



## What's New

This year, February has an extra day, Leap Year Day. This happens every four years. Of course it's also the month when we enjoy all the heart-shaped boxes filled with candy, and those special father-daughter events.

We continue adding automation to our systems. We know you 'love' our detailed invoices. You may have noticed your most recent monthly invoice included all your Microsoft licenses and expiration dates.

Speaking of 'love,' we've sent a short questionnaire along with a special treat. We'd 'love' to hear back from you; enjoy a treat on us! A reminder that March is also the beginning of Daylight Savings; Spring Ahead!

- Catherine Wendt

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**February 2024**



## Trust Accelerators

Late 2022, as the pandemic was in our rearview mirrors, we decided to commit to a Leadership Transformation program for seven of our team members. After many changes in our infrastructure and product offerings, and the new skills we needed to build on these changes, we felt this core group would be a great place for our next investment.

Our group would be led by Dr. Fred Johnson from Initiative One. This 15-month program would start in February 2023 with an in-person kick-off meeting, followed by eight workshops over the coming months where we would get together as a group to review the materials and the homework. To help it all sink in, there are several quarterly check-ins, after the initial trainings.

In our first in-person meeting, we were all provided the workbook (which was quite thick) and

discussed the goals and ground rules for the coming months. In addition to the homework and attendance, this was a commitment to each other to participate wholly. To foster and protect that kind of commitment, Dr. Fred asked us to talk through things that allow us to trust others, things that build trust, and to make a list.

We'd like to share our list with you and hope it encourages you to build your own list for your core teams. The next step is to share it, hold each other to it, and see what kind of impact it can have on your organization! We have our list on a huge Post-It note in the Tech room, in our Annual State of the Company updates, and in all our team performance reviews.

**Patience:** We live in a fast-paced world in general, and with our clients, there are often deadlines and work interruptions that are waiting

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for our resolution, ASAP! When we work with team members, patience and long listening are key to building trust. Showing that you're willing to give your undivided attention and listen builds trust.

**Honesty, without paying a price:**

If asked, I think most people would say they are honest and want others to be honest with them. Sometimes that honesty comes with a price and it might be too high to pay! If my being honest with you costs me my job, the respect of my peers, or other repercussions, that is too high a price! On the other hand, without honesty, there is a lack of trust, leaving no room to build the relationship or the team.

**Grace:** We all make mistakes and when they happen, we all hope for a little grace, maybe even forgiveness. That doesn't mean it's 'OK' to continue making mistakes. Our clients, our teams can grow and be successful when they learn from mistakes and we come alongside each other, brush each other off, and step back in the ring!

**Be Direct:** So if we're looking for Honesty, and hoping for Grace, how we direct our comments and conversations takes on a new level of importance. KDR stands for Kind, Direct, and Respectful. With these three ingredients. We will build trust and move toward success.

**Assume the Best:** When we're having a good day, this might come pretty easily. Add the pressure of deadlines, a sick child at home, a migraine, or one more client request, and it's easy to assume others have an ulterior motive. We can come up with some great stories in our heads of all the possible negative outcomes or ulterior motives, or we can walk into the conversation and assume the best!

**Keep Your Commitments:** Do what you said you would do, when you said you would do it. This builds trust!

**No Meetings After the Meeting:** We sit in an important meeting, talk things through, ask for questions and suggestions, working to come to the best plan. Then as people walk out of

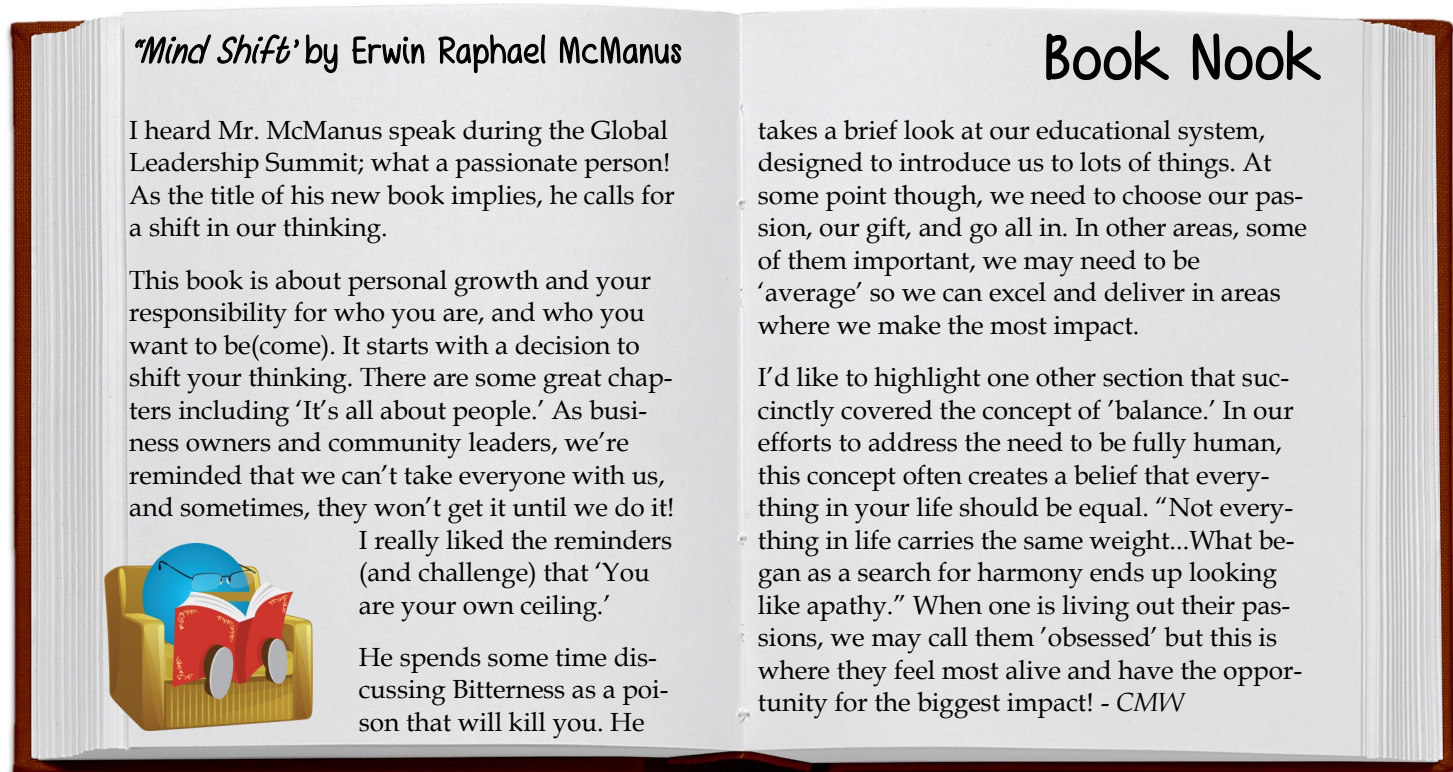
the meeting, they have mini-conversations tearing down the plan. After the meeting, you've been heard, a decision is made, and it's all hands on deck to make it successful.

**Deliver the Mail to the Right Address:**

When you need to work through an issue with someone, it's perfectly fine to gather some perspective and even advice before you approach them. However, taking the issue to others who cannot help fix it or move it forward breaks down trust.

**Confidentiality:** When we've been Kind and Direct, approaching others with the best of intentions along with Grace, honoring confidentiality is the crowning touch on Trust. — CMW

*"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just to take the first step."*  
— Martin Luther King Jr.



*"Mind Shift" by Erwin Raphael McManus*

I heard Mr. McManus speak during the Global Leadership Summit; what a passionate person! As the title of his new book implies, he calls for a shift in our thinking.

This book is about personal growth and your responsibility for who you are, and who you want to be(come). It starts with a decision to shift your thinking. There are some great chapters including 'It's all about people.' As business owners and community leaders, we're reminded that we can't take everyone with us, and sometimes, they won't get it until we do it!



I really liked the reminders (and challenge) that 'You are your own ceiling.'

He spends some time discussing Bitterness as a poison that will kill you. He

**Book Nook**

takes a brief look at our educational system, designed to introduce us to lots of things. At some point though, we need to choose our passion, our gift, and go all in. In other areas, some of them important, we may need to be 'average' so we can excel and deliver in areas where we make the most impact.

I'd like to highlight one other section that succinctly covered the concept of 'balance.' In our efforts to address the need to be fully human, this concept often creates a belief that everything in your life should be equal. "Not everything in life carries the same weight...What began as a search for harmony ends up looking like apathy." When one is living out their passions, we may call them 'obsessed' but this is where they feel most alive and have the opportunity for the biggest impact! - CMW



## Social Engineering: We Were Targeted!

January was a busy month for hackers and social engineers! We have a couple VERY targeted examples that hit our team. We knew what was happening right away but saved some examples so we can tell you what to look for.

The first one was an email (odd sender) from the HR-Management Desk. It said that my payroll expense report will be reimbursed on my next paycheck dated on the 1099 form (a mix of payment vehicles). All I had to do was fill in and complete the form and submit it to a specific email. The email address ended in our Syscon domain, but it was not a valid email 'person' for us. It said this was an automated message so the inbox wasn't monitored. If I had any questions or to fill in the form, I could use the barcode (it was a QR code) or submit an 'enquiry' to HR. It even had our blue logo in the body of the email! To really spice it up, it asked how their service was, had an important reminder, and even referenced an IRS Circular document.

The next event targeted several of us. Matt got a text to his personal cell phone, from 'me' saying 'Hello Matt! Let me know if you got this text and if you are in the office, Thanks.' It was signed 'Catherine Wendt President Syscon Inc.' Dan got the exact same message to his personal cell phone, then Ryan. Then a couple of us received some requests to buy gift cards, again as if they were from me. One of the messages offered 300,000 'Chris points,' something we've joked about with each other – how would they know that?

Larry received one of these too, but it said 'Lawrence' so he knew that wasn't from me!

Pretty alarming that they had some of our personal cell phone numbers, but you might remember a previous story we ran about *People Search*, an online website with way more info than Chris expected.

What would your team have done? Would they have sent each other a few Teams messages to find out what was going on? Would they have warned each other? What regular warnings and tips have shared with YOUR team members? Perhaps this is a good place to start! - CMW

## Replaced Computers

When you replace old computers, we may have programs and other data that is moved from the old computer to the new. In general, we recommend turning off the old computer and setting it aside for 30 days or so, just to be sure you have everything you need from it. During that short time, both computers need anti-virus and patch management to stay safe. Then what?

If you plan to re-deploy that old computer to another team member, it should stay on the list of Managed Endpoints (computers) so it stays safe and up-to-date. When the new team member is ready, we can setup the new user fairly quickly and they'll be up and running.

What if the computer will NOT be re-deployed and is actually end-of-life? At the end of the 30-day window, we recommend you give us a call so we can fully remove it from our management platform, pull the hard drive out and destroy it, and recycle the computer (some recycle companies will provide certificates of destruction for the hard drive). This is the only way we know to fully remove the computer, and you can be sure no one tries to put it back in service! – CMW



## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



### Nixplay Digital Frame

This Valentine's Day, capture and cherish your special moments with the Nixplay 10" HD Matted Touch Screen Wi-Fi Digital Frame. Designed to showcase your cherished memories, this digital frame combines elegance and modern technology for the perfect gift.

Featuring a stunning 10.1" 1280 x 800 HD display, the Nixplay Digital Frame brings your photos to life with vibrant colors and crystal-clear details. The touch screen functionality adds a contemporary touch, allowing for easy navigation and customization of your photo slideshow.

With Wi-Fi connectivity, updating photos becomes a breeze – simply upload your favorite moments directly from your smartphone or computer. This real-time updating feature ensures that your frame is always filled with the latest memories, making it a dynamic and thoughtful gift for your loved one.

Priced affordably at \$144, the Nixplay Digital Frame offers a sophisticated and sentimental way to celebrate your relationship. Check them out at [nixplay.com](http://nixplay.com)



# CONSTRUCTION CORNER



## S100C: Some Updates

We have some time-sensitive updates to share with you, so here we go!

**Medicare** – high-wage earners including owners and sales teams may have additional Medicare deductions once they hit over \$200K in wages. This is an additional 0.9% deduction after they hit the ceiling, plus the regular 1.45% deductions. The additional deduct is NOT matched by the employer, though. Be sure to pay the right total for your 941 payments. When entering CPA-specific adjustments, be sure the CPA has also considered these limits. The limit differs based on marital status, BTW.

**S100C upgrades** – if you're in our hosted Azure environment, DO NOT install this update on your own; it won't go well! There are several steps when it comes to these cloud-based servers. Give us a call to schedule the upgrade (need everyone out of the program for about an hour). It's included in your monthly hosting fee, so when you're ready, let us know; that way you'll have a successful upgrade!

**Deleted Records** – we've seen a growing number of requests to restore deleted records in Sage 100 Contractor. Did you know you can remove Delete rights for user security groups? It's a great way to protect your data and still make sure people can do their job. There are very FEW situations where data should be deleted in S100C, anyway.

### Cost Codes in FIT

When team members enter time through FIT, they choose their job, then see the list of Cost Codes. The ones in Green are part of the Job. The rest can be selected if needed. If they choose one of the green ones, they'll know it's in the budget.

**Clean-up** – are you cleaning up AR, AP, or other records? Many clients are gathering reports and information to share with the CPA so they can get started on the tax returns. If you have old items (from a prior year), please do not VOID those records! They're part of the prior year's completed tax year, and if you void them, you just changed the prior year's numbers! We recommend that you create a REVERSING record to clean these up. Need Help? Let us know! -CMW

***"If you're in our hosted Azure environment, DO NOT install this update on your own; it won't go well!"***

### When Textura or a GC Pays Your Subs...

We have a client with an exciting new project coming up. Many of their subs will be paid directly through Textura, so the question came up, how to make the entries and run the job in S100C?

Great news – S100C is nicely built to handle this very well! Here are the general concepts and how the data will flow. If you have specific questions, let's get on a call.

There are no changes to your billing. Setup the progress bill with the Schedule of Values including your items as well as your subcontractors'. Track your billing, Change Orders, and job costs as usual.

When the draw is paid, you will only receive a portion of the funds; the rest is distributed to the subs, directly. In the Cash Receipt screen, pull up the open invoice and your regular checking account. Enter the amount paid directly to you and Save. In the same Cash Receipt screen, separate entry, use a cash clearing account, pull up the remaining

balance of the invoice, and enter the amount paid directly to the subs, in total. This should be the balance of the draw request. When you Save, the funds will be in the cash clearing account.

In the AP module, select all the open AP invoices that were paid directly by Textura (or the GC) and select them to pay. Confirm that the total to be 'paid' matches the total in the Cash Clearing account entry.

In the Vendor payment screen, select Voucher instead of check. This will create vouchers that you can even share with your subs so they know what to expect and what invoices are being paid. In the following screen, select the same Cash Clearing account and 'pay' the Subs, printing the vouchers to share (optional). This updates all the open AP, and your final double-check is that the Cash Clearing account should be back to zero! -CMW

### Sage Support: Beware!

During the crazy December and January season, Sage and Aatrix support are buried in calls and chat requests; it's nearly impossible to get ahold of them! This isn't unusual, and the hackers know all about it – an opportunity for them to try to trick you!

A couple years ago, Sage 100 Contractor support moved to the process where all initial requests have to begin through their Chat. This is very frustrating in general, but with the high demand of questions, it's even worse, plus most of us have deadlines we're trying to meet.

We know of one company that really needed to talk with someone, so they searched Google for a Sage support number. They found one, but the person on the other end insisted to get on their computer, then wanted the firewall opened up so they could look at the data, and so on. It was a hacker!! If you need to call someone, call us and we'll help you and escalate if needed! - CMW

# Introducing Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365: A New Way to Work Smarter



## Why should you try Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365?

We believe that the integration of AI into technology will be one of the biggest shifts in technology that we will see in our lifetime. Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365 is a glimpse into the future of work, where you can collaborate with intelligent agents to achieve your goals faster and easier. Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365 is not just a tool, it is a partner that can understand your needs and preferences, and offer you personalized suggestions and solutions.

We will be putting together a webinar to cover Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365 in more detail soon. If you are excited and want to dive right in, let us know and we would be happy to get you set up with some Copilot for Microsoft 365 licenses right away!

## Want to be REALLY impressed???

Everything above this section was created using Copilot for Microsoft 365! I spent about 5 minutes writing out the prompt in Word and pressed "Generate" and it gave me the full article you see above! It even included a great looking format!

To give you a full perspective, this is exactly what I fed into Copilot for Microsoft 365, misspellings, grammar mistakes, and all:

*Create a three paragraph article enthusiastically describing the availability of Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365 based on these points:*

- *We are very excited to announce the availability of Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365*
- *You have probably heard about Chat GPT. Copilot for Microsoft 365 is like Chat GPT with the context of your Microsoft 365 data, and more!*
- *You can use Copilot for Microsoft 365*

*to: Add animations to a powerpoint slide, summarize your inbox, create a proposal from your meeting notes, summarize a teams meeting you missed and so much more!*

- *To learn more about what you can do with Microsoft 365 Copilot, checkout our article here: <https://syscon-inc.com/ai-tools-from-microsoft-changing-the-way-you-work/>*
- *I believe the integration of AI into technology will be one of the biggest shifts in technology that we will see in our lifetime!*
- *We will be putting together a webinar to cover microsoft 365 copilot in more detail soon. If you're excited and want to dive right in, let us know and we'd be happy to get you setup with some Copilot for Microsoft 365 licenses right away!*

**Truly INCREDIBLE!!!!**

## Pricing

Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365 is now available for \$30/user/month. Unlike other Microsoft 365 licenses, this license requires that the full \$360/license annual amount is paid up front. This is a decision from Microsoft that I would guess is due to the eye watering price of the hardware Microsoft had to purchase to make these powerful AI tools available to us.

Not sure if that's cheap or expensive? Let's take a closer look. If Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365 could save you just 10 minutes per day. That's over 3 hours per month! So, as long as you're making over \$10/hour, it's totally worth it! - CLW

## What is Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365?

We are very excited to announce the availability of Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365, a new feature that leverages the power of artificial intelligence to help you get more done in less time. You have probably heard about Chat GPT, a groundbreaking natural language generation system that can write anything from a tweet to a blog post. Copilot for Microsoft 365 is like Chat GPT with the context of your Microsoft 365 data, and more!

## What can you do with Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365?

You can use Copilot for Microsoft 365 to enhance your productivity and creativity across the Microsoft 365 suite of applications. For example, you can use Copilot for Microsoft 365 to:

- Add animations to a PowerPoint slide with a simple command
- Summarize your inbox and prioritize your emails
- Create a proposal from your meeting notes
- Summarize a Teams meeting you missed and get the key takeaways
- And so much more!

To learn more about what you can do with Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365, check out our recent article *AI Tools from Microsoft: Changing the Way You Work!*



## How Did They Do It? Guthrie Glass & Mirror

The CFO of Guthrie Glass & Mirror, James Baumgardner, provided insights into the construction industry and the company's strategies for success.

With a family history in construction dating back to the 1970s in the New Jersey and Philadelphia area, James initially pursued a career in accounting with a BIG4 firm. However, in early 2020, he transitioned to the family business, aligning his skills with the company's growth plans.

He attributes his success to the guidance of his parents and the dedication of the incredible staff. Recognizing the challenges of employee recruitment and retention, the company has prioritized employee well-being by implementing various perks and wellness programs. He emphasized the company's commitment to assisting customers in unique situations within the diverse landscape of commercial construction projects. Collaborating with architects, the company constantly reimagines plans and suggests cost-effective alternatives to bring visions to life.

Highlighting the invaluable S100C expertise from Syscon, he noted that the part-

nership has enabled the company to explore and confidently adopt new technologies, enhancing operational efficiency.

In his role as CFO, he and his team oversee the administrative side of the business, ensuring the team has the necessary resources to excel in construction. His favorite part of the day is the unique culture within the company, fostering a close-knit environment that feels like one big family.

James offers a piece of advice to others, emphasizing the importance of doing the right thing in both personal and professional dilemmas, even if it's not the easiest or most financially beneficial choice. This principle has been a cornerstone of Guthrie Glass & Mirror's approach. – RB



**James Baumgardner,**  
CFO

### Fast Facts

**Location:** Egg Harbor, NJ

**Specialty:** Glazing and Metal Fabrication

**Founded:** 1986

**Professional Affiliations:** AGMA, AGI, and GBCA

 [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

### Multi-Generation Workforce, webinar

**Date:** Thursday, Feb 22nd

**Time:** 11:00 a.m. Central

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

### 'Leap' into Electronic Field Time, webinar

**Date:** Thursday, Feb 29th

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. Central

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

## 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.

