

NECG Legal Tech Review

Last Chance To Save Up To \$25,000 In Taxes On IT Software, Equipment

While many tax incentives for small business have been shot down in recent years, Section 179 of the IRS tax code remains one legal "loophole" worth looking into.

This year (unless Congress changes it at the last minute, which they have done in the past several years) Section 179 allows you to purchase up to \$200,000 of qualified equipment and software. With that purchase, you can write off up to \$25,000 as a Section 179 deduction.

That's less than in previous years, but the good news is, you can still triple your savings. Here's how:

- 1. Save on taxes.** If your business could use new software, equipment or services, but the expense is just a little beyond your reach, the tax savings you'll gain from a Section 179 deduction might just tip the balance in your favor.
- 2. Take advantage of year-end price reductions.** Manufacturers and service providers need to look good to their investors at year's end. It's a great time of year to bargain for the best deal.
- 3. Leverage your savings with smart financing.** Taking advantage of an equipment lease or equipment finance agreement could turn out to be the most profitable business decision you'll make this year. How? By combining a properly structured equipment lease or equipment financing agreement with a full Section 179 deduction, your cash outlay for the year will very likely be less than your deduction.

Plus, your business can start profiting immediately from the new equipment, software or services you invest in.

Call us today at (203) 431-9300 to get started.

Just remember – these savings for 2015 evaporate at midnight on December 31. Call us today at (203) 431-9300 to get started.

Disclaimer: Everyone's tax situation is different. Consult with your own tax professionals for specific advice.



"As a legal partner, firm administrator, or legal associate, you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we shine! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"
- Frank Ballatore, NECG

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"It's the latest innovation in office safety. When your computer crashes, an air bag is activated so you won't bang your head in frustration."

Don't Let Your Phone Be Used Against You: 5 Smart Tips To Keep Your Smartphone Safe

For better or worse, we are practically “married” to our phone these days. It goes everywhere we go. It has access to our most private conversations and key financial data. It holds some of our most precious memories, in the form of pictures, sound recordings and video.

And yet, there are those who would use it to rob and manipulate you. And they're getting more and more clever each day at penetrating your defenses.

So how do you protect your phone and yourself from vicious attack by these cybercriminals?

Here's a basic checklist to keep you and your “beloved” safe.

1. Keep your phone with you at all times. Remember, if somebody swipes it:

- It can be used to access your money, or steal your identity.
- Someone can pose as you on your social media accounts.
- A thief can use your SIM card to rack up phone bills.

2. Keep your phone secure.

- Set a secure entry password.
- Update your phone's operating system as soon as updates become available.
- Turn Bluetooth off when you're not using it and avoid using it in crowded areas.
- Only use encrypted WiFi networks that require a password, and set your phone to not automatically connect to new networks.
- Enable remote geo-tracking and the lock and wipe functions. These will allow you to locate your phone if misplaced. You'll also be able to lock the screen and wipe the data if the phone is stolen. Just be aware that geo-tracking may enable others to pinpoint your location.

3. Keep your data secure.

- Back up your data regularly.
- Don't save passwords or PINs on your phone.
- Avoid online banking in public or crowded areas. Strangers may be able to look over your shoulder.

4. Use apps safely.

- Apps can transmit personal data. Select permissions carefully when you install them.
- Always source apps from trusted providers and check feedback from other users.
- If you're not sure why an app needs access to your contacts, calls, photos or location, see if you can find a comparable app that doesn't require that access.

5. Be selective about how and where you use your phone.

- Stick with trusted webs sites and apps when you download anything.
- Never download content from an unknown source or one you can't verify.
- Turn GPS off when you're not using it. Your location can be tracked if you have it turned on.
- Log out of web sites when you are done using them.
- Especially with e-mail – THINK before you click. Hackers are getting very clever at creating authentic looking e-mails. One false click could unleash malicious code allowing them access to all your personal data.

Keep these tips in mind to keep yourself out of harm's way — and to enjoy all the great things you love about your phone.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Tossing Your Video Cam To The Wind

Shooting the perfect video for your business just got easier, thanks to a new flying camera that's smart enough to follow you on its own. It's called the Lily flying camera, and it breaks new ground in ease of use. Just toss the camera in the air, and it starts shooting video. It can follow or circle or zoom in on a subject with ease. You just wear a special wrist beacon. Lily may be a cool toy, but it's also a great tool for your business. Shooting video from the air, hands-free, quite literally means the sky's the limit on what you can do. It also means you can shoot great marketing videos without having to buy a whole lot of new gear. Just toss Lily in the air, demo your product and let Lily capture stunning aerial footage for you.

Real Leadership Is Power With People (Not Over Them)

Everything we accomplish happens not just because of our efforts but also through the efforts of others. The biggest difference between people who manage others versus people who lead others is how they develop those under them.

As all leaders know, untitled or not, leadership is power *with* people, not power *over* people. Do you build people up or tear them down? Encourage or discourage others? Try to be the hero, or make heroes out of those around you?

According to researcher Tom Rath at Gallup, the No. 1 reason why people quit their jobs is lack of appreciation. Everyone wants to feel significant, to be recognized for what they do. It's important to make people feel appreciated. It's even more important to let people know there is someone who believes in them, so much so that he or she will not let them be less than they can be.

The 3 C's of Power with People:

- **Character** – Those who wish to influence others understand how important character is. When establishing character, it is critical to remember that the opposite of humility isn't pride; it is self-absorption. Few people can lead or inspire others, at work or at home, when they are self-absorbed.
- **Competence** – People who act as leaders exude competence – by their actions, by their appearances and in everything they undertake.
- **Connection** – When we act effectively as leaders, those around us bond with us – not because of our position or title in the organization, but because of their relationship with us.

Once you've developed these 3 C's in your relationships with others, you will be capable of leading. As a leader, titled or not, your job is to act as a thermostat, not as a thermometer. Industrialist Harvey Firestone said, "You get the best out of others when you give the best of yourself." So give it your best.

Leadership Action Points:

- **Express your appreciation** – To act like a leader, celebrate the success of those around and under you as if it were your own.
- **Ask others what motivates them** – When was the last time anyone asked you what motivates you? Don't make assumptions about what motivates your team either.
- **Collaborate** – When it comes to decision-making, the oft-used acronym TEAM is true: Together Everyone Accomplishes More.
- **Practice diplomatic confrontation** – Rather than confronting the person, consider what behavior of his or hers needs to change. Confront the problem, not the person.



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Cloud Computing & Your Company: What You Need To Know

Like it or not, cloud computing is coming to your industry. The question is, will you happily be an early adopter of this technology or be frozen by indecision?

Here are some answers to questions you may have about how to best take advantage of this new and sometimes paralyzing technology.

Just what exactly is “the cloud”?

The cloud is simply storing and/or accessing data and programs over the Internet – rather than using a computer’s hard drive. Simply put, the cloud is a metaphor for the Internet. Due to increases in technology, the cloud is a super-efficient and reliable data processing, storage and delivery system.

Why migrate to the cloud?

The cloud can integrate online apps for marketing, human resources, customer service and more, enabling faster scaling, growth and flexibility for your organization.

As with your electric bill, you pay only for the capacity you use, thus reducing your capital expenditures as well as ongoing expenses. It also allows instant access from any device and easy backup capabilities.

What about data security?

While there are risks in sending your data to the cloud, one way to protect it is to select a data security system that encrypts the data at the file level before it leaves your network.

So, is the cloud for you?

There’s a lot to like about the cloud, yet we’ve just scratched the surface in this article. If you have more questions or

The Lighter Side:

Crazy But True...
Midnight Mystery:
The Case Of The
'Weird' Laptop



One day a user brought us her laptop. She said it was acting “weird.”

We ran the usual diagnostics, which all came up clean. Then the dreaded “Blue Screen of Death” showed up.

The cooling fan had failed completely.

So we backed up her data and gave her a new machine. End of story...

Nope. Within a week, she brought the new laptop back to us, complaining of similar problems. This had us stumped – it was brand-new.

We ran the hardware diagnostics in a continuous loop overnight. Nada.

We asked the user if she had any ideas. She got a funny look on her face and promised to report back to us. Sure enough, the next morning we received an e-mail from her, with an incriminating picture.

When she snuck into her den at midnight, she had caught Boots, her fat orange cat, preparing to take a nice, warm nap on her laptop.

As Boots stepped onto the keyboard, his paw triggered the hot key. Then, as he snoozed on top of the unit, the internal fan had to work overtime to keep it from melting down.

Mystery solved!

We all had a good laugh, glad to know our detective work had finally paid off.