



What's New

The days are getting longer, the trees are full of beautiful white flowers, and many of our clients are busier than they've ever been! Then we have Mother's Day and Memorial Day to look forward to; bring out the grill!

By the time you read this, Larry's big adventure will have wrapped up in FL. We have some fun pictures and blogs on our special web page, syscon-inc.com/coast-to-coast-ride. Hope you enjoyed this 53-day adventure.

We've had quite a few of our articles published in the local Business Ledger newspaper, the online Top Sage Resellers blog, and through the TUG newsletter. Check them out! - *Catherine Wendt*

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May 2021



So You're Moving Your Server and Data to the Cloud...

Last month we took a look at when it's time to replace or move your local server. If you've had 5+ years with your on premise server, you have been blessed! We walked through the pro's and con's of replacing existing infrastructure and the responsibilities. In prior years, the decision to make the capital investment to replace network and server equipment, or to move to a hosted solution, was driven by costs and emotional comfort; that's changed.

In the last year, businesses have had to factor in the need for remote access, which may be new for companies with a local on premise server. Providing remote access while locking down a local network is not for the faint of heart! The need for remote access might push the scales on the side of hosting. But if you've never had your equipment hosted before, or you've had a bad experience with hosting, you

might be skittish. Let's dig in and see if we can shed some light so you can make a good decision.

Move to Hosting; Server and/or Exchange— What if you don't want the expense and responsibility of maintaining a local server? About 10 years ago, a growing number of companies had remote Project Managers, so they started moving their data and accounting software to hosted servers for remote access. They were uniquely positioned last March when the world went crazy and everyone had to work remotely. Now the question of hosting data and critical software may be back on the table. There are a couple of facets to consider, so let's start with shared files.

File Shares and Email— Microsoft 365 is a game-changer when it comes to making Office documents like Word

Continued pg.2

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and Excel available without having to log into the server. There are two categories for file shares; OneDrive, which acts like My Documents on your local machine, and SharePoint which is designed to allow documents to be available to multiple people, and even allows for 'live' collaboration. All of the MS Business packages include Email, OneDrive, and SharePoint, as well as Teams.

OneDrive is like a user's individual file folder, just for them. That was the G: drive at Syscon. On my laptop, it's My Documents. With OneDrive, you can access these individual documents under your Microsoft account. So when I had to change laptops, I logged in with my credentials and all of My Documents were available to me. No more copying and moving things around and keeping track of what I changed!

SharePoint is for shared files. On a server, you probably have different drive letter names with security for different types of data. SharePoint is similar in that you have a file structure and can apply security. What's different is how it's accessed. Rather than logging into the Terminal Server, you can see the file folders right from your computer and access them from anywhere. When we are working together on the same docu-

ment, we can actually see each other's changes rather than sending copies or sharing screens. Moving file shares to SharePoint takes some planning, and you'll be very glad you did it.

When it comes to email, M365 is pretty straight-forward. You're using Outlook, so it's familiar to all. The email history has to be migrated and there are some excellent tools to get this done. Access from your cell phone, computer, laptop, or a web browser is available.

Before we move on to critical software, we have to talk about backups. All of this data needs to be backed up by a third party product. You backup your data and email now, and you'll keep backing it up after you move it to the cloud. You've got to have backups!

Hosting Critical Software—Now what about your critical business software? Some products are now available through a web browser such as Salesforce, a CRM tool. Not all software runs in the cloud. Some applications need to run on a server. So if you move your file shares to the Microsoft solutions and want to turn off your server, what do you do about the installed software that still needs a home? That's where hosting comes in.

Cathy & Larry Sightings



Catherine and the Leadership team had their quarterly Traction event.

Larry should be in FL wrapping things up!

There are LOTS of hosting solutions out there. Like any other business choice, you'll need to do your homework, get referrals, and ask good questions about what is and is not included.

It has to be a company you trust with a good track record. Things you'll need to know; What support is included? Who installs software upgrades? Are backups included? Do they host others with the same software you need, successfully? What kind of printing is available? Can you bring your own Microsoft licenses? What security is in place? What about adding/removing users?

There are many things to consider and you're not an IT expert. Be sure to involve a trusted IT professional as you evaluate your choices. Even when you've moved data to the cloud, your local firewall, etc., need support. Read our full article on our website! - CMW

Fewer, Richer, Greener by Laurence Siegel

Our earth has problems and we haven't been the best of stewards all the time. We've made progress in taking care of our earth and its resources, but there's more to do, pressing problems that need attention and solutions.

Having said that, we have a lot to be thankful for. The improvements across the globe to food, health, and quality of life in recent decades is staggering. In this book, the charts, graphs, and comparisons to previous generations are a testament to our accomplishments.



Book Nook

The author makes it clear that we are not 'done,' but we are not horrible. We have technologies and brain power as never before that we can use to address our current problems. The book heralds our amazing accomplishments while balancing, with hope, the places that most need our attention right away.

The research and depth of information is a testament to those who present solid facts from many sources and angles. 'Let us ask our children to respect the past and embrace the future, not with fear, but the courage and the desire to right what might be wrong with it.' Recommended! - CMW



Cyber Security Attack Updates

Facebook

Over 533 million Facebook users' personal data was leaked online. Exposed data includes phone numbers, Facebook IDs, full names, locations, birthdates, bios, and email addresses. Over 32 million of the leaked Facebook data were from U.S. accounts. The data was scraped due to a vulnerability that Facebook patched in 2019.

Hobby Lobby

Hobby Lobby misconfigured its Amazon Web Services cloud database that exposed sensitive customer information. Exposed information includes names, partial payment card details, phone numbers, physical and email addresses, source code for the company's app, and employee names and email addresses. An estimated 300,000 customers were impacted. Hobby Lobby has secured the information so it is no longer publicly available, but it is unknown if any hackers took sensitive information before Hobby Lobby secured it. — *ID Agent*

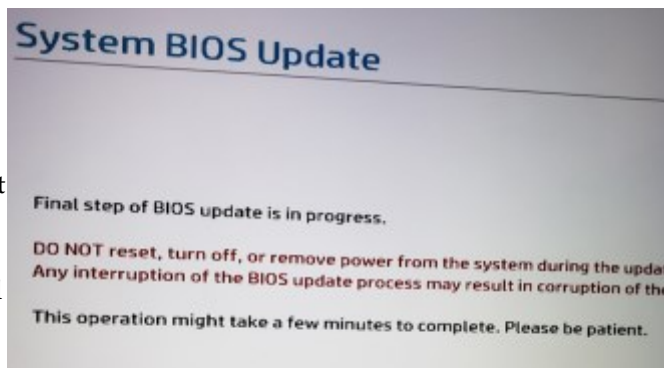
Automated Patch Management

Some clients have taken our advice and are using this service, but may not fully understand what it does or how it works. Others are considering the service, especially since some states are still not heading back to the office or allowing onsite tech visits. So what is this and how does it work?

There are two types of patches – Microsoft patches, often related to security, and third-party patches for other popular software such as Adobe and Java. Microsoft releases patches weekly. Some of these are security related, so getting them out to the endpoints (computers) is a top priority. Others are less security-focused. In both cases, our techs review these updates, confirm they're stable (not causing other problems), and release them to the computers. Some security patches are pushed regardless of the stability risk because they address a significant threat. Third-party patches are less frequent and we follow the same guidelines.

When the patches are released, they are downloaded to the network computer with our probe, then shared to all computers, or downloaded directly over the internet, queued up and ready to install. Many of these updates install in the background, no impact to the users. In some instances, a reboot is required, so on Friday late-afternoons, you'll get a message and a count down to the auto-restart to finish the installation.

So here's the most important part – the techs want to remind you to LET THE UPDATES RUN, PLEASE! We know



these aren't convenient, but they are important. There are some recent BIOS updates that are very important but take longer to install. Please let them install, let them run, do not turn off your computer until they finish. Any questions, just let us know. Thanks in advance for your help as we work to keep your computers safe! - *CMW*

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



UV-C Light Disinfecting Foldable Wand

This wand won't help you do magic, but it *will* disinfect surfaces.

The UV-C Light Disinfecting Foldable Wand requires four (4) AAA batteries to work and comes with a micro-USB charging cable.

To disinfect a surface, hold the wand 0.5 to 2 inches away from the surface and then hover above the surface for 10 to 25 seconds. UV-C light damages the DNA structures of harmful pathogens. UV-C light kills up to 99% of germs, bacteria, and other harmful pathogens, according to The Grommet.

The wand is built with a sensor that automatically shuts off when the wand is tilted more than 90 degrees to the right or left, or when it is folded at a 45-degree angle. The wand folds to half its size.

This item is not for disinfecting people, pets, or plants. Do not look into the UV light directly. Learn more at: <https://www.thegrommet.com/products/globe-electric-uv-c-light-disinfecting-foldable-wand>



CONSTRUCTION CORNER



T&M Billing

The T&M Billing module in Sage 100 Contractor is really nice. This takes job cost records and allows you to apply specific rules, by job, to generate detailed T&M invoices. This can be a great time-saver while making the invoices accurate, matching the terms of your contract.

Before I share a few details, I wanted to ‘clear the air’ on when you can use this module. On a recent client call, they had previously been told that if any costs hit a job before the T&M tables were setup, they could not use this module. That is completely false! As long as there are job costs records, you can use this module.

So how does it work? There are a couple of options, making it very flexible, job by job, to match your contract terms. In the T&M Setup screen (3-10-1), there are categories by Cost Type – Material, Labor, Equipment, Subcontract, and Other. In any combination, you can enter the markup, and you can indicate if it will be detailed on the bill or ‘hidden’ as part of the cost item. You might mark up materials by 10%, then add 5% Overhead and 5% Profit. On the same job, Subcontract costs might not have a markup, but you can add Overhead and Profit; and so on.

There are so many ways to bill Labor on a T&M job, and this module gives you a lot of flexibility. All Labor can be

marked up by a specific percentage, then add Overhead and Profit. In most contracts, it’s a specific rate based on the person’s position. There might be an agreed rate for Foremen, for Journeymen, and for Supervision. The table allows you to setup the rate per hour (and be specific about overtime), by Cost Code. As an alternative, you can indicate a specific rate by person; very

‘Once you have this nailed down, you’ll wonder how you did T&M billing before!’

flexible. One job can be by cost code while another can be setup with a rate by person. You can even set a minimum number of hours.

Equipment has its own Rate table if you need more details than cost-plus. The table can be created by Equipment Type, or for specific pieces of equipment. Enter the rate based on Operated, Standby, and Idle. This also has an option for minimum hours.

Once you have the table setup and some costs on the job, you can run the Compute process through a specific date and take a look at the results. There are quite a few report options – include hours, by cost code, by cost type, and many combinations. If there are costs that are not to be billed, these can be flagged as Not Billable, then re-compute to see the results.

Print (we recommend keeping an electronic image), then post. The billing is now available in accounting and the cost record statuses are automatically updated to Billed.

Warning: Rolling out this module for the first time takes some planning. We recommend making a copy of your data and practicing. We also recommend

some training. Once you have this nailed down, you’ll wonder how you did T&M billing before! - CMW

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.” —Anne Lamott

Aatrix – Two Ways to Use

During a recent client call, I mentioned that I had generated the Aatrix reports for the quarter but hadn’t filed them yet. The person I was talking with was confused. How could I generate the reports through Aatrix and not file?

Turns out that their only experience was to use the Aatrix service, which has fees associated with it, to generate and file their quarterly reports. That service is very nice and can be a time-saver. BUT, if you have Sage 100 Contractor and run payroll, you can generate the Aatrix reports (FREE) and NOT use the additional Aatrix services. You’ll still see their prompts, their marketing, but just choose ‘Print’ to get the official tax reports you need. Any questions, let us know! - CMW

Very easy to deal with.

‘Syscon would be a great option if you want someone to help you write reports, or need support in general for your software. They are very, very knowledgeable and support many companies using Sage 100 Contractor. Very easy to deal with.’

-Carolyn Brister, Controller, Momentum Mechanical, Inc.



Joke of the Month

What type of construction are dogs good at?

Roofing.

M365 Education Station

10 Things to Do in SharePoint

1. Upload Files to SharePoint

From Office.com, you can drag files from your computer into your document library. You can also upload files or folders from SharePoint.

2. Open a Document

If your computer is sync'd with SharePoint, open documents in various folders through the 'tree' as usual.

3. Work on the Same Document with Others at the Same Time

Open the document you want to work on. The initials of each person in the document will be at the top right of the document.

4. Share Documents

From Office.com, select the document you want to share, click the ellipses (...) to Share or download.

5. Share Sites

If you have site owner permissions, click SharePoint or Sites, then choose the site you want to share, and click Share.

6. Create a Team Site

A team site is a group of related web pages, a document library for files, and lists for data management. Log into SharePoint. Click +Create site and select Team site.

7. Add a List or Library to Team Site

From your Team SharePoint site, pick New and then pick List or Library from the list.

8. Keep Prior Versions of a Document While You Revise It

In SharePoint, right-click to open a document and click Version History.

9. Search for Something

Type a search keyword in the Search box, then click the Search icon. The Search feature at Office.com or through Teams is very robust!

10. Share Information with Your Entire Organization

Select +Create news post and share your news.



Tip of the Month

Did you know?

A document library is a secure place to store files where you and your co-workers can find them. SharePoint is Microsoft's secure document library that you can access from any Internet connection, provided you have active credentials. This replaces logging into the server to see file shares (see page 1 and 2!).

You can use a desktop, laptop, tablet, or smartphone!

Rather than emailing a file, you can send them a link and include security restrictions using SharePoint through Office.com!



Simple sharing & seamless collaboration

Share files, data, news, and resources. Collaborate effortlessly and securely with team members inside and outside your organization, across PCs, Macs, and mobile devices.



Engage & inform your organization

Drive organizational efficiency by sharing common resources and applications on home sites and portals.



Harness collective knowledge

You're just a click away from what you are looking for, with powerful search and intelligent ways to discover information, expertise, and insights to inform decisions and guide action.



Transform business processes

Accelerate productivity by transforming processes—from simple tasks like notifications and approvals to complex operational workflows. With SharePoint lists and libraries, Microsoft Flow, and PowerApps, you can create rich digital experiences with forms, workflows, and custom apps for every device.



How Did They Do It? Flooring Solutions

For Diane, happily ever after is running a commercial flooring company with her husband Joe. He came from the flooring industry and she was a commercial designer. Their formula for success hinges on three main ingredients: providing a level of service their competition finds difficult to replicate; having the grit necessary to successfully navigate difficult times like recessions and the pandemic; and maintaining supportive relationships with their teammates.

One memorable job was replacing flooring for a bank that was unable to shut down. In addition to working around the bank's operating hours, they had to be careful about gluing materials and mindful of chemical odors permeating the environment. In the end, Flooring Solutions was able to complete the project while meeting the bank's needs.

Syscon has been able to meet Flooring Solutions' needs. Diane and Joe said they are very grateful for the



Diane and Joe Sabers,
Co-owners

relationship they've had with Syscon.

They migrated from Quickbooks and manually calculating proposals to using Sage. Backups used to be stored on physical tape drives—they are now backing up in the cloud. These updates brought measurable time saving efficiencies. Happily ever after keeps getting happier! -BK

Fast Facts

Location: Oak Brook, IL
Specialty: Commercial Flooring
Founded: 1997

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

Are you interested in having your story featured? Let's talk!

Upcoming Events

Event: Updating Union Paygroups in Sage 100C Webinar,

Date: Thursday, May 13

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events

Event: Ditch the Old Server, Webinar

Date: Thursday, May 20

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events



Featured Articles

Business Ledger newspaper:
Over/Under billing article

TUG membership magazine:
Over/Under billing article

CFMA member forum, Café
Connection: Multi-Factor
Authentication



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.

