



What's New

November reminds us to stop and take a look at our many blessings. We're blessed with an amazing staff, meaningful work, and wonderful clients. We give thanks.

The last of our Classic hosting clients have moved to Azure, so we'll begin the process of decommissioning this ground-breaking infrastructure. After 11 years of service, it is now 'classic,' which means, outdated!

We're partnering with Aatrix to share their electronic filing services. Join us Dec 15th to hear more.

Perhaps you have a friend who will be alone; why not consider inviting them to join you this Thanksgiving!- *Catherine Wendt*

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November 2022



Insurance Companies are Entering the IT Business

I'm reminded of the not-too-distant past when the CPA firms were getting into the IT business. All of the sudden, annual accounting reviews included IT-related questions. Before they would sign off on an accounting audit or review, they insisted on details regarding the computers, the network, backups, and a variety of questions that I'm convinced the accounting representative did not understand or know what function they served.

Fast forward to the pandemic event which accelerated the work-from-home initiatives, opening many companies to cyber security risks and targeted attacks (hackers were huge fear-mongers), the insurance companies found themselves with claim payments that were quickly outpacing the premiums. They put together a new gameplan and implemented it quickly.

First of all, we applaud and thank the

insurance industry for helping us share how important IT-related security measures really are, and bringing small businesses to the table for these discussions. No one likes to be strong-armed into anything, and the insurance companies certainly flexed their muscles. New Cyber Security policies would no longer be rubber-stamped with nominal premiums. If you needed Cyber Insurance (and you do), the renewal was predicated on having Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) in place, at a minimum. Many have gone even further and most insurance companies have a questionnaire for you to fill out.

In the past, you may have made your 'best guess' when filling out these IT security questionnaires, but you have a lot at stake if any answer is wrong, whether you knew it or not. If you say you have automated patch management and anti-virus updates,

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but you don't, and you have a ransom event or some other cyber security event, you may find your claim denied! The insurance companies will provide insurance, but you have to do your part to keep things secure. Many other policies include premium incentives if you agree to certain safeguards.

So what's the fuss? It seems several insurance companies are still behind when they look at payouts versus premiums. The Managed Services Providers (MSPs), your IT specialists, have been running into a very deceptive tactic all across the U.S. You may have allowed them to run a scan of your network as part of your insurance application process. In some cases (not all, of course), when these scans come back, there may be questionable findings, or things that look concerning. The insurance company presents these to you, says they can't renew the policy given the results, and offers to put you in touch with *their* MSP to get everything cleaned up.

Why would they do that? Why not offer to share the results with *your* MSP so your existing team can remediate what was found, or in some cases, debunk some of the findings? For many of

our clients, there's no local network at all, just a work group behind a firewall; all the servers might be in the cloud; the scan won't include at-home computers which are more likely to be at risk. Why would they offer *'their'* MSP?

Turns out one of the fastest growing segments in the IT community, selling the most licenses for a Compliance Manager, is an insurance company! The scan results are delivered with some technical requests and something like 'While we understand this contingency is technical in nature, please note that our security team is available to assist in the implementation of remediation measures.' The recommended MSP gets the additional business and the insurance company gets a commission/kickback for referring the service, further helping them recoup their losses.

To be fair, sometimes a scan will identify something that needs attention. Any scan results should be reviewed by your current IT group, your trusted advisor. If you get 'geek speak,' get a second opinion.

What to do next? Please connect with us (or your IT group) on a regular basis to review your security and systems.

Thoughtfully consider the recommendations, then open your checkbook. You insure your car and still lock it. Insure your technology and take the recommended precautions and safeguards, including staff training! Let's dive in and make a plan! - CMW

Cathy & Larry Sightings



Catherine sang with the Alleluia Orchestra at Grand Canyon Univ in Phoenix!

Larry is playing his French Horn in multiple orchestras this season and heading up our generator project!

"Innovation is not absolutely necessary, but then neither is survival."

— Andrew Papageorge

Lead Like It Matters, Craig Groeschel

I've heard Craig speak on several occasions, and each time, I was challenged and inspired. In this recent book he focuses on leadership principles for a church that lasts. However, many of these concepts, thought-provoking questions, and examples have a direct correlation with our businesses, organizations we serve, and even our families.

First of all, what is 'it'? He gives some great examples, times when you know a business, an organization, a church just has it! They're on fire, excited, motivated, with almost cult-like focus — who doesn't want to be part of something exciting?



There are three (3) sections to the book; What is *it*? What contributes to *it*? And What does it mean to get it

Book Nook

back and guard it? Some highlights include the importance of a vision, a BHAG, something to strive for that is valuable and bigger than day-to-day. It's amazing how we tend to want to 'copy' someone's formula, a big business that has had a success, or someone's style, hoping that the formula will give us the result. He shares what happened when they followed their own formula and watched success and failure, having to figure out what they missed.

There are all kinds of 'nuggets' that I've highlighted; *'successful leaders do consistently what others do occasionally'; 'the passion of the people won't exceed the passion of the leader'; 'Systems create behaviors. Behaviors become habits. Habits drive outcomes'; 'a generation is rejecting 'relevant' and crying out for 'real.'; and so many more. Grab your highlighter! Highly Recommended!-CMW*

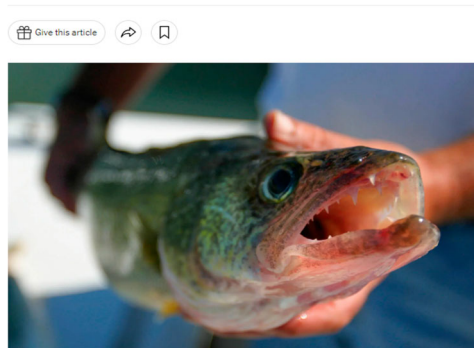


Fishing Scandal

Believe it or not, our tech team has quite the sense of humor and Mary knows exactly how to push their buttons! On a Monday, Mary asked the techs if they had seen the fishing scandal over the weekend. They responded 'no' and wanted to know the topic. Mary sent this screen shot and the article about a Fishing Scandal – using weights in an actual fish to cheat in the competition. A fun Monday was had by all. –CMW

Fishing Contest Rocked by Cheating Charges After Weights Found in Winning Catches

Two competitors stuffed walleye with lead balls in a scheme that was caught after the tournament director and attendees grew suspicious.



A walleye taken from Lake Erie near Marblehead, Ohio. Daniel Miller/Associated Press

By Vimal Patel
Nov 2, 2015

Scam to Collect Cell Phone Numbers

Mike received this one – it said it was from 'Catherine Wendt' but it was someone's gmail account as the sender. The message asked Mike to send his cell phone number because I needed an assignment done quickly, and asked him to watch out for my text.

This would be a great way to get a big list of cell phone numbers for texting scams and phone scams. As with all of these, be diligent, check to see if it's really from who you think it's from, then DELETE! - CMW

Home Computers Accessing Business Files

We've seen a growing number of home computers who need/want to access the business SharePoint documents, but are shared family computers. You probably log in with a local user name (not a company name), so business documents are not readily available.

So how do you access these documents when you're at home without copying them to the local home computer? We recommend Office.com.

At home, log in as usual, then open a Google browser and log into www.Office.com. From here, you can see all your assigned SharePoint sites, your OneDrive (My Documents), search for email, and even view other Office 365 tools such as Teams. None of these files are copied or installed on the local computer, keeping them separate from the home information and users. You can add, modify, and work in these programs, then when you're done, log off and they'll all be available to you when you're back on your work computer. - CMW

MFA: Security Hardening

At a recent industry event, we heard more stories about the successes of MFA, and 'MFA Fatigue' which led to a breach – basically a CEO was pounded with Approval requests, got frustrated, and Approved, but it was hackers!

Microsoft is addressing this trend by adding some two-digit codes and some other features. For our clients, MFA is fully enforced. We will review all our clients' MFA settings and re-align with the latest security guidelines. We'll keep you posted; any questions, just call. – CMW



Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



FIXD – Car Sensor

Meet the car repair sensor that's savings people \$1,000s. Their website says the sensor works with all gas-powered cars and trucks built after 1996 and diesels built after 2008. The sensor is installed in the car and reports to the app on your cell phone, Android or iOS.

The FIXD sensor de-codes the engine lights and lets you know if it's a minor or major event, helping you determine if it's safe to keep driving. The system wirelessly sync's to your phone through Bluetooth when you're in the vehicle. It uses very little power when not communicating with the app, so you can leave the sensor 'on' and plugged in all the time.

The price is listed as \$59.99 plus S&H with a 30-day money back guarantee. I saw offers to Buy 1 get 1 at 50% off as a promo for \$89.99. And like most modern devices, you can upgrade to their FIXD Premium service for just \$5.83/month, billed annually. You get all the regular features plus access to an on-call trusted FIXD mechanic, free cost estimates, the ability to check your emissions before you head to the testing site, making car care easy.

Learn more at www.fixd.com



Construction Corner



S100C v24.2 – Changes

Here's an easy one to get us started. Both Arkansas and Virginia have payroll tax table changes. Indiana allows for additional exemptions for dependents, so check out page 6 of the release notes.

I'm happy to report that this release shows the approved budget in the 3-5 Job screen; finally!

Now the big news – with version 24.2, there is no longer a need to archive payroll before starting a new payroll year. This version allows multiple years of payroll records in the current company dataset. Archiving and closing a payroll year are now distinct processes (similar to the fiscal close changes several years ago).

IMPORTANT: You still need to Close a payroll year BEFORE you can begin processing in the new year, but the closing process doesn't remove records.

The Payroll Closing process has moved back to the 5-3-8 screen. Looks like this resets the earnings to zero so the pay calcs can start over for the new year. The prior year records become 'read only.'

Several reports have been updated to accommodate this new process: 5-1-4 State Tax Reports; 5-1-8 Hours Report; 5-2-2 Payroll Records; 5-2-3 Compute Payroll; 5-2-4 Payroll Checks; 5-3-7 Payroll Audit; 5-3-8 Close Payroll Year; Aatrix Reporting; and in the Database Admin tool, Archive Oldest Payroll Year

New Electronic Filing Requirements by Many States

Join us **Thursday December 15th at 1:00 Central time**. We are hosting a Q&A session with Aatrix to hear their process and pricing to meet these electronic filing rules. You won't want to miss it!

(formerly Archive Payroll).

For the payroll changes, which are promising for cross-year reporting such as WC, you'll need Company Admin and Payroll Admin rights.

WAIT: Before you jump to upgrade, more testing is needed; they've already had one small 'fix.' Nothing like having hundreds of people using it to find out what you missed in testing. This is payroll; proceed SLOWLY! - CMW

SendGrid – Emailing Out of S100C

Many of you email direct deposit vouchers out of S100C. In the past, this was done through Basic Auth which was deemed a security risk and moved to end-of-life by Microsoft in October. With the support of version 24, we were able to move you to SendGrid to accomplish these email processes and keep things safe. There is a 'free' version, but it has a limit to the number of email messages.

Turns out Sage is hardcoded to include sending a copy to the Sender of the email, so if you email 50 vouchers, you've used 100 'sends' since you were copied on all 50. Again, this is hardcoded by Sage. We mention this because for many of you, this has pushed you over the 'free' limit, causing you to pay for this service. It's not a lot of money, but it is another expense; we get it. Feel free to make a suggestion to Sage about making the 'Sender' copy an option, but for now, go ahead and upgrade your version; the safety and security, not to mention the convenience, is worth it! - CMW

Sage Second Screen Issue

Back in 2012, more and more clients were using multiple screens. Now it seems like most people have at least two screens; and some of you have even more! Most of our software programs seem to 'remember' what screen we opened them up on last time. When I launch Teams, it opens on the monitor to

Ready to Close the Year?
Save the date!
Closing the Year Webinar
Thursday, December 1st
1:00 p.m. CST

Register at www.syscon-inc.com/events

the right. When I'm down to one screen (on the plane), it opens on my one and only monitor – no problem.

S100C has not been able to get this logic working. When I move the Client screen (for example) to a different monitor to work, then the next day I only have one monitor, it thinks it's displaying the Client screen on the second monitor – which doesn't exist!

'...it thinks it's displaying the Client screen on the second monitor - which doesn't exist.'

So why mention 2012? That's when Larry did a short video on this issue and showed how to move the phantom screen back to the computer you're working on. The video is still on YouTube, although the screen layout looks a little different these days, and he walks through the steps.

If you don't want to pull up the video, here are the steps. When the screen is open and you can't see it, but in the tray, you see that the program thinks it's being displayed, hover over the screen in the tray with your mouse. Right-click with the mouse on the hovering image and choose Move. With the keyboard arrows, move left/right or up/down until you can see the image, then left click. If you close it and re-open, it will now be in the right place. I guess we'll have to give Sage a little more time to address this. - CMW

M365 Education Station

5 Useful Planner Features

Microsoft Planner is a tool that makes it easy to collaborate with team members and track task management. Planner is best deployed for team projects that involve multiple team members, like moving your office to a new location. You can specify all the tasks required (called a card), categorize those task cards in buckets, assign tasks to team members, set deadlines, attach files, and track progress. Planner is included in most 365 plans, so you likely already have this incredible collaboration tool waiting for you to start using!

1. Move Tasks to Any Plan (New!)

Until recently, it was only possible to move tasks between plans in the same M365 Group. Now you can move tasks among groups. For example, perhaps your Payroll Group has a task for the Controller, who is on the Financial Group. Tap the ellipses (...) in the upper right corner of your task and select 'Move task.' Select where you want to move the task to – you'll get a notification when the task was moved successfully. Clicking the notification brings you to the new location for your task.

2. Recommended Plans (New!)

In the web app, the new Recommended Plans feature will show you tasks that have been assigned to you but haven't been opened yet. You will find Recommended Plans on the left pane between Favorites and Recent. Recommended Plans will only appear if they are not already in your Favorites or Recent sections.

3. Sync with Teams

You can bring a plan into Teams. First, select the Teams group then click on the 'plus' at the top of the screen. You can either type Planner into the search, or locate and select Planner from the app options. Next, click on the 'Use an existing plan' option. A drop-down menu will appear and you can select what plan to share. Then click the purple Save button. Congratulations—you've now synced your Planner plan with Teams!

4. Collaborate with Third Parties

Did you know you can collaborate with parties from outside your organization in Planner? Guest users can create and delete buckets and tasks, edit task

fields, and edit your plan's name. Plus, third-party users will also get some of the notifications from your plan. The owner of your group will need to add the third-party to the group in Outlook. This sends them a welcome message, then they can follow the link to get to the plan.

5. Label Your Tasks

A label is a color-coded visual cue that can be added to tasks, up to 25 labels per task. To add a label to a task, open the task in your plan. On the task card, you'll see a Label icon. Select one of the 25 color options. By default, all the tags are named by their color. Edit the label name to anything you'd like, such as naming the Red label 'Urgent.' Add or remove labels assigned to a task at any time. To delete a label, click the X on the label (note that you must have the task open to delete it).



Tip of the Month

Did you know?

Bucket – A bucket is a column in Planner. Tasks within a plan are grouped into buckets like To Do, In Progress, and Done. Your buckets, your choice of names!

Kanban – Name for the card-based scheduling system that Planner uses.

M365 Group – This is a group you set up to share a collection of resources such as a shared Outlook inbox, a document library, or a shared calendar.

Plan – A plan is the name for the project you are tracking in Planner.

Task – A work item or activity with a specific purpose related to the larger plan. A task is a card that can be moved from bucket to bucket in the plan.



Microsoft

Partner

How Did They Do It? Lynch Construction

In December 1990, Jeff Lynch was 'let go' following some owner decisions. Joan had a good job, so they were ready to start their own company specializing as a residential general contractor for custom home remodels. Joan did accounting on the weekends. Through excellent work and great referrals, the company was incorporated in 1993 and began growing, adding employees, and ultimately requiring Joan's full-time attention in 1998.

When a custom stair vendor announced they were closing, right in the middle of a large project, they grabbed the opportunity. After bringing on their sales person, the Shop Foreman and two others, they created North Shore Stairs as a complement to the Lynch Construction Co.

Jeff is very creative and people look to him for suggestions. The goal is to improve the home, not look like an addition. One client wanted to hide the TV behind a painting, but the interior de-

signer wasn't sure how to make it happen. The Lynch team came up with a pulley system, and with just the touch of a finger, the art is lifted and the TV is available. They were thrilled!



Joan Boulet-Lynch

Having been with Sage 100 Contractor since 2002 and in the Syscon hosting environment since 2012, one of their favorite services is knowing they can call and talk to a real person, not just a machine. Personal contact is huge. Syscon is there to help the Lynch team use technology so they can get back to work! - CMW

Fast Facts

Location: Lake Bluff, IL
Specialty: Residential Custom Home Remodel
Founded: 1993

[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: Cyber Security: What you NEED to Know, breakfast

Date: Thursday, November 10

Time: 8 a.m. CST

Register: ASA Chicago is hosting a breakfast event in Des Plaines, IL; www.ASAchicago.org

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

Date: Thursday, November 17

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events

Event: Closing the Year in Sage 100 Contractor, webinar

Date: Thursday, December 1

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events; free to clients, small fee for guests

Event: Using Aatrix for Electronic PR Filing, webinar

Date: Thursday, December 15

Time: 1 p.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events; Aatrix is presenting!

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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.

