Syscon U

What's New

Team members! You've probably heard a few new voices and seen a few new faces. This has been another exciting year. By the time you receive this, we will be able to announce that we made the Inc. 5000 Fastest Growing Companies for the second year in a row!

August is our annual state of the company and this year is no exception. We'll bring everyone together for some in person updates and some fun. We're excited to have everyone together for a few days. Our theme for the past twelve months was Integrate: New Team Members, New Products, and we've certainly embraced both. We'll unveil this year's theme at our August event. - *Catherine Wendt*

In this Issue

August 2025

Business Growth
A 'Champaign' Problem

Many of you are experiencing some significant growth — very exciting! The high-level story usually starts with a leadership team focusing on sales; who are our best customers? How can we make our PM's and Foremen more knowledgeable and accountable about their jobs? What are our clients' pain points and how can we minimize them? We've seen many clients dig into the data using Power BI reports, adding Cost to Complete tools, and dig into budget-to-actual reports.

Of course, the success of landing more work brings the next challenge; labor! To keep these new contracts and receive future work from these new clients, the current work has to be done well. To make the expected margins, it has to be done efficiently and on time. Hiring, training, and retaining staff, both in the field and in the office, takes a great deal of focus, too.

More than one client has commented that when they're super focused on building the backlog, it's difficult to stay in touch with the team and keep the hiring momentum. When they're focused on team members and finding the right people, it's easy to let go of the gas pedal with regards to sales.

We're seeing many of these companies choosing to expand the leadership team. One or two people just can't keep the laser focus on all these aspects while also running the field. As the company grows, there may be more overhead labor, and the roles of the owners may change. It's tough for an owner who knows everything about all their jobs to come to the realization that with growth, this just isn't possible anymore. Choosing the right people that you can trust (and verify) to take these roles is challenging, as

SYSCON

(continued from page 1)
is letting go. You may need to learn new skills yourself!

I'm reminded of a Darren Hardy example. He was sharing a story about a friend who had started with her company and worked her way to the top. She was smart and successful, but she was frustrated and overwhelmed. As her responsibilities **grew, there just wasn't time to get** everything done and keep the high **standards. Darren's advice? He said** the problem was that she was too competent! When you know how to **do the work, it's tempting to just 'do it yourself.' When you don't know** how, you have no choice but to rely on others and come up with ways to double-check and confirm. In this case, she knew how to do all these **things, but that's not what she should** be doing. Her job had changed and she needed to allow others to handle these tasks. Sound familiar?

When we hear people talk about **'growing pains,' we often think of** field and office labor, long hours, hiring woes. Many companies now realize there are other 'growing pains' to

consider including changes in leadership roles. Knowing this is a new journey, some companies are choosing programs like Traction or Scaling Up. Some are even hiring coaches to help them walk through this journey. These methods also include reviewing procedures and processes; do they still make sense or even apply anymore? Are new tools or resources needed? Very exciting, but daunting since all of this is new!

A reminder that these are **'champaign' problems! It's a journey** and an opportunity for growth for you and the company. We would encourage you to join an industry association or peer group; attend workshops; consider membership in CFMA or something similar; meet with us for an IT check-in regarding hardware and software; consider a business coach or method.

And don't forget to celebrate the successes and milestones along the way! **A 'cupcake Friday' brings some** much needed fun AND a treat. On a personal level, a champaign toast to thank your family members for their support - *CMW*

Cathy & Larry Sightings

Catherine, Chris, and Matt attended our two-day Annual Traction off-site in Chicago; lots of great planning! Looking forward to the Global Leadership Summit in early August and the TUG Annual event.

Larry's Aunt is turning 99 years old! In addition to family visits in CA and TX, he and some friends are planning a trip to Prague this fall!

"We tend to overestimate the effects of a technology in the short run and underestimate the effect in the long run."

- Amar's Law

Book Nook

Fearless Leadership by Carey D. Lohrenz

This book was given to me by my C12 peer, Buddy; thanks! Ms. Lohrenz was the first female F-14 Tomcat Fighter in the US Navy, having flown missions worldwide as a combat-mission-ready pilot. There are quite a few **'firsts' here, and in the book, she talks about** the importance of earning these opportunities, pursuing them relentlessly and respectfully.

Ms. Lohrenz walks us through her initial inter**est in flying, her family's background in serv**ing in the military, and her desire to follow that **path, as well. It's a fascinating look into the** process including the intense pressure during training, the need to winnow out those who would not be able to take the pressure and risk, and her personal check-ins as she felt challenged and needed to decide how to proceed, if to proceed!

At the end of the book, she shares the controversy surrounding her Naval position and how this ultimately ended. The middle of the book covers the application of the Navy principles and the many leadership lessons she learned through her training and experience as a fighter pilot. An interesting application for us is her observations about the 19 and 20-year-olds rotating in and out of the carrier ships and how **her life and many others' counted on these** young people getting things right! The importance of team, training, and more.

There are many practical applications to business and the background is very interesting. The importance of debriefing really caught my eye. Highly Recommended - *CMW*

Get More Tips and Topics: www.Syscon-inc.com
630.850.9039

Tech Talk

Introducing… Our Client Portal!

When we switched our ticketing system a few years ago, we had several target goals as well as a long-term vision. We've met several of the goals and are thrilled to begin steps towards the larger vision which starts with a Client Portal!

The first step is to allow clients to look at their support tickets. We've been testing this with a couple of clients and it's going quite well. The primary contact person can log into the Client Portal and see the status of tickets, see details, submit a new ticket, and request specific services.

One of our clients reported "It has become part of my daily logins. The site is user friendly, very easy to navigate." She continued, "Rather than going through my inbox finding the email to look back at, it's all right there nice and organized." Another primary contact said "It's been handy to reference and know a matter is closed instead of checking with you for a follow up."

For our managed services clients, the person pulls up a browser and enters 'support.syscon-inc.com' which brings them to a log in page. By clicking the 'sign in with Microsoft' option, our ticketing system recognizes the user and their level of access and logs them in. The primary page is a nice blue background with a coffee cup, some 'boxes' with quick access, and a list of recent activity. The person can choose report options, view issues, or even use our new Hardware Request form.

Speaking of the hardware request form, this is the next step of our longer vision.

When clients request hardware quotes, it usually turns into several email messages as we clarify who will be using the equipment, preferences, and confirm if any other peripherals are needed. Phase I of this form allows you to choose what kind of equipment you're asking about, let's say Laptops, and provides a list of things we'll need to know. What size monitor? Do you need a 10-key? How about a docking station? Do you want the extended warranty? What about an external keyboard or mouse? And more! Choose a different option and you'll get a different list. This should be a great time-saver for both of us!

Keep an eye on your email and our newsletter for the official launch of our Client Portal. Authorized users can be granted additional access to view and submit requests for the entire company!

Don't worry—we still answer our phones 'live' Monday through Friday, 8 to 5 Central time, and you can still email in your requests to CustomerSupport@syscon-inc.com. Nothing has changed here! We're providing additional access that will allow you to see your tickets, the status, submit tickets, and other ticket-related details. We are VERY excited about this! —CMW

How About a Code Word

During the CFMA Annual conference, the BMO Financial Crime Unit and FBI co-presented on the Digital Age; it was fascinating! There were several scary stories. Several were related to stealing photos, voices, with knowledge of relationships to trick people and gain access, family and professional. As a Managed Service provider and active educators in the construction business world, we have many images, recordings, and sound bites. With the latest AI tools, these could absolutely be faked.

We have put in place a code word for the Leadership team! If the request is security or money-related, or changes user access, we will challenge for the code word. Consider a code word for your office or your family. —CMW

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

Whoop Strap 5.0

Looking for a fitness tracker that won't distract you every five minutes? The Whoop Strap 5.0 is a screenless, minimalist health wearable that delivers deep insights on sleep, recovery, strain, and stress—without lighting up or buzzing during your day.

Chris wears one daily. "I love that it doesn't have a screen… I get enough notifications," he said. He also pointed out, "The band doesn't have a clasp at the bottom, so it's still comfortable when typing."

Battery life is impressive—up to 14 days. "I went to a conference, didn't charge it once, and still had 55% battery when I got home."

The Whoop app lets you log daily behaviors—hydration, caffeine, alcohol—and see how they affect your body. "No surprise that drinking alcohol lowers my recovery score, but it's interesting to know that it lowers it by 10%." Chris also noted, "The daily stats can be interesting, but it gets really interesting when I look back over a few months."

Memberships range from $17 to $30/month, and the annual subscription includes the device—no extra hardware to buy. —LAW

Construction Corner

Credit Card Receipts

One of our least favorite jobs is to match the credit card receipts to the statements. It's time-consuming and thankless—until it isn't!

A few months ago, I saw some small **charges on our card, less than $5. We'll** often refer to or download an article which usually involves a small charge. The next month, I saw the same two vendors for small amounts again, and that seemed odd. I checked with our team—no one had any idea what these were for. Zach jumped in and said it sounded like phishing, so we contacted the bank to report them. I hate having to **replace credit cards, but that's what the** bank said we had to do and honestly, they made it as seamless as possible, even for our true recurring charges.

Fast forward to a recent month. As I reviewed the statement, I highlighted a few transactions and requested more details. Two of them belonged to Jen. When she dug in, she found two charges to her card were fraudulent! She is so careful with her company card, so this was quite unsettling. We got back to the bank, reported the items, and replaced her card; deep breath!

What about you? Do you have receipts for all the charges on your company (and personal) credit cards? You would need them in an audit, but with the fraud attempts out there, you might be **paying for things that aren't yours at all! We'd like to encourage you to do this 'matching' work and be sure to provide fun snacks and lots of "thank you's" to** those who have this job. - *CMW*

FIT Timecard Signoff Module

This is the second client in a row who had an employee file a complaint about the hours worked versus the hours paid. In the first one, time was called in or left on Post-it notes so there was no history of the time that was turned into the office.

For the second one, they have the FIT System so there was a great history of the time entries and approvals, as well as the paystub details from S100C. BUT, the employee said their travel time was not correctly paid.

In the end, our client paid over $100,000! They also chose to add our Employee Timecard Signoff Module, an add-on for our FIT System, electronic field time. **With this in place, they'll have the audit** trail they need with signatures from their employees.

What about you? Do you need or want an employee sign off on their hours? Let us know and we can tell you more about how this works. - *CMW*

> *"When servers, routers, or internet providers change, and you use the FIT System, give us a call first!!"*

Server and Network Changes for FIT Users

We've had several payroll emergencies in recent weeks, causing panic for the payroll teams and our teams. Each of these were preventable, so we thought **we'd share a few things with you.**

The FIT System communicates with Sage **100 Contractor which 'lives' on a server,** physical or hosted. To communicate, it goes through the internet (ISP) and often a firewall. If any of these devices or services changes, the communication is interrupted.

So if you're replacing a server, physical or virtual, or moving/changing hosting **providers, or you're replacing a firewall** or changing internet providers, be sure to talk with us first!

None of this is a problem, but we'll want to make a plan so you're payroll processing is not interrupted on payroll day. Scheduling the work on a non-payroll day is helpful, so we can make the configuration changes and test well before you need them. - *CMW*

FIT Workstation—Where is it?

Quite a while ago, the FIT Workstation was actually installed on an office computer and configured to pull the data for the final approval and import steps by the Payroll Admin. Several years ago, the FIT Workstation was moved to a web browser for access—no more local installation. This allowed Payroll Admins to work from anywhere to process the payroll, and took away the need to upgrade the workstation when new releases came out.

If you're still launching the FIT Workstation from a local computer (clicking on the icon on your desktop) rather than logging in through the **browser, let's talk! We'd like to get you** updated ASAP!! - *CMW*

SQL Server 2016—EOL

We have an update from Sage reminding us, and therefore you, that **there are changes to the 'minimum** version SQL Server requirements to maintain compatibility and comply with **industry standards.' This includes Sage** Paperless users, as well as other Sage programs running the full SQL 2016 OS.

The deadline from Sage to maintain compatibility is October 31, 2025. This is your chance to check in with your IT services and confirm the version of SQL **you're running and plan ahead as** needed. The Microsoft deadline for the end of extended support for version 2016 is June 30, 2026.— CMW

M365 Education Station
Microsoft 365 Copilot in Teams–Really!!

Ever wanted to transfer a call in Teams and wished you could share the key details, too? Now you can! With Microsoft 365 Copilot in Teams, you can generate a quick AI summary before transferring a call. The recipient receives general context like who called, what was discussed, and any next steps, right as the call is transferred their way.

This feature works on Windows, Mac, and Phone devices and is available to users with a Microsoft 365 Copilot license. This feature reduces the need to repeat yourself when someone new joins a conversation and provides a smooth handoff. Here are the steps, right from Microsoft!

On Windows and Mac

1. On a Teams call, make sure transcription is enabled by selecting **Record and transcribe** under the **More** (…) menu, then clicking **Start transcription**. Or, you can enable Copilot by clicking on the **Copilot** button and selecting **Turn on**, then your preferred language to have Copilot generate transcriptions and notes.

2. Select the icon **Transfer** to transfer the call.

3. In the Transfer the call menu, check **Generate call transfer context for the recipient**. This will create an AI summary of your discussion up until now.

4. If you'd like to send the summary to the incoming caller, select **Keep it**, then **Transfer** to transfer the call. The transferee will see the summary of the call before answering in the call notification. More context can be provided by selecting the **Call context** button when joining the call.
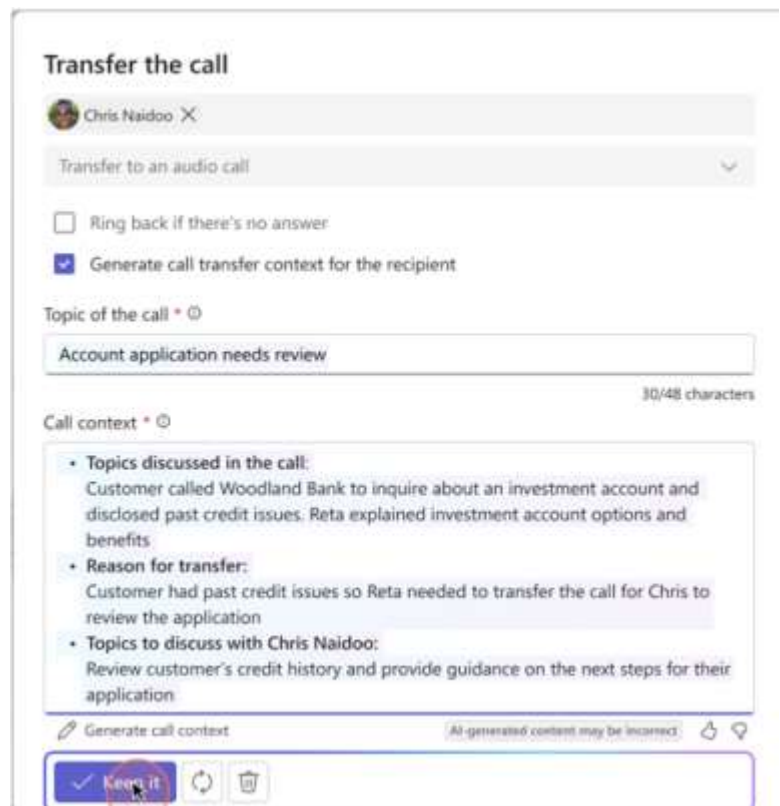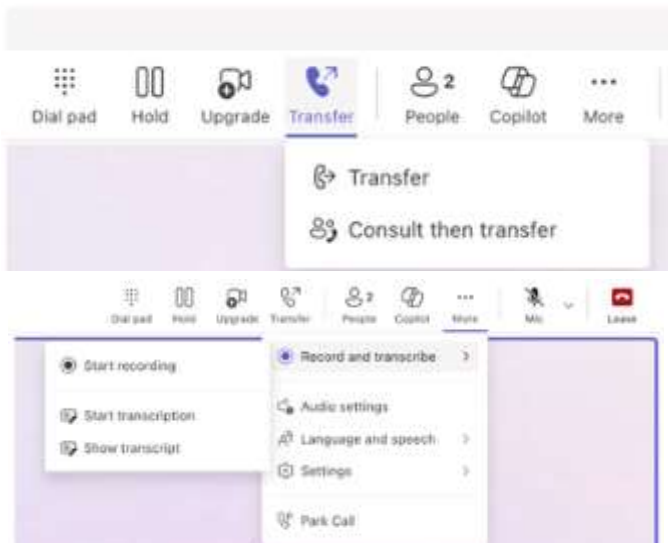
How Did They Do It?
Beeler Construction

The company is gearing up to celebrate 40 years next year! As a second generation owner mentoring the third generation working in this family company, Kim Beeler-Peterson is so proud of her parents and the many life lessons they taught her. Dad built church furniture in a union shop, but he was a born entrepreneur. With a brother and a friend, the three men started ABCO Building company in 1959. Some of the ventures went well, some not so well, but with hard work and each other, they weathered the storms. As time went by, Dad wanted his own company and his name on the door, so in 1986, Beeler Construction came to life.

As a teenager, Kim remembers transferring numbers by hand to the ledgers; no small task with 100 people on the payroll. Other jobs included cutting the grass, picking up materials for the guys, **and other office tasks. Her parents' work** ethic and discipline were amazing and they instilled these in their children as well.

While in college, Dad gave her a choice and a deadline — either commit to Beeler or the opportunity **will be gone. She's** glad she took her **dad's offer! With one** year left of college, her mission was to learn everything the **company wasn't do-**ing and bring it back. They already had Master Builder for payroll; next was the rest of the accounting.

The amount of growth has been challenging and exciting. When they had a strong backlog, it was difficult to meet **the employees' needs. When refocusing** on the team, it was hard to keep the backlog; definitely a balance.

Kim's favorite Syscon resource is the Power BI reports, a game-changer, along **with Syscon's understanding of construc-**tion accounting and finding the right tools; a great partnership. Kim is very proud of what her Dad started and her opportunity to be part of it. - *CMW*

Kim Beeler-Petersen, CFO

Fast Facts
Location: Menomonee Falls, WI
Specialty: General Contractor, Carpentry
Founded: 1986
Affiliations: CFMA, WHEA, AHE

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

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

Acumatica Part II: Construction Specific Features (webinar)

When: Tues Aug 5th

Time: 12:30 pm Central

The second webinar in our three-part introduction of Acumatica. We'll dig into the Construction features. You'll love it!

Acumatica Part III: Cool Features and add-ons (webinar)

When: Tues Aug 19th

Time: 12:30 pm Central

Acumatica is a cloud-based ERP with a large ecosystem of add-ons, and many built-in features. Let's take a tour!

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.