

## What's New

April showers (and snow) bring May flowers! Green grass and bulb plants are everywhere, so get out of the house and enjoy a walk, get some sunshine, greet a neighbor as you pass by. Time to get off the couch and turn off the TV binge-watching.

We have wrapped up our Hosted Exchange upgrade. Thanks for getting the word out to your staff. After migrating hundreds and hundreds of mailboxes, we had 7 calls, most of which were for cell phones; go techs!

Continue to take care of yourself. You can't help others if your 'bucket' is empty. Be good to your clients, your vendors, and your staff. They're looking to you to provide calm in the storm. - *Catherine Wendt*

## May 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.



## 3 Ways To Stop Cybercriminals Cold In Today's Crazy Times

You've seen it. You've probably even experienced it. For what feels like forever now, just about everyone has been forced to modify priorities. As a business owner, you've probably been focused on shifting your business to accommodate this world crisis. You may even be investing more of your time in retaining customers and generating new cash flow. If you're like most people out there, you've barely even had time to think about cyber security and protecting your important data.

Maybe you've heard the saying "Never let a crisis go to waste." It's as if cybercriminals wrote it because that's exactly what they're thinking right now. In fact, they're probably working overtime right now to craft new malware while our lives have been turned upside down. Yes, as you're focused on your business,

hackers are finding new ways into your IT network. Their objective is to steal data and passwords, compromise your clients' private information, and even demand large ransoms.

Did you know that cybercrime is expected to cost \$6 trillion (that's a 6 followed by 12 zeroes!) by the year 2021? But, now is when hackers are expected to do their absolute most damage.

Here are three strategies you can use right now to help protect your business data, money, and productivity during these unusual times.

**1. Guard Your Inbox.** People aren't paying as much attention as they usually do, which makes it the perfect time for cyber-attackers to send e-mails with dangerous malware, worms, and viruses.

*Continued pg.2*

(continued from page 1)

Carefully inspect every e-mail received, always, and make sure you know the sender.

Here's another tip: avoid clicking links in the e-mail unless it's abundantly clear where they go. Also, don't ever download an attachment unless you know who sent it and what it is. While it takes a few extra seconds, double check by calling the person who sent you the attachment. Better safe than sorry. Make sure you communicate these safeguards to everyone on your team, especially if they are working from home.

**2. Secure Your Company-Based Technologies.** During crises like this one, your passwords are a critical first line of defense. Don't wait for your company's finance data to be compromised. Make a point now to re-evaluate your passwords and direct your team to create stronger passwords. Too many employees are guilty of using the same password across multiple applications. Use a unique password for every single application.

Your team may tend to save your passwords in their web browser. Don't do this. A skilled hacker can bypass the PIN required to access your saved passwords. Once they have the password or PIN to access

your web browser, they can steal as much as they want – credit card information, customers' private data and more!

## Did you know that cybercrime is expected to cost \$6 trillion by the year 2021?

We recommend our clients use a password manager. It's convenient, but more importantly, it's far more secure.

**3. Secure Your Home-Based Technologies.** With the coronavirus pandemic, far more businesses are encouraging their employees to work from home. That means a lot of people are working from the living room or kitchen without giving a second thought to security. This negligence is an invitation to new cybercrimes.

Here are a few tips to ensure your work-from-home employees are keeping your network and data secure: make sure your employees and contractors are not using their home computers or devices when they are working from home. If possible, add a firewall to ALL computers and devices that will be utilized at home. Offer to purchase and install quality anti-virus software, and arrange to have the latest Microsoft security patches installed

on these home computers. Remind your staff to lock their computers when they step away for a break. Avoid using external thumb drives and hard drives to transfer data between home and the office.

The hackers are not taking a break, and neither should you. We've already seen a surge in phishing scams.

While this coronavirus scare has negatively affected countless businesses, we are proud to say we are open and continuously servicing our customers. If you need additional security advice or want a consultation to discuss how to protect your data, we're ready to help – 630-850-9039.

## Cathy and Larry Sightings

Catherine participated in several Q&A webinars to answer high priority remote access work topics. We also had our Syscon mid-year State of the Company presentation.

Larry spent quite a bit of time pulling data for client PPP applications.

*'The best thing about the future is that it only comes one day at a time.'*

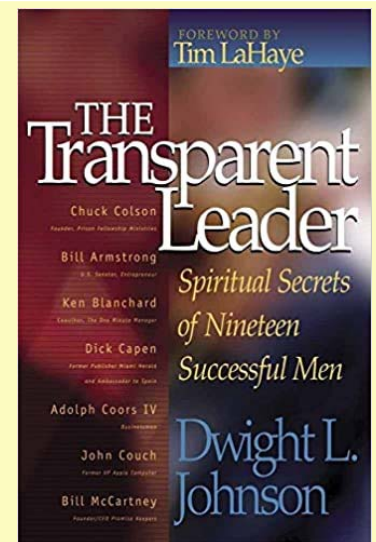
- Abraham Lincoln

## The Transparent Leader by Dwight L. Johnson

This book is a compilation from business men from a variety of industries. Each one had met and become friends with Mr. Johnson and had agreed to contribute to the project. There's a short introduction by Dwight Johnson followed by each guests' reflections on his own business experiences, the implications to his family, the lessons learned, and in many cases, the significant failures he had to overcome.

I really like the variety of business backgrounds—successful coach, multi-generational family businesses, news publisher, an ambassador, a politician, all part of the list. These men shared their journeys, their failures, and their successes—going to jail, the murder of a father, adultery, financial ruin. Each man spoke about his family and his faith-journey. This gave me a new perspective on the men in my life.

With this type of structure, I was able to read each man's story and reflect on what was shared. I found some very interesting observations and a few quotes to add to my collection. Then at my next opportunity, I could read about the next person on this impressive list. Definitely recommended reading, even for us ladies. - CMW





## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



### Zepp Golf 2 Swing Analyzer

Improve your golf game with a device smaller than a golf ball. The Zepp Golf 2 is a remarkable piece of tech that attaches to the back of any golf glove. It's packed with sensors and delivers real-time analysis of your game.

Using Bluetooth, the Zepp Golf 2 pairs with your smartphone. As the data is analyzed, it's displayed on the accompanying app. It tracks your club speed, backswing positioning, hip rotation, consistency, and much more. The Zepp Golf 2 also has a long-lasting battery - up to eight hours - so it will definitely make it through your next game without a hitch. The Zepp Golf 2 is compatible with both iPhone and Android devices. Learn more at Amazon or Zepp.com.

## From the Techs

### Latest Phishing Scam— Microsoft Account Team

Even with the chaos happening outside our doors, the hackers just won't give it a break! I must have received half a dozen of these phishing attempts, so please share this with your staff.

The 'From' says 'Microsoft account team' and the subject line says 'Microsoft account unusual sign-in activity.'

Basically, they're telling me that there's an unusually high sign-in activity level (not even sure what that means). They say they detected something unusual about a recent sign in to our account.

Then there's some official-looking info such as Country, IP address, Platform, and Browser. All I have to do is click the link to 'Review recent activity.' If it wasn't me, they'll help me secure the account. If it was me, they'll mark it as 'trusted.'

If you keep reading, it's signed as 'all rights reserved ?? 2020' at the end, and there are a few spacing and typos throughout the email.

I sent a warning to everyone on our team, right away. DON'T click these links. If you really think there are people signing into your Microsoft account, go to a clean browser, log in, and check. Better yet, if you think something is wrong, call or send an email and we'll take a look with you.

### Office 2010—End of Life as of October 13, 2020

Time keeps marching on. We just wrapped up the Windows 7 and Server 2008 end-of-life software. Now it's time to look at the version of Office on your workstation or laptop. If you're running Office 2010, you'll

need to get that upgraded before October 13th this year. After that date, Microsoft will not release any additional updates for the product, making it an excellent target for hackers. — CMW

### Cognizant is Compromised

According to an article by Sean Lyngaas from the April 18th issue of Cyberscoop, Cognizant, a multi-billion dollar IT Services company was attacked by Maze ransomware.

All of this in the middle of the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic, too. They're in the IT Services business based out of New Jersey, providing services to major pharmaceutical firms and restaurant chains.

As Mr. Lyngaas points out, this is one more sign that the 'ransomware gangs are not holding off on targeting companies amid the novel coronavirus pandemic.'

The message to all of us? Stay vigilant. It's easy to get distracted by the whirlwind happening all around us. Stay grounded, stay calm, stay centered. You got this! - CMW

### Zoom Breaches

Remote meetings are great tools to stay connected. We've been using them for years, with video cameras, through Go To Meeting.



You may have stumbled on some of the horror stories with Zoom; unannounced meeting crashers! Zoom is focusing on security updates, so if you're using Zoom, run the updates or you may receive some unexpected guests on your next call! - CMW

## Construction Corner



Now for some words of warning. The application was a 12-month look back which included your slow and busy seasons. The qualifying expenses start the day after the funds are available to you. It's an 8-week window during which you have to spend the money on the qualifying expenses (and a few them are not locked in yet). But, you may not have enough work. You might not be able to spend the amount you were approved for, and if you're in a state where jobs are shut down, there might not be a lot you can do about it.

Be prepared – if you can't spend all the funds, you might want to consider paying the loan back early, as soon as the qualifying period is over and you have the results of your tracking. Right now, there's no penalty for paying the loan off early. On the other hand, where else can you get a 1% interest rate? Lots to consider. If some or all of the loan proceeds are not forgiven, consider your next steps very carefully. —CMW

### Drones & Construction

Twenty years ago, it was rare for construction companies to use drones. Instead, larger businesses would send a helicopter to capture aerial views of a jobsite. As drone technology improved and became more accessible, the FAA

created The Part 107 program to license commercial drone pilots and designate where commercial drones may fly. The FAA also launched a program in 2017 that lets commercial drone pilots get airspace clearance with the FAA in less than a minute, cutting down on the 90-day wait time prior to this program – helpful, considering that about one-quarter of all buildings are located within restricted airspace.

Drones have helped make construction sites safer, more profitable, and provided for increased productivity. Drones are a safe way to get a birds-eye view of a construction site (and cheaper than a helicopter!). Drones can monitor stockpiles and multiple sites at once. Drones outfitted with thermal sensors gather data that the human eye cannot see. The predicted advances for drones in construction include advanced sensors and improved analytics.

*Summarized from the "How Drones Have Changed Construction & What's Next" article from Construction Business Owner.*



### Learn to Love Your Mondays

Processing last week's time just got a LOT easier. You won't find a better, fully integrated, field time collection solution than ours because we wrote it to do what our clients need!

No more pictures of hand-written time cards. No need to key it all in by the deadline. One place to call for support!

Interested? **Want to enjoy Mondays again?** Join us Thursday, **May 28<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am Central Time** to hear all about it! Register at [www.syscon-inc.com/events](http://www.syscon-inc.com/events).

### SBA Loan Funds and Tracking Costs

Even as I write this, the final ink has not dried. There are changes coming out and clarifications, too. Interesting how the clarifications from the various parties aren't the same, either. More details are coming, and we'll see what's next.

Even after we get the 'final' ruling on some of the qualifying expenses and definitions, there will be more follow up. What will the application for 'forgiveness' look like? How will 'forgiven' funds be treated on our company financials? What about 'unforgiven' funds?

There are a couple of things that we know right now. If you put in an application for the Payroll Protection Plan, the SBA Loan, it is a LOAN! Make no mistake about it; you signed a loan document. It has interest due and there may be payments. The loan has an amazing interest rate, and the payment terms are very generous; and you didn't even have to go through the regular loan qualification process to get approved!

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

This month's trivia question:

**By 2021, this much of the global workload will be processed via the cloud:**

- a) 61% b) 43% c) 35% d) 94%

**To enter: Go to [www.Syscon-inc.com/Trivia](http://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: May 20, 2020**

Congratulations to last month's Trivia Contest winner, Matt Friscia with **Always Best Care** in IL! Matt's name was drawn from the fishbowl for last month's correctly answered question:

**The size of the computer's memory is measured by the number of:**  
b) Bytes

Visit [www.syscon-inc.com/Trivia](http://www.syscon-inc.com/Trivia) for contest rules.