

What's New

May 1st was always a fun day. We would find flowers (pretty weeds), put them on a neighbor's doorstep, ring the bell and run away! Memories!

Microsoft won't sell Office 2016. Some of the software our clients use to run their businesses is not yet compatible with Office 2019. We offer a monthly subscription to Office 2016 rather than buying a version of Office that doesn't work with your software. Be sure to let us know if you're in this pickle!

We'll be closed Monday May 27th for Memorial Day, enjoying fun with our families!

- Catherine Wendt

May 2019



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.



Are YOU Prepared For The End Of Windows 7?

On January 14, 2020, the world will bid a fond farewell to the beloved Windows 7 operating system. Well, sort of. Microsoft has declared that, after that date, it will no longer update or support the system. It's the final nail in the coffin for a trustworthy, oft-touted software package that's been running on fumes since newer versions hit the scene. And, as with any funeral, there are some arrangements to be made for the millions of businesses that have stuck it out to the end. Here's everything you need to know about the coming changes - and what you should do now to prepare.

THE END OF AN ERA

The news of Microsoft closing down Windows 7 support may come as a surprise to some of us, but the operating system has been on its last legs for a while. In fact, Microsoft

stopped adding new features and honoring warranties for the platform back in 2015. When 2020 comes, it will cease releasing patches and updates for good.

This doesn't mean that Windows 7 PCs will suddenly stop working in January; you'll still be able to boot up in the operating system if you keep it installed. But if you value your privacy, your data, and your sanity, it's time to upgrade.

Those Microsoft updates that pop up from time to time don't exist just to annoy you; they patch security vulnerabilities and protect you against new viruses and malware. Without that ongoing support, Windows 7 users will become fish in a barrel to sophisticated cybercriminals looking for a quick buck.

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That's why it's essential that you call in the professionals to prepare your business for the switch to Windows 10 – or an alternative operating system – now, not later.

IT'S A REQUIREMENT, NOT A CHOICE

Upgrading your operating system well in advance of the Windows 7 end-of-life date may seem like a decision you should make for your peace of mind, but it's even more critical than that. Of course, as time leaves Windows 7 behind, it's certain that pieces of software will steadily become incompatible with the OS. Programs your company uses day-to-day suddenly becoming unusable will present serious headaches, but the real problem lies in the security of your network.

Windows developers are in a constant arms race with cybercriminals looking to exploit vulnerabilities in their platform. Each patch brings a host of bug fixes and security upgrades, but cybercriminals almost *always* find a new way in. Thus, the developers hastily put together a new patch, and the

cycle continues.

When an operating system loses support from these developers, its users are left completely vulnerable to hackers. Like maggots drawn to rotting meat, they flock to the abandoned platform and dig into the networks of those stubbornly clinging to the outdated OS. This process is expected to be especially nasty after Windows 7's end of life, since so many businesses still use the OS and likely will forget (or refuse) to upgrade.

If you value your business at all, it's not a choice. You need to upgrade before time runs out.

AVOID THE CRUNCH

Not only should you enlist your IT experts to facilitate the upgrade, but you should do it ASAP. As the clock ticks down on Windows 7, tech companies are expecting a flood of upgrade requests as businesses scramble to leave the OS behind before it's too late. Many of these IT providers will have a lot on their plate later in the year as they hurry to upgrade hundreds, if not thousands, of individual PCs. If you wait it

out, you're likely to find yourself at the back of a long, long line, potentially to the point that you breeze past January 14 without a solution. If you do, you're almost certain to regret it.

Every day, the need for an upgrade becomes more urgent. Give the task the ample time required, and avoid needless stress. Reach out to your IT provider and ask them to start the upgrade process today.

Cathy and Larry Sightings

Catherine tried to fly into Chicago in mid-April, but the snow storm got in the way! Headed to Portland for a Sage conference, too.

Larry played French Horn with members of the Praise Orchestra for a benefit concert.

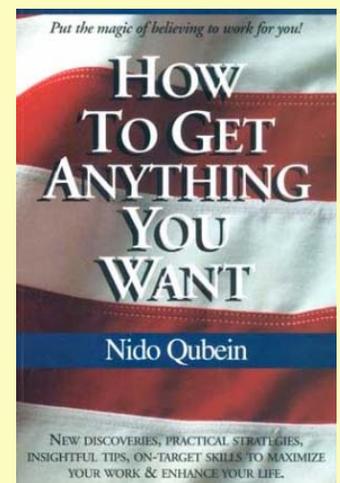
'Commitment is doing the thing you said you were going to do long after the mood you said it in has left you.'
- Darren Hardy

How To Get Anything You Want by Nido Qubein

I had a chance to hear Mr. Qubein speak at an industry event. I was moved by his presentation, and even found myself leading some moments of audience clapping in response to his comments. I also ended up in the elevator with him as he was leaving the building; he was gracious during this short encounter, true to the man I just saw on stage!

I'm not a fan of this title, I'll say that up front. And, it doesn't reflect the content of the book, either. The book is required reading for the students entering the college that he has turned around. It is packed with quotes from literary giants, scholars, and our founding fathers to name a few. The underlying message is that we are responsible for who we are, what we do, and the life we lead; absolutely!

I recommend this book. I also recommend that if you have a chance to hear Nido Qubein speak at a 'live' event, take it. An amazing man, an amazing story. - CMW



Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



VIZR Hopes To Revolutionize Your Dashboard

When it comes to driving, the forces that aim to keep us safe seem to be in constant battle with the pull of convenience. We're supposed to keep our eyes glued to the road while trying to navigate through Google Maps without missing a single turn. It's an inherently dangerous combination.

With their new VIZR tool, FIXD automotive hopes to fix that. After selecting the feature you want, you connect the device to your phone and place it on your dashboard, where it creates a transparent display. This way, FIXD says, you can seamlessly navigate without ever glancing at your phone and putting your life in jeopardy.

Though VIZR is a great idea, the reviews indicate it might not be all it's cracked up to be. You might want to wait until all the bugs are sorted out. For now, just keep your eyes on the road the old-fashioned way.

From the Techs

Windows 10—What's Different? A User's Perspective

Well first of all, how do you log in? Turns out you hit the space bar to get to the log in screen. How do you log out? Hit the Windows icon in the lower left corner where the Start button used to be. You can choose the 'Power' icon to Restart or Shut down (looks like a power button on a printer), or a few icons above this, there's an icon that's supposed to look like a person, then choose to Log On as a different user (Switch Account), or Sign Out.

How do I find software that isn't a shortcut? I found that the search feature is pretty good. The search field is always there in the lower left corner of the screen; start typing 'Outlook...' and you can just click on the image that comes up; start typing 'remote' and you'll see the Remote Desktop icon, and you can even choose one of the last few addresses you visited.

I often create a PDF to send in an email, or I've saved an Excel or Word document I need to email. In the past, I have to click the paperclip, then browse to find what I just saved. Now it 'remembers' what I just saved and where it was and I can just choose it; saves a lot of 'clicks.'

I don't like the new calculator; it takes up too much room. There are a lot of icons from the 'Start' button that look pretty, but I have no idea what they're for. I'm not a fan of the 'gimmicky' short cuts and tiles from the Start menu;

they're not really for business; why do I need a shortcut to Xbox?



I don't know if it's Windows 10 or Google Chrome, but I really like the icons that represent the last eight (8) websites I've visited so I can just click on them rather than begin typing in my browser.

As I watch our techs and try new things, I'm sure there will be more to check out. I don't like learning new software any more than the next person, but this seems to be going pretty smoothly (and I don't have a choice!). —CMW

Can You Afford To Lose \$80,000 A Year? If Not, Read This:

According to the Better Business Bureau's 2017 State of Cybersecurity Among Small Businesses In North America report, SMBS lost more than \$79,000 to cybercriminals.

Honestly, this shouldn't surprise anyone; after all, as even the smallest businesses digitize more and more of their processes, the costs of breaking those systems will continue to skyrocket. If you're a small business owner in 2019, you need to start making cyber security a priority - now. Make a list of clear goals and objectives, and prepare your business for threats coming from all directions, rather than relying on a single defensive strategy that's prone to fail when things get tough. *SmallBizTrends.com*, 12/3/2018

Construction Corner



someone who does not know how to use it, will bring a poor result; and quite a bit of frustration, too.

When clients come to us with frustrations about their hardware and software, there are quite a few times when the core of the problem is a lack of training with the tool. It's not a reflection of the user's intelligence, or anything like that; they just haven't been trained to use the tool. I consider myself pretty smart, and I'm sure I could find a video or two on using a trowel, but that won't be enough for me to do a great job with the trowel.

Our technology tools are amazing and can produce great results with a lot of time-savings. But, you need to invest in learning to use the tool. Consider investing in some training, join a user group, spend the time to watch some video trainings, and similar. These are investments in your education, and that kind of

investment has an amazing ROI, not to mention lessening the frustrations of using the hardware and software.

Short Story: We have a client that had a gut feeling that the payroll liabilities tie-out should be easier to do, and they shouldn't have to track Employee loans in a spreadsheet. They were absolutely right! With some discussion, a few drawings, and a short list, we created a plan to use the software as it was intended, and save hours of tedious work each week (and tie out those liability accounts!).

How can we help you? —CMW

Frustration! Is it the Tool?

My father-in-law was a Mason Contractor. One of his masons, Tommy McLaughlin, was a true craftsman. His work was beautiful! I also remember the stories about how he took care of his tools. He purchased great tools, then took care of them, all the way down to polishing his work boots!

I'm confident that if I were to use Tommy's tools, I would not have the same result! My work with a trowel would be messy, at best. I just don't know anything about using a trowel.

So what does that have to do with computer frustrations? Well, this story points out that even an excellent tool in the hands of



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

In a recent Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA) discussion on their Café Connections, the FIT system came in with high praise; thanks!

You won't find a better, fully integrated, field time collection solution than ours because we wrote it to do what our clients told us they needed!

Interested? Join us **Friday, May 31st, 11:30am Central Time.**

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

This month's trivia question:

Which of these is not a computer operating system?

- a) Linux
- b) Microsoft Windows
- c) Apple OS X
- d) Photoshop

To enter: Go to 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: May 20, 2019

Congratulations to last month's Trivia Contest winner, Carolyn Brister with **Momentum Mechanical, TX!** Carolyn's name was drawn from the fishbowl for last month's correctly answered Question:

The QWERTY keyboard has been in use since the late 1870s. How could you tell that the keyboard in front of you uses the QWERTY layout?

- a) **The first 6 letter keys on the top row spell QWERTY**