ALL THINGS TECH

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Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably

What's New

Happy New Year and welcome to 2017! We have signed up and completed our training with Sage to offer **Sage CRM** software, on premise or cloud. After many years with Saleslogix (previously owned by Sage), we're making the move at Syscon, as we stay committed to using the software and tools our clients use to run their businesses. We'll keep you posted on our progress.

Welcome back from the holiday. Let us know if you need helping wrapping up 2016.

We love taking care of your IT so you can take care of your business!

- Catherine Wendt

January 2017

This monthly publication provided courtesy of Catherine Wendt, President of Syscon Inc.

We love this stuff! Our passion is helping businesses use technology to run their organization successfully and profitably.

3 "Must-Do" IT Resolutions For 2017

"Never before in the history of humankind have people across the world been subjected to extortion on a massive scale as they are today." That's what *The Evolution of Ransomware*, a study by Mountain View, California-based cybersecurity firm Symantec, reported recently.

If you have any illusions that your company is safe from cyber-attack in 2017, consider just a few findings stated in a recent report by the Herjavec Group, a global information security firm:

- Every second, 12 people online become a victim of cybercrime, totalling more than 1 million victims around the world every day.
- Nearly half of all cyber-attacks globally last year were committed against small businesses.
- Ransomware attacks rose more than an astonishing 300% in 2016.

- The world's cyber-attack surface will grow an order of magnitude larger between now and 2021.
- The US has declared a national emergency to deal with the cyberthreat.
- There is no effective law enforcement for financial cybercrime today.

Clearly, your company's information and financial well-being are at greater risk than ever in 2017. And you cannot count on the federal or state government or local police to protect your interests. That's why I STRONGLY SUGGEST that you implement the following resolutions starting TODAY.

Resolution #1: Tune up your backup and recovery system. The #1 antidote to a ransomware attack is an up-to-date incremental backup copy of all your data and software. Yet managing backups takes more than just storing a daily copy of your data. For one thing, if your business

(continued on p2)

(continued from page 1)
is at all typical, the amount of data you store grows by 35% or more PER YEAR. If your data management budget doesn't expand likewise, expect trouble.

Resolution #2: Harness the power of the cloud—but watch your back. The cloud is convenient, and often pay-as-you go. Yet it's a double-edged sword. Any oversight in security practices can lead to a breach. Here are two things you can do to harness the cloud safely:

- *Determine which data matters.* Some data sets are more crucial to your business than others. Prioritize what must be protected. Be sure to include bank account information, customer data, and information that must be handled with compliance and regulatory requirements in mind.

- *Select cloud providers carefully.* Cloud vendors know that data security is vital to your business and promote that fact. Yet

"Not all cloud vendors are the same."

not all cloud vendors are the same. You can't control what happens to your data once it's in the cloud, but you can control who's managing it for you.

Resolution #3: Set and enforce a strict Mobile Device Policy.
Whether it's BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) or company equipment, mobile devices open gaping holes in your network's defenses. Don't miss any of these crucial steps:

- *Require that users agree with acceptable-use terms before connecting to your network.* Be sure to include terms like required use of hard-to-crack passwords, conditions under which company data may be "wiped" and auto-locking after periods of inactivity.

- *Install a Mobile Device Management System on all connected devices.* A good system lets you impose security measures on devices that have company data. These often include GPS tracking.

- *Establish a strong protocol for when a connected device is lost or stolen.* Make sure features that allow device owners to locate, lock, or

wipe (destroy) all data on the phone are pre-set in advance. That way, the user can be instructed to follow your protocol when their phone is lost or stolen.

Let Us Help
When it comes to defending your data, whether it's bank account information, customer and employee records, or proprietary intellectual property or processes, Do NOT take chances. Our experience with Technology Systems combined with our Business process experience over the last 30 years makes us a great resource to review your current situation and help implement necessary changes!

Cathy and Larry Sightings
Catherine held a well-attended webinar, *Closing the Year —We'll Review ALL the Steps!*

Larry and Cathy attended the C 12 East Valley annual Christmas Party. Lots of great food and a wonderful time was had by all.

'Sir, what you do speaks so loudly I can't hear a word you say.'
— Abraham Lincoln

Our 30th Year—Wrapping up the Celebration

The year 2016 was our 30th year in business! We had celebration plans for our clients, our staff, and our vendors throughout the year. Even as we look back at the special events, we're ready to continue another year of servicing our clients, continuing as experts in business-to-business technology solutions, and keeping your network safe and you informed as you focus on running your business!

- Special 30th Anniversary Video
- Ladybug Cards and Mouse Pads
- Fourth of July Client Celebration Boxes
- Staff and Spouse Pin Stripes Event
- Phoenix Rescue Mission Cookies

- Interview in the *Hinsdalean* Newspaper
- Contests to win Cubs tickets; great seats!
- Trivia Contest for a monthly Gift Card Drawing
- Staff 'Movie Nights'
- Tech Tip Articles in the *Business Ledger*

Took the Whole Company to Las Vegas for the Weekend!

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

New Nintendo Classic Rules Them All!

For anyone in their late 20s to early 40s, chances are nothing shaped your life more than Nintendo. If it was your first "gadget," it may even have been love at first sight.

And now, for Nintendo lovers, the Nintendo Entertainment System is back and better than ever with the NES Classic Edition. It's tiny, but designed to look just like the original NES. Setup is a snap. Just plug it into your TV's USB port. Hit the power button and you're greeted with a screen where you can browse games and options. You can even select a CRT filter that replicates the lines and look of an old TV.

The color is sharp, the timing dead on and each pixel is a perfect square so you see the games exactly as designed. At 60 bucks, it's a great gift for your favorite millennial (maybe even YOU!).

Construction Corner
For our clients who use Sage 100 Contractor

Sage 100 Contractor version 20 Why the wait?

That is THE big question! We ran a two-part series in our August and September 2016 newsletters, and these are up on our website under **News**, **Newsletters**. The two-part article covers the history, the reason for the change, and many other details. For now, I'd like to focus on the order of events and what is different about this upgrade compared to all the rest.

First of all, the word 'upgrade' is a little misleading. This is really a brand new program with a new backend (like a replacement engine under the hood). Sage 100 Contractor version 20 will be installed right next to version 19, both of them installed as separate programs. What's the big deal? That means you will need more server space than when you simply upgrade an existing program; there will be <u>two</u> programs.

Next, you are NOT ready to go. There are some changes when you first log onto version 20, many of which are really great. These include moving from a Supervisor logon to users designated as having Supervisor permissions; there are choices to be made for the frequency of automatic backups of the data (again, more drive usage); location of the SQL installation; and a few other things you'll want to setup with your Network Tech. We spent a lovely evening working through all of this together, so all of our Techs are familiar.

Then there's the data—proceed with caution on two fronts:

Item #1: First, you have to migrate your version 19 dataset to the version 20 installation. In our testing, datasets were 3 to 7 times **larger** than the original version 19 data size, so again, check that you have sufficient drive space! Just start with your most recent dataset. Don't worry, the version 19 dataset will still be there—now there'll be two of them; one in version 19 that you're going to keep using, and one in version 20 that you're going to test like crazy for a few weeks.

Item #2: Test, test, then test again. Start building a list of all the reports you use at the end of the week, month, quarter, and year. These all need to be tested. Focus on third-party reports and programs such as Paperless Environments, Crystal Reports, Syscon Custom Analytical Tools (Over/Under Billing, T&M Analysis, Cost to Complete, etc.), Syscon Custom Reports (Progress Billing, Union Reports, Certified Payroll Reports, etc.).

Take your list, contact your vendors, and find out when they'll have version 20 compatible software releases. All of these will need to be available AND tested before you go 'live' with version 20.

When you're ready, ALL datasets get converted, so again make sure you have enough room before you start.. Later, you can archive/delete version 19 and all its datasets, but that's *much* later—*CMW*

Other Stuff

Sending in your DNA; really?

I have no idea how accurate the DNA tests for ancestry are, but I'm really surprised at how many people are willingly turning over their DNA; would you send in your fingerprints or your passwords? Is their data secure? Does the government or law enforcement have access to it? What happens if that company goes out of business? I would ask if your curiosity might kill the cat, as they say—*CMW*

Yahoo Hacked (a while ago, folks)

So in the recent news, I've seen video clips, radio discussions, and printed reports of the hacking of Yahoo exposing a billion or more accounts. The experts are recommending you change your

password, and that's a great place to start. So how many other places do you use that very same password? Those need to be changed, too. How many utility log ons, bank log ons, and other services use your Yahoo email as the user name to log on? Do you use the same password there? Hopefully you're getting the picture; don't use the same password in multiple places. Change your passwords when you change the batteries in your smoke detectors. Do you really need internet access for all those places? Check out our blogs and newsletter articles about Password Vaults and test one of them out as a 2017 New Year's Resolution! -*CMW*

Another Syscon Client Tricked Into Downloading Cryptolocker!

I'm always worried that I'm boring our clients and friends with continual warnings and recommendations regarding their security. Then we have another

client under attack and I'm committed all over again! The most recent was the UPS email, a favorite for hackers since it has such a high success rate. I bet they're rolling it out during the holiday season on purpose. At this particular client, they got an email for a UPS delivery, clicked open the email, and then, **clicked on the attachment**—please don't click on these. Best advice? Call the vendor, call the sender, but don't assume that an email is innocent. Be on guard! Every email should be approached with caution; the sender may have been infected, it may be a hoax, it may be a bogus sender that looks like someone you know. And while I'm on it, never ever send or wire money anywhere until you get on the phone and have a conversation with the boss or banker, personally!-*CMW*

Here's an easy way to start 2017 with a clean e-mail inbox

Ever wonder how in the world you ended up on so many e-mail lists? They just pile up until you can't even keep up with unsubscribing from the new ones. Unroll.me lets you manage your subscriptions by unsubscribing and bundling the ones you want to keep into a single daily "rollup." It makes unsubscribing easy and painless. It simply lists all your subscriptions for you. You just click an X next to the ones you want to unsubscribe from and Unroll.me takes care of the rest. It's a great way to organize your in-box while keeping all the subscriptions you love.—*Lifewire.com*