CITIZENS STATE BANK
Gets A Grip on Technology with CSI Managed Services

Not all managed services providers can meet financial institutions' very specific needs.

Financial institutions simultaneously deploy many different technologies, all of which must run smoothly and securely in order to best serve customers and protect their data. But for many community banks, holding on to staff who are equipped with the expertise and ability to manage these various systems is a difficult and expensive task.

It's true: finding qualified IT employees is challenging. The nationwide IT unemployment rate remains low at 3 percent, according to the Tech Trends Q3 2015 report by Dice, a career site for technology and engineering professionals. But a deeper drill reveals the unemployment rate for some IT specialties sits as low as .3 percent.

CHALLENGE
Citizens State Bank's former managed services provider couldn't fulfill all of its needs regarding evolving regulatory concerns as well as fully secure and effective hardware and software management.

SOLUTION
The bank, a long-time Meridian core customer, realized it needed to partner with a financial industry-focused managed services provider. The bank turned to CSI due to its expertise and industry performance.

RESULT
Citizens State has found a true partnership with CSI, employing a fully outsourced model that includes managed cloud, security and IT systems solutions. The bank has capitalized on major benefits including increased data integrity, quick resolution time and satisfied auditors and regulators.

Fortunately, Citizens State Bank in Luling, Texas, decided years ago that a third-party managed services provider could help the bank not only solve IT staffing issues, but also achieve its technology strategies. Even so, the bank eventually learned that not all managed services providers can meet financial institutions' very specific needs.

"We were using a vendor that we relied on for several years," said Ruben Robledo, Citizens State's president and CEO. "It was a good relationship, but there were things they just couldn't resolve. We had some ongoing regulatory concerns and the management of the hardware and software had some weaknesses."

Citizens State, a CSI Meridian core customer since 2009, decided to search for a more synergistic partnership—and found one close to home.

"We needed more confidence on the IT side," Robledo says. "So when we looked at who was the best—and in doing our due diligence—we chose CSI Managed Services for many reasons, the main one being the fact that we had confidence in their expertise and industry performance."

CSI

Citizens State employs all that CSI Managed Services offers: managed cloud, security and IT systems solutions. Robledo says the combination has worked well for the bank: "The great thing about the full outsourcing is that everything is managed: hardware, software, vendor relationships on the Internet, the data, the broadband—everything is organized by a group that knows the industry."

SIX TOP BENEFITS

Robledo adds that having CSI take charge of the bank's disaster recovery efforts has lifted a big weight from his shoulders. He goes on to tout the six main benefits Citizens State Bank has realized since partnering with CSI Managed Services:

1. Data Integrity. Robledo mentions the time CSI correctly advised the bank against using a popular file-sharing service due to its high-level risk, adding he learned shortly thereafter that viruses had breached the service: "I went back to management and decided it's not something we should take the risk on, since you don't know who's managing the server on the other side. So, the data integrity has been a huge part of our confidence in CSI."

2. Quick Resolution Time. Robledo recalls an incident in which an employee received an email infected with ransomware. Before the bank was even aware of it, CSI had handled the matter: "We received a ticket overnight, and by noon the next day, CSI was able to go in and rebuild from our back-up."

3. Happy Auditors. Robledo says the bank has had the same IT auditor since before its managed services switch. "Honestly, he was giddy the first exam when he came in (afterward), just because of all the improvements. The examiners are good with it as well. We gave them our reports, which had everything they needed on the patching and incidents, and they were really impressed."

4. Virtual CIO. "We consult with our vCIO often, and have monthly meetings to discuss new issues in the industry, like the cybersecurity assessment tool. We went through that thoroughly, and they helped us complete it very quickly with their knowledge and experience."

5. Core Platform Integration. Robledo says having the bank's core and managed services solutions with one company creates ease and symmetry: "When we're addressing new updates, there's a concerted effort to be efficient—it's handled seamlessly."

6. A Joint Relationship. "It's such a relief to have someone to manage our technology," Robledo says. "But it really is a joint relationship where we work together on projects and updates. The relationship makes the experience much better and more productive."

By the bank's standards, it's a win-win situation: "We know CSI Managed Services has set us up with the best and most appropriate servers and controls. We're in a good place."

ABOUT CSI

Computer Services, Inc. (CSI) delivers core processing, managed services, mobile and Internet solutions, payments processing, print and electronic distribution, and regulatory compliance solutions to financial institutions and corporate customers across the nation. Exceptional service, dynamic solutions and superior results are the foundation of CSI's reputation and have resulted in the company's inclusion in such top industry-wide rankings as the FinTech 100, Talkin' Cloud 100 and MSPmentor Top 501 Global Managed Service Providers List.

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