



What's New

Lots of travel last month! Seems like many organizations are finally getting back to in-person events; so nice! Wonderful presentation by Marcus Lemonis for example.

A few of our articles have been picked up by other publications. The Business Ledger just ran one of them at the end of April!

Chris and I are headed to Atlanta for the annual CFMA conference. We're presenting one of the breakout sessions focused on all that data you're collecting and how to use Power BI to make sense of it!

Wishing all the great women out there a **Happy Mother's Day**. Your leadership is critical! - Catherine Wendt



Working Remotely: A Success or A Failure?

So here we are two-plus years after the start of the pandemic. Overnight we had to pivot and figure out how to work from home, how to manage staff working from home, how to keep everyone safe and healthy, all the while wondering how long this would last! So, what did we learn?

It takes a unique person to work from home, stay productive, stay on focus, and know how to take care of **themselves**. Some of us didn't know we would need boundaries, so we made ourselves available 24/7 to our family and co-workers without considering the subsequent burn out. Others were overwhelmed with **anxiety, 'frozen' in place, unable to pull away from the news reports**, how many were sick, how many lost their lives, the dwindling staples at the store, and the visual reminder of masked faces everywhere we went.

Still others wanted to try out this **'work from home' thing anyway** and here was the chance. They soon found out how quickly they could put on a few pounds, run up credit cards with online shopping, be pulled into daytime TV, and succumb to constant distractions pulling their attention away from their work. Maybe it was the kitchen table littered with textbooks and homework papers, acting as a make-shift classroom. No one could meet with friends—children or adults—let alone get to the gym, shopping, or other routines outside the house. And now we had to cook!

For our clients, some were scrambling because their home computer just **wasn't up to the task to work from home, whether it was the computer's physical resources, operating system, screens (were you used to two of them?), or the internet speeds!** If the

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office had an on-premise server, this might have been the first time you needed remote access for so many people, and some of the remote connection options were not safe or secure. We had a few vendors and **clients who couldn't get into their** office buildings to collect checks to deposit, check stock to print payroll, let alone AP invoices to process. Then there were all the new rules to track and government-ordered benefits to pay when our teams or their families were sick, and what kind of info we would need to report these benefits so we could get credit later.

Working from home — a success or a failure? It might depend on what **type of person you are, who's asking the question, and what you think makes it 'successful' or not.** For our client owners and managers, we have a few recurring themes to share:

Over and over again I hear clients **say they want their staff to 'own'** their work, outcomes, projects. I think we need to look in the mirror — they are not owners and they

really aren't looking for that kind of responsibility and weight on their shoulders. It's absolutely reasonable for them to take responsibility to do a great job — you *are* paying them; but to expect them to do more is just not realistic, or fair.

All of our clients have deliverables and an expectation for the productivity their teams need in order to meet the client contract, the promised pay and benefits to employees, and profit for the company both for its continued health and to make the ownership burden worth the challenges. With these goals in mind, having Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in place to monitor productivity and results is so important. With a remote work force, you cannot control their surroundings, but you can help them structure their day and set boundaries so they can be successful and take pride in their work. *How you stay connected and monitor results is different, but it's still your job.*

Rather than worry about unproduc-

tive work time or turning into a micro-manager with an ulcer, figure out **how you can track employees' productivity!** What outcomes — how many bids, production rate based on crew size, financial reports due? Then get tracking!

So, working from home — successful? Is the jury still out? We are confident this is NOT going away. We are social beings and we need to be around **people. We're pretty sure the trend** will swing back a bit toward center, but working remotely is here to stay. What can you do to make it successful? How can you take advantage of the many benefits? How can technology help you succeed in this new adventure? - CMW

"And though she be but little, she is fierce."

— Shakespeare
Happy Mother's Day!

BE 2.0 (Beyond Entrepreneurship)

Years ago Jim Collins joined with his then-mentor and wrote *Beyond Entrepreneurship (BE)*. **For several years he's** wanted to add and expand the information to incorporate the results of his many research projects. So he decided to write *BE 2.0*.

The original text is all intact and as Mr. **Collins shares in the opening, it's solid** information and worth re-printing.



Inserted into the chapters **you'll find the expanded** information. He cites many of his research studies and expands on many of

by Jim Collins and Bill Lazier

Book Nook

the concepts in the original book. I was also pleasantly surprised to find that **he didn't just copy-paste** from other books, but has thoughtfully woven the additional information into the context of the original chapters.

The book also takes another step — many of the companies that were part of his research projects are quite large, leaving the reader to wonder if these concepts will work with their company. A great deal of care has been taken to tie these concepts and words of wisdom into practical application for *our* companies. Definitely Recommended! -CMW



Network Solutions Shutdown Nightmare — Update

In the cover story of our April newsletter, we shared a nightmare situation for one of our clients. This **client's domain was shut down for over 24 hours** because they had not responded to a courtesy email confirming their details. Their domain host, Network Solutions, decided to shut down their domain, meaning the **company's website and email were down.**

Not long after we helped this client through this disaster, this same client received multiple and very convincing phishing emails that looked like they were from also Network Solutions. When the client forwarded them to us, we took a look; it turned out that the client had turned off the domain privacy setting, which protects the **domain owner's name, address, phone number, and technical contact** for an additional monthly fee. The website going down provided an opportunity for this phishing attempt to gain access **to this client's website domain; it was convincing and well-timed.** Continue to be vigilant and protect your privacy! - BK

Snap-on Tools Attack

Snap-on tool manufacturer was the victim of a ransomware attack that compromised employee and franchisee data. The Conti ransomware group is taking credit for the attack that leaked

social security numbers, dates of birth, and employee identification numbers. Snap-on reported that they discovered the breach after detecting suspicious network activity, leading the company to shut down company systems. -ID Agent

Fox News Leak

A misconfigured database exposed almost 13 million records pertaining to employees and company data. Researchers at Website Planet discovered a trove with 58GB of data including records of content management data, internal Fox emails, user names, employee ID numbers, affiliate station information, and over 65,000 names of celebrities, cast, and production crew members. -ID Agent

Facebook Scams

Larry has a Facebook page. It's not very active and he doesn't keep it updated, but likes to check in on friends and family from time-to-time.

Our daughter called — she was receiving invitations but knew this was a common scam. Her friends have had this happen to them, as well.

Basically, someone sets up a second Facebook account with your picture and some basics, then invites all your **friends. What's in it for them? They begin to ask for seemingly innocuous information, your friends think they're talking to you, so they answer.** These questions are targeted to get just the right kind of info to impersonate you or access your accounts.

Knowing what was happening, she went one step further and contacted Facebook about the second account. They immediately shut it down — thanks Facebook! For those of you who are heavy Facebook users, be vigilant! This is a known strategy. They only keep doing it because it works and is profitable! - CMW

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Bumpboxx
Bluetooth Boombox

'Tis the season — for backyard BBQs, pool parties, Memorial Day celebrations, graduation gatherings, and other fun in the sun.

What's an outside party without music? The Bumpboxx Ultra Bluetooth Boombox is a portable **speaker that's clearly a throwback to boomboxes from the 1980s that played cassettes and radio.** If the graffiti look is a little too loud for your taste there are some plain options, including red, black, and blue that lack any graffiti styling.

The Bumpboxx has Bluetooth connectivity. **It's designed to be portable, weighing 7 pounds . It measures 16.5" x 4.25" x 11.75."** It includes a remote control, charging block, carry strap, RCA adapter, and a USB charging port. Its sound plays up to 110 **db., so you're covered if you want a louder party. :) Learn more at <https://tinyurl.com/boomboxshinygadget>**



CONSTRUCTION CORNER



Sage 100 Contractor – Things to Know

Do you use the Service module? When you setup a new record for a client and **there's a past due balance, you'll get a message** letting you know and even telling you how much is past due; very helpful.

Many of you have asked for more **specific info to 'pop up' when you choose a client and now it's here!** You can create a custom pop up message for any client. **It might say 'prepay only' or 'all requests require a PO' or something** else that your dispatch team would need to know when the request comes in.

There's a trade – it seems you'll get the this message every time you pull up a record for this client. That might make you happy (good to receive the reminders); we found it a bit annoying. Sage says they welcome input, so let them know your thoughts!

Emailing to Vendors – some of you have been using this features for years **and it's quite handy. Click the email icon** and enter the email addresses to send out the report or statement.

Beginning with version 22, Sage is only **allowing one email address in the 'Send' field.** We started seeing requests trickle in as version 22 rolled out, but it was **inconsistent. With version 23, it's been enforced; one email address.**

If you feel this is a step backwards,

Diagnose & Fix It

'When we do have a problem, Syscon is usually able to diagnose and fix it pretty quickly.'

-Jonathan Wilder, Payroll, J.P. Phillips, Inc.

suggestions can be sent through Sage City.

Third Party Products that Integrate with S100C – This has been a long time problem, but of late, more and more vendors are claiming they have an integration with Sage 100 Contractor. **Here's what we find when we actually get on a call with them.**

"The second problem is that dumping data to a CSV to import is not an integration!"

Many of these third party programs are under the misunderstanding that they can dump data to a CSV or Excel file, put the columns in a particular order, **and the 'integration' is that you import it** into Sage 100 Contractor. There are a couple of things wrong with this line of thinking.

First of all, S100C does not work this way. This is closed source code with **specific (and limited) API's for other software to 'talk' with S100C; the upload** they anticipate will work is not available.

The second problem is that dumping data to a CSV to import is not an integration! You have to pull the data **into the template each time and 'upload'** to the target program each time. To us, an integration means they communicate without intervention.

So if you're evaluating a third party program that says it integrates with S100C, ask them to SHOW YOU!

Go To Meeting versus Teams – **We've been recommending the use of Teams for internal Chat, internal meetings (audio and/or video), sharing documents, and even 'live' collaboration** right in the document! So why are we

Save the Date
Thursday, May 12th
1:00 Central Time
Paygroup Updates
Webinar

using Go To Meeting when we meet with you to look at your question or train on something new? So glad you asked...

For some of our clients, their IT group **has turned off the ability for us to 'take over' your screen, to use the keyboard and mouse.** This makes it very difficult for us to drill down and dig into an issue **that you're having. We can always stop what we're doing, launch the Go To Meeting and start over,** but that can be frustrating and wastes time.

In self defense and to save everyone's nerves, we send Go To Meeting invitations for our all training, troubleshooting, and discovery consulting calls. We love Teams and use it extensively for ourselves, but watch for our Go To meeting invites when we jump on our next call with you. And as always, cameras are still optional!

CFMA Annual Conference; We're Presenting! – May 16-18, Chris and I will attend this national conference in **Atlanta, GA. We're presenting the Power of Power BI and how this tool makes all that data SO accessible and manageable.** In person or virtual, check it out! - CMW



Joke of the Month

What type of bird can carry the most weight?

A crane!

M365 Education Station Microsoft | Partner

M365 Personal vs. Work

Many users already have a Microsoft email and password. In some cases, the email address for both work and personal use are the same. What's the difference between personal and work accounts, and which should you use?

Personal Account

- Created by you or generated from Skype/Xbox account creation
- Intended for personal use
- Expires when (or if) the user decides to discontinue use
- Can log in online from anywhere with Internet
- Included apps: Outlook, Teams, OneDrive; these offer fewer features than work accounts



Work Account

- Created by company or company's IT department
- Intended for business use
- User login expires when leaving the company (company may reallocate license to a new user)
- Can log in online from anywhere with Internet
- Included apps: Outlook, Teams, OneDrive, SharePoint, and more with more features and security



Personal Account–OneDrive

- For personal use
- Looks almost the same as OneDrive for work
- Once logged in, files will be visible in OneDrive
- Store personal files; only option is to use OneDrive; no SharePoint for a personal account; it's meant for individual use



Work Account–OneDrive

- For business use
- Looks almost the same as OneDrive for personal use
- Once logged in, files will be visible in OneDrive for Business
- OneDrive is for individual files while SharePoint is for sharing files across an organization; it's great for collaboration



Q & A

Q: Can I merge my personal and work accounts?

A: No.

Q: What if my personal and work account are the same?

A: When the user logs in, a Microsoft prompt (pictured below) is triggered; select Work or school account.

Q: How do I get rid of this prompt?

A: Rename the personal account or give it a nickname.



4 Reasons *Not* to Use Personal Accounts for Work

1. It creates confusion

Not only is it confusing for the user to identify the correct username/password, but this can confuse the user about the location of important work data. Further, an individual's personal files may sync and mix with business files (if both are stored in the employee's personal OneDrive).

2. Lose employee, lose data

If a company allows an employee to use that employee's personal account, the company has no guarantee that any files stored within an employee's personal account will be accessible, especially if the employee is terminated or leaves the company.

3. Risk for data leak

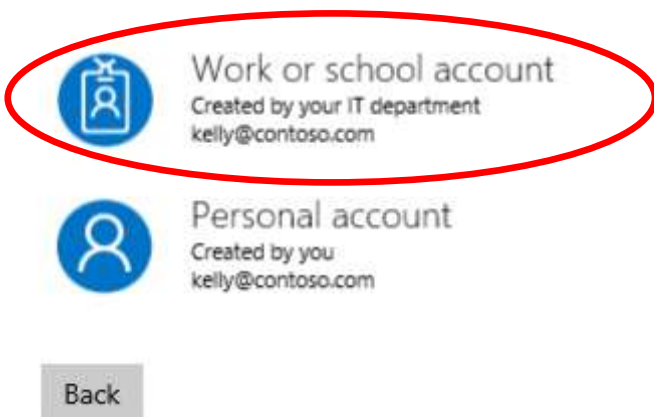
When company data is not directly under the company's control, there is a higher risk for data being leaked, either by user error or on purpose from a destructive employee. AND, there are no backups!

4. Higher risk for data breach

Companies already face challenges protecting their data from users who may log into the company cloud from an unsecured device that is not maintained by the company, does not have Endpoint Detection and Response, and other cyber security measures, and could have a compromised password. The use of a personal account with business info introduces a risk to the employer. Not a good trade.



It looks like kelly@contoso.com is used with more than one account. Which account do you want to use?



How Did They Do It?

MSL Electric

Shelly Griffin, controller at MSL Electric, pinpointed the reason for the company's success. "The owners don't want to cut corners – they want us to get it right the first time," Shelly said. This means the company is extremely organized and that everyone works cohesively as a team. "It's a family type feel; it's a great team where everyone works very well together. We all help each other. It's like a second home," Shelly said. She was so drawn to the company that she stopped working as an independent contractor to join MSL Electric's team full-time.

Shelly said that she's open to "any new technology that helps reduce overhead." When she first started at MSL Electric, they were using paper checks and didn't have direct deposit. They did use construction-specific accounting software, which they continue to use today. They've now implemented direct deposit and other paperless technology, including

Syscon's Field Integrated Time (F.I.T.) System for digital field time collection. "I love the F.I.T. timecard system! It saves us so much time and data entry. If we didn't have that, we'd probably have another payroll clerk position just for data entry on timecards," Shelly said.



Shelly Griffin, MSL Controller

As the controller, she manages everything related to accounting and accounting software. She described her job as making sure "everything is running smoothly." She said she is "always learning something" from Syscon's newsletters and webinars. — BK

Fast Facts

Location: Anaheim, CA
 Specialty: Electric—Public Works
 Founded: 2002
 Affiliations: International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers



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: Multi-Connections Luncheon, Cyber Security Presentation

Date: Wednesday, May 11th

Time: 12-1:30 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events

Event: Updating Pay Groups in Sage 100 Contractor, webinar

Date: Thursday, May 12th

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events

Event: CMFA's Annual Conference & Exhibition, Break Out presentation by Chris on the power of Power BI!

Date: May 14 – 18

Location: Atlanta, GA

More Info: www.cfma.org/annual

Featured Articles

Construction Business Owner magazine:

Real Jobsite Solutions – Who to Call for Computer Issues; IT or the Consultant?



Please Note:

Syscon will be closed Monday, May 30, 2022 for Memorial Day

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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.

