

## What's New

Thanksgiving brings to mind special school re-enactments of the first Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims and the Indians, and giving thanks for food and shelter. It's a time of year for many to gather with family and friends and enjoy turkey, stuffing, cranberries, and pumpkin pie.

We are blessed to live in the USA with the right to vote (don't forget!), many opportunities, the freedom to raise our families, and a bountiful land.

We give thanks for our wonderful staff, our many clients, some of whom we've work with for over 20 years, and the opportunity to help you run your business well using technology. Thank you!

- Catherine Wendt

## November 2018



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

We love this stuff!  
We are committed to helping businesses use technology to run their organization successfully and profitably.



## This Is The #1 Security Threat To Your Business ... And It WILL Happen To You

Would you leave the front door of your business wide open every night? Of course you wouldn't. When nobody's at the office, you've got to protect your assets, usually behind locked doors, a complex security system, and often even a network of CCTV cameras. There are procedures in place in case a thief ever wriggles their way into your facilities. And you've got insurance if the worst ever happens.

But what about your digital assets? According to a report from Kroll, digital theft of small businesses overtook physical theft in 2017, for the first time ever. As surprising as it may seem, today your business is more likely to be penetrated by hackers than for a thief to boost a few PCs in the dead of night.

Despite this, data shows that the vast majority of small businesses are seriously underprepared for cyber-attacks. The 2018 Verizon Data Breach Investigations Report states that a full 58% of malware strikes were on small businesses over the last 12 months, a number that continues to climb. The average cost of these attacks has climbed in turn, now exceeding \$1 million between efforts to recover data and restore daily business operations. Yet, according to a 2016 survey by the National Center for the Middle Market, less than half of midsize US businesses have an up-to-date strategy to address cyber security concerns, and almost a third have no plan at all.

In effect, business owners are leaving their digital front doors unlocked,

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complete with a neon sign saying “Rob Me!” flickering above. While it’s easy to assume you’re safe from the kinds of large-scale digital breaches you read about in the news every week, that false sense of security will eventually come back to haunt you. With more than half of small businesses targeted for digital attacks every year, it’s practically inevitable that you’ll end up in the crosshairs of cyber-criminals. Without the proper security measures in place, some portion of that \$1 million bill is going to hit your desk one day, and it may even shutter your business for good.

Luckily, with even a modicum of proper, proactive stewardship of your digital assets, you can turn that open door into a bank vault in no time. First, start with your em-

**“In effect, business owners are leaving their digital front doors unlocked, complete with a neon sign saying ‘Rob Me!’ flickering above.”**

ployees. A full 51% of data breaches occur due to the negligence (or naiveté) of team members, according to CompTIA. Establish comprehensive security policies, lay them down in crystal-clear print, and have your employees sign off on them. Build a thorough education program to school your employees on the risks and signs of digital crime. Topics should range from “How to spot a phishing e-mail” to the proper construction of company passwords.

While your employees are learning the ins and outs of basic cyber security, invest in multilayered protections for your network. This must go beyond a simple, free anti-virus, and should include platforms to keep all your patches up-to-date, security measures seamlessly integrated with company e-mail and, preferably, the watchful eye of a managed services provider. If you’re not a professional, it’s easy to miss security holes that would be glaring to criminals, even if you do your research. Better to get the experts involved and keep them patching those holes as they arise rather than risk missing something that flips your company belly-up down the road.

Thousands upon thousands of other small-business owners are leaving their digital door wide open day in, day out. As a result, cyber-criminals have begun to consider companies like yours to be easy pickings, vulnerable fruit ripe for harvest.

Don’t be one of the millions of businesses that succumb to cyber-attacks every year. Invest in adequate protection and give yourself the peace of mind you need to focus on what you do best: making money. Not sure where to start? Give us a call; we love this stuff!

## Cathy and Larry Sightings

Catherine attended an industry event in Nashville and met Barbara Corcoran (even took a picture)!

Larry’s small trading group continues to meet in the early mornings and they’re making progress. It’s also a great time of the year for long rides with the bike club.

*‘Big dreams and hard work are best friends. You don’t get one without the other.’*

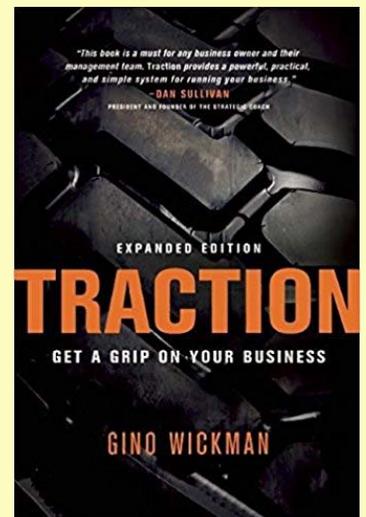
- Jon Acuff

## Traction by Gino Wickman

After reading this book, I had the opportunity to hear Mr. Wickman speak. He had great stories from his years of experience implementing these systems. This really convinced me to bring the book to our senior staff.

This is a business workbook, including homework assignments. It’s a structured look at the many facets of your business. Throughout the workbook you have an opportunity to evaluate your vision over the next 1, 3, and 10-year horizons; look at your core values; the unique services and expertise you bring to your clients; then dive into your staff to make sure the right people are being asked to do the right tasks so they can be successful; and more! Several members of my accountability groups are working through the book, as well as a few clients!

Recommended reading for all who are considering business growth. - CMW



## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



### PetChatz HD Pawcall FaceTime With Your Dog!

When a product is advertised as “more than a pet-treat camera,” you know we are living in 2018. PetChatz HD PawCall is a two-way, interactive camera to connect you to your furry friends while you’re away from home. With a camera secured to the wall and a treat-motivated interface for dogs and cats to master, the device allows you to say a quick hello to your pets, see how they’re doing, and dispense treats or essential oils to calm them down and keep them happy. The device even lets you monitor your home for any intruders or problems that may arise during your pets’ home-alone time. A silent mode enables you to observe your pet in their natural habitat, while a two-way “chat” feature allows you to connect in real time. It’s the perfect gift for any pet enthusiast!

## From the Techs



### Facebook Hacked

You may have heard about the security breach experienced by Facebook. In an early October update from ID Agent, a few details were provided.

The exploit was a web vulnerability. The risk to Small Businesses was rated as severe; the risk to individuals was rated as moderate. The number of customers impacted? 50 million!

So what’s the risk to your business? Many people use the same log on credentials and password on more than one site. So if they use the same log on and password with Facebook that they use to log into you network, your company is vulnerable to an attack.

You may think, how would they even know how to get to my network; well, they have very sophisticated software that can run hundreds and hundreds of attempts to random addresses with very little effort.

Talk to your employees—do they know Facebook was compromised? Do they use the same credentials? At the least, ask them to change their password on your network (and Facebook). Ask them to consider a different log on name for their non-business accounts. Be pro-active; your money and business are at stake!

### Roaring Penguin is now AppRiver

Many of our clients use anti-spam services, and we use Roaring Penguin for anti-spam. If you’re in our hosted Exchange (Outlook) environment, you may have noticed that when you log into your spam folder, the ‘penguin’ has been replaced.

AppRiver, another well-known and respected software security company has purchased Roaring Penguin. In the coming year, we expect to see some other changes, including some new security features. We’ll keep you posted as information becomes available. For now, don’t be alarmed that the penguin is missing!

### Latest Scam, involves Microsoft

One of our sales team members received an important call, supposedly from Microsoft. They had detected a problem with his machine and wanted to log in with him and run some tests.

Does this sound familiar? It is one of the most popular *scams* because people take the bait! Do NOT allow someone to log into your machine; call us right away! - CMW

### Do you get our weekly email blasts?

These are short, **2-minute video updates** on tech-related topics. There’s often a **short blog** if you want to read more on the topic. If you don’t get these, **please call Jonathan** at our office and we’ll make sure you’re on the list. You might have to ‘white list’ us, and we can tell you how to do that, too!

## Construction Corner



### When do I Have to Upgrade to version 21? Really?

Sage wants everyone on the latest version of the software, always. It's easier for them to support! And with a lot of users hitting the latest version every day, Sage can learn about issues right away. They can also focus their internal training of support staff, which ramps up close to the end of the year. So, every year, they tell you that you have to be on the latest version in order to close your year – well, that's only partially true.

Here's the rest of the story: You can close your year in version 20, or 21. Both versions work just fine and will do the job. To 'encourage' you to be on version 21, Sage will only release the 2019 new tax tables in version 21, and Sage has coordinated with Aatrix to only release the 2018 yearend reports (such as W-2 forms, Q4 payroll reports, and similar) in

version 21.

Here's another very important parameter – if you have not yet migrated all your version 19 datasets (prior years, archives), you **MUST get that done before going to version 21**. The License Server in version 21 was NOT backward compatible in our testing, so once you go to v21, you will not be able to launch v19 to run these prior years. So, focus your time in the last quarter of 2018 on making sure all the prior years have been migrated to version 20.

Now, about that timing... If you move to version 21 now, you will absolutely have to upgrade at least once more, when the 2019 Federal (and some State) tax tables become available. This might be in late December, or even early January. We recommend waiting for the tax release before upgrading, otherwise you'll just have to do it again.

So here's the priority list:

1. Make sure all version 19 datasets have been migrated to version 20; we recommend getting this done before December if you haven't

already done so. We're available to help.

2. In late December or early January, watch for the version 21 release that includes the Federal 2019 tax tables, then upgrade to version 21; the 2018 yearend reports such as W-2's should also be ready at that time. When this is available, it's time to upgrade to version 21.

It is possible that there will be additional updates from various states after the Federal tables are available, and we know some states don't post updates until early Spring.

Reserve **December 6<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 Central Time** for our **Yearend Planning webinar**, our most popular all year! We'll cover the yearend process, the payroll closing process, and the version 21 upgrade timing.



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FIELD INTEGRATED TIME SYSTEM  
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### Collecting Time From the Field Just Got Exciting!

We collect time, cost code information, work order numbers, phases, client signatures, and a whole lot more. Your field can use iPhones, Androids, or Tablets. All the info is sent straight to Sage 100 Contractor, no copy-paste! What a time-saver. Interested? Join us for a demo on

**November 29th at 11:30am CT!**

### Who Wants To Win a \$25 Amazon Gift Card?

This month's trivia question:

**You just finished writing a term paper or presentation for tomorrow. Which key can you press, on most PCs, for a spellcheck shortcut?**

- a) Tab b) F12 c) Enter d) F7

**To enter: Go to [www.Syscon-inc.com/Trivia](http://www.Syscon-inc.com/Trivia)** and type in your answer. All correct answers will be put into a fishbowl and we'll randomly draw the winner. The Winner will be contacted shortly after the deadline and will be announced in next month's newsletter.

**Deadline: November 20, 2018**

Congratulations to last month's Trivia Contest winner, **Jenn Webb** with **Atlantis Comfort Systems, RI!** Jenn's name was drawn from the fishbowl for last month's correctly answered Question:

*When was the first GPS satellite launched?*  
d) 1978