

OpenAxis, Inc. develops and installs "EzQC", a user-friendly system to make your quality control of hotel maintenance easy.

For more information, please call us at 323-265-3000.

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Working Together

Let's Work Together

"Working Together" is a wonderful thing in any society, even in the animal kingdom. The other day, on my favorite Animal TV Channel, I watched some impressive teamwork of Hyena families.

Female and young Hyenas live and work together in a group of 30-80. They share a den, and hunt together in small groups with good teamwork. During a hunt, some members stay home to baby-sit hunters' cubs.

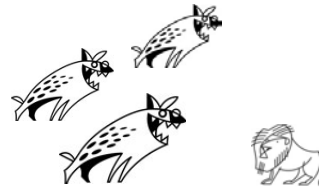
Hyenas are also known as one of a few animals that take care of the disabled.

Hyenas always minimize conflicts and work together by following their social rules and closely communicating each other everyday.



Their teamwork and social bonds are so strong that they, as a team, often overpower lions.

"Working Together" makes all family members happy and healthy.



Blaming

We often blame others when we cannot understand people on the other side. "Blaming" can cut off communication and alienate you from the others. This is an expense you will pay for blaming others.

"Blaming" starts when we do not understand "why" others say something you cannot accept. If you show your efforts to understand the others, they will try making efforts to explain to you why they say a certain thing or take a certain action.

Your effort will build a

constructive bridge with others.

Implementing Effort

Start making the effort to understand others before blaming them. It takes time and requires patience. However, your belief, "Yes, I can be a good friend of yours", makes a big difference.

Let's start it today. Try to understand your spouse first, for example, the best friend of your life.



Social Security



Social Security Statement

You normally receive a Social Security Statement every year. It tells you about your earning records and estimated benefits under current law.

As you work and pay Social Security taxes, you earn "credits", up to a maximum of 4 for each year. You need 40 credits (10 years) to receive retirement benefits as early as age 62 (You receive reduced benefits.). In 2005, you will earn one credit for each \$920 of wages or self-employment income.



Your earnings from last year may not be on the statement yet, due to the high volume of record Social Security received every

year. What Social Security did is to assume your earning is the same as previous year.



Retirement Age

If you were born before 1938, your full retirement age (to receive full benefits) is 65. Because of a 1983 change in the law, the full retirement age will increase gradually to 67.

<u>Year of Birth</u>	<u>Full Retirement Age</u>
1937 or earlier	65
1938	65 and 2 months
1939	65 and 4 months
1940	65 and 6 months
1941	65 and 8 months
1942	65 and 10 months
1943 -1954	66
1955	66 and 2 months
1956	66 and 4 months
1957	66 and 6 months
1958	66 and 8 months
1959	66 and 10 months
1960 and later	67

Living Overseas

If you are a United States citizen, you can travel or live in most foreign countries (except Cambodia, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam and many of the former U.S. S.R. republics) without affecting your eligibility for Social Security benefits.

If you are not a United States citizen, the law requires your payments to be stopped after you have been outside the United States for six cal-

endar months, unless you meet one of several exceptions in the law which will permit you to continue receiving benefits abroad. These exceptions are based, for the most part, on your citizenship.

If you are a citizen of one of the countries listed below, your Social Security payments will keep coming no matter how long you stay outside the U.S., as long as you are eligible for the payments.

Austria
Greece
Netherlands
Belgium
Ireland
Norway
Canada
Israel
Portugal
Chile
Italy
Spain
Finland
Japan
Sweden
France
Korea (South)
Switzerland
Germany
Luxembourg
United Kingdom

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Cash Flow: Improving Your Bottom Line

You have heard it said, "Cash is king." That statement rings truer than ever when credit is tight. Even profitable businesses can and do end up in bankruptcy because they run out of cash to meet their needs. So, how do you ensure that your cash keeps flowing? The following tips, while not all are appropriate for every business, will help:

1. **Forecast your cash inflows and outflows.** Most are very predictable. By modeling projected cash flow, potential problems can be identified in advance and dealt with. For instance, you may need to establish a new line of credit to build up inventories to avoid delaying a holiday season or a major expenditure.



2. **Do not just negotiate price with suppliers.** Try to negotiate liberal payment terms. You may be able to get the supplier to basically finance your inventory or even sell to you on consignment.

3. Conversely, with your customers, **make a prompt payment as a part of the negotiation along with price.** By explicitly discussing payment terms up front, you can establish an expectation of prompt payment in the customer's mind.

4. **Speed up your billing cycle.** It may even be feasible to bill in advance of delivery. Billing more promptly will have a direct impact on accounts receivable outstanding days.



5. **Speed up collections** by following up promptly and assertively on past-due balances. If feasible, encourage the use of credit cards instead of keeping open accounts. Resolve customer billing disputes as quickly as possible to minimize slow payments, and charge interest on past-due balances.

6. **Eliminate cash advances.** Issue com-

pany purchasing or credit cards to employees who travel or make reimbursable purchases. Having clear policies on allowable expenditures and requiring detailed receipts will minimize inappropriate spending and fraud.

7. **Use long-term financing to pay for large capital items or lease them.** While there is certainly a cost to this strategy, it spreads the cash outlay over a long period of time.



8. **Keep inventories at the lowest possible level.** It not only conserves cash, it can boost profits by cutting finance charges, lowering the risk of write downs due to obsolescence, and reducing storage costs.

9. **Perform credit checks** on new customers and even periodically on established



customers. Large, new customers can be a particular risk because of the extraordinary expenditures that often need to be made before the goods or services are delivered and payment is received. With these customers, go beyond a simple credit check. Dun & Bradstreet reports, which are references from other companies that do business with them, can be very useful.

Setting up a process to forecast your cash needs can help you implement these and other cash-boosting, profitability-enhancing strategies. After all, a healthy cash flow is a key to your business' on-going success.



At OpenAxis, we focus on the implementation of IT solutions for small- and medium-sized businesses.

We provide management and computer consulting services by identifying issues, implementing solutions, and managing all your IT needs.

Comprehensive Solution:

Accounting Solution
 Operation Solution
 Manufacturing Solution
 Other Integrated Solution
 Customized Solution
 EDI and E-Commerce Solution
 Returned Merchandize Authorization

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How to Get Rid of Your Electronics

Did you know that it is illegal to throw away your old computers, monitors, printers and cellular phones to regular garbage bins? These electronic wastes contain some materials hazardous to the environment, but most people do not know how to properly get rid of them. There are four basic things you can do with your e-wastes.

1. Donate to people in needs. (You may also get some tax deduction.)
2. Recycle or sell at a reduced price.
3. Ask manufactures if they take the wastes.
4. Throw away at a proper place.

Your local organizations or recycling companies accepts e-wastes, with some or no fees. To transform your e-waste to something that makes someone happy, it requires many preparations. Many of these organizations are public or non-profit organizations, and you need to check which parts of the job they need your help with. You might think "Why should we spend time and money just to throw away a garbage legally?", but it is our responsibility to do the right thing. Please check with the organization for their rules.

- If they need functioning electronics, are there

any rules on old models?

- When and where can you take your e-wastes? Can they arrange a pick-up service?

Please do not forget to erase sensitive data on your electronics if there are any. (Please refer our April article for how to clean the hard drive.)

It is estimated that by the year 2007, there would be about a half billion surplus of computers/monitors in the United States alone. Landfills that once seemed abundant are getting full. The system of 3Rs (Reduce, Re-use and Recycle) is still in developing stage in the United States, but until the system is established well in your area, please do your part to take care of your e-wastes that once took a good care of you and your business.

Information Source for Greater Los Angeles Area:

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

[Www.888CleanLA.com](http://www.888CleanLA.com)

Or go directly to: <http://ladpw.org/epd/CompElec>

Phone: 1-800CLEAN LA (1-888-253-2652)

[Check their online Smart Business Recycler Locator and Electronic Waste Database to find where to take e-wastes in your area.](#)

LACoMax Los Angeles County Online Materials Exchange

<http://ladpw.org/epd/lacomax>

[Donate, sell, or buy E-wastes online.](#)

(Check CalMax for <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/calmax/> for other California counties.)

City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation Solid Resources Citywide Recycling Division

<http://www.lacity.org/san/safe.htm>

[S.A.F.E. Center for Business E-Waste Disposal are operated on certain Wednesdays in certain location.](#)

Phone: 1-800-988-6942 (Option 1 for English, then 2 and 0 to talk with a person for more information.)