

Cybersecurity Forum – Succeeding in Your CMMC Journey

Cleveland State University
Thursday, April 27th

Speaker and Panelist Bios



Jeff Brancato, Executive Director



Jeff Brancato is Executive Director of NEOCC, a cross-sector information sharing and analysis organization (ISAO) working to enhance the ability of companies across the region to protect their digital infrastructure and assets. NEOCC's programs also help build regional capacity in this increasingly important field, particularly through promotion of the cybersecurity profession and initiatives to increase the size and expertise of the workforce. NEOCC is one of a small number of industry-led regional ISAOs operating the United States.

Mr. Brancato began working with NEOCC shortly after planning was initiated in late 2015. For NEOCC's founding members, he led strategic planning and program development, implemented activities that generate value for its members, established financial and administrative functions, and guided the effort through NEOCC's formal establishment in 2018.

Mr. Brancato is responsible for the Consortium's ongoing planning, programs, services, member recruitment and business operations. He brings to NEOCC experience and expertise in forming public-private partnerships, industry-university collaborations, and other kinds of alliances to address shared interests. Since 2018, the Consortium's voting membership has grown nearly 50%.

Previously, he was an executive at a regional technology-based economic development organization in Northeast Ohio, and for many years worked in higher education, supporting growth of research programs, technology commercialization, and regional technology industry development.

Outside of NEOCC, he continues to work as a consultant in these areas. He also currently serves on the board of directors of Cleveland State University's Research Corporation.

Mike Gerfin, Supervisory Special Agent, FBI Cleveland

Michael Gerfin is a Supervisory Special Agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation overseeing the Cleveland Division's Criminal Cyber squad. SSA Gerfin holds degrees in Computer Science and Physics and has over 25 years' experience in Information Technology. Before joining the FBI, he was a research scientist and software engineer working in the fields of image processing and industrial control systems. He has been responsible for investigating both National Security and Criminal computer intrusions during his 15 years with the Bureau.

Laura Élan – Senior Director of Cybersecurity



Laura Élan is the Senior Director of Cybersecurity for MxD Cyber: The National Center for Cybersecurity in Manufacturing. In her role, she will support MxD's cybersecurity projects and initiatives in support of the annual Strategic Investment Plan and will lead MxD's Cybersecurity Steering Committee.

Prior to joining MxD in 2021, Laura was responsible for Baxter Healthcare's regulatory strategy for medical software, cybersecurity, interoperability, and AI/ML enabled software. Laura completed her undergraduate work in Electrical Engineering at the University of Illinois - Urbana. She holds a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering and a Master of Computer Science from the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois. She is a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Illinois and holds the RAC credential from the Regulatory Affairs Professionals Society.

About MxD

MxD (Manufacturing x Digital), based in Chicago, is where innovative manufacturers go to forge their futures. In partnership with the Department of Defense, MxD equips U.S. factories with the digital tools, cybersecurity, and workforce expertise needed to begin building every part better than the last. As a result, our nearly 300 partners increase their productivity, win more business, and strengthen U.S. manufacturing. <https://www.mxdusa.org/>

Mike O'Donnell – Vice President of Operations, MAGNET



Michael O'Donnell has 30 years of experience in engineering and manufacturing consulting, with most of that time spent at MAGNET. A Master Six Sigma Black Belt and licensed Professional Engineer, Michael orchestrates new consulting methods, training simulations, and workshops for various businesses. Michael holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from the University of Michigan and an MBA from the University of Richmond.

<https://www.manufacturingsuccess.org/>



Aaron Shaffer – WLS Companies



Aaron started building computers at 16 and worked for two years at a small computer shop before attending Case Western Reserve University to complete a degree in Cognitive Science. Aaron was a full-time student for one year until the university IT department hired him full-time as a Level 3 support specialist where he worked for 4 years while completing his degree. In 2007 he was offered the role of IT Director for the Case School of Engineering but decided that long-term he would be better off as an independent IT Consultant and went out on his own. Six months into that journey, WLS Stamping located Aaron through a head-hunter firm and brought him on as IT Director, where he continues in that role today. In 2020, Helix Linear contacted Aaron to request that his time be split between WLS and Helix, so today Aaron serves as fractional IT Director to both companies. Aaron is the decision maker and hands-on implementor of the systems and controls for CMMC compliance. Both WLS and Helix are 1 year into working towards CMMC compliance, so there is added value in doing the research and learning once, and then implementing the same systems at both companies.



Billy Heiser - Director, Global Information Security



Billy Heiser is the Director, Global Information Security for The Lincoln Electric Company. Billy holds a Bachelor's Degree in Cybersecurity and Information Assurance as well as CISSP and CISM certifications. He has a 26-year history in IT with 15 years focused on cybersecurity. With experience in running domestic, international, and global cybersecurity programs in real estate, retail, and manufacturing environments he has learned from some of the greatest minds in cybersecurity. One of his many current challenges includes achieving CMMC compliance in a very well-established global manufacturing environment.



Steven Stransky – Partner, Thompson Hines LLP



Steven G. Stransky is a partner and the co-chair of the Privacy and Cybersecurity Practice Group at Thompson Hine LLP, where he advises clients on a broad range of data privacy and cybersecurity compliance issues and data breach response matters. Prior to joining Thompson Hine, Mr. Stransky served in the federal government for ten years, including as a Deputy Legal Adviser on the President's National Security Council and as a Counsel for Intelligence Law at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Biography



Damon Hacker, MBA, CISA, CSXF, CMMC-RP

President & CEO, Vestige Digital Investigations

Damon Hacker is one of the founders of Vestige Digital Investigations, a leading technology company specializing in CyberSecurity (proactive & reactive), Digital Forensics and Electronically Stored Information (ESI).

A pioneer in these fields, he brings more than 30 years of experience in the arena, including a background in IT Security and IT Auditing. He helps to improve the techniques, processes and technology in cybersecurity and digital forensics within the legal process. He actively assists clients achieve compliance with many different cybersecurity frameworks.

Helping to shape this important and fast-moving industry, he is responsible for leading Vestige and overseeing corporate strategic direction and growth, finance and administration, as well as the sales and marketing functions of the company.

Damon is active in a number of professional organizations including:

- Information Systems Security Association (ISSA)
- Information Systems Audit & Control Association (ISACA)
- Association of Fraud Examiners (ACFE)
- International Society of Forensic Computer Examiners (ISFCE)
- Advisory Boards of a number of Cyber and Forensic Academic Programs

Damon is an in-demand speaker on local, state and national levels. He speaks on the subjects of DoD CMMC cybersecurity compliance, IT security, IT auditing, computer fraud, white-collar crime, data breach, non-compete and intellectual property theft.

In addition, Mr. Hacker consults on cyber and digital forensics for the television industry, having consulted for The Blacklist; Bones; CSI: Cyber, CSI: Las Vegas, and Backstrom.

He earned both his Master in Business Administration from the Weatherhead School of Management, and his undergraduate degree from Case Western Reserve University. In addition he is a Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), CSX Cybersecurity Nexus Fundamentals certification from the Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA), and is Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification - Registered Practitioner (CMMC-RP) for DoD cybersecurity compliance.



Key Facts

- 30 Years of IT Experience
- Sought after speaker on: CyberSecurity and Digital Forensics topics
- Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
- Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification - Registered Practitioner (CMMC-RP)
- Technical consultant for television

Vestige Digital Investigations

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