



1-Minute Newsletter – Sept 2015

This is another installation of our 1-Minute Newsletter – we hope you find it helpful!

Planning for new computers?

Please call us before you buy them! Because we haven't finished our compatibility testing for Club Office and Windows 10, we're not sure just what the best configuration options are yet. Right now, Windows 7 is vastly preferred over Windows 8 or Windows 10, and since Microsoft will support Windows 7 through January 14, 2020, we think it's still the best choice. FYI, since Windows 8 and Windows 10 computers are what are currently available in retail stores, what we do in our office is simply erase the new computer's hard disk

and install Windows 7 on it instead. Then we don't have all the crummy extra apps installed on the computer that always come with a new machine and plug things up. You might pick up a copy or two of Windows 7 from online stores such as amazon.com, tigerdirect.com or microcenter.com and keep them on hand for the same reason. As far as Windows 10 goes, we'll have an answer sometime later this year. Why the delay? Well, testing a new operating system takes a lot of time.

EMV Credit Card Processing

Huh? What's that? If you use credit cards at your facility, this is what's coming. Magnetic swipe cards are being phased out in favor of the more secure chip-on-a-card kind of credit card. What it means to you, the merchant, is that after October 1st, 2015, if a merchant accepts an old magnetic-swipe card instead of EMV and the card happens to be fraudulent, the card processor may no longer foot the bill and the cost of the fraud shifts to the merchant! Not only that, it's expected that the discount rates will be higher with non-EMV processed transactions, too, costing merchants *even more* money. We are currently adding EMV processing to SQLPos, our integrated POS system and hope to have EMV certification soon through Mercury Payment Systems. It will use an external card swiping device that plugs into the computer's USB port, and we'll have make and model information to you as soon as we have it, but it's expected that the cost of the device will be in

the \$225-\$250 range. And if you're curious, our current plans do not include adding "Apple Pay" to our software unless Mercury provides for it through their normal functionality. The old magnetic card swiper is shown below next to a photo of an example of what the new device may look like:



You should call your merchant contact at Mercury Payment systems to order one for each of your POS terminals. The EMV change will also require a SQLPos software update that will be available as soon as Mercury has certified it for us.

Got "the Cloud?"

It's all the rage, you know. "Cloud" is a terrific metaphor for data storage and a fabulous buzzword. But in reality, the "cloud" is essentially a hard disk drive somewhere out on the vast Internet. We've been providing each of our customers with 1-gigabyte of "cloud" storage on our web server for more than ten years – well before the metaphor came about. Our cloud storage comes with your technical support subscription – you just have to use it! At the same time, we caution you about becoming overconfident about using only the cloud for all your backups because if

something should happen to your Internet connection that cloud storage becomes inaccessible! That's why we suggest that users make backups onto portable storage devices like flash drives, CDs or DVDs, and put a "copy" of it on the cloud as a secondary, off-site backup. Be safe. Use both portable storage devices *and* the cloud. And do it regularly. A good rule of thumb is to make a backup at the end of every day that you add or change any data in your Club Office system. By the way, if you need help using the cloud storage that we provide, call us for assistance! It's really easy to do!

Reboot?

If you leave your computers running all day and all night, you should remember to reboot them every day anyway. You don't necessarily have to power them off and back on again (although that's a pretty good idea!), but at least do a Windows restart. Restarting clears out Windows' internal memory spaces and helps the computer run more efficiently.