

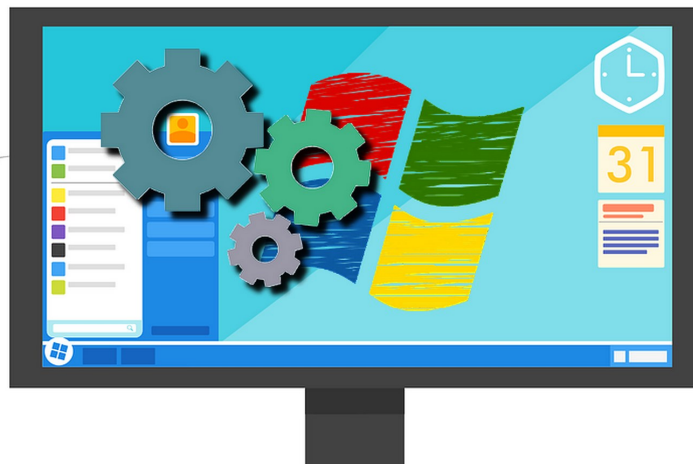
What's New

Two very big things this month. The November 3rd election; hope you're planning to vote! Then there's Thanksgiving; a time to enjoy turkey or ham, but also a time to give thanks for the many blessing in our lives.

Don't feel very 'blessed' in this pandemic season? All the more reason to stop and count them:

- Freedom to worship, or not
- Food on our tables, roof over our heads
- Meaningful work
- Family and friends
- Technology to allow us to be together when we have to socially distance
- The ability to read, write, have clean water...

You get the picture. What's your list? - *Catherine Wendt*



Microsoft 365 – Lots of Hype; How About a Tour?

So many people talk about 'Office 365' or 'Microsoft 365,' but when it comes down to knowing what these actually do, what they are, most people are pretty fuzzy. First of all, it's changed a LOT over the last few years (that's what happens when you focus a lot of money on R&D!). Next, as Microsoft focuses on the 365 offering, they're NOT giving much focus to legacy products, giving a clear signal of what's to come. I'd also add that we're in the middle of a pandemic and find ourselves at a very unique point in history where the technology tools and on-demand software have been accelerated by sheer NEED; how do we get work done when we can't go to our offices or meet with our teams?

In early October, we presented a high-level 'Tour' of Microsoft 365. This webinar was a BIG hit and generated

a lot of discussion. Even though we kept it to one hour, and only covered the highlights, it was a lot to take in, so we thought we'd recap. As you dig into this info, get your pen or highlighter out. You'll be the only one in the room who actually knows what you're talking about when it comes to Microsoft 365!

OK, here we go – There are three (3) groupings, categories that make up the Suite of offerings:

- Business Apps – Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint
- Cloud Services – Exchange, OneDrive, Teams, SharePoint
- Business Security – MFA (multi-factor authentication), Defender, Azure Information Protection, Intune, Conditional Access, Windows Virtual Desktop

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November 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.

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Now, the first two, Business Apps (Office to you and me) and Cloud Services are part of Office 365. This product combination has been around for a while. Think about it as the foundation of the 365 offering. I can't think of a single client that doesn't use Word and Excel. Many use Teams, especially since March 2020, and a growing number are using OneDrive for local documents on their mobile devices.

Microsoft 365 is the more mature product, incorporating Office 365 with the Business Security you and I need in order to safely use these software programs, and to protect our mobile devices. Take all the products from Office, add Teams and shared documents, and you absolutely need the security additions! With Microsoft 365, not just Office 365, you have the necessary security. As an IT group, we're EXTREMELY excited about these additional security products.

- **Multi-factor authentication**, for instance. You probably have this with your bank; you log in with your username and password, then you receive a code to 'authenticate' that it's you.

- **Microsoft Defender** has some basic tools to 'defend' the local device.
- **Intune** has some great security for businesses when it comes to protecting and maintaining remote equipment.
- **Windows Virtual Desktop** is just 'so cool' according to Chris. More to come on this one.

"We're at a unique point in history where the technology tools and on-demand software have been accelerated by sheer NEED."

With so many features and options, Microsoft continues to adjust its packaging names and prices. At a high level, these tools can be grouped into three (3) buckets:

By the Service—license for the specific service you want to use; not all services are available this way, 'a la carte'; this is the least cost-efficient way to purchase the core services.

M365 Business Packages—a wide array of apps and cloud services are

included; great security features; designed for small to medium businesses; biggest bang for the buck; max of 300 licenses. This is our favorite.

M/O365 Enterprise—higher service limits (read 'more money'); no limit on licenses

When choosing the right level of licensing, we recommend you reach out to us so we can talk it through with you. There are quite a few things to consider, and we are totally prepared to walk you through it. Next month, we'll cover how you know if you're ready to try one of these!

Cathy and Larry Sightings

Catherine is teaming up with Chris for several webinars this month, and preparing for yearend events.

After many cancellations, Larry finally had a chance to visit with IL friends up in Galena.

'A government big enough to give you everything you need and want is a government big enough to take away everything you have.'

- Gerald Ford

They Can't Eat You by Marc Sparks

I guess I've been off my game in recent months. I thought I was in pretty good spirits, keeping some kind of 'normal' at our office for us and clients. Then I started this book and realized I've been in a daze! Ideas started flowing and I felt a new 'spark.'

Marc Sparks graduated from high school, no college education. His father taught him a strong work ethic, and he had a God-given knack for sales. He also admits he's naturally self-confident and loves to build businesses. There are some great stories about the various businesses he's built. He admits that he was not knowledgeable in all of these industries, so he spent a great deal of effort to find 'A' players, learn from them, and support them as he teamed up with them to make success happen. Attitude, energy, and loving the process of building a business with 'A' players are the keys to his success.

There are a lot of core business lessons in this book. None are really new; in fact, they're a shift back to many tried and true standards; be on time and prepared; work hard; go the extra mile; get rid of wrong team members ASAP; share the praise and success with others. Who would have thought? Definitely recommended. - CMW

THEY
MY UNORTHODOX PATH
CAN'T
TO OUTRAGEOUS SUCCESS
EAT
MARC SPARKS
YOU

FOREWORD BY DARREN HARDY
Publisher & Founding Editor of SUCCESS Magazine

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Arlo Pro 3 Floodlight Camera

In the era of porch pirates, more people are investing in outdoor security cameras. The Arlo Pro 3 Floodlight Camera delivers security and practicality. It features an ultrahigh-definition camera delivering 2K HDR video and color night vision combined with a 2000 lumens light. Nothing goes undetected!

Plus, the Arlo Pro 3 is wireless. It connects to WiFi and doesn't need a power cord (it just needs to be plugged in for charging periodically). Because it's on WiFi, you can check the feed anytime from your smartphone. You can even customize notifications so you're alerted when it detects a car or person. And it has a speaker and microphone so you can hear and talk to anyone near the camera.

Learn more at:

[Arlo.com/en-us/products/arlo-pro-3-floodlight.aspx](https://www.arlo.com/en-us/products/arlo-pro-3-floodlight.aspx)

From the Techs

DocuSign Phishing Scam

Larry was expecting a DocuSign document via email. He noticed one in his Junk, so he decided to take a look.

This looked really 'good' but with trained caution, he took a better look before clicking anything. Here's what he noticed, and some things you should look for when you're deciding whether to click a link or not.

The subject line didn't have any reference about who this was from. Usually there's a name of a business in the subject line of the email. Next, he noticed that the link to see the completed documents did not point to DocuSign! In fact, the link to 'About DocuSign' didn't even point to

To keep you informed and safe, every Monday morning we send a short technology email tip. We highlight a new threat or scam we've seen; an upcoming expiration of a service or product you use; tips on hardware and software specific to running your company; and much more!

If you're not receiving our updates, be sure to whitelist 'Infusionmail.com' which is the platform we use to safely send email to you. If you need any help, call the office and ask for Beth or a Tech and we'll give you a hand!



a DocuSign address!

When Larry sent it over so I could share, I noticed it was from DocuSign.net, but if you check, the real DocuSign ends in .com. I also noticed the document name started with '20181010...' as if it was from two years ago.

So the Junk flag did it's job this time, giving enough warning to dig deeper before clicking anything. Remember: if you're not sure, just send it to us and we'll take a look. Be cautious! The wolves are out there! - CMW

Fatality Due to Ransomware

In an article by *The New York Times* on September 18th by Melissa Eddy and Nicole Perlroth, there is a report that hackers invaded 30 servers at University Hospital Dusseldorf, crashing the network. The hospital had to turn away emergency patients and send them to a hospital about 20 miles away. A woman in a life-threatening condition died from the delay of treatment.

Hospitals are a magnet for these types of attacks. They are required to keep medical records electronically and have to have access to their data. When there's an attack, they're often willing to quickly pay the ransom, whatever it is, rather than risk their patients' lives; completely

understandable, but this puts a target on their back, and on it goes.

The article went on to include more info, including a recent ransomware attack on the University Hospital in New Jersey, after which patient medical records were published on the internet! Can you imagine finding your medical info on the internet? - CMW

So what's next when it comes to
Hosting Servers and remote access?
Join us Wednesday
November 4th at 10:00 Central Time
to hear about what's coming!

Construction Corner



Over/Under Billing Work in Progress (WIP)

I get a lot of calls on this topic. Some clients compile this information every month; others wait for mid-year bank financials or yearend tax preparation.

Overall, the idea of these reports is to review the progress of the job and confirm you're on track to meet your profit goals. From the accounting standpoint, it's a way to smooth out the 'timing' problems with costs and billing.

When a progress bill is put together, the PM's are often projecting how far they'll be by the end of the month. This includes what size crews they're scheduling; what materials will be on the site and/or 'in the wall'; what subcontractors are expected and when they say they'll start or finish their work. Sometimes this estimate is done 5, 10, or even 15 days before the end of the month.

Then reality steps in – the crew didn't make the production rate; the materials weren't delivered on time; the subcontractor didn't get as far as they expected; the weather was

uncooperative; or maybe you blew past all the estimates and got way further than expected!

The Over/Under billing review compares what expenses actually hit in the month compared to the budgeted expenses for the project (including approved change orders). What percent of the budget has been used? Strictly doing the math, that would indicate what percent of the contract you would have earned. When you compare that to the actual billing to-date, you are either Under Billed (got more done than you estimated or were allowed to bill), or Over Billed (didn't get as far as you expected). You'll want the PM's to weigh in here; the job may be under or over budget, and that needs to be considered. Bring the results to the PM for input.

Being Over Billed is not bad, BTW. In fact, it helps your cash flow. Being Under Billed is not bad, but can adversely impact cash if it keeps happening. - CMW

Loving Mondays Again

All of you FIT users out there, we are SO EXCITED! You might remember being surveyed as to what new feature you'd love to see added to the

FIT System – you picked Work Photos, and we have them!

The **Work Photos Module** lets field staff take pictures and send them directly to Sage 100 Contractor. No more moving them from the phone or tablet, email, saving to the server.

Come check it out on **Wednesday November 11th at 1:00 Central time**. Call the office or sign up on our Events website page.

Ready to Close the Year?
Save the date!
Closing the Year Webinar
Thursday, December 3rd
1:00 p.m. CST
Register at www.syscon-inc.com/events

An Audit by the Department of Labor (Ouch!)

Recently a client reached out because they are being audited by the Department of Labor. They were looking for some help to find specific reports they needed to provide to the auditors. That can be a daunting task, so we were happy to help. We also suggested reaching out to their attorney, at a minimum, for some guidance and representation.

Why are we telling you about this? It's a good reminder that you need good record keeping of what time has been spent in the field, what's been turned in for payroll, vacation, sick, as well as what was paid. What would *you* provide in an audit?

This might be a good time to look at electronic field time collection. Our FIT System is a great option and fully integrates with Sage 100 Contractor, as well as being EASY for the field to use with their cell phones. Check it out on **Thursday December 10th at 10:30 Central Time**. - CMW

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

This month's trivia question:

Which of the following is NOT a type of cloud for data storage?

a) Public Cloud b) Private Cloud c) Hybrid Cloud d) Gated Cloud

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: November 20, 2020

Congratulations to last month's Trivia Contest winner, Tim Havlat with **Chicago Electrical Company** in Chicago, IL! Tim's name was drawn from the fishbowl for last month's correctly answered question:

What technology is used to record cryptocurrency transactions?

c) **Blockchain**

Visit www.syscon-inc.com/Trivia for contest rules.