



## What's New

For many of us, we change our clocks on Sunday, March 14th. Spring ahead (Fall back), so we'll lose an hour. Good news: the days are getting longer. And, for the Irish folks, or those who like green beer, it's St. Patrick's day this month, too!

Many of you know that Larry is filling a bucket list item and riding his very nice bike from the Pacific to the Atlantic ocean, the southern route. This trip starts in mid-March and goes through early May. We're posting highlights and pictures on our special web page, [syscon-inc.com/coast-to-coast-ride](https://www.syscon-inc.com/coast-to-coast-ride). Check it out!

Keep an eye out for those early bulb flowers that I'm sure are on their way! - *Catherine Wendt*

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**March 2021**



## SECURITY: Adding and Removing Staff

Many years ago, we realized we needed a checklist for all incoming and departing employees. There are so many things to consider on both sides of the relationship, so these checklists have been invaluable! How about you? Do you have a checklist to on board new staff? Next question – do you have a checklist to off board?

When bringing on a new employee, they may need specific company procedures; a network or hosted server log on with specific document rights; a login to your accounting software with a specific security group or access limitation; a company-issued cell phone; a company computer; access to certain software programs, some of which might be in the cloud; a name badge; specific tools for their role (we have a tech 'trunk' bag with all kinds of testing equipment); they'll need their email setup, and maybe access to

other calendars; maybe they need a company credit card; maybe you provide a company vehicle; they have to be setup in payroll with wage info, marital status, and all the right forms; when in the office, where will they sit?

Most people would agree that it takes a lot of effort to bring a new employee on board, a lot of planning. So how much thought do you give to a departing employee? If they're on their way out, just grab their gear and move on, right? Not so fast; we'd like you to consider a couple of other things, specifically as they relate to critical software, network access, document access, and licensing.

Where to start? Well, let's start with one of the most common questions we hear, which is one of the biggest risks to the security of your data. When an employee departs, did you contact the IT company and let them know?

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At a minimum, their password should be changed right away so they don't have access to log into the network or the hosted server. Depending on their role in the company, it may even warrant a lock down across the network.

Their email password should be changed and the account should either be forwarded to someone else (hosted Exchange), or changed to a shared mailbox to retain access and free up the M365 license. If you're using M365 OneDrive and/or SharePoint, you'll definitely want to contact the IT group and make arrangements to limit OneDrive access and to turn off SharePoint access on any computers they may be using at home. You may have collected their company computer, or the one they used in the office, but if they worked remotely, they may have installed M365 on a home computer or laptop. If that's the case, they can log in unless you've changed the password and made a few changes.

Many accounting project management software packages and CRM (Customer Relationship Management) software use Windows authentication. That means that if the user's network logon and password gets them on the server, they can then launch the software. In addition

to changing their network password or removing their account, you'll want to remove them or change security in your accounting software or CRM.

You might have other software packages that are web-based. This might be a phone system (VoIP), a bank site, a scheduling or project management program (ProCore, for example). Do you have a list of what software you setup for them? If you do, take out that list and change passwords, update access, or remove users. If your vendors charge by user counts, you'll definitely want to reach out to them. Sometimes all you can do is free up a license because you've committed to a certain number of licenses for a period of time or the licenses were part of a purchase; other times you can make adjustments to actual users which are billed month-to-month.

For those of you who have IT services with us, please be sure to call us when an employee departs. At a minimum, passwords and access should be changed. There are a number of services that are based on user counts including hosted Exchange, M365, Office, anti-virus, remote access (RDP), and the FIT System. If you don't already have it, create that departure list so you're ready with critical changes. — CMW

## Cathy & Larry Sightings



Catherine is working through the Darren Hardy series, Hero's Journey, a weekly training all year long.

Larry is counting down the days and stepping up the training. His coast-to-coast bicycle ride starts in early March! Follow him on our special webpage.

*'Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.'*

- Anne Lamott

### *Conscious Capitalism by John Mackey and Raj Sisodia*

I love the opening – a young man, living in a commune, believing business is the enemy. Seeking to change the world, John Mackey and his friend decide to open a store focused on healthy food and a higher purpose.

Then they found themselves in a difficult spot. As the business started taking shape, they were now the 'enemy' trying to work out vendors, employees, financing, and keeping the business open.

There's a great story of a flood that decimated their first store, and how the community



## Book Nook

rallied around, fortifying them to keep going, and ultimately becoming Whole Foods as we know it today.

Profit for profit's sake is still the 'enemy,' but that's not really how most businesses work. The book moves on to talk about the different business models and what the Conscious Capitalism model means, and how it can benefit our staff, our customers, our environment, and future generations.

It's nice to hear someone walk through their journey and how the 'big bad business' accusation can be left behind if we all help share the story. - CMW



## Several Updates Just for You

**Microsoft Edge** – The legacy software, the one with the blue-only icon, is end of support March 21st. If you use this product, be sure you're using the blue/green logo version. It's a small nuance, but worth checking out or you're going to have quite a surprise this month.

**Hot Spots, Printing** – Many of our clients started using their phone Hot Spots for internet access last Spring. Very handy, and I use it, too. But, printing this way just isn't going to work. If you have to print, get plugged in for the best result, Wi-Fi is second, but don't bother over a hot spot.

**Microsoft Project** – If you purchased MS Project outright in the past, it is no longer supported. It's only available through a monthly subscription and that's the only version they'll support.

**Solarwinds, in the news** – You may have heard of the very serious data breaches for some big companies and the US Government associated with the Orion software, which is owned by Solarwinds. You may also recognize the name because we use several products that are under the Solarwinds umbrella. We've been on multiple calls with Solarwinds as they keep us (their partner) up-to-date, so we thought we'd share some details.

We do not use the Orion software at all. Our N-Central software, which is part of our monitoring, anti-virus, and patch management, was purchased by Solarwinds several years ago, but is a

completely separate product. The cloud-to-cloud backups for M/O365 accounts and the local backups are also a separate product, not related to the Orion software.

Solarwinds is making many changes due to the breach, which we definitely applaud. They'll apply these lessons to all of their software offerings. In the meantime, none of our clients were ever exposed to this event; all is well. -CMW

## COVID & Cybercrime

Cybercrime reports increased 300% during the pandemic, according to the FBI Cyber Division. Pre-COVID-19, the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) received about 1,000 complaints per day. After COVID hit, IC3 receives 3,000 to 4,000 daily, according to FBI Cyber Division Deputy Assistant Director Tonya Ugoretz.

Ugoretz described a 'collision' between an increase in cyber criminals and an increase in the number of opportunities to exploit users. These are the 8 ways cybercriminals are looking to take advantage of the unwary during the pandemic:

1. Impersonating major organizations for phishing campaigns
2. Fake COVID test results for smishing (text message phishing) or vishing campaigns (voice/phone phishing)
3. Free PPE scams
4. Antibody test scam
5. COVID stimulus payment scams
6. Fake contact tracers
7. Targeting children who are learning from home
8. COVID vaccine to scams

Cybercriminals are 'quite creative,' Ugoretz warned. Cybercriminals' efforts include creating legitimate-looking Internet domains, fake COVID charities, fraudulent loans, and extortion. Children educating from home are targeted with educational materials that are actually malware. - BK

## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



### Lightsaber Umbrella

In honor of National Umbrella Month (March) and upcoming April showers, we've selected a gadget that protects against the rain *and* Sith lords.

The LED Saber Umbrella has a 40 inch handle and is 32 inches wide – large enough to shelter any Jedi-in-training or Jedi master.

Be like Luke Skywalker and wield a blue lightsaber umbrella. Or be like Darth Vader and wield a red saber umbrella. Want to stay neutral? There's a transparent saber option as well if you don't want to declare for either side of the Force.

The saber umbrella comes in one size and is built to withstand high winds. This is the umbrella you are looking for!

Learn more at: <https://broadwaytrending.com/products/led-saber-umbrella?variant=32110364721285>



# CONSTRUCTION CORNER



## Workers Comp – How to Calculate

In the last two months, I've received several calls on this one, so I thought there might be others out there with similar questions.

The overall idea is that you estimate your total gross payroll, by comp code, for the coming year for the insurance renewal. Based on your estimates, you get a quote and a payment schedule. Now, as the year actually gets underway, you want to track the total estimated premiums compared to the actual payroll. And, as you're paying your team, you want the job-specific costs to include this insurance cost when each week's payroll is posted. The goal is to track premiums paid compared to the actual payroll to see if you're over paid and getting a refund, under paid and you'll owe, or right on target.

Let's start with the rates – the policy renewals show the 'retail' posted rate by comp code, per \$100 paid, with the estimated premium by category (estimated payroll times rate divided by 100). There's usually a subtotal, but it's kind of like the MSRP when you buy a car – it's not the price you're going to pay. Then there are usually a dozen or so lines with various other charges and credits followed by the premium you'll actually pay. The difference between the original total and the final premium is the discount they are applying. You can

### Syscon was the right choice.

*'We were attacked by the Cryptolocker virus ... Syscon was our new IT support team and brought experience, knowledge, and good news. Moving to the hosting environment with Syscon was the right choice for us.'*

-Sharon Orr, Vice President,  
Finance & Administration, Notch

either ask your insurance agent for the net rate per \$100 paid by comp code, or calculate the discount and apply it to each of the rates.

With your net rates ready, move to the Workers Comp (WC) table, the 5-3-2 screen. The pay calc looks at this table to get the rates when computing payroll based on the comp code in the payroll record (5-2-2). We recommend using the actual comp code number and description. If you have the same comp code in multiple states, add a leading digit(s) to distinguish them since these codes have to be unique; no duplicates. Add the state abbreviation and enter the net rate.

*'You want to track the estimated premiums compared to the actual payroll, by comp code.'*

Whether you pay your premiums monthly, in 9 installments, or 11 installments, all premium payments are posted to the balance sheet. The WC pay calc (5-2-1 screen) has a designated credit account. It's either a PrePaid insurance account dedicated to Workers Comp (or with a separate Workers Comp subaccount), or it's a liability account. Whatever account number is in the Credit field of the pay calc, that's where the premiums are posted.

So what about OCIP/CCIP jobs? Create a separate WC code for these, maybe 9999. For qualifying jobs, use the special comp code with no rate, since the owner or GC will be paying those premiums. This allows the total wages by job to be ready for your yearly audit, and the job will not be charged the expense. The rate field is left blank for this one.

When the insurance year comes to an end, you may owe, or you may have a credit. Make these payments, or receive the refund to the very same balance

sheet account. Your jobs will be correctly burdened, and you'll take the swings out of the Income statement; what a deal!! - CMW

## Credit Card Module

Some of our clients use this module. It's a great tool to track the actual Vendor and the history, rather than everything coming up under the credit card vendor name. You can still choose the expense account and even job cost. If you're not using this module yet, but you're interested, there are a few things to consider to get things started, just like any accounting-related start-up entries, so let's talk.

For those of you using this module, we have a few tips to share based on the most common questions we receive. Reconciling transactions in this module is a lot like the bank reconciliation guidelines:

- 1) When you're reconciling the statement, don't hit Final Save until the balance in S100C matches the statement.
- 2) When you void a credit card payment, the AP record is now open and ready to repay (just like voiding a check). If that's not the plan, you need to take extra steps to void or reverse the AP record.

Not sure? Try it in Sample Company, or make a copy of your dataset and try it in there. It's worth the effort and might make your life easier! - MZ/CMW



**Joke of the Month**  
Which country is the best in construction?

*U-crane.*

# M365 Education Station

## Office: What's Changed?

For as long as I can remember, when you ordered a computer, you purchased Office. Everyone needs this basic tool kit, which includes Word, Excel, Power Point, and so on. Then, Microsoft would come out with new releases every few years and one of the older years' versions would be 'end of life' and no longer supported. Most updates were backwards compatible. Then people would start sending attachments created with the latest Office version and you'd eventually give in and purchase the latest version of Office and install it. Sound familiar?

Microsoft 365 has changed how all of this works, and I would say that the changes are for the better!

First, Office is available as a subscription. Yes, that means a monthly recurring charge, but there are quite a few perks:

- With your license, you can install Office on up to 5 of your

personal devices. That means the one subscription will cover your desktop, laptop, and even your tablet. You're already saving money!

- You can access Office through the web at Office.com. If you're on someone else's computer, go to a web browser and log in.
- Turn off subscriptions when your staff size shrinks. You're not stuck having purchased Office licenses that no one is using.
- Need to scale up? Add monthly subscriptions. It's a lot less cash outlay to add a couple of licenses than buying Office.

Add OneDrive, and even changing computers will be less painful. Office subscriptions are available 'a la carte' or in M365 packages. We recommend looking at the Business Standard or Business Premium package to get the biggest bang for your buck!



## Tip of the Month

### Did you know?

Whether you only use 365 for email, or you use OneDrive, or SharePoint, **you need backups!** Microsoft can recover your documents if MS goes 'down,' but you can't call them up for the Excel doc you accidentally deleted two months ago, the Word document that's now corrupted, or that critical email you deleted. You need backups!

**March 31st is World Backup Day.** Sounds like a perfect time to setup M365 backups! We have a great, cost-effective option. Call us!

## Great News: 1 license, up to 5 devices!



Microsoft

Partner

## How Did They Do It? Capitol Region Watershed District

Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) grew from a single staff member to a group of 25 employees in just over 20 years. Its mission is to protect, manage, and improve water resources of the district. This work includes projects that collect, filter, and in some cases, reuse polluted rainwater, before it flows from city streets into storm drains and the Mississippi River. CRWD's clean water projects vary in size and location from stadiums to transit corridors to the yards of district residents.

CRWD's work has grown in its complexity and the district quickly realized the need for a more sophisticated system like Sage 100 Contractor. The district began using Sage with

Syscon's support in 2016 to create efficiencies for contracting, invoicing, payroll, and reporting. As a local unit of government, CRWD is committed to being a good steward of the tax dollars they receive and a big part of that is creating systems that are transparent, efficient, and allow staff to access the most up-to-date information when managing its many programs and projects. -BK



Michelle Sylvander,  
Office Manager

### Fast Facts

**Location:** St. Paul, MN  
**Specialty:** Protect, manage, and improve water resources  
**Founded:** 1998



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

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<b>Upcoming Events</b>						
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**Event:** How & Why to Replace Paper Timesheets with Mobile Devices; Webinar

**Date:** Thursday, March 25

**Time:** 1 p.m. CST

**Register:** [www.syscon-inc.com/events](http://www.syscon-inc.com/events)



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