

What's New

Well, we made it; the Microsoft January 14th 2020 deadline will now be part of the history books. The weeks leading up to this major event were hectic! Double-check that all the Win 7 machines at the office and at home are on Windows 10.

For those of you in the Chicago area, we're looking forward to seeing you (hopefully) at the ASA Expo on March 3rd at the Drury Lane in Oak Brook. We're in booth 309; come and say 'Hi'!

Valentines Day is right around the corner. Whether you're helping the little ones put together cards for their friends, or you're planning a special evening for your honey, be generous with the hugs! - *Catherine Wendt*

February 2020



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

We love this stuff!
We are committed to helping businesses use technology to run their organization successfully and profitably.



If You Think Your Business Is Too Small To Be Hacked ... You're a Cybercriminal's #1 Target

Many cybercriminals look at small businesses like blank checks. More often than not, small businesses just don't put money into their cyber security, and hackers and cybercriminals love those odds. They can target small businesses at random, and they are all but guaranteed to find a business that has no IT security - or the business does have some security but it isn't set up correctly.

At the same time, cybercriminals send e-mails to businesses (and all the employees) with links to phishing websites (websites designed to look like familiar and legitimate websites) or links to malware. They hope employees will click on the links and give the criminals the information they want. All it takes is ONE employee to make the click.

Or, if the business doesn't have any security in place, a cybercriminal may be able to steal all the data they want. If you

have computers connected to the Internet and those computers house sensitive business or customer data - and you have NO security - cybercriminals have tools to access these computers and walk away with sensitive data.

It gets worse! There are cybercriminals who have the capability to lock you out of your computer system and hold your data hostage. They may send along a link to ransomware, and if you or an employee clicks the link or downloads a file, your business could be in big trouble. The criminal may request a sum of money in exchange for restoring your PCs or data.

However, as some businesses have learned, it's not always that simple. There are businesses that have paid the ransom only for the cybercriminal to

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delete all of their data anyway. The criminal walks away with the money and the business is left to die.

And that's not an understatement! Once cybercriminals have your data and money, or both, they don't care what happens to you. Cybercriminals can do more than just major damage to small businesses; their actions can literally destroy a business!

This goes to show just how critical good IT security really is, but we find that many business owners still don't take it seriously. Even as we enter 2020, there are business owners who don't consider cyber security a high priority — or a priority at all. In other words, "It hasn't happened yet, so it probably isn't going to happen." Or "My business isn't worth attacking."

Cybercriminals don't think like this. It's a numbers game and only a matter of time. Business owners need to adapt to today's online landscape where just about everything is con-

"Cyber criminals don't think like that. It's a numbers game and only a matter of time."

That Will Never Work by Marc Randolph

At an industry event in Florida, I had a chance to hear and meet Marc Randolph. In his presentation and his book, he walked through the Netflix startup journey, from idea to going public. There were many key players in making Netflix a success and he shares the credit. Aside from the story, he shares many business insights.

You've probably heard that there are no 'overnight' successes, and that's true here, as well. Marc's journey started with the desire to find an idea on which to build a business. The choice to sell DVD's by mail was at the beginning of the DVD technology, the fall of Blockbuster, and the expansion of Amazon.

Marc shares the excitement and long hours of a startup; building his initial team; growth and success; realizing he was no longer the best person to lead the company as it met that success; and finally, the decision to exit, to leave his 'baby' behind, but in excellent hands. Knowing his strength and passion is in nurturing the fledgling idea, Marc has moved on to helping other startups. At the end are his Dad's eight rules for success. These are worth checking out, too. - *CMW*

nected to the Internet. And if something is connected to the Internet, there is always going to be some level of vulnerability.

Here's the latest scam. With the growing number of businesses that have Cyber Insurance, the ransom requests are starting at \$5 million dollars because they know many businesses have insurance that will pay. Insurance companies are keeping to the letter of the agreement, so make sure you're in compliance, which often includes promises that you'll keep your equipment maintained and patched (no Win 7 machines).

But you can control your level of vulnerability! You can be 'penny wise and pound foolish,' or complacent and do the bare minimum, which will put your business and customers at risk. Take this seriously and put IT security measures in place - a firewall, malware protection, secure modems and routers, cyber security insurance, and working with a dedicated IT company. There are many options to secure your business.

The reality is that cyber security should be a normal, everyday part of any business. And anyone thinking

about starting a business should be having the cyber security talk right from the very beginning: "What are we going to do to protect our business and our customers from outside cyber threats?"

When it comes down to it, not only do you need good cyber security, but you also need a good cyber security policy to go along with it. Start by educating your staff about staying safe when online. There's a saying that most people need to be reminded more than they need to be taught, and I think that applies here.

Think about that question and think about the security you have in place right now. No business is too small or too obscure to be hacked.

Cathy and Larry Sightings

Catherine and the Leadership team had their quarterly Traction off-site meeting, followed by an industry event in Franklin TN.

Larry played a horn duet in the Paradise Valley Chamber Series.

'There is more to life than increasing its speed.'
- Mahatma Gandhi

The Birth of **NETFLIX** and the Amazing Life of an Idea

That Will NEVER Work

MARC RANDOLPH
CO-FOUNDER AND FIRST CEO OF NETFLIX

UNABRIDGED • READ BY THE AUTHOR

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



M&R Digital Counting Coin Bank

Many of us still keep a coin jar to toss our spare change into. Even with the growing popularity of apps like Apple Pay and Google Pay, coins remain a big part of our lives. Of course, when you're tossing coins into a jar at the end of the day, you have no idea how much you've collected until you count it or take it to a Coinstar.

The M&R Digital Counting Coin Bank solves this problem. You never have to count change again. Every time you drop coins into the bank, it counts and adds them to the total. The digital readout keeps you updated on how much you've saved. It's a remarkably simple piece of technology that eliminates the hassle of keeping track of change.

From the Techs

Love-Hate Relationship With My Computer

Do you have a love/hate relationship with your computer? I know I do! Sometimes equipment just doesn't do what you need it to. I learned a long time ago that I should get a tech's help sooner rather than later. So how do you know when to try a few things, and when to pick up the phone and get some help? Here's everything you need to know about when to reach out.

Many of our clients, when they experience an issue with their computer, they reach out to us right away for some troubleshooting. This allows us to figure out what's happening, then resolve the issue before our client becomes overly frustrated. This is a 'win' for both of us!

There are two pretty common scenarios that can actually escalate your frustration when these inevitable computer problems come up.

First example: Let's say you're having trouble printing (as an example) so you decide to use the printer down the hall, or downstairs. You're busy so you keep this work around in place for several days. Then we show up to work on some pre-planned items or a new machine. You see we're in the building and come over to tell us that you have this printing issue, it's been weeks that you've been dealing with it, and you want it fixed.

This is the first we're hearing about the printing problem, and we haven't blocked any time to look at the issue. Not only that, we're going to ask you a bunch of questions (anyone else having trouble, what program were you printing from, and so on) and although you know these are good

questions, you are out of patience with this printing issue!



Second example: You have a computer issue so you go to the most tech-savvy person in the company and they make some changes, but the problem is still there. So, they make a few more changes, but still no luck. Then you let us know about the original issue, but now, we not only have the original problem, but we may have some new layers or even new problems that were introduced when the changes were made, and we don't know what was done.

Do either of these sound familiar? Have you ever felt ready to throw that computer out the window? (BTW - we actually had a client do that once.) These are some common stories we hear, so you're not alone and you're not crazy. We'd like to encourage you to call sooner rather than later. This will help you (and your blood pressure) as well as helping us to get to the bottom of things and get you back to work. - CMW



Marc Randolph, co-founder of Netflix, was the keynote speaker at an industry event in Orlando. 🌟

Construction Corner



Bank Fraud – We’re Seeing An Uptick

In late December and early January, we heard from several clients whose businesses were victims of bank fraud. With so many in such a short time, it feels like there’s a renewed effort by hackers.

Their banks recommend Positive Pay, and we whole-heartedly agree. Basically, you upload a file to the bank after each check run. The file includes information about all the checks including the check number, date, payee, and dollar amount. This information is then used by the bank to compare against incoming check activity on your account. If it’s a match, they let the payment go through; if not, it’s blocked.

So why did these clients call us? For our clients using Sage 100 Contractor, we have a custom Positive Pay program. It comes with a standard template that is accepted by most

banks. Because it’s ours, we can also modify a template to match a specific bank’s requirements. This allows you to cut your checks through S100C, generate the Positive Pay file, then upload it to your bank.

The clients who called us were playing defense; they had already been hit with fraud. You could play offense and avoid the frustration and time drain. Consider adding Positive Pay to your bank relationship. I’m confident your banker will be open to the discussion, and we can provide the tool to make it happen! - CMW

W-4 Form Changes in 2020

Last month, we reported that S100C v22.3.30 has a new W-4 Information tab to accommodate the new W-4 form for 2020. Rolling this out to new employees will be sticky, to say the least.

Then we had some pretty typical year end requests to adjust Federal withholding for key staff and owners. Basically, we max out the number of dependents so withholding is zero, then put in a flat dollar amount for weekly

withholding. This works great for those who want to follow their accountant’s advice for a set amount. But, it didn’t work this year. Mary figured out that you have to use the new W-4 tab to dictate a fixed dollar amount and can no longer use the fields we’ve usually updated.

Very Sneaky, Sage

I was a little disappointed with this one. When you’re on a website making a purchase, there’s usually a check box that you can check to receive notices of sales or new products. It used to be that these were pre-checked and you had to uncheck them. Now they’re unchecked and you usually have to opt in. With v22.3.30, Sage added an automatic opt-in to their Product Enhancement program. We found it because Sage was a ‘user’ that was logged in when we needed Exclusive Access. Basically, they’re collecting information about your configuration and how you use the software. We have opted out. - CMW



Collecting Time From the Field Just Got Exciting!

You won’t find a better, fully integrated, field time collection solution than ours because we wrote it to do what our clients need!

Interested? Want to enjoy Mondays again? Join us Thursday, **February 27th at 11:30am Central Time** to hear all about it!

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

This month’s trivia question:

Who is the computer scientist and MIT professor credited with inventing the World Wide Web?

- a) Bill Gates b) Gordon Moore c) Charles Babbage d) Sir Tim Berners-Lee

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: February 20, 2020

Congratulations to last month’s Trivia Contest winner, Lisa Feger with **Mid-State Steel** in IL! Lisa’s name was drawn from the fishbowl for last month’s correctly answered Question:

The keyboard layout designed by Sholes is:

d) QWERTY