



## What's New

My favorite time of year — Candy Corn Pumpkins! Hopefully you received our booklet and CD sharing our story and music! I've heard from a few of you already; enjoy!

We're wrapping up our testing of the new EDR protection software (September newsletter). Please watch for updates as we roll it out to all clients who use our anti-virus service.

We continue to move our Hosted Exchange clients to Microsoft 365. We only have a few left, so if we haven't connected and made a plan, let's get on a call!

Hard to believe we're in the fourth quarter of 2021. Enjoy the changing seasons and fall treats!  
- Catherine Wendt



## The Leaders We're Grooming And Changing Technology

We see a growing phenomenon in our long-time clients and some of our newer clients, and we're pretty excited about it. There's an openness to technology solutions that hasn't been there before. Don't get me wrong — everyone seems to like the latest cell phone, bigger screens, and cars with cruise control that also keeps a set distance from the car in front of you. I actually watched Larry drive in traffic for quite a while without touching the break or gas pedal; not my cup of tea, but he was pretty thrilled with the technology, and I have to admit, it's impressive.

On the other hand, we've often been anywhere between sad and frightened by the lack of some clients' willingness to embrace the technology we've recommended. In our efforts to keep our clients' data and equipment safe, we've made our best case to get rid of those XP and Windows 7 machines

(really?); offer creative ways to use strong passwords everywhere; send firewall service renewal quotes; recommend extended warranties on older servers; encourage backups for important data and email; recommend automated patch services; and many more! Sometimes these seem to fall on deaf ears, but we are determined never to give up; there's just too much at stake!

So what are we excited about? We see a maturing generation joining our clients' companies in key roles. In some cases, this is the next generation of a family business; in others, there are key people being groomed for leadership roles. This next group of leaders also loves the latest personal gadgets, but their expectations for how computers should contribute to meet the business's needs for efficiency are quite high, and rightfully so. We're participating in new conversations

*Continued pg.2*

## In this Issue

The Leaders We're Grooming...	1
Book Review.....	2
Sophisticated Bank Scam.....	3
Shiny New Gadget .....	3
Quarter 4 — Planning.....	4
Microsoft 365 Focus.....	5
How Did They Do It?.....	6
Events Calendar .....	6

October 2021

(continued from page 1)

**about the pro's and con's of new services, equipment, software, cloud solutions, security, and what's available.**

And while this group of new and/or future leaders is looking to technology, the IT industry has really made the next shift as well. The kaleidoscope of cloud and cloud-related offerings is becoming a beautiful picture that many can now see and appreciate. We are truly amazed at what is available right now for us and our clients, and the very affordable and productive options.

As this trend takes the IT industry by **storm, we're also coming across some poor infrastructures and poor solutions.** They have the right names and components, but they are woefully designed, creating frustration where there **should be joy! It's as if some IT firms and IT departments have decided that if they use something with the name 'cloud' in it, or something with 'Azure' in it, they're experts and are using 'current' technology.** A beautiful home is not just how it looks on the outside — **it's the flow of the rooms; the location of the light switches; hallways where two people can comfortably pass; natural light in key rooms; a hot**

**water pump so you don't have to run the shower for 15 minutes at 5 a.m. to have hot water! Having 'Azure' on the outside of a hosted server doesn't make it well designed or well provisioned; that takes knowledge, research, and a commitment to making sure the person using the system has an excellent experience, and that is TOP on our minds.**

If your season in business is more late-fall or early-winter, **you don't have to fully understand or even agree with some of the technology changes; that's a tall order.** Are you willing to hear these opportunities out? Are you willing to consider that there might be some technology options that have **'come of age'? Are you willing to trust your emerging leadership teams?**

Let me ask you — do you drive a stick shift? How old is your car? Do you have a door ringer/camera and check it on your phone? Do you order cigars, wine, groceries, gadgets, and other things online? Do you subscribe to a service to watch your favorite shows or movies on demand? Do you use that automated cruise control feature, maybe even a little hands free just to check it out? These are all good things and make our personal lives more enjoyable.

Time to let your business join the technology changes, from the exciting offerings to the security recommendations, and everything in between. Hey, my son is that next emerging generation, **and I can tell you, it's been quite a (rollercoaster) ride. I can't WAIT for what's next!** - CMW

NEWS

We are so honored to make the Construction Executive Magazine's 2021 Top Construction Technology Firms in the Workforce and Labor Management Category.



*"I don't like that man. I must get to know him better."*  
— Abraham Lincoln

*How the Mighty Fall* by Jim Collins

Jim Collins refers to this as his 'dark book.' His previous books share research as to how companies excel and grow, becoming or succeeding at being great. This research **was focused on companies who 'fell' and the five (5) stages of decline as identified from the research.**

One of the interesting facets of his analysis is the ability for several of the target companies to recover from this decline. In any of the first four (4) stages, companies can turn things around. But once they enter stage 5, none of the companies were able to continue to exist or prove relevant in their fields.



Book Nook

Here are the Stages: 1: Habits Born of Success; 2: Undisciplined Pursuit of More; 3: Denial of Risk and Peril; 4: Grasping for Salvation; 5: Capitulation to Irrelevance or Death. Mr. Collins explains each of these titles, what they mean, and how they were manifested in the target companies. There is a call for diligence and a hard look in the mirror. None of these companies woke up one day and chose these stages. The declines were slow and initially, were easy to miss or explain away.

There are several appendices that provide additional information along with his research guidelines. A great deal of content was focused on Level 5 Leadership and its importance in any company. - CMW



## Sophisticated Bank Scam

On a recent call with our C12 IT Affinity group, one of the companies shared a client story that we just had to share with you!

**At the client, the financial person's account was compromised.** The hacker was able to change the password to the bank, and the only Two-Factor (Multi-Factor) Authentication in place was to **that same person's email account.** Over \$700K was transferred! The hackers had also added an email rule that forwarded any incoming bank emails to a different email address.

If you find out that an email account has been compromised, check out the rules; **this is a common 'first step' for the hackers.** It could be a forward rule as in the case above; it could be a rule to delete all incoming mail that has the letter **'X' (this really happened); or similar.**

Check out your Cyber Insurance rules — not all Cyber insurance covers wire transfers. — CMW

## T-Mobile Breach (August)

Personal data for over 50 million customers was compromised. The 21-year-old hacker who claimed credit for the T-Mobile breach said he took advantage of **the company's lax security.** He said he found an unprotected router, which he used as an entry point to access customer data. Stolen data includes names, social security numbers, addresses, dates of **birth, and driver's license/ID** information, but no financial data. This is the largest of the three (3) data breaches T

-Mobile has experienced in the last two years. **T-Mobile says it's taking steps to improve its security.** —Wall Street Journal, T-Mobile

## Outlook Calendars, Phones

I pulled up my calendar on my phone and it had many entries for the one day I was looking at. I also noticed that some of those appointments belonged to others on our staff — very odd.

Turns out that other mailboxes were checked on my phone (thanks Chris), which is why they were displaying. No way to know how this happened, but very easy to fix it, which I happily did for Larry a few days later when he had the same experience.

- In your calendar view on your cell phone, click on the Outlook icon in the upper left corner, next to the name of the month.
- **You'll see the list of mailboxes that are available to you.** Check or uncheck based on what you need to see.

**That's it! Easy to do, if you know where to look.** Now you can pass it on and help others. - CMW

## Anti-Spam—Changes

In Microsoft 365, you can easily right-click and mark an email as **'Never Allow' or 'Always Allow.'** **This is fast and you are in control.** However, Microsoft is making a change. If an email is flagged as **'High Confidence Spam' it will go to the Junk folder, even if YOU'VE marked it as 'Always Allow.'** **I think you'll just have to keep checking that junk folder; bummer.** - CMW

## Visio Changes

Microsoft is coming out with Visio for the web, which will be included as part of the Microsoft 365 apps, making this more affordable; no additional license needed. This will not be full-featured, though. It might be worth checking out (released in September).



## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



## Tabletop Glass Fireplace

**Fall means it's s'mores season! This month's nifty gadget lets you roast your own marshmallows (or burn them to a crisp — we're not judging) from a tabletop.**

A Tennessee-based artisan makes tabletop glass fireplaces. They come in two sizes — **the mini measures 3" x 3" x 4" tall and the regular is 6" x 6" x 9" tall.**

**Hope you're a DIY fan! This gadget does not come assembled.** All orders are shipped in flat packed kits with a Quick Start guide. The kit includes glass panels and base wood that can be stained or painted. The seller recommends finishing the base **wood if you're putting it outside.**

There are 2 types of kits — basic and deluxe. The basic kit includes the wooden parts for the base, 4 glass panels, and the start guide. The deluxe kit adds lava stones and heat resistant sand. Neither includes fuel due to shipping restrictions.

Just be sure to remove the glass **before you make your s'mores.** It's good for more than a treat — it does provide heat and the flame dances!

Learn more at [https://www.etsy.com/listing/192447489/tabletop-glass-fireplace-gifts-for-him-2?shop\\_home\\_feat\\_1](https://www.etsy.com/listing/192447489/tabletop-glass-fireplace-gifts-for-him-2?shop_home_feat_1)



# Construction Corner



## Quarter Four – Planning Ahead

Hard to believe but we are now in the fourth quarter of the year – where has the time gone? With the days getting **shorter, and colder, it's time to do some planning.**

This is a great time to catch up on bank reconciliations. If there are uncleared checks, you may need to reach out to vendors to see if replacements are needed. Uncleared vendor and employee checks have some rules. According to the Unclaimed Property rules, you are obligated to reach out to the Payees and get them the payments. If you cannot find them, the money is supposed to be sent to the state as unclaimed property, allowing the Payees to petition the state to receive the funds. Yes, this is a real thing!

How about those aging reports? This is a good time to clean up old AP invoices. Contact the vendor(s) for a statement and clean up old items, confirming that your list matches theirs.

AR Aging is another good place for some clean up. Are there penny balances that need clean up? How about old **retention that hasn't been received yet** – pick up the phone and ask for the check. **You'd be surprised how often a quick phone call will result in an old retention balance being paid; sometimes you just need to ask!**

A reminder that if you have to get rid of

### Willing to Help

*'Syscon was right there willing to help and correct the many issues we were having.'*

-Lisa LaMonte, Controller,  
American Fireproofing

old items, regardless of the reason, do NOT delete them! You will need to make reversing entries and post the clean up records (reversals) to a current posting period.

There are some very handy ways to make AP and AR reversing entries and

*'To get rid of old items regardless of the reason, do NOT delete them! You will need to make reversing entries...'*

apply them right away. Use the Reference field in the 3-2 and 4-2 screens to reference the clean up record to the original open record. Put the original Invoice number in the reference field. When you post the reversal, it will give you a message that the original record was, or was not, found. If it was found, hit Yes and the reversal will be applied to the original record; no additional steps needed.

**Let's talk about Payroll** – whether you do your payroll in house or use a payroll service, this module needs the same TLC. Start by running the 5-3-7 Audit report; **there shouldn't be any errors.** If you run your own payroll, you should be running this every time you run a payroll. If you use an outside service, and there are errors, your job costs may be understated, for example.

For one of our clients, the vacation union calc in S100C had been correctly setup as an Add/Deduct calc. The vacation is added as earnings, taxed, then deducted and sent to the union. The payroll service only had it setup as a deduction. So each week, our client had the tedious task of overwriting the tax amounts to match the service. In this case, Sage 100C was right and it was the payroll service that had the wrong setup; there were audit errors everywhere!

Then, check with your CPA. Will you have yearend entries for key personnel such as personal use of a company car, or health benefits? These need to be added BEFORE payroll is closed.

Time to pull out the calendar. When is **the last check in 2021? You'll need to** archive the payroll after that check is posted, before you create 5-2-2 records for the first check dated 2022. Make sure you have access to the Database Admin tool, as well. We hold a webinar to review all of these steps, so look for the event in early December. - CMW

## TUG Event Coming Up

TUG – The User Group for Sage 100 Contractor, 300CRE, and Sage Estimating – is holding their annual national conference October 25th through the 29th in Las Vegas.

In addition to the product-specific **breakout sessions, they'll have several** key speakers, some from Sage, too. For those who are members and have registered, the breakout sessions are available now so you can sign up for the topics that interest you.

**There's an annual membership fee to be** a member of TUG, which gives you access to their various webinars and trainings, as well as their regular newsletter (which has featured several of our articles!).

**We'll be there, ready to hear the** speakers, attend the breakouts, and help **other members, as we've done in the** past! - CMW



## Joke of the Month

Never tell a window a joke.  
*You don't want it to crack up.*

# M365 Education Station

## Introducing Microsoft's New Hybrid Work Tools

Hybrid workplaces continue to become more commonplace. Some team members are in the office while others work from home, which makes it more critical than ever to work in a seamless, collaborative environment. Microsoft is rolling out several new hybrid work tools. We'll cover some of the latest features in Teams and PowerPoint Live.



### Teams

There are 4 changes you need to know about:

- **Front Row for Teams Rooms** – This is a new layout that moves the photo gallery to the bottom of the screen. The idea is to make it feel like you're looking at your colleagues face-to-face. This will be available later this year.
- **Together Mode** – If you have 10 or more people in a meeting, you can enable this mode. It digitally places up to 49 participants in a shared background, like a stadium and lecture hall. To enable, make sure you have the latest version of Teams. Next, from the Settings menu (click on your avatar to open Settings), click the option to Turn on New Meeting Experience; Teams will need to restart. Next time you're in a meeting, click on the 3 dots at the top of the screen and then click on Together Mode.
- **Meeting Recap** – This new feature is only available for private meetings. Participants can view meeting recordings, chat messages, notes, and transcripts from the meeting chat tab. Also, a link to the Meeting Recap will be in the meeting event in the participant's Outlook calendar. You can also access the recap from the calendar icon in Teams (on the left, under the Chat and Teams icons).
- **Fluid Components** – These are new chat features that support asynchronous collaboration (collaborating together at different times). You can pin a message so you can find it easily later and reply to a specific chat message. You can also share and co-create notes during meetings. This is in development and is due for release in late 2021.



*Front Row for Teams Rooms*



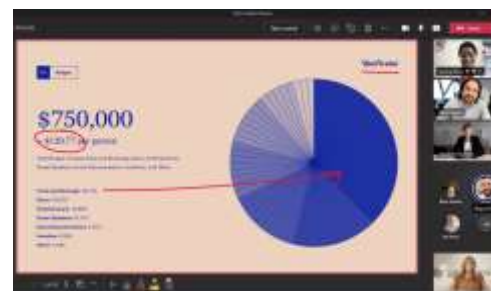
### PowerPoint Live

Did you know you can present a PowerPoint presentation live in Teams? When you are in a Teams meeting, click the arrow in the upper right corner of your screen. The option to Share Content will pop up. If your presentation has audio, toggle the option to include computer sound. Scroll down in the Share Content and you will see PowerPoint Live. Select the slide deck you want to share and you're ready to present! PowerPoint Live has two (2) new useful features.

- **Presenter View** – The presenter has a panel view that allows the presenter to review notes, participate in chats, and see the audience, all in one screen. The notes that appear on screen are the notes the presenter entered in the slideshow while in PowerPoint.
- **Interactive Presentations** – The presenter can share hyperlinks and videos in addition to static slides for a more engaging presentation. The presenter can also draw on slides while presenting.



*PowerPoint Presenter View*



*PowerPoint Live*



## How Did They Do It?

### Kisby Shore

James Lees traded in his career as an attorney for the chance to work with his father at the company his dad built from the ground up. James is an attorney who is also a card-carrying union member.

**From day one, James had his father's** strong work ethic instilled in him. In his early days as a new hire for his dad, James spent time on construction sites with the guys in the field getting hands-on experience. He saw his father work hard, which inspired him to work hard in turn. That work ethic is the backbone **of his success now that he's taken over** the family business from his late father.

As the only commercial mechanical contractor in Atlantic City, he gets ample opportunity to work hard. They get a lot of emergency calls after business hours. He recalled one bitter cold night in February when the Atlantic Housing Authority called at 2 a.m. on Saturday because 3,000 residents were without heat. In less than an hour, James and his crew

were on-site despite the late hour and sleet. Within a few hours, their crew had replaced the old, crumbled pipe and restored the heat.

Every day on the job is a little different. While they take emergency calls, their primary work is as a new construction installation company. Using Sage 100 Contractor and Syscon's add-on Over/Under Billing report helps the accounting side of the **business run smoothly.** "The support I get from Syscon is unbelievable," James said. - BK



James Lees,  
Managing Partner

#### Fast Facts

Location: Atlantic City, NJ  
 Specialty: Mechanical Contractors  
 Founded: 1951  
 Affiliations: South Jersey Mechanical Contractors Assoc., Plumbers & Pipefitters 322



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:** How to Get Field Time that's FULLY Integrated with Sage 100 Contractor, webinar

**Date:** Wednesday, October 27

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

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

**Event:** Azure, webinar/training

**Date:** Thursday, November 11

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

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

## Featured Articles

Construction Business Owner magazine:

*Chris Wendt Named Vice President of Technology Services*

Business Ledger newspaper:

*How MFA Works (and Why You Need It)*

*Syscon Celebrates Its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*



## 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.

