

TECHNOLOGY TIMES

"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably"

The Power of Women! by Joanna Sobran



Pictured (left to right):
Dawn Ferencak,
Joanna Sobran,
Carey Carlock,
Marla Skinner,
Karen Lindsey,
Kristen Benford,
Tandra Rutledge

I recently attended a women's networking and educational event hosted by Riveredge Hospital in Forest Park. It was a nice change of pace for me, as most IT events I join tend to be male dominated. It's the reality of the tech industry. Having been in this business for over ten years, I've noticed that the industry is now slightly growing in women, but it has historically been, and continues to be, dominated with men. Don't get me wrong, I love spending my days with a bunch of quirky and smart IT guys, but there was this amazing spiritual connection that filled the room that day, which I don't experience often. There were business women, wives, mothers, retirees, coaches, and volunteers. What they all had in common was the love for one another, laughter, connection, advice and a desire to help each other. It didn't matter what age, color, or business they were passionate about—these women spoke to one another through a special language. Notice I didn't say *hear*. I didn't have to *hear* them. I saw their smiles, felt their hugs, and was moved by their energy to succeed with grace. Connections and introductions were made with genuine efforts and follow up. This is how these women have grown their businesses and their spiritual souls.

I'm grateful to my longtime friend and Publisher, Dawn Ferencak (a single mom nonetheless) who was able to bring over 100 women into this room to make an impact in their lives. I don't know about you, but from my experience, it's not easy to get 100 butts in seats for a half day and keep everyone engaged and energized. But Dawn did it. And like many of these women, Dawn never forgot about me and continues to change my life personally and professionally. She's like a sister. On this day, in fact, I felt like I had many sisters, who all had a special purpose and a desire to make an impact in some way. I didn't always dream of working in IT, but I knew that I wanted to influence change and make a difference. Technology is a vehicle of change that can empower the way we live for the better. I hope during my next ten years, I get to see more women joining this industry. Women and men think and act differently. I'm not saying one way is better than the other, just different. And having an industry that's made up of people who approach problems in diverse ways is good. Good for our future, and good for business!



Share this article and read others like it on my blog at:
www.linkedin.com/in/joannasobran



"As a business owner, 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!"

Joanna Sobran
President/CEO, MXOtech



It couldn't be easier! Be the first to email brainbuster@mxotech.com with the correct answer to the question below & win a \$25 gift card.

According to the article on page 3, what is one thing you can do right now to protect your business against cyber-crime?

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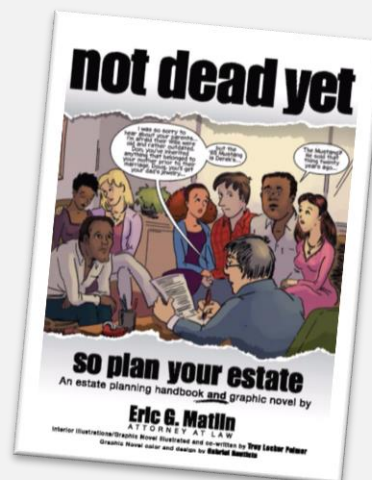
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Do you have a funny story or resource to share with other subscribers? Send it to us! Submit your content to kburmeister@mxotech.com.

If you've given any thought to getting your affairs in order, look no further...

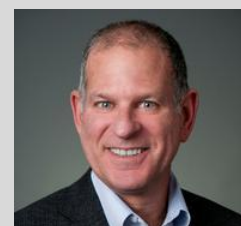
We're very proud of our client, attorney Eric G. Matlin, on the release of his new book, **"Not Dead Yet, So Plan Your Estate."** Eric has taken the subject of estate planning and transformed it into a captivating and fun-to-read graphic novel. The story does a great job at taking a complicated subject and making it easy to understand – holding the interest of those who would normally never even consider reading a book on the subject.

This book is not just for the wealthy; estate planning is necessary regardless of your financial status. Whether you are in the process now, or need to understand why it's important for your future, check out **"Not Dead Yet, So Plan Your Estate."** From zombies to vampires—even a post-apocalyptic glimpse—you won't be disappointed. This estate planning handbook is truly one-of-a-kind. www.notdeadyetbook.net



About the Author

Not Dead Yet, So Plan Your Estate is the latest book from Attorney Eric G. Matlin of Matlin Law Group. Eric Matlin is a graduate of DePaul University and The John Marshall Law School. He was admitted to practice law in 1978 and has written estate plans for thousands of families, ranging from people with a negative net worth to people worth over \$10 million. Eric is a member of the Chicago Bar Association. Eric also participates as a charitable Board Member of The Josselyn Center, Northfield, Illinois [Providing Excellence in Community Mental Health]. Eric gives estate planning seminars to interested groups and is available for public speaking engagements. To learn more about the estate planning and other practice areas of Matlin Law Group visit them online at www.MatlinLawGroup.com.



Author/Attorney,
Eric G. Matlin

NOW AVAILABLE! Free Security Training for MXOtech Clients

It's your data. Do your employees know how to protect it?

Some of you may have been hearing on the news that security breaches, risks, and cyber criminals are getting more advanced. While the MXOtech team utilizes best practices and standards to help protect your IT resources, it is critical that our clients work to empower their internal teams to keep security top of mind.

To enable your staff, we've added a security training service at no cost to you.

This includes monthly educational videos, web training (with certification), and notices with new developments. Advanced security services, including a risk assessment, is also available for an additional cost.

Visit <http://tinyurl.com/MXOtraining> to get started.

Do your employees know:

- ⊗ How to identify phishing emails & websites
- ⊗ Not to send PII (SSN, credit card, driver's license, etc.) in emails
- ⊗ How to protect portable media
- ⊗ The importance of creating strong passwords
- ⊗ Not to share their passwords
- ⊗ The dangers of posting PII on social media
- ⊗ About the risks of using their personal devices with company data

\$1.5M Cyber-Heist Typifies Growing Threat

Efficient Escrow of California was forced to close its doors and lay off its entire staff when cybercriminals nabbed \$1.5 million from its bank account. The thieves gained access to the escrow company's bank data using a form of "Trojan horse" malware.

Once the hackers broke in, they wired \$432,215 from the firm's bank to an account in Moscow. That was followed by two more transfers totaling \$1.1 million, this time to banks in Heilongjiang Province in China, near the Russian border.

The company recovered the first transfer, but not the next two. They were shocked to discover that, unlike with consumer accounts, banks are under no obligation to recoup losses in a cyber-theft against a commercial account. That meant a loss of \$1.1 million, in a year when they expected to clear less than half that. Unable to replace the funds, they were shut down by state regulators just three days after reporting the loss. Net result?

The two brothers who owned the firm lost their nine-person staff and faced mounting attorneys' fees nearing the total amount of the funds recovered, with no immediate way to return their customers' money.

Avoid Getting Blindsided

While hacks against the big boys like Target, Home Depot and Sony get more than their share of public attention, cyber-attacks on small and medium-sized companies often go unreported, and rarely make national headlines.

Don't let this lull you into a false sense of security. The number of crippling attacks against everyday businesses is growing. Cybersecurity company Symantec reports, for example, that 52.4% of "phishing" attacks last December were against SMEs – with a massive spike in November. Here are just a couple other examples out of thousands that you'll probably never hear about:

- ⊗ Wright Hotels, a real estate development firm, had \$1 million drained from their bank account after thieves gained access to a company e-mail account. Information gleaned from e-mails allowed the thieves to impersonate the owner and convince the bookkeeper to wire money to an account in China.
- ⊗ Maine-based PATCO Construction lost \$588,000 in a Trojan horse cyber-heist. They managed to reclaim some of it, but that was offset by interest on thousands of dollars in overdraft loans from their bank.

Why You're A Target – And How To Fight Back!

Increasingly, cyber-thieves view SMEs like yours and mine as easy "soft targets." That's because all too often we have:

1. Bank accounts with thousands of dollars.
2. A false sense of security about not being targeted.
3. Our customers' credit card information, social security numbers and other vital data that hackers can easily sell on the black market.

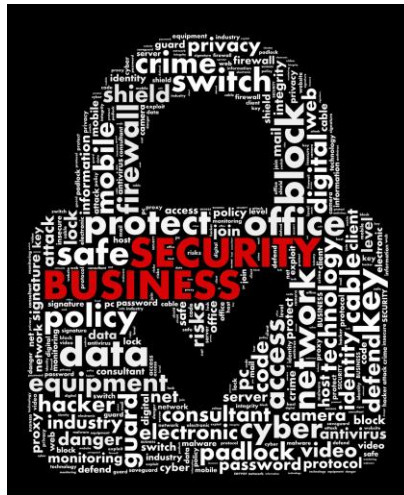
If you don't want your company to become yet another statistic in today's cyberwar against smaller companies, and your business doesn't currently have a "bullet-proof" security shield, you **MUST** take action without delay – or put everything you've worked for at risk. The choice is yours.

Here are three things you can do right away:

1. Remove software that you don't need from any systems linked to your bank account.
2. Make sure everyone with a device in your network NEVER opens an attachment in an unexpected e-mail.
3. Require two people to sign off on every transaction.

Let Us Help – FREE Cyber Security Assessment

When it comes to defending your data, whether it's bank account information, customer and employee records or proprietary intellectual property or processes, do not take chances. If you are NOT a current MXOtech client, you could be at risk. **We are offering our Cyber Security Assessment at no cost through the end of December to five companies in the Chicago area that are NOT currently protected by MXOtech and have 20 or more computers.** Call us 312.554.5699 or email sales@mxotech.com because we can only offer this valuable service to the first five companies that apply.



Meet Tina.

MXO Client Experience Manager



As the Client Experience Manager (CEM), Tina directly supports our IT Service team and is the point-of-contact at MXO to ensure client success.

Tina brings with her a wealth of experience supporting non-profits and other information technology clients, including account management, operations, and business development.

Tina's responsibilities as the CEM include client satisfaction through the onboarding process, overseeing support tickets, customer survey feedback, project management and completion, and ongoing client communication. Tina is extremely passionate about meeting new people and building valuable relationships.

Contact Tina at tkillacky@mxotech.com to discuss the **FREE Security Training** now available to all MXO clients. Sign up online at <http://tinyurl.com/MXOtraining>.

SECTION 179 TAX DEDUCTION

Save A Bundle Of Money On Taxes While Updating Outdated Computer Equipment, But You Have To Act FAST...

Please forgive me for the headline if it seems a bit “sensational,” but I really needed a way to get your attention about a perfectly legal way to save quite a bit of money on taxes while updating outdated computer equipment that is going to quickly pass you by if you don’t act soon.



Thanks to the updated tax deduction titled “Section 179 election” (see www.section179.org for details), the Federal Government allows you to buy up to \$500,000 in machinery, computers, software, office furniture, vehicles or other tangible goods and take the full expense deduction in the current year, thereby REDUCING your taxable income on your current year’s tax return.

This is real money in your pocket! But you have to act now, as once the clock strikes midnight on December 31st, Section 179 can’t help your 2016 profits anymore.

HERE’S HOW WE CAN HELP YOU TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE SAVINGS:

Current MXOtech Clients: Good news! As your self-appointed CIO we have an obligation to let you know of what is required and to help you with budgeting the replacements in an orderly way. Older equipment starts becoming problematic and causes increased issues and downtime. We are in the process of taking inventory of your current machines and will follow up soon with replacement recommendations.

Future MXOtech Clients: Contact us before December 15th to schedule a time to discuss exactly what type of upgrades and support you will need for 2017. We can help you save money and start 2017 off on the right technology foot! Don’t forget, you MUST respond before December 15th to give us time to implement the savings! Call 312.554.5699 and speak with George about Section 179.

Innovation Inspiration

“What new technology does is create new opportunities to do a job that customers want done.”

– Tim O’Reilly

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