Dear Friends,

In today’s technology environment, being innovative has never been so important. Alpha Omega’s Disruptive Innovation Group (DIG) was created not only to provide disruptive changes on future opportunities but also effect existing work, stabilizing projects and continually introducing innovative change.

In this issue of our quarterly newsletter, we explore the benefits of the DIG and how it helps make a job with Alpha Omega more than just a paycheck. Recent award of the NOAA NESDIS Cloud IaaS and SBA Engineering and Information Technology Support contracts have cemented Alpha Omega as a leader in modernization of Federal systems, implementing leading technology including cloud support, and have opened growth opportunities for our employees. In addition, Alpha Omega is proud to be selected as the OutSystems Partner of the Year; our Low Code implementation of a blockchain transaction integrity platform has been recognized as the Most Valuable Project (MVP) by OutSystems for 2018!

Alpha Omega stresses the importance of giving back to communities. Through the Gifting for Families Program, Alpha Omega employees donated over $1000 in gifts to make the holiday season a little brighter for children who may otherwise be forgotten. Wishing our Alpha Omega Family an exceptional 2019!

-Gautam Ijoor
Have I been Pawned?

by Nitin Vartak

Around mid January, the email addresses and passwords of 770M people were distributed in popular hacking forums, making it one of the largest heists of such data ever. Security researchers filtered the data to get to 21 million unique passwords. This event represented not a single hack but a collection of databases from multiple hacks across multiple services accumulated over years.

Hacks targeting single service are becoming more and more commonplace. From Target, Home Depot, OMB.gov to the recent Experian data hack. These events are in the news every day. Stolen data in these events were painstakingly collected over time, and were released at once in the January leak. It is safe to assume that one of your passwords is in the database. It may not have been your bank that was hacked directly, but if you use the same password on your Target account, it could be just a matter of days before a hacker attempts to use the stolen password with your bank account. This is all to say that there is a good chance that You Have Been Pawned.

In light of this, here are a couple steps you can take to make your personal information little more secure:

Check If You have been Pawned: Visit https://haveibeenpwned.com/. No seriously… it’s a legitimate website run by Troy Hunt, a well-known name in security domain. Check all your email addresses individually and it will tell you which hack exposed it. Try your common passwords and it will tell you if these were found in one of the databases. If your password was found in one of the hacks. Change it NOW! Also, Two-factor (2FA) Your Life: Enable 2 factors authentication on everything. YES EVERYTHING – Google.

Facebook, LinkedIn, twitter, back accounts, and all other services with sensitive data support multi-factor authentication and if it does not…. STOP USING IT NOW! Download the Google or Microsoft Authenticator App on your phone and get started. Here are the steps to it: https://lifehacker.com/heres-everywhere-you-should-enable-two-factor-authentic-5938565.

Pro tip: One additional thing you can do is to use a password manager like LastPass and save yourself from the struggle of remembering complex passwords. If you want more granular control and don’t want to use online password managers then try KeePass2 that stores passwords locally.

DIG - Tech Talks

by Jame George

Disruptive Innovation Group (DIG) activities are expanding, and we are excited to announce the start of Tech Talks, a forum for employees to present topics that enable all of us to take a break from daily tasks to sharpen our skills in new ways. We have had versions of Tech Talks running on a few of our contracts, and we are now taking this company wide. We have an exciting lineup scheduled for the next few months which includes talk on Technology Management (TBM: https://www.cio.gov/priorities/tbm/), Penetration Testing, BlockChain, and more. None of us are born experts, so let’s believe in ourselves and participate! As the Dalai Lama said “Share your knowledge. It’s a way to achieve immortality.” There are multiple ways any employee can engage present topics: request presentations on specific topics, and provide constructive feedback during the presentations.

Please email DIG: sridhar.rajagopalan@trustedmission.com your topics and we will take care of the rest. Looking forward to an exciting season of tech talks ahead of us!

Foster Integrity: Maintain a Culture Founded Upon Honesty and Ethical Standards

In a recent client satisfaction survey, Alpha Omega Project Manager Jason Wagener was specifically recognized for excellent support during the transition of the project. Following is a paraphrased excerpt from the survey: “Jason …. has a tremendous amount of expertise … He not only understands the business but its technical application of the system to the business. What makes him invaluable is the fact that he does not hesitate to say no to something that is not beneficial to our business.” Way to go Jason!

~ Greg Swirdovich

AOI “Thankful” board at the Annual Thanksgiving potluck
**Policy Changes**

As announced on 12/26, AOI made a change to the Holiday Plan Policy. Two holidays have been identified as floaters which employees may substitute and use any work day they choose. Approval from immediate supervisor and/or client is required. Floating Holidays cannot be carried over to the next calendar year.

Unused Floating Holidays will not be paid out upon termination.

**Beginning of the Year Reminders**

As we welcome in 2019, we want to remind you of a few items for the New Year:

- 401(k) Limits increased to $19,000 for 2019. For participant ages 50 and over, the additional catch-up contribution remains at $6,000. If you wish to update your contributions, please access your Empower account.
- Health Savings Account Limits increased to $3,500 for individuals and $7,000 for family. For participants ages 55 and over, the additional catch-up contribution remains at $1,000. If you wish to change your contribution, please access your Employee Navigator account. Accounts outside of Cigna/HSA Bank, you must submit a form with account and routing numbers.
- Commuter Limits increased to $265 for transit and also $265 for parking costs. If you wish to update your benefit amount, you will need to submit a new form.
- Take a look at your Emergency Contact list. Make sure the information in Paylocity is still relevant.

**Check out our open positions:**

- Technical Recruiter
- Web Developer
- Technical Analyst
- Cyber Security Policy/Governance Specialist
- Database Administrator
- Information Security Architect with HP Fortify
- Project Leader/Team Lead
- Azure Infrastructure Engineer
- Application Architect
- Systems Analyst
- Senior Systems Analyst
- CPIC Program Manager
- Jr. Finance & Accounting Analyst

We're tapping into the power of our most precious resources, our current employees, to help meet our hiring needs. Simply recommend a candidate you think would make an ideal employee, and you'll be rewarded with a cash payment if the candidate is hired.

For each successful referral that results in a hire, you'll receive a cash award up to $1,500 for each referral. Please connect with the HR team for the Referral Form NOW.
At our annual holiday party, we kicked off our first ever Annual Employee award program to recognize those that contributed in exceptional ways over the past year.

**Outstanding Innovator Award – Tim Long**

Given to an employee who has generated novel and valuable ideas and used those ideas to develop new or improved processes, methods, systems, programs or services. This award recognizes creative ideas that have improved Alpha Omega.

**Lean Forward: Fail Smart Award – Sultana Parveen**

Given to the employee who isn’t afraid to take risks. To the person who is fearless enough to lead into a new direction. This person demonstrates the appropriate risk-taking behavior. One that possesses a determined will to succeed.

**Driving Change Award – John Wilson**

This award is to recognize an employee who acts as a champion of change. This person takes a proactive and innovative approach toward finding viable solutions to business challenges.

**Unsung Hero Award – Duy-An Nguyen**

To the person whose quiet daily performance makes everything go smoothly for everyone else. Who consistently goes above and beyond, without fanfare or public recognition. This person fills in when and wherever needed and always performs at a high level; takes the initiative to solve problems and improve work situations without being promoted; demonstrates reliability, perseverance, and focus on results; and helps others by sharing knowledge of Alpha Omega’s practices and job-related skills. This person is continually both a real benefit to coworkers and a stable, dependable resource.

**Rookie of the Year Award – Julin Justin**

For the new employee who has contributed significantly to his or her department, with enthusiasm, a strong work ethic, superior leadership (if applicable), commitment, and reliability in a short time working at Alpha Omega. This person has quickly become a valuable team player.

**Peer Recognition Award – Roshan Anand**

Provides an opportunity for employees to recognize each other for outstanding service. This is a very special award – an award given by a peer to a peer. The award winner should be an employee member who has had an impact on the nominator professionally. Items to consider include motivation, inspiration, and extraordinary effort in helping with job duties.

**Extra Mile Award – Challie Clemons**

This award recognizes an employee who has gone above and beyond their regular duties. This award recognizes and acknowledges the dedication of those who take on one or more special initiatives to help others, even when they are not called upon to do so. For an employee who sacrificed their time for their peers or the good of the company. Showed willingness to assist beyond normal expectations.
Great Fiji Dream Vacation?
I'm looking forward to...

Best part of your job?
What do you do at AOI?

INTERDEPENDENT, WORLD-WIDE CUSTOMER BASE OF GOVERNMENT AND COMMERCIAL ENTITIES, ALL SHARING DATA AND INFORMATION

STIMULATE SUCCESS - RECOGNIZE AND ENCOURAGE POSITIVE EMPLOYEE ACHIEVEMENTS THAT ARE IN SUPPORT OF OUR CUSTOMERS, THROUGH VARIOUS MONETARY AND NON-MONETARY INCENTIVES AND REWARDS

Follow us on LinkedIn for more Alpha Omega news
EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

“i doodle – The art of the Doodle”

by Warren Beinart

Have you ever sat in a meeting or on a long phone call and wish that you had something to keep you focused and engaged in the conversation? We have all had those moments when our mind wanders off and we struggle to keep in tune with the presenter.

Well, it’s a known factor that if you draw during such meetings your concentration improves by 20%. Really...

I always had a pen in hand and I was always scribbling on the side of notepads and I’m sure you have done this or seen others do this. They are drawing boxes or circles or lines over and over again. They do this to keep the creative side of their brain from drifting off, so that they can focus on what is being said. Trust me... it works!

When colleagues started noticing that my drawings were a little more intricate than mere repetition they wanted to see more. When the company VP says “Wow, that is awesome, draw me something” you have no choice but to comply!

TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Meet the USDA ezFedGrants Team:

Who We Are:
Led by our fearless leader and project manager, Jason Wagoner, we are a diverse team of 5 out of 10 contractors working on this USDA project. Each person brings a flavor of their own style, as well as expertise that jams quite well with one another. Here we are:

- Jason Wagoner (Project Manager, Pennsylvania native, and beer aficionado)
- Abael Solomon (Business Analyst, Maryland native, and soccer/FIFA lover)
- Christine Edmond (Training Analyst, Maryland native, and adventurous musician)
- Ramin Majidzada (Help Desk Specialist, Afghanistan native, amusement park enthusiast)
- Takia Glover (Help Desk Analyst, Maryland native, and FUN seeker)

What We Do:
In supporting the USDA Office of the Chief Financial Officer, our AOI team manages projects, the help desk, training, communication, and documentation as it relates to the ezFedGrants grants management system.

How We Have Fun:
The work environment and team’s foundation is strong from/due to collaboration, constantly learning from and helping one another, diligently supporting the client goals/objectives, and keeping open, transparent communication with one another...also frequent trips for coffee/lunch together.

Pictured (Left to Right): Christine Edmond, Ramin Majidzada, Jason Wagoner, Takia Glover, Abael Solomon
2018 HOLIDAY PARTY RECAP

We wanted to take the time to thank everyone who was able to make it to the holiday party this year, it was a blast! We are already look forward to next years!

Upcoming Employee Events

All Hands Meeting
When: Monday, March 4th @ 4:00 p.m.
Where: AOI HQ
What: Find out about Alpha Omega's Goals for 2019, Anniversaries, etc

"We should never have hired that Waldo chap."