



What's New

Most of us have the end-of-year tasks wrapped up. Time to get the numbers to the CPA and re-focus on our companies. With restaurant restrictions still in place, you might have pulled out the recipe book to create a special Valentine's Day dinner – don't forget the candles.

For our construction clients, you should already be on the latest version of Sage 100 Contractor. For those in our hosted environments, watch for our update to replace your shortcuts; we have an enhanced security version.

Time to get those computer hardware and software projects going before the busy spring arrives. We've heard several predictions that pent up work is coming! - *Catherine Wendt*

In this Issue

Multi-Factor Authentication.....	1
Book Review.....	2
Most Common Passwords.....	3
Shiny New Gadget	3
Drones on Job Sites.....	4
Microsoft 365 Focus.....	5
How Did They Do It?.....	6
Events Calendar	6

February 2021



Multi-Factor Authentication aka MFA

When you log in to your accounting software, bank website, a password tool, your CRM, Facebook, LogMeIn, or an Amazon account, you have a user name and password. From time to time, or when you're on an unfamiliar computer, some of these sites also add some security questions to make sure it's really you. So with all this security, why would anyone need Multi-Factor Authentication? So glad you asked.

Always good to start with a definition. Here's what Wikipedia says:

"Multi-factor authentication is an electronic authentication method in which a computer user is granted access to a website or application only after successfully presenting two or more pieces of evidence to an authentication mechanism: knowledge, possession, and inherence."

Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), also referred to as Two-Factor Authentication

(2FA) comes down to a double-check that you are who you say you are. If your user name and password have been compromised (or shared ☹), this allows for a second confirmation in a different format. There are three (3) formats available, so any combination of two increases the level of security and safety.

Knowledge – This is where the security questions come in. You are asked specific questions in order to show you have the user's knowledge. Unfortunately, hackers troll Facebook and similar sites to 'scrape' this kind of info that many people freely share on these sites; pet names, vacation home sites, things like that. Also, if your credentials were compromised, information such as your father's middle name may already be for sale and associated with your user log on. This one is still helpful, but



Continued pg.2

(continued from page 1)
insufficient all by itself.

Possession – This might take the form of a key fob that has been issued to you. The fob might receive a code that you need to enter. It could be a fob that is scanned at a security door. It could be an app that sends a code or a request straight to your cell phone for approval. It might be a text to your cell phone or a call to a previously approved phone number. In each case, the ‘real’ user has to be in possession of something specific in order to authenticate.

Inherence – Facial recognition on a cell phone has been around for a couple of years. You have to scan your face to unlock the phone. Have you heard of the Clear airport security program? They use a retinal scan to identify it’s you, then walk you to the TSA person to get to the security screening. There are a growing number of computers that use fingerprint identification on laptops or security doors. These are more recent and open up new issues for businesses. One of the concerns is when staff leave the organization. If their company cell phone or company computer requires facial recognition or a finger print, how are you going to gain access to the

equipment? A few take a ways:

- * In the real world, we have to take our skills of filtering sales calls and apply them to email requests. ‘Be cautious as serpents, yet innocent as doves,’ as the saying goes. There’s no room for naiveté or benefit-of-the-doubt. Be suspicious. Delete if unsure. Call the person to get clarity. Never send money anywhere just because you have an email request. Get serious about this!
- * Resign yourself to the MFA/2FA reality – pick your poison when possible. If you have an option to send an authentication request to your phone or a separate key fob, you might choose your phone because you always have it with you (be sure you lock your phone!). If it has to go to an email address, be sure you haven’t shared the password with anyone else and that it’s a strong password. It’s the price of convenience, and it’s a small price to pay to protect your data.

BTW – As we move from our Hosted Exchange email to Microsoft 365, we will roll out MFA. Please keep this article handy. You might even consider sharing it with your team! . – CMW

Cathy & Larry Sightings



Catherine is back on the road and enjoyed some Texas hospitality during a client visit in early January – thanks!

Larry is counting down the days and stepping up the training. His coast-to-coast bicycle ride starts in early March!

‘When you embark on a new adventure, don’t leave any of yourself on the shore.’

- Dick Capen

The 4 Disciplines of Execution by Chris McChesney, Sean Covey, Jim Huling

How many times have you found yourself excited to roll out a new work flow, new module or program, then watched the day-to-day take over and the great change fizzle out? It’s discouraging.

This book hits this scenario head on. It’s human nature and the ‘whirlwind’ of getting work done can’t be ignored. But, they have a plan, too; 4 Disciplines.

One of the things I really liked in reading the 4 Disciplines is its alignment with the Traction 90-day Rock focus. Both books remind us that when



Book Nook

there are several really important goals, the odds are good that you’ll miss them. You need laser focus. The 4 Disciplines walk through identifying the Wildly Important Goal (WIG). Then they introduce not only Lag Measures (the end result), but the importance of Lead Measures – tracking the daily/weekly tasks that, if done, will make success a certainty.

The last Discipline is the weekly check in with the field that’s executing those Lead Measures. This is also in keeping with the Traction method, and the importance of connection and accountability during the execution, not just the end result.

Recommended!- CMW



File Name Lengths

With a growing number of companies moving to SharePoint and OneDrive, we've run into some file name length issues. With a little planning, these problems can be minimized.

The file name length is not just the name of the document. It also includes the various folders under which the file is created. It starts with the letter and name of the location on the drive, then the various folders, all the way to the name of the file.

When setting up SharePoint and OneDrive, keep the folder names concise. Consider how many layers' deep a file needs to be placed, or should there be additional folders created at a higher level.

Then there's the name of the actual document. We ran into a few that read like a long book title rather than a document name. If a folder can be more descriptive, could the document name be shorter? You have 256 characters, which can be plenty with a little planning. — JS/CMW

Most Common Passwords of 2020

Coming up with new passwords can be challenging, especially if you follow our recommendations to change them every 90 days (check out DinoPass.com for fun options). But it's important to take the time to come up with secure passwords. It took less than 1 second to crack 15 of the 20 most common

passwords of 2020. According to NordPass, the top password was used by 2,433,285 people, took less than a second to crack, and was exposed 23,597,311 times.

The common thread among the most common passwords is that easy-to-remember passwords are also easy for strangers to access your account.

Password	Time to Crack
123456	<1 second
123456789	<1 second
picture1	3 hours
password	<1 second
12345678	<1 second

See the rest of the top 20 most common passwords at <https://syscon-inc.com/most-common-passwords-of-2020>. If anything you use is on this list, change it ASAP! 'Good' people aren't the only ones with access to the list, BTW. — BK

Top Exploit—Ransomware

According to ID Agent, the top 3 US breaches to start the year involved Ransomware. The three industries in this report were a Minnesota healthcare system, a short line railway, and a medical laboratory.

In the laboratory event, the data is estimated to include names of patients, dates of birth, test results, some Social Security numbers, and phone numbers. To summarize, this is basically all the info needed to pose as a legitimate person for identify theft, or to open accounts and cards under the persons' names.

What kind of password are you using? Do you share it? How old is it? Is it the same other places? Might be time to make some changes. - CMW

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Dartle Laser Keyboard And Mouse

Interesting: 87% of companies expect their staff to use their personal devices, including smartphones, for work, according to Syntonic. But mobile devices have small keys and no mouse, making them challenging to use. How many typos have you made on your mobile device? 'Tge' instead of 'the' is one of our more frequent errors, for example.

The Dartle Laser Keyboard and Mouse is a battery-powered device about the size of a deck of cards. It connects to mobile devices via Bluetooth to project a full keyboard and mouse that connects with all Android, iOS, and Windows machines.

It takes about two hours to fully recharge its lithium ion battery. It uses a special laser projector system that creates a virtual keyboard and mouse on any flat surface. Turn the Dartle on or off with one button.

Learn more at: dartletype.com.



CONSTRUCTION CORNER



To Delete or Not to Delete – That is the Question

Our answer? Don't delete. We get a lot of resistance to this, so before you move on, here are some alternatives that might just meet your needs.

One of the great features of Sage 100 Contractor is how interactive and connected the information truly is. In a vendor, client, or job, you can drill down to related records; easily pull up total dollars for the length of the relationship; pull a history of your relationship; see details on who and what has hit a job in the past; see how much you paid or were paid historically; and I could go on.

Now, some of those characters are no longer actively involved with the company; you have many similarly named jobs with a specific client; you have a long list of employees and just want to see active ones. You just want to narrow how much data you need to sift through to select what you need – understood!

Here are some options:

- Use the **Inactive feature**. Clients, Vendors, Employees, even Cost Codes can be marked as Inactive, which will take them off the look up lists. If things change, you can edit the Inactive flag and they'll be back on the list. This allows you to keep all the history, no deleting, and still limit what you have to

I don't have to worry.

'The ease of access from my office and field is excellent ... all this functionality and I don't have to worry about IT issues or backups or security. It is a great service, well executed.'

-David Cohen, Vice President,
DMR

sift through.

- Before this 'Inactive' feature was available, we added a bracket in front of inactive clients, jobs, and vendors. This pushed them to the bottom of the look up lists (we look things up alphabetically) which kept our data clean and easy to search through.

When you delete, the Employee number, Cost Code number, Vendor/Client number will display in Job Cost reports, as an example. By using the Interactive or 'adding a symbol' method, we don't lose the specific detail. Now when we look back at job costs, we can see the original players.

'Before you delete, consider using the 'Inactive' flag; and NEVER re-use EE/ Vendor/Client numbers.'

Last thought – don't re-use numbers! These historical records will all of the sudden display with people/vendors/clients who weren't even with you at that time. Any questions, let us know! - CMW

New Year, New Drone Rules

It's a bird. It's a plane. No, it's a drone! Expect to see more drones in the sky, especially flying over construction sites. Drones are the fastest-growing segment of the entire transportation sector, according to the FAA. Of the industries in the U.S., construction is the fastest-growing adopter of drones, according to DroneDeploy.

The FAA recently announced two rules for U.S. drone pilots that require Remote Identification (Remote ID) allowing drone operators to fly at night and over people if certain conditions are met. There are over 1.7 million registered drones and 203,000 FAA-certified remote pilots in the U.S., according to

the FAA. Drone use on construction job sites is said to have increased 239% from 2017 to 2018.

Remote ID identifies drones in flight and the location of their control stations, which reduces the risk of drones interfering with other aircraft and people/property on the ground. This is a 'major step' towards fully integrating drones into the national airspace system. This system is meant to address safety, security, and privacy concerns.

Remote ID overrides the FAA regulations that previously required a drone operator to get a Part 107 waiver to fly over people and at night. Drone operators must meet several conditions to fly at night or over people – these conditions relate to drone size, not injuring persons or property, and pilot training. - BK

Audit Errors – Data Fixes

With our 25+ years of Sage 100 Contractor work, and amazing programmers on staff, we are uniquely equipped to fix audit errors. And because we're 'small' compared to Sage, we can minimize down time while doing it.

Congrats to Larry for helping a fellow Consultant with a Payroll Close failure that no one could resolve – but Larry! Knowledge, Experience, great Tools!



Joke of the Month

What do construction workers do at parties?

They raise the roof.

M365 Education Station

Exchange or M365?

The good news is that if you're using Outlook running on an Exchange server, moving to Microsoft 365 is very similar—it's Outlook, too! So why make the move? What's the difference? Glad you asked.

1. Control

With Exchange, the server and software are under your control. This also means you're responsible to maintain the hardware, backup the data, purchase and install upgrades, and purchase licenses as needed. When using M365, Microsoft has all the servers, controls the upgrades, and maintains the equipment. Your monthly license level covers the current version and product licensing. You still need third-party backups, though.

2. Access

In both products, you have access from both computers, cell phones, and through an internet browser with Outlook Web Access (OWA).

3. Software

With Exchange, you purchase the server and its license, then you purchase Exchange and the user calls. You are also responsible to purchase upgraded software. With M365, the software is subscription-based; that means a recurring

monthly fee. That's a lot less up-front costs, but means you have a monthly cost. With the subscription, you can turn off licenses that are no longer needed, where with Exchange, you cannot return a license.

4. Data

With Exchange, the size of your data is limited to the hardware. If more space is needed, there is a capital investment to add that space and back it up. With M365, there are some generous size limits based on the subscription level. Additional space is an increase to the monthly fee. Less up-front costs under the subscription model.

5. Product Road Map

This one is interesting; Microsoft has put a lot of R&D money into the 365 products. They have not been putting money or enhancements into Exchange. Given the many companies running Exchange, I don't think they'll shut it down, but it's getting harder and harder to meet customer/user expectations with Exchange.

For some of our clients, maintaining control is the top priority. For others, it's features and user needs. Once you know which direction is best for you, we can help make it happen!



Tip of the Month

Did you know?

You can schedule your email to Send at a specific date and time. From the web Outlook app, compose your email. Then, click the drop-down arrow in the blue Send box in the lower left-hand corner of your email. Click the 'Send Later' option and select your preferred date and time. You can do this from the desktop (Options>Delay Delivery), but you'll need to be logged in at the scheduled delivery time.

On Premise vs. Cloud



Microsoft

Partner

How Did They Do It? Alpine Demolition

Karsten Pawlik, vice president of Alpine Demolition, happened to drive past the charred remains of the Masonic Temple that caught fire the night before. The five-story temple was in a residential area and was so structurally unsound that nearby residents were evacuated as a safety precaution. Fortunately, the collateral damage was limited to one crushed vehicle. Karsten stopped at the site and handed the fire chief his business card and headed to the office. Alpine Demolition was uniquely poised to bid for the job because they had been inside the Masonic Temple five years ago and knew where the asbestos was. Also, they could start the job the next day. They won the bid and were able to remove the unsafe parts of the 97-year-old temple.

Although every situation is unique, many of their jobs are in the same vein as the temple demolition. Alpine is known for their rapid response. Karsten attributes their success to hard work, determination, hiring the right people, and staying ahead of technology.

Alpine has worked in the Syscon cloud since December 2014. Karsten said the cloud helps keep the office connected while some work in the field. They also use Sage 100 Contractor, which he said helped keep their jobs on budget and helps Alpine to be a better company.
-BK



Karsten Pawlik,
Vice President

Fast Facts

Location: Aurora, IL
Specialty: Demolition
Founded: 2002
Professional Affiliations: Association of Subcontractors and Affiliates of Chicago, Fox Valley Contractors, Chicagoland Associated General Contractors, National Demolition Association, National Safety Council, IL Mechanical & Specialty Contractors Association
Other: 100% woman-owned

[Read more at www.syscon-inc.com/how-did-they-do-it](http://www.syscon-inc.com/how-did-they-do-it)

7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Upcoming Events						
14						

Event: How & Why to Replace Paper Timesheets with Mobile Devices, Webinar

Date: Thursday, Feb. 11

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events

Event: Teams 101, Webinar

Date: Thursday, Feb. 25

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events

Follow us on social media!



Syscon Inc.



@syscon_inc

Proud Members



Proud Partners



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

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

