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Privacy Tips from Edward Snowden

Multi-Million Dollar Humanitarian Aid Scam



CE/CLE Training

Jean Mignolet is proud to offer state approved trainings regarding tips for "Locating Hidden Assets" and "Google is not an Investigation" for legal professionals and attorneys. Please contact for available dates.

For more than three decades Jean Mignolet has served in law enforcement and private investigation, managing all aspects of general investigative business. She specializes in in-depth background investigations, and is the top choice of attorneys, corporations, small business owners and individuals who require all types of investigative services.

Dear Debbie,

Winning the Pin Up contest has inspired me to speak out about my own experiences. My goal is to empower my readers and do everything I can to help you all stay safe from fraud.

In sharing more of my investigative cases that have gone public, you will learn how to protect yourself before you get scammed and what I can do to help you if you do fall victim to fraud.

Working while ill, working with care-giving, and patient advocacy are all issues you will be hearing a lot more about from me as well.

Jean Mignolet

A reminder that prior issues of the newsletter are view-able from the website.

For further information
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investigators@mignolet.com
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Privacy Tips from Edward Snowden

As part of the *New Yorker Festival*, whistle blower Edward Snowden conducted a remote interview about how we can protect ourselves from unconstitutional electronic surveillance. In this interview, Snowden explained he leaked information regarding the US government's electronic surveillance programs because he wanted to open these issues up to conversation.

What we can do as individuals to protect our right to privacy is to stay away from web and text services that don't support encryption. While Facebook and Google have made some security improvements, Snowden still considers them dangerous services. He also cautions to not send out unencrypted texts. Using services like SpiderOak instead of Dropbox will ensure your files will be encrypted resting on and in between servers, and text services like RedPhone and Silent Circle can encrypt your text messages.



Multi-Million Dollar Humanitarian Aid Scam

It always pays to do your due diligence. My client, a successful musician learned that the hard way. My client, along with other wealthy philanthropists from the United States and Europe have fallen victim to an international multi-million dollar humanitarian aid scam.

Senior Litigator Counsel for the Southern District of Florida Neil Karadbil states, "Cases are evaluated for investigation and possible indictment based on the following: the amount and scope of the fraud, impact on the community, status of the defendant/s, and sufficiency of evidence."

This case certainly fits the bill. Working together with a certified fraud investigator in New York City and with some help from Interpol as well as cooperation from US authorities and international law enforcement agents, we were able to unearth evidence that the female fraudster had scammed at least \$2.5 million from my client and other donors.

These deep-pocketed donors believed they were donating money to humanitarian aid and social and economic development. Instead, there were actually donating to the fraudster's multi-million dollar beachfront property and \$300,000 in jewelry.

"If it sounds too good to be true, it's a scam" is always what a PI advises their clients. This isn't just the warning of a paranoid PI. Financial scams are rampant, and just as many prey on financial desperation, others prey on good intentions.

But why go to all that trouble to avoid social media, Google mail and searches, and encrypt my files and text messages if I'm not doing anything wrong? If I don't have anything to hid, then what's the problem?

Snowden explains the problem:

"When you say, 'I have nothing to hid,' you're saying, 'I don't care about this right. You're saying, 'I don't have this right because I've got to the point where I have to justify it.' The way rights work is the government has to justify its intrusion into your rights."

You shouldn't have to justify their intrusion into your privacy. Our right to privacy does nothing to hurt efforts to fight crime because law enforcement officials can still obtain warrants that give them access to suspects phones and subpoena service providers to gather information if there is probable cause a crime is being or has been committed. Unless law enforcement respects due process, you ought to be able to retain your rights.

Our fraudster first made contact with her marks in the spring of 2012, posing as managing director of a United Kingdom-based investment firm. This firm, they were told, partnered with a network of prominent multinational banks and NGOs whose goal was to raise money for social and economic development projects in the developing world. She assured her marks this would be a no-risk investment because her bank partners kept these investment opportunities confidential, so she was positioned to offer them a \$10 million return on their investment of \$1 million in about 21 banking days. Worst-case scenario, they would get their \$1 million back.

Of course, they did not. In less than a month after the investments were made she cut off all communication with investors, who were left \$1 million in the hole. Meanwhile, fraudster lady made out with a new house and awesome jewelry.

When we looked into who the company principals were, we found out that the buyer was a corporation known as the address of the home she had purchased. This firm was not incorporated until the summer of 2012, months after she scammed American investors. Furthermore, this firm has no registered agent.

Lady fraudster will be sentenced on January 16th, 2015 for her criminal charges to which she has plead guilty. She also awaits a pending civil lawsuit in the Brooklyn federal court.

It always pays to investigate BEFORE you make the investment. It's better to get a PI to verify your investment firm before you lose your money and have to hire one anyway to investigate the scam you fell victim to.

