SYSCON U

What's New

What a summer! We held our two-day off-site Annual Traction (EOS) meeting. We're deep into our Initiative One Leadership Training 18-month program with a core 7 team members. We've been onboarding several new staff members; wonderful people!

After a few clients with missing patches had some 'stressful' moments, we've decided to end our AV-only service. We're moving them to AV _and_ Automated Patch right away. Security patches are so critical!

I enjoyed a few days with our IL-based team followed by Preferred Electric celebrating 50 years in business and a family baby shower! Congrats to all! - _Catherine Wendt_

In this Issue

August 2023

How Do You Celebrate?

Most business classes, training books, videos, and other materials designed to help you grow and run your business well don't have a lot to say about celebrating. There are almost always opportunities to celebrate; big things, little things, milestones, made-up holidays, made-up awards, and so on. We have a couple of ideas for you and a few stories.

We had a ridiculous and time-consuming problem with a Microsoft service. We just had to get to the bottom of it, and it was a tough problem, not only for us, but for the Microsoft people we were working with. This was nerve-wracking and a huge weight on Chris's shoulders, but he was determined! When Chris finally got it resolved, literally months of effort, I commented that he was like a bulldog with this problem. A quick Google search and we found a stuffed Bulldog, a perfect gift. Thus we created the Bulldog Award. It came with a presentation in front of the whole company, the stuffed character of

course, and something the team could aspire to.

When Dan joined our team, we had a different sticky problem that was his area of expertise. He absolutely stuck with it and found the solution. We found another stuffed bulldog and added Dan to the Bulldog Award club!

Several years ago we were flirting with a new milestone revenue number. I jokingly said that if we hit it, we should splurge on a bottle of Don Perignon Champagne—the game was on! It took a while but when the day came, I brought the champaign, we pulled out some plastic champagne flutes, closed the conference room door, and we toasted the success!

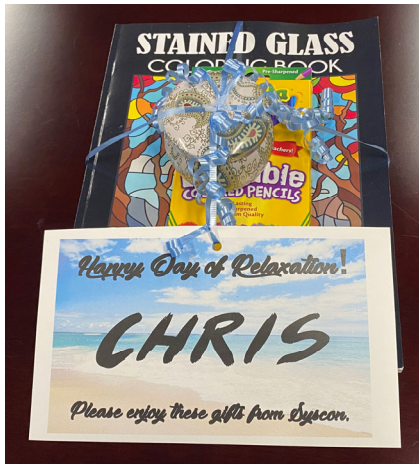On National Relaxation day (it was on the calendar!), we put together a package for everyone: a coloring book, colored pencils, a soothing candle, personalized with a note and a ribbon. Everyone met in the conference room and we took half an hour to relax and visit.

Several of you know that we brought our programming team to Chicago to spend two weeks with our teams. Mariano and Santi have been with us over 5 years, and Jere is our newest member. We worked hard, then took time to visit Top Golf and spend an evening together—such fun!

We've had small heart-shaped chocolate boxes for Valentines day; fuzzy head pens on everyone's desk which led to some creative photos and even a drone ride!

For several years we sent a bottle of wine from Rutherford's Winery in honor of work anniversaries with Syscon, something employee and spouse/significant other could enjoy!

Maybe you've been dedicated to providing a turkey/ham at Thanksgiving; some fun treats around Christmas; congratulations for taking the time and money to support and celebrate with your team. Is there an opportunity to step it up? Do something unexpected?

Cathy & Larry Sightings

Catherine attended our two-day Annual Traction off-site; lots of great planning! Looking forward to the Global Leadership Summit in early August.

Larry has been invited to join the Scottsdale Philharmonic board.

If any of this gets the creative juices flowing, or you've done some fun and creative celebrating, we'd love to hear about it. Just got back from a client celebrating 50 years in business, huge family event for their teams; amazing! What can YOU celebrate!?- *CMW*

"Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm."

- Winston Churchill

Book Nook

Unoffendable: No Offense, None Taken by Ryan Leak

Wow! I'd like to make this short book required reading for every school, university student, everyone considering marriage, everywhere! The focus is that we look inside and think about how we view others, view our circumstances, and how we choose to 'read' others' actions. It's a quick read, but there is much to keep in mind after you finish reading.

In the opening, we're reminded that it's human nature to want others to think highly of us, to be desired by the oppositive sex, to have people think we're good looking, wealthy, and ultimately happy, that we're successful. This often sets the stage for how we 'read' people's comments and the stories we tell ourselves of what they 'really' meant. For context, Mr. Leak tells us how he was mercilessly teased in his early school years. So he responded by being even meaner than they were! He can remember all the times he was offended. Ironically, he doesn't remember the moments he offended others.

The saying 'you reap what you sow' reminds us that life isn't about what you receive, but about what you give. Genuine celebrations of another person's success can disarm our tendency to compare. This means we would have to be looking for the positive things!

His wrap up is the story of his dream to play in the NBA; check it out! People may choose to 'play small' because of a comment that shook their core confidence. Is this true somewhere in your life? So many applications here. Recommended; bring the highlighter! - *CMW*

![SYSCON logo]

Tech Talk

Microsoft Server 2012 R2 Operating System—RIP!

In October 2023, this server operating system will reach it's final conclusion. No longer supported, all extended support will end. If you're running this server operating system (OS), it needs to be upgraded, equipment replaced with a new operating system, or you need to consider a move to the cloud.

Just in time, we're holding our 'Ditch the Old Server' webinar in mid-September. Check out the last page for details. In the meantime, if this is what's running on your server, time to do some quick planning.

BTW—if you're a Sage 100 Contractor user, you have another very good reason to make a change. *S100C version 25 will not install on this end-of-life OS*. If you still run a local network, let's jump on a call! - *CMW*

Quarantined Email from a Known Sender

We've seen this several times. An incoming email is Quarantined by your anti-spam software. You see it's from a vendor you know and recognize, so you release it from quarantine. BUT, before you do, here's something to consider.

Perhaps this is a known and trusted vendor. But there's a reason the scanning software flagged it. There's a very real possibility that the vendor has been compromised or this specific person's email has been compromised and they don't even know it yet!

You'd actually be doing your trusted vendor a favor if you dug into this a bit.

It's worth asking a tech if the email is truly risky, and if so, letting the vendor know that they should engage their tech team to take a look.

We're in this together—let's have each other's back! —*CMW*

You Might Look Like Spam!

We've seen a growing number of clients going back to sending large group email messages to their internal teams or other groups. If your target list has 20 or more names, do NOT send the email through regular channels.

There are some excellent spam filters out there. When an email has more than 20 recipients, it automatically receives a higher possible spam score and it's very possible the email will not be delivered.

Consider a service like Mail Chimp or Constant Contact. There are some 'free' levels and some paid options. If you use a CRM, setup the DKIM configurations and use their services to get the email delivered safely.

What's the big deal? If your domain name (the company web address, ours is Syscon-inc.com) is seen as sending spam, your email may not get to the recipients, but even worse, it might be blacklisted, causing other 'regular' email to be intercepted, as well. If you need options, check in with the techs and we can offer some suggestions.—*CMW*

Background Images, Avatars

Coming soon: Frosted Glass is a type of background effect that helps users keep their privacy with a background blur, but in a more professional and creative way. It lets users have graphics together with a blur effect. With the new frosted glass effect, the transparent area is turned into a blur while the graphic remains.

Another fun feature is the Avatar which is available in preview. You make a digital Avatar of yourself that displays instead of your camera view. As you speak, the mouth will move, but it doesn't follow hand/head gestures (yet!). Press a button to trigger a nod or make a thoughtful gesture.—*CMW*

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

Joy Resolve Barisieur Coffee Alarm Clock

Rise and shine with the Joy Resolve Barisieur Coffee Alarm Clock, the ultimate morning companion that combines the best of both worlds – alarm clock and coffee maker! This sleek and elegant device is here to transform your wake-up routine into a delightful experience.

Measuring a compact size of approximately 6.5 inches in width and 8 inches in height, the Barisieur is designed to fit seamlessly on your bedside table. Fill the water reservoir and add your favorite ground coffee into the filter the night before and set the alarm for your desired wake-up time. As the morning approaches, this ingenious device will start gradually brewing a cup of coffee, filling your room with a mesmerizing scent that gently nudges you awake.

Now, let's talk about the price. The Joy Resolve Barisieur Coffee Alarm Clock is a luxury item, crafted with quality and precision, and priced around $300. While it may not be within everyone's budget, its premium craftsmanship and the unparalleled experience it offers make it a temptation for coffee enthusiasts.

So, start your day right, and let the Barisieur be your ticket to a blissful and flavorful morning! Check it out at joyresolve.com!

CONSTRUCTION CORNER

S100C—RTF Printer

So what is this and when/why would you use it?

Sage comes with two default printers, one is the S100C PDF printer which generates PDF's, and the other is the RTF print driver.

The RTF printer will create a Word-style document of whatever you're printing. This allows you to make simple changes such as a Progress Billing Applications number, or other small edit with relative ease. Then print the 'Word' document as a PDF and send as usual.

Client Statements and Progress Bills are the most common uses I've seen. It's a handy tool.—*CMW*

WA State Cares Act—Starting July 1st

Beginning July 1st, 2023, WA State employers are to deduct 0.58%(no wage limit) from employees' checks for the new WA State Cares act. Lots to consider, so here's what we learned and what you need to know!

The goal is for all residents to have disability benefits. Some employers already provide this type of coverage option, so if an employee already had coverage, they could request an exemption letter. If an employee can provide their exemption letter, they do not have to participate in this deduction.

Other exemptions are Active Duty Military, home mailing addresses outside of WA, or those over 65.5 years. Why an age guideline? Because although paying into the fund starts in July 2023, there is a 10-year delay to use the benefits!

So for now, any new hires that have the exemption letter are exempt from the deduction. Otherwise all new hires, and all existing employees who don't have the letter are to have the deduction added to their payroll. Payments will be made quarterly to the WA Employment Security Department, above and beyond the SUI. We haven't seen the reports yet, so Q3 should be interesting! - *CMW*

BIM Services—A Growing Need

We were recently approached by an excellent vendor of ours about their new BIM Services offering and if it would be a fit for our clients. We hear about 'BIM' all the time but haven't heard much discussion across our client base, so we decided to meet with the vendor.

> *"Although paying into the fund starts July 2023, there is a 10-year delay to use the benefits!"*

Turns out there is a growing contractual obligation to provide BIM documents for government projects and hospitals exceeding $5,000,000. The goal is electronic drawings of the Subcontractors' work, compliance with original Architectural specs, and As-Built drawings, along with other documentation.

If new contracts require these documents and you don't have the software expertise, we have an excellent resource you can talk with. In the meantime, we're looking for an opportunity to hold a Q&A webinar so we can all learn more about this growing requirement and how to find resources to get it done so you can bid the project! - *CMW*

ACH Scam—Remind Your Team

Recently a client received an email asking that future ACH payments go to a new bank and account. It was a really 'good' email and in many ways, looked legit; it wasn't!

All the names, spellings, and other details looked just right. When you got to the bottom of the email, the domain name was one letter off, just one letter!

Rather than try to be a detective, we recommend you have an internal policy with absolutely no exceptions; all requests to change bank information—employees, vendors, clients—must involve a phone call that you initiative with a primary contact, no exceptions! If you experience fraud, contact the bank, ask that the FBI get involved, escalate to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. Then go sooth your team member; no one wants to have been tricked and I'm sure they feel just awful. Provide some encouragement, then re-train the team! -*CMW*

A Few S100C Tips

Changing banks? Many of us have a default General Ledger account in various cash screens including 3-3, 1-2, 1-1, 4-3-2, 5-2-4, and so on. If you'd like to **change the account default**, be sure you log in with Administrator Rights, then in the account field, enter the new account, then go back to the field and hit the F7 key. Click on the pull down arrow in the 'Default entry to' field and choose the new account, then Save. You've just updated the default account.

There's a lot of confusion about the **Reference#** field in the 3-2 and 4-2 screens. It's designed to allow you to reference an existing invoice/credit to which the new record applies.
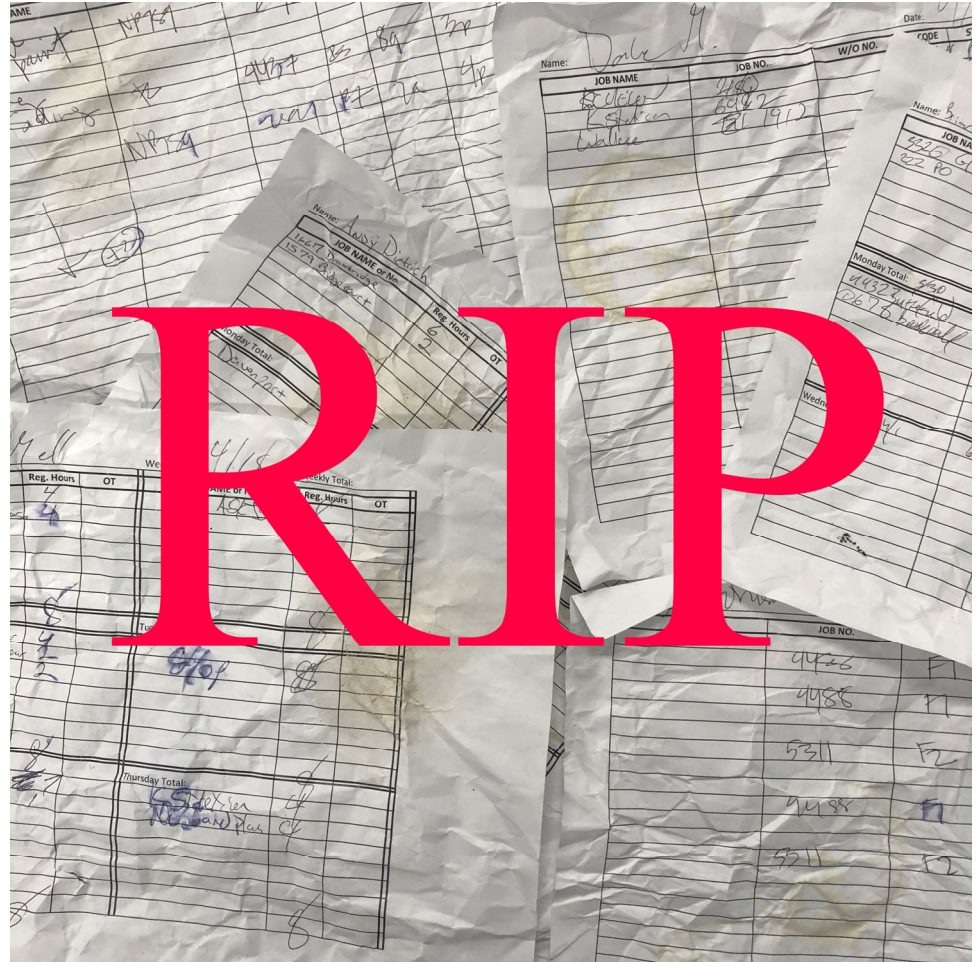
In either screen, enter the credit (sometimes an invoice) as usual. In the Reference# field, enter the invoice/credit to which the new record will be applied. When you save, it will say the referenced invoice was, or was not found. If it was found, you can choose Yes to apply the new record right away, or No if you don't want to apply it, or Cancel if it says 'was not' found!

This saves time by applying and clearing the records, the Payment details are right there, and keeps them off your Aging reports! - *CMW*

Field Integrated Time
for Sage 100 Contractor

If this looks like your desk, or the dashboard of your Project Managers' trucks, it's 'time' to put this behind you! We're all about workflow automation. With the help of our clients, we've built a field time collection software program that works with iPhones, Androids, Tablets, and a browser. No duplicate setup of jobs, employees, or other info. It's fully integrated with Sage 100 Contractor and NONE of your data is every installed on their devices.

Intrigued? Let us show you how this works and you'll wonder how you ever functioned without it!

Learn to Love your Mondays!

Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider

Microsoft | Partner

Microsoft CSP

We went through a fairly lengthy process to apply as a direct Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider (CSP). This allows us to work directly with Microsoft rather than through another vendor. We have access to better pricing for clients' managed licenses, better support, and we even pay an additional monthly fee for a premier level support with Microsoft so we bubble up on their list.

Azure and Microsoft 365

We successfully use the AWS (Amazon Web Services) cloud platform for our Field Integrated Time (FIT) System app. When we were choosing whether to use AWS or Azure for our cloud hosting platform, as much as we like AWS and it's been great for our app, Azure was hands-down the right choice for our clients. It is fully optimized with the Microsoft 365 suite of products including Teams, OneDrive, SharePoint, and many of the add on modules such as the amazing Power BI!

How Did They Do It?
Hartwig Mechanical, Inc.

Vincent Wilas, the CFO of Hartwig Mechanical, recently shared insights about his journey and the challenges faced by the company in an interview with Sycon. He emphasized the positive impact of technology on their success and transformation.

He joined Hartwig Mechanical, a third-generation family-owned company with a strong ethical foundation and an excellent reputation in Illinois and Wisconsin. He attributed their success to hard work, making the right choices for customers and employees, and implementing efficient systems for smooth business operations.

The biggest challenge they faced in the previous year was the software conversion to Sage 100 Contractor. This transition was complex and transformed their business practices, and he acknowledged its significance in streamlining their operations.

Utilizing Sage 100C, they revolutionized their processes, incorporating

add-ons from Sycon like Positive Pay, Cost-to-Complete, WIP reporting, and the FIT System! They also introduced the Service Module and brought payroll in-house at a significant cost savings. S100C played a crucial role in efficiently tracking job costs for their 500 active projects.

Vincent Wilas, CFO

Software conversion has undoubtedly provided them with efficiencies and improved tracking, granting greater real-time visibility into job and financial performance. While there were initial glitches with the breadth of the implementation, they worked through them and achieved a perfect system. — *RB*

Fast Facts

Location: Harvard, IL
Specialty: HVAC and Plumbing
Founded: 1958
Affiliations: PHCC, PICRA, MCA of Chicago, SMACNA, MSCA, MCAA

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

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

Webinar: Ditch the Old Server

When: Thurs Sept 14th
Time: 1:00 pm Central

If you have Server Operating System 2012 R2 or aging equipment, you won't want to miss this!

Kevin Mitnick, August 1963 to July 2023. An amazing mind, an amazing story. So glad I had a chance to meet him in 2018 at an industry event. Our prayers to your family after a hard fight with cancer.

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.