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## Welcome to the WhistleBlower Security Newsletter

Making good companies better by strengthening your company's corporate policies and procedures.



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## Latest News

*Whistleblower Security recently met with Giffin Koerth in Toronto to discuss their services. Giffin Koerth is a boutique firm specializing in forensic engineering, forensic accounting, forensic computers and forensic visualization. This is part of our ongoing diligence in finding key partners for our clients to utilize in the event of an allegation that needs deeper investigation. If you are unsure on how to proceed with an allegation, Giffin Koerth could be the solution for you.*

*To learn more about them, please visit [www.giffinkoerth.com](http://www.giffinkoerth.com). See article below...*

## The truth lies in the data. Dig in

Peter J. Thompson



Edward Nagel of Giffin Koerth's forensic accounting group

Ask Edward Nagel about the business of forensic accounting and computer forensics, and he begins by discussing the significance of its applications and practices - the nature of investigations, the process of data preservation and recovery and the value of computer forensics in everything from fraud detection to resolving human-resource issues. But stories do trickle out of Nagel, principal at the forensic accounting group of Toronto-based Giffin Koerth. Like the one about the time John Young, who heads Giffin Koerth's computer forensics practice, was called by an insurance company to help investigate a fire at a business. A computer had been recovered from the wreckage. Young's team were able to make an image of the disk drive - an exact replica of the drive at that point in time - and set about following the trails of e-mail, files, log-ins and Web activity it contained. What did they find?

"A Google search on 'how to start a fire,'" Nagel says.

It's no secret that, in the past couple of decades, computers have overtaken paper files as the information storage technology of choice. More recently, as computing power has migrated from desktop units into myriad devices ranging from smart phones to digital cameras, the field of computer forensics has also boomed. "There's more of a paper trail than ever," Nagel says. In fact, the business has grown fast enough that many forensics firms are making substantial investments in the field. Giffin Koerth, for example, was founded as a forensics engineering firm in 2002. This past September, it launched a forensic accounting and computer forensics practice, which includes a state-of-the-art computer forensics lab, a first for a firm with a core practice in engineering.

As the field has grown, however, it has also become more complex, thanks to the sheer number of devices capable of storing digital data now in daily use. Each one comes with unique, often proprietary operating systems, individual data-storage techniques and unique data formats. "We need to be ready to acquire large amounts of data on different types of devices," says Young. "You need to have a broad array of hardware that's scalable, portable and very highly powered, and can be deployed at a moment's notice."

Giffin Koerth's lab plays a large role in meeting that need, with a full suite of equipment, including cutting-edge technology, such as high-speed forensic imaging hardware, and a fire-resistant safe to secure original devices or data recovered during investigations. Likewise, investigators are deploying a new generation of equipment that gives them the flexibility to deal quickly with many different devices. One of the leading examples is a portable forensic kit now being produced by U.S. manufacturer Paraben Corp. Packed with a variety of cables, memory readers and a laptop computer, it has the capability to perform comprehensive analyses of more than 2,200 different devices.

But for all the technological advances in computer forensics, Nagel says the goal of the job remains true to the roots of investigation: specifically, to use evidence - be it from data or other non-technical sources - to set out an objective, fact-based summary of what happened during a period of time. From there, it's up to clients who use firms like Giffin Koerth to determine what steps to take next. But with the growing capabilities of computer forensics, they have much more information on which to base their decisions.

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