# RNT ensures its clients practice good cyber hygiene

As a veteran computer security specialist, Teresa Rule calls out poor "cyber hygiene" when she sees it.

Often, that's at client companies that contract to have cyber security assessments conducted by Rule's Oklahoma City-based business, RNT Professional Services.

For instance, cyber security professionals from RNT once walked into a client's office and discovered passwords had been printed with label makers and stuck to computer monitors.

"That is not a secure password," Rule said in somewhat of an understatement. "Those workers put their company's information at risk because they weren't practicing good cyber hygiene."

The lack of good information security practices also could jeopardize any contracts the company had with the federal government, she said.

RNT Professional Services is a disabled military veteran-owned consulting firm that provides vulnerability assessments for clients across the nation.

**Jim Stafford**

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Clients include government contractors, the payment card industry and small manufacturers that might otherwise seem insulated from the world of computer hackers.

"If you are anywhere and connect to the internet or have any device that has an antenna of any sort, you can be hacked into," said Rule. "We like to work proactively and not reactively. We like to make sure organizations are able to manage the risks and meet any kind of cyber security incident or event."

Rule co-founded the company five years ago with her husband, Randy. RNT now employs 18 people, 70 percent of whom are military veterans, as are both Teresa and Randy Rule. Both Rules are U.S. Marine Corps veterans.

RNT is based in the Business Development Center incubator at the Moore Norman Technol-

Teresa Rule co-founded RNT Professional Services five years ago with her husband, Randy. [PHOTO BY JIM STAFFORD, FOR THE OKLAHOMAN]

ogy Center.

All of RNT's clients are outside of Oklahoma, many in the Washington, D.C., area.

RNT's business model of taking its professional services to out-of-state clients across the nation is a key benefit to Oklahoma's economy, said Connor Cox, programs officer with the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST).

"Revenues from out-of-state sales bring new money into Oklahoma businesses that ultimately increase economic wealth and jobs in the state," Cox said. "Furthermore, a com-

**SEE THE VIDEO**

Go to Oklahoman.com to see a video about the Oklahoma City computer security firm RNT Professional Services.

pany with a geographic or industry diversified customer base has a more stabilized revenue source that is not as susceptible to downturns in local or regional economies."

## Too busy making a living

Education is critical for small companies, which are among the most vulnerable to computer hackers, Rule said.

"They don't know how to practice good cyber hygiene, and quite frankly are too busy making a living to worry about things of that nature," she said. "So, we are here because we want to make sure that people understand they need cyber security no matter where they are."

For companies that work with the federal government, cyber security can be a make-or-break issue.

Beginning January 2018,

government contractors will have to prove they are compliant with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act or risk losing their contracts.

That's where RNT Professional Services steps in.

"What we do is an assessment, which includes a review of policies and procedures with your business dynamics and industry-specific zone," Rule said. "Then we write up a plan of action and milestones, which is project manager talk for a checklist, which specific actions that need to take place before they are compliant."

RNT also is taking the message of cyber security to Oklahoma small businesses in a series of ongoing workshops across the state. Information about the workshops is available at the RNT website at rntpros.com, as well as local CareerTech centers.

"We want to make

sure the word gets out to people in McAlester, Woodward, Shawnee, Ponca City," she said. "We want them to have the same information that is readily available to people in the larger metropolises."

The company also is coordinating with OCAST, the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance and the Oklahoma Bid Assistance Network to help spread the word on its cyber security services across the state.

The cyber security threat is real, Rule said. You see it in the headlines frequently about hackers breaking into a business or even the U.S. government. Sometimes all it takes to gain entrance into a system is a lone password.

"We are here because we want to make sure that people understand the need for cyber security," Rule said. "Because no matter where they are, they can be hacked into."