History Settings” and select “Location History.”
5. Pause your history.
6. **BONUS TIP:** Delete your timeline history by going to Maps Timeline,

Tips For Using Google Maps Timeline

If the benefits outweigh the risks for you or your family, do two things. First, define a timeline to delete stored data. You can delete your location history after 3, 18 or 36 months – or keep it forever (which we don’t recommend). Once you pick an option to remove the data, Google is legally obligated to delete it.

Second, use multifactor authentication on your devices and accounts so that even if someone finds your phone or hacks your account, they can’t get in. Take control of your privacy and review this buried feature in Google’s Maps app!

“FREE WEBINAR”

Join Lisa for a 30-minute LIVE webinar on:

"Surfing Restrictions? What You Can Do To Protect Your Business From Risky Websites"

Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 10:00 am

During the webinar, you'll learn...

- The Holiday's are fast approaching and online shopping and surfing may be putting your business at risk
- How to ensure employees aren't putting your company at risk
- Preventing your employees from surfing non-work related sites with DNS filtering. Is it a good idea?

Who should attend...

All Small Business Owners with employees and an Internet connection who want to protect their business from risky websites and irresponsible surfers.

Secure your place by registering now at www.cstsupport.com/webinar



CARTOON OF THE MONTH



WFH STRATEGIES THAT ACTUALLY WORK



We all value work and family balance. But during the holidays, that seesaw tends to teeter more toward family, even when end-of-year deadlines hang over our heads. No one wants to be the office jerk who says NO to flexible work schedules. However, if you say yes, you may open your business up to lowered productivity and increased security risks – unless you have clear WFH strategies.

A recent study by Tenable found that 67% of business-impacting cyber-attacks targeted remote employees. Working remotely is like having your cake and eating it, too. Still, it's entirely appropriate to ask your employees (and yourself) to not eat the cake off the floor or in bed. What we mean is that to support your employees' productivity and company security, make sure you're implementing some Work From Anywhere (WFA) best practices. Just as they should eat their cake at the table, if your employees are going to work from home or Grandma's basement, they need to check that their setup meets simple expectations.

WFH/A Best Practices:

Have A Decent Internet Connection.

Most video calls require at least 5 Mbps, but 50–100 Mbps ensures multiple people can stream at once without issues.

Access Shared Company Resources.

Make sure employees have tested their connection off your company's network BEFORE they leave. Can they access the VPN? Are their login credentials stored safely in a password manager?

Have A Place To Work.

Preferably a room with a door (that closes ... and locks). Nobody wants Grandma crashing a

Teams meeting. Noise-canceling headphones are also an excellent idea.

Agree On Core Working Hours.

If your employees are working remotely (not taking vacation), make sure they've agreed to be available at certain times, including team meetings. Yes, this means they can't watch their kids and should have child care set up.

Have A Project.

Especially for short-term WFH situations, having a clearly outlined deliverable is an easily tracked productivity metric. They either got it done or they didn't.

Have A Cyber Security Policy.

According to Tenable's survey, 98% of remote workers use a personal device for work every single day. A cyber security policy includes all aspects of your company, not just remote work. However, remote work is unique, and you may need to take extra steps to protect your business if remote work is happening at your company. This includes installing security software on devices and enforcing multifactor authentication on their device, on work applications and when accessing the company's network. Train your team on at-home security, like how to spot phishing e-mails, create strong passwords and keep kids or other family members away from work devices.

Remember ...

Nobody wants to get tied up in a security snafu or lose productivity over remote work. Make remote work policies a core pillar of your company so that whenever an employee requests to work remotely, you have a policy in place to ensure they can do their best work and do it safely!



Christmas Gift Suggestions:

To your enemy, forgiveness.
To an opponent, tolerance.
To a friend, your heart.
To a customer, service.
To all, charity.
To every child, a good example.
To yourself, respect.

– Oren Arnold,
novelist, journalist and humorist



CST GROUP INVITES
YOU TO A FREE

Brunch & Learn

“FIVE TIPS TO REDUCE YOUR
CYBER SECURITY RISK BY
88% WITHOUT SPENDING A
DIME!”

WHERE: NORTH COUNTRY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
7061 US-9, PLATTSBURGH, NY

WHEN: NOVEMBER 9, 2023

TIME: 9AM - 11AM

COST: FREE!!!

REGISTER HERE:
[CSTSUPPORT.COM/FREE-
EXECUTIVE-SEMINAR/](https://cstsupport.com/free-executive-seminar/)

SPACE IS VERY LIMITED! REGISTER NOW

(Continued from Front Cover)

Is your business growing? Your customer's happy? And more important, are you happy?

We are thankful for exposure to these high-level entrepreneurs that have shared their successes and failures and have been willing to share ideas about what has worked for them. In 2023 alone, we have met Shark Tank Stars Robert Herjavec, Daymond John and Kevin O'Leary, along with Marcus Lemonis, Nick Vujicic, Lance Armstrong and Joe Polish. Each of them presented new ideas and strategies to make us better.

Do you have people around you doing that? If not, maybe its time to make a change. You should be surrounding yourself with people that are smarter than you. They will not only teach you amazing things but you can position yourself for growth.

So, as we approach the end of the year, CST is again making some changes to our service offerings. We listened to our clients and have added a VOIP solution. Not only will we protect your technology and be the resource for problem solving but we will also take care of your phone system. If you want to learn more, please reach out.

If 23 years in business has taught me anything, it is we cannot sit stagnant in hopes success will fall in our laps. Success is as big as you dream it can be so why not dream BIG!

CST will continue to grow and expand to reach ambitious goals. I hope you are doing the same.

Based on Wikipedia, Thanksgiving began as a day of giving thanks for the blessings of the harvest and of the preceding year. That "harvest" now looks very different for each of us. Celebrate whatever that looks like for you!

Happy Thanksgiving!

As always,

"passionate NOT pushy"

Lisa



Time for Rest?

Who is ready for the season of relaxation? I know I am! I feel like this year has been especially busy. Our office has been crazy busy the past few months and we are always setting new goals for ourselves. The team has worked hard and as the year closes, we are really feeling it.

I've been thinking a lot about seasonal depression as it has been a common conversation since moving to Northern NY. I feel like it is more of your body requiring rest. My grandmother used to tell me that fall and winter are meant for rest, not just in nature but for us too. So, how do we do that when we are still working and life still carries on? I think it is different for everyone and finding what works for you is the key - especially considering we see less and less sunshine.

Shawn and Lisa stress to all employees that there should be no work after office hours. But this is easier said than done. It is hard for us because we do enjoy our jobs and helping our clients, plus we have built a team of hard workers in general making it a true struggle. We also understand the importance of turning the computer off at the end of the day and enjoying some much needed downtime. Finding that work/life balance is a challenge for sure.

I have started to integrate some different habits at home to help with relaxation even though there is always a house to-do list to finish. One simple way that has helped me, is to turn up the music or listen to a podcast while I clean. I know this is simple and some of you may already do this but it really helps me get chores done faster all while taking away the tedious tasks.

A big topic at the office lately has been time management and that certainly applies at home as well. That balance is more important than ever considering I have two small children at home to wrangle. This means that the time for "cleaning" has shrunk considerably. I don't want to feel like all I am doing is working in the office and then going home and working all night. I try to give myself an hour when I first get home to do whatever I need. Sometimes I don't get to everything and I need to give myself permission to be ok with that. I am learning to let some things go. As my kids get older, I am getting them involved too! Teaching them work ethic is so important for them to grow up to be amazing humans.

The point I am trying to make here is that everyone needs a break. Your body tells you what you need so I hope you are listening. If you are extra tired after work one night then skip the chores and have a movie night. I can ensure you your body will thank you.

-Jessica