



What's New

May is usually packed with special events such as graduations, Mothers' Day, and of course Memorial Day; enjoy!

For Syscon, it's conference season! Chris and Matt attended the Empower conference; I attended the EOS (Traction) conference; we'll have our quarterly Traction Leadership meeting; CFMA's conference is in late May/early June; and more. With several of us on the road, take advantage of our 'live' phone coverage so we can get the right person to help you.

Mothers' Day reminds us of the amazing women in our lives, not always with the title 'Mom.' What amazing woman should you call and thank?
- Catherine Wendt

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May 2026



New Opportunities, New Chapters

For 9 years, I directed a German Men's chorus in Elmhurst, IL. I had the pleasure of conducting their 100th annual concert and several after that, as well. These were salt-of-the-earth men who worked hard, loved their families, loved the United States of America, and loved their German heritage, especially the music and language. One of the concerns was the aging membership, and we weren't the only German Chorus facing this issue.

In the Fall of 2025, I became the Director of an adult chorus in the North Scottsdale area, directing their 21st season. Given the age of the chorus, they too have an aging membership, although there are some younger members. With the founding director in her late 60's and camaraderie across this 35+ strong group, there's a growing awareness

of the need to invite and incorporate new and younger members.

Syscon is celebrating our 40th year in business; I keep checking the calculator to be sure this is right! Over the years, we've helped clients close their business to retire or pursue a new chapter in life. In the last five years or so, we've seen a growing number of our clients sell or close their business, to retire or open a new chapter. It's not surprising since some of these clients were with us 10, 15, 20, or more years. We were honored to serve them during their years in business, and it was our pleasure to help them navigate the technology needs as they brought things to closure – we'll miss them!

Many of our clients are passing the baton to a new generation rather than selling or closing down. In

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some cases, we've watched the next generation grow in knowledge and wisdom as they learn all the aspects of the business and step up to new leadership roles. This has also opened up discussions about newer technology offerings and the changing expectations for our employees when it comes to their tech. For me, it's been exciting to watch Chris and the teams he's built as they engage with these new leaders. We are committed to helping them grow in their leadership roles, as well as supporting their technology needs, hardware, software, cloud, and AI.

At the EOS (Entrepreneurial Operating System) Conference in Kansas City MO, I saw this playing out across various types of businesses. For those using the EOS Traction structure to run their business, there were breakout sessions on various aspects of using the EOS model, holding Level 10 meetings, building and reporting Scorecards, setting Rocks, lots of sessions on accountability, and Gino Wickman focused his presentation on Tough Love. Peo-

ple introduced their Visionary or their Integrator; there were presentations about moving senior leadership to the Owners Box, outside the accountability chart. In some cases, it was an ESOP arrangement, others were new owners, new partners, or the next generation. One breakout was about the huge surge in Private Equity (PE) groups and their interest in our businesses as they look for places to invest their considerable funds.

So where are you? Where am I? Do you have a clear vision for the next 12 months, rolling up to three years, then ten? Do you have the right team in place or are you clear how you'll build it? Is your core team clear on the direction the company is heading and all rowing in the same direction?

As some clients are closing the chapter of their business, we see many clients growing, rapidly! They're embracing new technologies, new reporting options, transparency with their teams, and clarifying their growth goals. It's important to share the stories, the history, the foundation of your business.

It's equally important to look ahead and provide vision, mission, and values that will keep the business alive and vibrant, and your teams excited and focused. We ask for blessings on each and every one of you no matter what chapter you're writing. - CMW

"Your capacity for excellence is inversely proportional to the number of your commitments."

— Shane Parrish

A CEO Does Only Three Things by Trey Taylor

This book was mailed to me as part of a clever marketing campaign for Mr. Taylor's C-Suite coaching business. My title is 'President' so it seems I made the list. So what exactly does a CEO do? In the first section entitled Essentials, that question is addressed head-on. First, a CEO creates the overall vision and strategy of the company, then communicates it (Culture). Second, the CEO recruits, hires, and retains the very best talent (People). Third, a CEO makes sure there's always enough cash (Numbers).

In addition to owning Culture, People, and Numbers, the CEO takes the credit for nothing and the blame for everything! All of this requires focus and intent. The book has a quote from Brad Whitchurch, "It's my job to keep the forest in



Book Nook

view while tending to the trees."

Each of these three areas has its own section with great examples and specific details. Starting with the People group, the emphasis is knowing your people, who they are at their core, and incorporating that with intentional actions. He shares a pyramid diagram that starts with the 'I Am' foundation, an individual's values, beliefs, self-image, their life compass. The middle section of the pyramid is 'I Feel' which incorporates our entire inventory of possible emotions. The top of the pyramid is the 'I Think' section, the intellectual part with facts and figures, where we make decisions and exercise our choices.

You might not be ready for all his recommendations, but I'm confident these questions will get the wheels turning. - CMW



What Software is on your Laptop?

Most of our clients have laptops in their organization. In most cases, they have M365 installed for email, Office (Word, Excel, etc.), OneDrive and SharePoint, and usually shortcuts to get to Sage 100 Contractor. The rest of what they need is usually browser-based or an app on their phone, like our FIT System for time.

For our Managed clients, all of these items are backed up, or we provide a la carte backups for their M365 accounts. For others, they pay for a backup service for the local computer which might have specific software running with local files that need to be backed up.

If you're running software on a specific laptop, and you haven't mentioned it to us or arranged backups for it through us, let's talk! Very recently, we had a fully managed client casually mention a program she uses once in a while on her laptop, so we were able to arrange backups right away. Thank goodness nothing had happened to the software, the data, or the laptop up until then! - CMW

Construction-specific Websites

We recently met with a company that focuses on websites for construction companies. They've been in business about 17 years and we have at least one client who has used them and is very happy.

Although we host websites for many of our clients, we do not build them. We get

the question pretty often, and we like to have some potential resources for you to interview.

If you're considering a new website and you're in construction, it might be worth a conversation with this group, Contractor Gorilla. Let us know and we can put you in touch with them. There's no commission to us or anything like that, just a solid vendor that was recommended by one of our clients and might be worth throwing in the mix as you do your due diligence! -CMW

Taking Warfare to the Homeland

We ran across an article that reminds all of us how diligent we need to stay when it comes to security.

An Iranian-based group of bad actors is targeting US-based companies with cyber warfare. Iran may not be able to send a missile in our backyard, but they can hurt us, just the same.

This example was a medical device company with over 200,000 laptops and servers. In their cyber attack, they triggered a remote wipe on every single device bringing this company to its knees!

Just because we're not in the armed forces doesn't mean we are not targets. These bad actors are very 'good' at wreaking havoc. It's critical that you have enforced MFA, automated patch management and security updates, device monitoring, and additional security such as our M365 Tenant Secure configurations which is included in our managed Microsoft support.

Take it up a notch with our Advanced Security offering in partnership with Blackpoint. As the use of AI improves and increases, for both good and bad actors, this 'optional' offering will become more and more critical. We're going to feature some updates on this in the coming summer months with some special incentives to jump on board with the advanced security. Stay tuned! -CMW



Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Vacuum Broom

This one actually looks fun. You sweep the dust, dirt, crumbs, hair, pet food, or other debris into a pile, then press the nozzle to vacuum it all up! It has a 1-cup dustbin capacity, is lightweight, and cordless.

This vacuum broom is recommended for all hard floor surfaces. The USB rechargeable lithium battery provides up to 200 uses per charge. It has a 3-piece locking handle, too. At 15" L x 1" W x 38" H and 1.9 lbs, it's light weight and easy to maneuver across the floor.

The retail price is \$99.99, but I saw specials ahead of Mothers' Day with as much as \$20 off. If you're not completely satisfied in the first 60 days, you can return it for a replacement or refund. There are a few guidelines to qualify for the return, but they're all reasonable.

What do you think? Is this a good option for Mothers' Day, or should you go with flowers? - CMW



CONSTRUCTION CORNER



Sage 100 Contractor v2026.1

The first thing you might notice is the naming convention for this release is very different than in the past. We're used to seeing 27.1.xxx.xxx as new major (first two numbers), minor releases (next number), and updates come out. Although this is different, it's more in keeping with the standard software version numbering systems.

The standard Job Status hard-coded list has been in place for 30 years. 1-Bid, 2-Refused, 3-Contract, 4-Current, 5-Complete (substantially complete but not fully paid, pending CO's, etc.), and 6-Closed (we're done!). It seems some users would like to have different statuses so Sage has added this option – which opens up a FLOOD of issues.

Before you jump into trying to add new Job Statuses, you'll want to start with any third-party integration software you might be using. If you have logic by Job Status for imports and other rules, such as with our FIT System, there is much to consider and test before making changes. Another area of concern could be Power BI reports or other integrated reporting tools that use the Job Status. These are most likely not going to have logic for added job types. The last consideration is internal S100C reports

which again would only have the original Job Status selections and report criteria.

The next change seems minor but had some unexpected consequences. Report Forms, the 'wrapper' around any report number you choose, can be created to be shared and available to everyone, shared but only for a specific company, or private which means only a specific user can see it. This is very handy and helps keep reporting clean and organized.

'Before you jump into trying to add new Job Statuses, you'll want to start with any third-party integration software'

Unfortunately, you cannot tell by the name of the report whether it is shared or private. With this version, it now says 'Shared' or 'Private' as part of the name of the report form; very handy. EXCEPT, after the upgrade, it blew away all my default report forms! For instance, when printing checks, we have a report form 'Syscon.Check_AP' but after the upgrade, it defaulted to Check11.Check_AP. Turns out all of my defaults had to be reset – plan ahead!

We stumbled on two new queries in the 5-2-2 screen, one called 'Federally Qualified Overtime for Biweekly Payroll' and another version for weekly. We have not tested the accuracy of these new queries but they are promising. A reminder! These follow the Federal OT rules. Not all

Save the Date
Thursday, May 7th
11:00 am Central Time
Updating Paygroups
(Unions) Webinar

OT qualifies for reporting on the W-2's at the end of the year. Most unions have more generous overtime rules, so the total OT paid, the OT-only portion may be smaller than what they see on their checks.

In the release notes, Sage re-states that the Federally qualified overtime hours and compensation are calculated and saved when you create payroll records from 5-5-1 Daily Payroll Entry or from the 5-6-5 Create Timecards window. This is automatically calculated without having to re-open or re-save payroll records. We have found this to be inconsistent, so if you see any missing amounts, you can use the Recalculate Federally Qualified Overtime menu option in the 5-2-2 screen. A reminder that these are for the Federal rules, not union or state-specific, so if you're making changes, do so with caution!

Bank Feeds continue to be a frustration! The same release notes say that Sage is aware that Bank Feeds does not work for some Chase Bank customers. They shared that they are exploring the issue. This would include bank statements and credit card feeds. We would encourage you to continue to keep this front and center with Sage so they understand how important it is.
 - CMW



See You There!

May 30 - June 3

JW Marriott, Phoenix AZ

CFMA's 2026 Annual Conference

Let us know if you're attending. We'd love to visit with you!

M365 Education Station

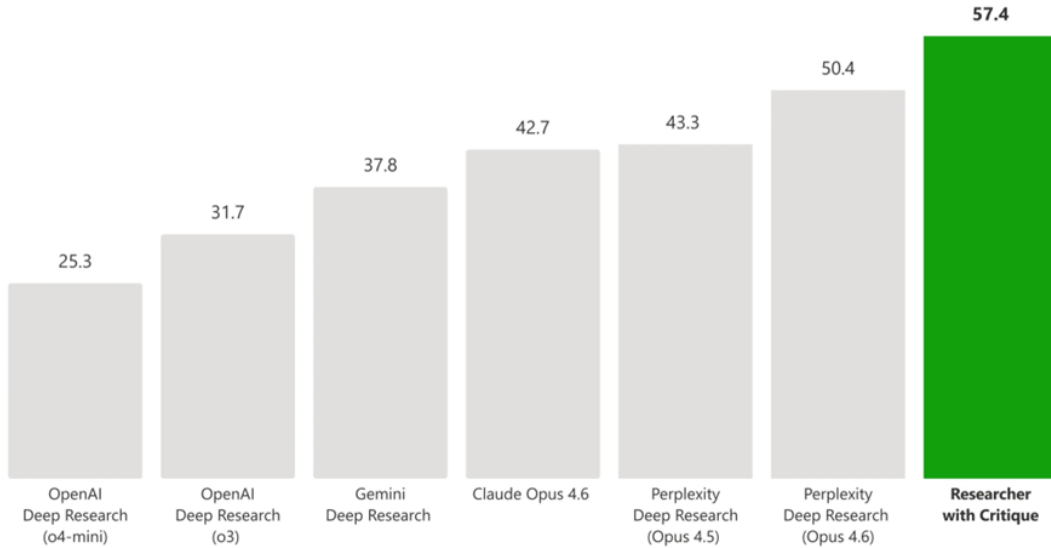


Microsoft 365 Copilot—Researcher Gets a Boost

Microsoft announced new features in Researcher built on multi-model intelligence. Researcher helps you tackle complex questions by synthesizing information across sources, generating comprehensive analysis, and delivering cited, well-reasoned responses you can have confidence in (but as we say, trust but verify!).

According to the post by Jared Spataro, Chief Marketing Officer, AI at Work, Microsoft, Researcher’s new Critique feature which uses a combination of models from Frontier labs including Anthropic and OpenAI, provides another step up in the results and quality. According to the DRACO benchmark, Researcher with Critique is 13.8% higher on this benchmark than the industry standard for deep research quality. Ever heard of DRACO (no, not from Harry Potter)? It stands for Deep Research Accuracy, Completeness, and Objectivity. Perplexity Research has made this tool available to the broader AI community. Read more in their February 4, 2026 article at Researcher.Perplexity.ai.

DRACO Benchmark for Deep Research Quality



Become an Expert!

We took Chris’s two-part webinar and pulled out the very practical tips and tricks, then packaged them in short segments, available on our website.

Check it out! ➔



How Did They Do It? McCowan Berrones & Co

Individually, Chris Berrones and Ryan McCowan both knew they wanted to work for themselves one day. Ryan had left commercial construction to get into residential, wanting to start his own business someday. Chris was a carpenter and had also dreamed of going out on his own. While working at the same company, they had an opportunity for some residential work and things grew from there. Chris left the company to jump in full-time with support from Ryan. Shortly thereafter, Ryan left too, making the dream happen! When they showed up for their first job after the demo of a house, it really hit them; 'what are we doing?'

Bringing their skills together, Ryan focused on project management responsibilities while Chris headed up the field work. Custom residential work can be highly stressful, for the families as well as the construction company. They've built a strong team that their clients really enjoy working with, ultimately turning over quality work which, in the end, speaks for itself. Over and over again, this has led to referrals that have fueled their success.

One of the biggest challenges has been managing cash flow. When cash slows,

operations tend to slow down, creating a vicious cycle. One of the lessons Ryan shared was to invest in operations as the needs present themselves, even if it's before you think you can afford it. They are so glad they invested in bringing Krystal on as Controller and moving to Sage 100 Contractor.

One of the biggest differences between commercial and residential construction is the personal nature of the work. For residential, you're dealing with people's homes, life-long dreams, and life disruptions. The projects take a great deal more handholding to get the job done. Even though their company is fairly new, both Chris and Ryan keep this focus in mind.

When it comes to working with Syscon, Ryan has been very happy with the reports he now gets from S100C. The information is right there, looks professional, with fully burdened labor on their jobs. They're just getting started with the FIT System. The whole business feels more 'legit!' - CMW



Fast Facts

Location: San Rafael, CA
Specialty: Custom Residential GC
Founded: 2020

[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: Stop Fighting Your Software! Part I: Low-Code Automation Tools

Date: Thursday, June 18th

Time: 11:00 a.m. CST

Register: www.syscon-inc.com/events



Take Note:

Syscon will be closed Monday, May 27, 2026 for Memorial Day

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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

