ALL THINGS TECH

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

July 2017

This monthly publication provided courtesy of Catherine Wendt, President of Syscon Inc.

We love this stuff!
Our passion is helping businesses use technology to run their organization successfully and profitably.

The Loophole That Lets Insurance Companies Refuse to Cover a Cybercrime Theft in Your Business

As hacking hit the headlines in the last few years — most recently the global hack in May that targeted companies both large and small — insurance policies to protect businesses against damage and lawsuits have become a very lucrative business indeed. Your company may already have cyber insurance, and that's a good thing. But that doesn't mean that you don't have a job to do — or that the insurance will cover you no matter what. When you buy a car, you get the warranty. But in order to keep that warranty valid, you have to perform regular maintenance at regularly scheduled times. If you neglect the car, and something fails, the warranty won't cover it. You didn't do your job, and the warranty only covers cars that have been taken care of.

Cyber insurance works the same way. If your company's IT team isn't keeping systems patched and up to date, taking active measures to prevent ransomware and other cybercrime attacks, and

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backing everything up in duplicate, it's a lot like neglecting to maintain that car. And when something bad happens, like a cyber attack, the cyber insurance policy won't be able to help you, just as a warranty policy won't cover a neglected car. Check out this real life policy exclusion we recently uncovered, which doesn't cover damages "arising out of or resulting from the failure to, within a reasonable period of time, install customary software product updates and releases, or apply customary security-related software patches, to computers and other components of computer systems." If your cyber insurance policy has a clause like that — and we're pretty sure that it does — then you're only going to be able to collect if you take reasonable steps to prevent the crime in the first place. That doesn't just mean you will have to pay a ransom out of pocket, by the way. If your security breach leaves client and partner data vulnerable, you could be sued for failing to protect that data. When your cyber insurance policy is voided because of IT security negligence, you won't be covered against legal damages, either. This is not the kind of position you want to be in.

All of this is not to say that you shouldn't have cyber insurance, or that it's not going to pay out in the case of an unfortunate cyber event.

> *"You still have to keep your systems secure"*

It's just a reminder that your job doesn't end when you sign that insurance policy. You still have to make a reasonable effort to keep your systems secure — an effort you should be making anyway.

Cathy and Larry Sightings

Catherine and Larry visited the Focus on the Family campus in Colorado Springs as part of a 40th Year in Ministry Celebration. Vice President Mike Pence and Stephen Curtis Chapman were two of the special guests—a great event!

'Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will create the fact.'

- William James

Get Off your "But" by Sean Stephenson

Earlier this year, I had the chance to hear and see Sean Stephenson. The first thing he does is address the elephant in the room—he's confined to a wheel chair, has a rare brittle bone syndrome, needs assistance for everyday tasks, and has a fulfilling and blessed life!

It's really hard to listen to Sean without thinking that all your 'complaints' are petty, to say the least. In his book, he talks about how important it is to **connect with others**. He reminds us that words are powerful, so **watch what you say to yourself**. He discusses **mastering physical confidence** and how that impacts our view of ourselves, as well as how others view us. Then there's the importance of **choosing your friends wisely**. Last, but definitely not least, he talks about **taking full responsibility** for yourself and your life. A powerful book!
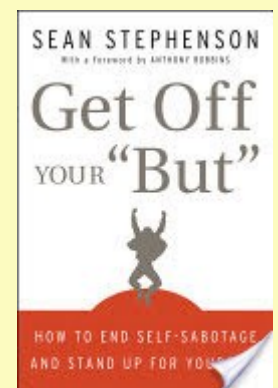
Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

Alexa, Who's Winning the Virtual Assistant War?

There are multiple companies trying to break into the "smart home hub" market, but Amazon's Echo (and its sultry Alexa) are holding on to 70 percent of the market share, and it doesn't look like that's changing any time soon. That's a clear sign of victory for Amazon - and a wake-up call for its competitors.

The voice-activated home assistant market is growing, with almost a third of millennials likely to use a home assistant this year. While it might take a decade or more for the devices to find their way into the homes of older demographics (a situation Saturday Night Live has already mined for comedy), it seems that smart hubs will only increase in popularity from here on out, and that Alexa is poised to rule them all.

News From Our Techs

Comcast and AT&T are NOT your IT Company

These companies provide services bringing the internet to your business and home. Although this is a critical service, these companies and their technicians are delivering a specific solution to you; they are not equipped to support your company network and that starts with the firewall.

The firewall is your first line of defense from the outside world, protecting your network. One of the most common emergencies we are pulled into is when Comcast or AT&T upgrade service or swap out equipment and just set the equipment back to factory defaults. This takes down the internet (and phones if you use that service), causing a work disruption and an emergency call to our office.

If you plan a change in providers, if they're swapping out equipment, if you're upgrading existing service, call us first so we can be prepared to assist and test.

Summer Heat vs. Computers— Heat Wins Every Time

Every summer we hear from a client that has turned off the air conditioning over a long weekend to keep the electricity expenses down, only to find the server room equipment is 'frozen' and unresponsive.

High temperatures can be a death sentence for your electronics. A server that becomes overheated usually costs more in energy to run, has a shorter life-span, and is more likely to crash.

For most companies, a server crash can mean hours or days of downtime, unproductive employees, and a great deal of unnecessary stress.

8 Steps to Prevent a Heat-Induced Server Crash:
1) Tidy up the server room. Remove papers or other items that have been stacked on top of, or right next to, computer equipment.
2) Make sure cold air reaches all the equipment; this area has to have air conditioning 24/7/365!
3) Keep the doors to the server room closed and seal off the space.
4) Consider a server room thermostat that can send temperature alerts directly to your email. Get some help from our techs as you consider where to set the thermostat and what levels to set for the alerts.
5) Buy a rack enclosure so the air can flow all around the equipment rather than having the computers stacked on a table top, or even worse, on top of each other. Server racks are designed to keep air flowing above and below the equipment and can include your APC units.
6) Keep the temperature at no more than 77 degrees Fahrenheit.
7) Look into Managed Services to monitor the health of your computer equipment.
8) Consider virtualization of physical servers, or cloud computing, so you have fewer pieces of equipment producing heat in the first place.

Electronics are sensitive to heat, and your computers are an integral part of running your business, as well as a sizable investment. How can we help?

Construction Corner

S100C Version 20.4.54 and 20.5

A note that if you install version 20.4.54, it forces a reboot of the machine, so plan ahead; this caught several people off-guard.

Also, in mid-June, Sage released version 20.5 with several features such as increased field lengths, and a way to have a different background color for each company. This feature should be very helpful for quite a few of our clients.

Union Paygroups, Option to use Higher Rates

Did you know that in the Sage 100 Contractor 5-2-2 screen, you can choose an Option to set the hourly rate to Use the Higher Rate than the default? For example, their home union may be at a higher rate than a specific paygroup in a specific County. Choosing this

option allows the default rate in the grid to be the higher one, rather than using the rate in the actual selected union paygroup. In some situations, this could be helpful. - *CMW*

Sage 100 Contractor version 19—Say Goodbye...

Sage recently reminded us in an email blast that the last updates for version 19 will be July 1st. To be clear, they will not release 2017 year-end tax forms or 2018 tax tables; these will only be available in version 20. This is their way of 'encouraging' all of us to move to version 20 this year.

If you have custom third party programs or reports, or Crystal reports, all of these will need changes or re-writes to work with version 20. All Sage reports less than 21, Queries, and custom Report Forms need to be tested before you go 'live'; plan ahead. There are lots of materials on our website to help you with this

planning, or call the office and we'll book a half-hour planning meeting with you.—CMW

Other Stuff

Get a Refund If Your Child Made Accidental In-App Purchases from Amazon

Some game apps allow you to buy stars, donuts, coins, or other tokens you can use to play the game. The tokens are imaginary, but the purchase is real. It's easy for kids to buy stuff within these apps without realizing they're spending money—your money. Last year, the FTC found Amazon liable for billing parents for these types of purchases, and the online retailer has now settled with the FTC, agreeing to refund these purchases. If your kid has purchased stuff without your permission via an app purchased on Kindle or the Amazon Android app store, you might be eligible for a refund. As Consumerist reports, you should get an email directly from Amazon, but you can also visit the Message Center in your Amazon account and find information under "Important Messages."
Lifehacker.com – June 1, 2017