

ALL THINGS TECH

Brought to you by  **SYSCON**
Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably

What's New

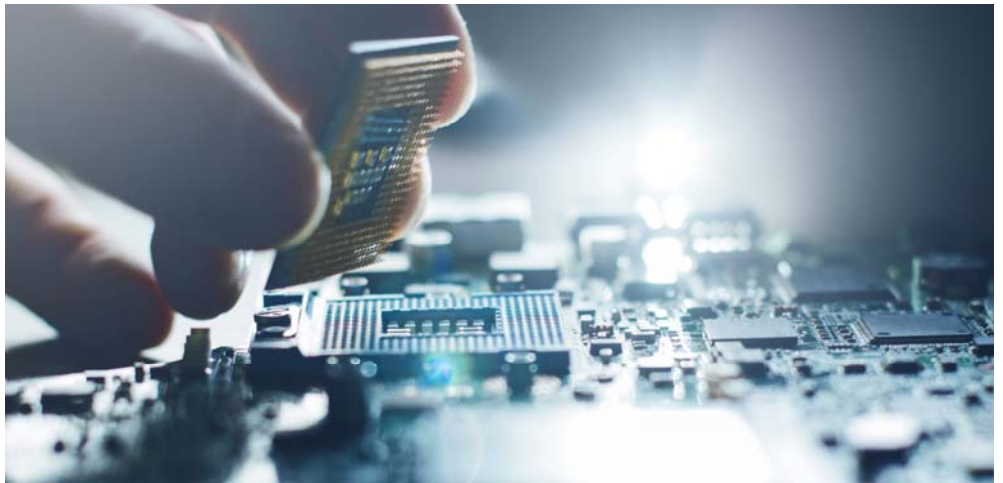
We are excited to welcome in the New Year. Hopefully you enjoyed some time off, time with family and friends, great food, and some nice gifts.

We are happy to have the major crunch of yearend closings and upgrades behind us! It's been quite a whirlwind, but we've learned a LOT and will be sharing it in this newsletter and in upcoming webinars.

We are also excited about adding our newest MSA, all RAID 10, continuing our improvements and growth of our Private Hosting Cloud options.

Wishing a successful and fulfilling New Year!

- Catherine Wendt



Do You Really Want The Cheapest Computer Technician Working On Your Company's Network?

These days, small businesses are more dependent on IT systems than at any other time in history. Because of this, even the slightest technological blips in our cyberspace-centered workflow can have expensive, lasting consequences.

Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of this occurred back in 2013, when Amazon went dark for half an hour. Sure, it was a paltry 30 minutes, no big deal, until you consider the mega-giant was theoretically hemorrhaging \$66,240 every 60 seconds, based on their quarterly revenue.

Of course, your company probably isn't a staple of international commerce like Jeff Bezos' beloved brainchild. Because of this, many small business owners think that a downed server or small security breach here and there won't matter too much for their bottom line. For these unlucky few, IT takes a

backseat to more "pressing" issues, and they go the cheap route with their technicians, hardware, and AV. This cost-cutting solution seems like the idea of the year, and will undoubtedly work great for the business – until it doesn't.

Maybe your long-time technicians fail to notice a piece of outdated equipment, and your server gives up the ghost during peak business hours. Virtually all work grinds to a halt, and your employees are forced to wile away the two hours shooting three-pointers into the trash bins. Add up the two hours of wasted wages for your entire team, the financial cost of missed business, and the much more intangible loss of customer goodwill as they struggle with diminished service on a workday, and you'll come up with a sum that disabuses any business owner of their illusions about "cheap" IT.

January 2018



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.

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And that's not even close to the worst-case scenario. Imagine, for a minute, that your technicians assure you, despite the lack of regular monitoring and maintenance, your network is secure. These words of comfort sound nice until the day a team of expert hackers actually attempt to access your systems, and find outdated, security solutions in place — basically, a front door left wide open. At that moment, your business becomes a criminal's playground. They're free to access financial information and personal data of your customers and employees, hijack your business to send out floods of malicious software and spam, hold nearly every aspect of the company ransom for thousands of dollars, and cause chaos to their hearts' content. The fact is, fixing problems is a lot more expensive than preventing them. When you cut corners and utilize a nephew, or someone who's 'good with computers,' you're paying for an array of shoddy, Band-Aid solutions that will be applied piecemeal, and usually too late, like a finger plugging a hole in a dam. But when you make a substantial investment in

your IT support, you're investing in the most basic aspects of the future of your company.

Robust network security, dependable computers and servers, consistent internet access, and other fundamental components of your company network are far from luxury items. These days, technology forms the scaffolding upon which businesses run. If any piece of the operation fails, the whole system suffers, usually accompanied by a fat financial penalty. There is an ever-growing, endless list of potential technological pitfalls that can have permanent consequences for your business: teams of hackers zeroing in on vulnerable small businesses, rogue employees with a grudge, lost laptops, aging and unreliable hardware, fire, natural disasters, and IT "professionals" that have no idea what they're doing, to name just a few. As technology progresses, and companies depend increasingly more on it to stay competitive, it simply doesn't make sense to relegate IT to the neglected corners of your budget.

When it comes to business, there's a lot to worry about these days. A

total collapse of your company's technological infrastructure doesn't need to be one of them. Invest in a robust, managed IT package from tried-and-tested professionals, and leave the worrying to the experts. You can rest assured that our IT team of experts truly has you covered.

Lastly, social engineering attacks target the 'people' in your company. Educate your staff, remind them regularly about phishing scams and other attempts to gain access to your network. Don't let their naivety bring down your network. We'd love to help, and you know where to find us!

Cathy and Larry Sightings

Catherine conducted and Larry played keyboards for the North Ridge Community Church Christmas Cantata, full Orchestra and Choir!

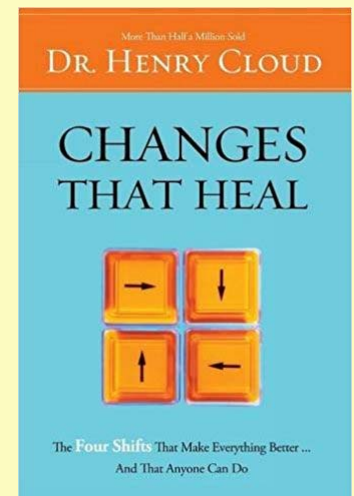
'Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.'

- John F. Kennedy

Changes that Heal by Dr. Henry Cloud

This is the type of book that makes you reach for a pencil or highlighter so you don't forget the nuggets you just read. Building on his previous, and awesome books on Boundaries, Dr. Cloud reminds us that change isn't something we wait to have happen; we can dig in and get started.

He identifies four (4) shifts that make everything better, any one of which may be a struggle for us, getting in the way of our growth and the change we hope to achieve: 1. Bond with others; 2. Separate from others; 3. Sort out issues of good and bad; 4. Take charge as an adult. Sprinkle in some Grace and Truth and you have a recipe for changes that heal. I have a ton of highlights in my copy, and I'm reminded that my excuses for my limits are pretty good, but they're still excuses. Recommended!



Shiny New Gadget Of



AirSelfie: The New Way To Take A Selfie

Move over, selfie sticks — it's time to take photo tech to the skies. The new AirSelfie, a pocket-sized camera equipped with four rotating fan propellers that allow it to take flight, aims to revolutionize the way we take pictures. The palm-sized device promises to take 5-megapixel, HD photos from up to 65 feet in the sky, steadied by an anti-vibration shock absorber that ensures images stay crisp and clear.

The hovering camera is the product by AirSelfie Holdings, an international team of developers and engineers, and is designed from the ground up to integrate seamlessly with your phone. To use it, all you do is slip it out from its charging case (which attaches directly to your smartphone), use the app to direct it to the desired height and orientation, and snap an aerial picture or video.

The technology is available now, and with a \$320 price tag, comparable to many other modern cameras. Check it out at AirSelfieCamera.com.

Guarding Against Fraud In The Workplace

In the November 2017 C12 Business Group materials, they tackled the touchy subject of fraud in the workplace, especially for a small to medium sized business. They shared some interesting statistics and some interesting information about how owners address, and in some cases avoid, these issues.

First of all, they found that many owners don't put safeguards and double-checks in place because they don't want to seem untrusting of their staff. This is the wrong way to look at this—anyone responsible for your money would welcome the owner's interest and be relieved to know there are safeguards for the company as well as the employee.

As an owner, you are responsible to have clear guidelines for your staff related to the handling of the company funds, as well as other responsibilities. You are also responsible for the overall health and well-being of the company, providing good stewardship for the entire staff that counts on having a job with you tomorrow.

Lastly, you owe it to yourself to safeguard your investment of time, personal guarantees, equipment investments, and similar. You have a lot on the line and should take steps to protect your investment.

According to the C12 materials which have source references, 50% of small-to medium-size businesses (SMB) will

experience fraud at some point in their business life cycles, costing an average of \$114,000 per occurrence, usually at the hands of a highly trusted employee. SMB's with fewer than 100 employees have a 30% chance of experiencing fraud. In 95% of fraud cases, the perpetrator took some effort to conceal the fraud, most commonly by creating and altering physical documents.

Life can be hard—the bookkeeper who would never dream of taking even a stamp from the office all of the sudden is swimming in debt due to an illness or a family member's addiction. It's just a little bit; we'll pay it back soon; I just need it for one week; and so on. The company policies and safeguards are going to protect that person from even more heartache because they can't act on the temptation thanks to your safeguards.

We know a very smart business man who felt he was checking the books monthly, but the bookkeeper knew exactly what was being checked and was able to steal from the company.

Open your own bank statements; get online and check where those electronic payments are going; check the signatures on the checks; learn how to read your financial statements; open or at least review incoming mail. If you'd like to talk through rolling out some of these safe guards, we'd be happy to talk with you and brainstorm some ideas. - CMW



Construction Corner



What's New in Sage 100 Contractor version 20?

Sage is working very hard to get everyone moved to version 20. They won't release any 2017 yearend tax forms, or the 2018 updated tax tables for version 19. We have some new updates.

Frustrated with records that won't compute because the Employee has negative vacation hours? Sage heard you; they took this 'new' feature OUT in v20.7!

In v20.6.84, you can 'hide' Inactive Employees from the look up screens without having to delete anything (you should never delete employees). Pull up the list, choose Options, and walk through a few steps to check mark the Inactive Employees; you'll love this one. AND, it works in the

Jobs, Clients, Vendors, Equipment, and Parts screens, as well.

A little irritated that any cash account entry in 1-3 comes in under adjustments? Now when you make that entry, you can choose whether it's a Deposit, Check, or an Adjustment.

With v20.7, if you work over a Terminal Server or a Cloud Hosting solution, and you use printer redirection for local printers, you no longer lose your default printer for reports each time you log on.

All Archiving features, both Fiscal and Payroll, are handled through the new Database Administrator tool, not the 1-6 or 5-3-7 screens, respectively. The good news here is that if anyone is logged on and you need Exclusive Access, you can see who, they get a warning and a 60-second count down to wrap up and get off!

There's a new 'Refresh' button when previewing a report. If you drill down and make a change, then choose Options, Refresh, the report will reflect the change, rather than backing out and regenerating the whole report.

I think this one is a two-edge sword—you can View the history of changes in a record. Who made the change, when, what was changed. We recently had someone call and say a record had disappeared, but we could see from the history that it was first voided, then deleted.

Reserve **February 8th** for our **Webinar** on migrating the prior year archives!



Collecting Time From the Field Just Got Exciting!

We're helping our clients collect field time from mobile devices, and we're fully integrated (really!) with Sage 100 Contractor version 20.

We can collect cost code information, work order numbers, phases, client signatures, and a whole lot more. Interested?

Your field can use iPhones, Androids, or Tablets. Join us for our next demo!

Who Wants To Win a \$25 Amazon Gift Card?

This month's trivia question: **Phone phreaking was a popular hacker pastime in the 1980's. What did phone phreaking entail?**

- Destroying telephone-company infrastructure
- Making prank telephone calls to authority figures
- Getting access to unlisted telephone numbers
- Hacking telephone services to make free calls

To enter: Go to www.Syscon-inc.com/Trivia and type in your answer. All correct answers will be put into a fishbowl and we'll randomly draw the winner. The Winner will be contacted shortly after the deadline and will be announced in next month's newsletter.

Deadline: January 19, 2018

Congratulations to last month's Trivia Contest winner, **Mary Zoss**, with **The Orchard Evangelical Free Church, IL!** Mary's name was drawn from the fishbowl for last month's correctly answered Question:

Which is one reason you should go to Start and choose Shut Down rather than just turning off the computer?

- Because your computer sometimes installs updates when you shut it down