



What's New

Many of the lingering States are in the final re-opening phases—no masks! The airplanes are full; the restaurants have a wait list; many families are planning weddings and other family celebrations together this summer!

On the other side of the coin, the onslaught of phishing email scams is just out of control! Many say that your password is expired (which is not true); others are asking you to click on links so you can bid on upcoming work. **Don't Be Fooled!**

Several of you have sent some kind words about our services, even naming specific Syscon team members. It is so encouraging! We are sharing these internally—thank you!

- Catherine Wendt



Dropbox, Zoom, Slack – Alternatives and Why You Should Consider Them

Many of our clients have been using a combination of services to meet their needs. The most common data need we hear about is sharing documents with field crew leaders, Project Managers working remotely, and pulling up documents when on the job site. To meet these needs, companies have subscribed to Zoom for remote meetings, to Dropbox for shared data, Slack to have on-demand chat features, and email to send copies so others can see, make changes, and send new versions back with edits.

Usually they start out with the 'free' version of these products. In some cases, these are personal accounts just to move things along and meet the need of the moment. Before long, others in the company are using these accounts, sharing logon credentials,

often with no security or backups. Then the accounts become a necessary part of doing business (not just to meet an immediate need) and you have to upgrade to the paid versions; completely understandable.

By this point in time, there are a couple of things that are out of control and **need attention. Let's start with the personal accounts. If your data is under someone's personal account (or several people are using their personal accounts), and it's your company data, you do not have any control. In fact, you're at risk if their work relationship with you changes. You're also at risk if that data is compromised in any way (accidentally deleted, corrupted, or even encrypted by hackers).**

Many of the shared accounts such as

Continued pg.2

In this Issue

Dropbox, Zoom, Slack.....	1
Book Review.....	2
M365 Archives and Backups....	3
Shiny New Gadget	3
Run the Tune Up!.....	4
Microsoft 365 Focus.....	5
How Did They Do It?.....	6
Events Calendar	6

July 2021

(continued from page 1)

Dropbox have some security setup issues. If someone is using a personal Dropbox account with your company **data, you don't have control and it may or may not be password protected. It probably isn't backed up, either.**

Let's stay with Dropbox for a few minutes. Is there one logon and password that everyone shares? Then you have NO security; everyone can see everything; anyone can change the password; you will have conflicts if multiple people need to be on at the same time.

If you have a business account with **Dropbox, that's a good step in the right direction;** we have a few questions for you. When was the last time you updated the Administrator password? If you have a password, is it a strong one and has it ever been shared with others? When was the last time you reviewed the access policies on the file folders? When documents are shared with others outside your organization, what safeguards do you have in place?

Now let's talk about money. If you pay for Zoom, Dropbox, and maybe Slack, what are some options to save some money? Let's start with email.

If you have M365 email, your subscrip-

tion dollars already include some tools that are awesome and can replace some **things we've listed above. For instance,** instead of paying for Zoom, even the M365 Basic license has Teams. Through Teams, you have the ability to have meetings with one or more people in your organization, and even invite outsiders as guests; no more Zoom. Also with Teams, you can Chat with anyone in your organization at any time. You can even design various Teams so your Chat sessions are with a small group, a whole team, or just one-on-one; no more Slack.

One more savings—M365, even the Basic license level, includes OneDrive and SharePoint; no more Dropbox! **OneDrive is similar to the local 'My Documents' you have on your computer (or a user drive on a network). The documents in OneDrive are 'mine' and I can choose to share if I wish. If you've added our third party backup to your Microsoft license (and you need to do this), those OneDrive files are included in the backup, too! What about sharing documents? Implement SharePoint along with various security features. This takes some planning with one of our Techs. The time will be well worth the investment. You can create the structure for the Shared documents,**

set up security rights and restrictions, then move or add documents to Share-Point. Your team can collaborate together at the same time (no more saving versions, re-sending, and keeping track!). These documents can be shared with people outside the organization. You can even put restrictions on certain files to limit or completely restrict sharing.

Maybe you're not using M365 for email. You can always migrate over, but maybe you just love G-Suite and don't want to put your team through a change. OK, we understand. You might still consider an M365 Basic license. Even without email, **you'll get Teams (no more Zoom or Slack) and OneDrive/SharePoint (no more Dropbox). Add the backup service (you need it) and you may reduce the load and data on your server and server backups AND save money!** - CMW

“Talk about things that matter to people who care.”
 — Jim Rohn

Built to Last by James C. Collins and Jerry Porras

When it comes to successful companies, what makes them tick year after year? Why does one company languish, either losing their lead or never achieving the same heights as their competitor? This team set out to find the successful habits and share their findings with all of us.

The book starts with some explanations: **what do we mean by a 'visionary' company? What companies were studied? How were comparison companies chosen? How was the data organized once collected?**



Some findings: Turns out **you don't need a great idea** to start a company, or even a charismatic leader. Visionary companies have a clear foundation, a core focus which is to be guard-

Book Nook

ed. At the same time, they also look for ways to **'bake' into their systems and culture ways to foster innovation** within those core ideologies. Mr. Collins emphasizes the constant need for visionary companies to preserve the core yet stimulate progress at the same time. Each part of the study included stories of how the successful visionary company and the comparison company handled specific situations and weathered changes.

There are great examples and some concrete **steps to uncover a company's core 'personality' and build that vision! Phrases like 'Good Enough Never Is' are peppered throughout. It was so encouraging to read about the things we're doing right and just need to stick with it,** and to be prodded into action on areas needing attention. Recommended! - CMW



Microsoft 365—Archives and Backups

In the past, when you archived some of your email, it created a separate folder on your computer (which is not backed up with regular mail, BTW). The only access to these archives was on that specific computer. In Microsoft 365, you can also archive email, but those archives are available from anywhere, not just your computer.

When the archiving feature is activated, any email older than two years (you can choose a different length of time) will be moved to the archives, automatically.

If the two years' worth of data in your regular mailbox (not archived) hits the data limit, you will need to increase your license level. Or, if you know there's a new email with a huge attachment (or a couple of them), you can move the large email to the archives, freeing up more space in your regular email.

A couple of other interesting things: there are **no file size limits for the archives** at this time! When you search, it defaults to the current mailbox, but you can select all or just specific archives as well. You can also take advantage of the very fast search option through Office.com using the web interface from a browser.

What if you have local archive folders that you've created before moving to M365? These can be migrated to your regular mailbox, which will back them up and then move them to the archive folder, reducing your mailbox size. You can also migrate straight to an archive folder, but these will not be backed up. — CMW

Twist on an Email Scam

Larry recently received an email with an interesting twist on a phishing attempt. **The email Subject line says 'Update for your recent purchase.'** The email looks like a normal purchase order from PayPal, complete with PayPal logo, order date, delivery date, transaction number, order confirmation number, and a phone number to call. Unlike the usual phishing attempt, this email does *not* include a link. Interestingly, the email includes a footer with an address in Austin, TX that does **not match PayPal's Austin address.** A private residence is located at the address provided in the email, per Google Maps.

Larry was suspicious because he didn't recall buying anything via PayPal. After he verified directly through his PayPal account that he hadn't had any recent transactions, he knew this was a scam. Be cautious! Double-check using other sources, and call us if you need help identifying these scams! - BK

Buying New Computers

We've always provided hardware. If you purchase these items through us, **we don't charge for our time to spec-out the equipment.** Some of our clients purchase hardware on their own, or pay us for the time to write the specs and order on their own. If you choose to purchase computers directly from the **manufacturer, or you're in a hurry and go to the local Best Buy,** there are a few things you need to know.



The most common delay when we help set up these computers is that they have Windows 10 Home, rather than Windows 10 Pro. In a business environment, you **need the 'Pro' version.** We can upgrade during the setup process, but it adds time and you have to purchase the upgrade.

The other thing to know is that a 'deal' is often because it's a slower processor, or slower drive speeds. These could save a **few bucks, but you'll spend the next few years frustrated with your computer!**

We're here to help. Take advantage of our expertise and experience! - CMW

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



ColdSnap—the Keurig of Ice Cream

Who wants a frozen treat?

ColdSnap is a home appliance that makes single servings of frozen treats in less than 2 minutes. The Keurig-like machine takes ColdSnap pods, then freezes and **dispenses the pod's contents.** It makes single servings of ice cream, frozen yogurt, frozen smoothies and shakes, and other frozen treats like coffee and cocktails. The Consumer Technology Association named it a 2021 Honoree for the Innovation Awards.

ColdSnap pods are shelf stable (no need to refrigerate) and are made of recyclable aluminum. You may need to clear some space for this countertop appliance—**it is 9" wide by 17.25" height by 17.5" deep.** It weighs about 50 pounds.

If you're like us (our staff really wants one for our kitchen!), you're ready to snap up your own ColdSnap. But this gadget is so **shiny and new that it's not for sale yet**—a small commercial launch is expected later in 2021 with a broader launch slated for 2022.

Learn more at: coldsnap.com



Construction Corner



LOTS to Share This Month

We have a variety of topics, warnings, and info to share this month. Take a look!

Run the Tune Up!—Sage 100 Contractor is a database. There is a built-in process to run a Tune Up each evening. For it to run, everyone has to be logged out of the software. When we get a call about performance issues, this is where we start and we often find it has not run in many weeks, or even months. **What's happening?**

In some cases, people aren't logging out of the software. They're hitting the 'X' to close their remote sessions, but that's like turning off a screen, not logging off. You have to exit Sage 100 Contractor.

When you exit that program, you'll get a message box 'Exit Sage 100 Contractor' with a Yes or No. If you didn't see this message, you didn't log out.

Next issue—many of you are running third party products such as SSO/SFO or ProCore. These products stay logged in, so the Tune Up can't run. We recommend that at least once a week, you log in, Pause these services, run the Tune Up, then restart. At a minimum you should be doing this once a month when you roll the posting period forward. We recommend once a week! BTW—the F.I.T. System doesn't cause this issue. ☺

Extremely reliable & responsive

'Syscon really puts my mind at ease. We have worked with Syscon for 11 years and they have been extremely reliable and responsive ... not having to worry about anything to do with the computers, printers, or data is a huge benefit to us.'

-Chris Covey, Office Manager,
Animal Eye Consultants

State Unemployment Email Scam—I received a 'beautiful' email scam. It was supposedly from the IL Unemployment office. The logo was pretty good, but it was warped - the shape was off. The email address was from NoReply@illinois.gov, which is close, but not the right domain name. It said my profile was out-of-date and asked me to validate my info to avoid

'Hitting the 'X' to close their remote sessions is like turning off a screen, not logging off. You have to exit Sage 100 contractor.'

payment restrictions (scare tactic). Then there was a link to 'Get Started.' Then I was warned to be sure to follow ALL INSTRUCTIONS to avoid restrictions. Across the bottom the paragraph labeled 'Important' was in Spanish. There were other buttons to 'translate message to:' and one that said 'Never translate from.' The Subject line was 'Important Notification from ILUI,' which is not how IL represents this department.

Most of these warning flags were small and subtle. If you were in a hurry or distracted, you might miss them. NEVER update information from an email link. If you think the State needs an update, log onto the regular site with your credentials and check it out, or better yet, call them! Do not follow these links, and do not provide any information, credentials, or even info you think is unimportant—DELETE!

Two Jobs, One Invoice

We're seeing a lot of changes in how GC's and Owners are asking to be billed. A recent example involves one contract for two locations. Our client wanted to track each location against separate budgets, and the GC wanted one

Progress Bill. Phases would have been an option—Phases have separate budgets; time entries and material orders can be entered by Phase; then all of this rolls up to the one job. There are general reports and phase reports.

But, it turns out they needed Certified Payroll, too. The Certified Payroll reports are not available by Phase, so this option had to come off the table. By running two separate jobs, the number of people who would have work flow changes was minimized. The field would not have to remember to add a phase (although the F.I.T. System does have this option), and we could get the **Certified reports. PO's and AP entry** would not be changed, either. So what about billing?

All the billing would be done through the 3-7 Progress Billing screen for one of the jobs. One person on the AR team would be tasked with following the special procedure to move a portion of the revenue under the second job, making Over/Under billing and Job Status reports make sense. By following the procedure, all cash will be posted to the one Progress Bill, and each job will have revenue and costs.

Before you commit to a solution, or **think there's no way to meet your goal**, be sure to make a list of all the requirements (in this case, Certified Payroll was a deciding factor), then let's go through the options and take advantage of the power in Sage 100 Contractor!- CMW



Some Fun—Unscramble This Word:

MIOIMPTS

Hint: Glass half full

See next month's newsletter for the answer!

M365 Education Station

4 Ways to Secure M365

Microsoft works to keep your company's data secure, but you have a role to play, too. Here are four (4) things you can do to help keep your company's data safe:

1. Set Up MFA!!

Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) requires more than just a user name and password. Another source of verification is required such as a special code to your phone for additional confirmation.

2. Train Your Users

Educate, continuously! Require MFA; provide reminders to not click links; never provide a password in response to an email request; never send a user name and password in the same email.

3. Classify Data

Classifying your data into distinct categories and groups allows you to apply custom controls such as

policies and file restrictions. This might include limiting access, restricting the ability to share files or even download to a local device.

4. Adopt Zero Trust

Zero Trust is an approach that begins with the premise that nothing is trusted and all interactions have to be confirmed first. It assumes no document, link, email, or other data is safe to open.

Microsoft deploys some sophisticated artificial intelligence (AI) to stop cyber attacks. More specifically, Microsoft uses machine learning, which is a type of AI. Without human intervention, Machine Learning (ML) uses historical data to make predictions about what is safe. In other words, ML is a smart type of AI that teaches itself to recognize possible cyber threats and stop them before they cause harm.



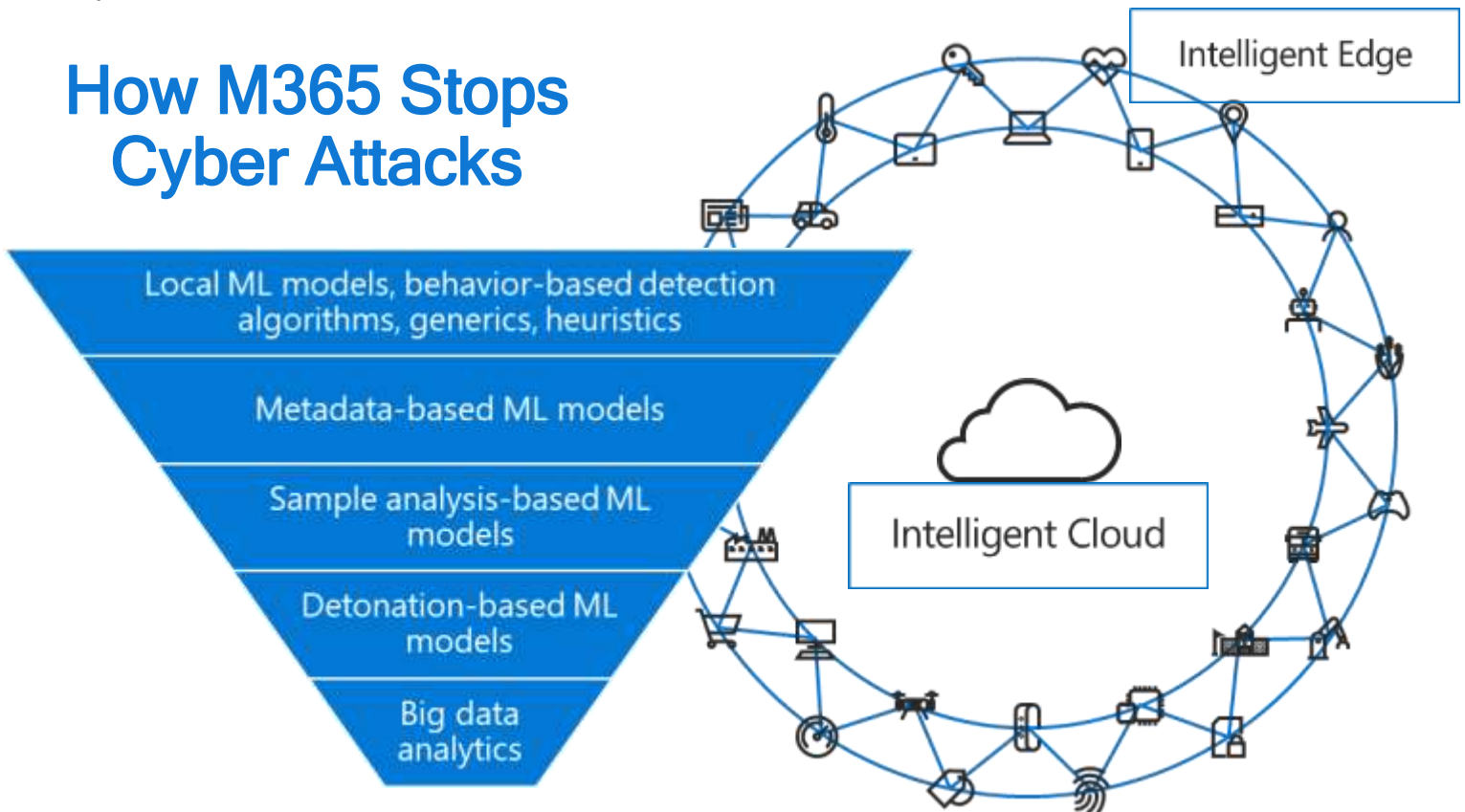
Tip of the Month

Did you know?

M365 Business Premium licenses (and higher) have the option to encrypt your email. From the Option tab, you can choose protection options such as encrypting email before you send, and even disabling the ability to forward your email.

These additional security options are built in to several M365 license levels. If you send sensitive numbers or other sensitive info via email, we strongly recommend you move up to one of these license levels!

How M365 Stops Cyber Attacks



How Did They Do It? Chicago Electrical Company

Two Cs make all the difference at Chicago Electrical Company (CECO) – Communication and Commitment to quality, according to Tim Havlat, project engineer. Communication helped the CECO team navigate the uncertainty from the pandemic. They use a range of tools, including email, text, Share-Point, and Teams to stay in touch. These last two Microsoft tools helped CECO share documents and drawing forms from the field directly to the office.

When the field and the office can't be in the same room, they can still be on the same page.

Staying on the same page helps CECO maintain their commitment to quality. After an email exchange failed to address a missing order of baseboard heaters, the company's owner hopped on a red eye flight so he could speak directly with the manufacturers on site in North Carolina to straighten it out.

Technology helps CECO stay adaptable and efficient.

Tim's favorite Syscon tool is the Field Integrated Time (F.I.T.) System for collecting field time. He said that F.I.T. has cut down on the number of hours that multiple staff spend each week on payroll and has overall streamlined their payroll process. As the end user, Tim appreciates that he can speak with the people who built the F.I.T. System and that they listen to his feedback. Technology is a powerful tool that can **make people's lives easier and makes CECO's work more efficient.** -BK



Tim Havlat,
Project Engineer

Fast Facts

Location: Chicago, IL
Specialty: Electrical
Founded: January 1995
Affiliations: IBEW Local 134

Read more at www.syscon-inc.com/how-did-they-do-it

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

Upcoming Events

Event: RIP Hosted Exchange, webinar

Date: Thursday, July 22

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events

Event: M365 Focus, webinar

Date: Thursday, Sept. 23

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events



Featured Articles

Business Ledger newspaper:

New Work Photos Module for FIT

TUG membership magazine:

S100C – What Version Are You Running?

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.

