

**ZACHARY ZOELLER** | *The Daily News*

**BURIED TREASURE:** Larry DeJournett, vice president of information technology for EVS Corp., checks the company's servers inside its high-security data bunker. -- *PHOTO BY ZACHARY ZOELLER*

Within four years, two disasters - the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York and Washington and Hurricane Katrina on the Gulf Coast Aug. 29, 2005 - rocked the security and emergency preparedness of the United States.

While the deaths of 1,836 people to Katrina and 2,752 to the Sept. 11 attacks were the main concerns both times, economic fallout was an inevitable occurrence.

Katrina caused about \$81.2 billion in damages, and although the initial damages of Sept. 11 cost about \$27.2 billion, the economic effects on the national airline and tourism industries have yet to be calculated.

The images of papers raining down on Ground Zero in the aftermath of Sept. 11, as well as blocks of flooded buildings in post-Katrina New Orleans, served as wake-up calls to the U.S. business community that vital information must be reliably and accurately stored.

"The awareness of the value of companies' data has come to top of mind," said Gayle Rose, CEO of Electronic Vaulting Services Corp. at 5425 Raines Road.

### **Watch your backup**

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2005 and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 have placed stricter regulations on how companies store information, adding to the importance of reliable data backup and retrieval techniques.

While the concept of electronic backup of information is nothing new, the ability of the small- to medium-sized business to store all of its data to hard disk has become affordable because of the availability and cost of the Internet and digital storage infrastructure, Rose said.

Magnetic tape has been the primary information backup medium since the 1960s, holding more than 80 percent of the world's digital data, according to a recent article in *Computer Technology Review* magazine.

EVS offers answers to companies looking for a data backup system without the personnel and time required to use tapes. Instead of backing up information nightly on numerous tapes that are sent via courier to a warehouse, software installed on a business' computer systems automatically sends data to EVS' servers 24 hours a day.

"If your server fails at 3:00, we have information as of 2:59," Rose said.

Electronic Vaulting Services Corp.

- 5425 Raines Road
- Provides digital data backup for local businesses
- Competing with traditional tape backup
- Woman- and minority-owned company
- <http://www.evscorporation.com/>
- 255-0657

Anita Howald, director of information technology for Lenny's Franchisor LLC, which owns the 148 franchises of Lenny's Sub Shop in 11 states, could not keep up data storage demands with its small IT staff. About six weeks ago, Lenny's began using EVS' data backup service and the relief was automatic, she said.

"We were using tape backups, but we outgrew them very fast," Howald said.

Lenny's T1 connection delivers data directly to EVS' servers, which store every document on the company's system.

"A couple of times we had to replace documents that kind of disappeared," she said. "I call them any time and they help me resolve issues like that."

### **Digital resolution**

While EVS is capable of handling a large company's data, such as its current pilot program with First Tennessee Bank, its prices open the door to small businesses, too, Rose said.

EVS charges \$5 per gigabyte of data per month, and most small- to medium-size companies use about 100 GB to 300 GB of storage, Rose said. A gigabyte is a measure of computer storage roughly equal to 240 songs on an MP3 player.

While EVS offers to set up a virtual private network, a private communications network on the Internet, most companies use a dedicated T1 connection, which is a circuit that transmits data like a telephone line, and is installed by a telephone company.

EVS' staff of three full-time computer engineers and three part-time technicians works with customers to create individual solutions.

Chris Chu, head engineer for EVS, developed the idea for a remote digital backup company several years ago, but needed to find someone willing to fund the project and provide financial expertise. Chu presented the idea to Rose, who admittedly knew little about digital backup.

Rose became CEO in September 2005, a year after making an initial investment of about \$250,000 to get EVS on its feet, she said. She expects the company to be profitable in the fourth fiscal quarter of 2007, a testament to her confidence in the potential of digital backup.

"There are a lot of good ideas out there, but if you don't have the depth and business skills, you're going to stumble before you get to your third birthday," Rose said.

### **Under lock and key**

Entering EVS' data bunker is like accessing Fort Knox, with its bricks of gold replaced by computers.

First, only a proper security card can open the front door, followed by four locked gates before reaching EVS' servers, which are comprised of two stacks of hard drives and servers about 8 feet tall with double power connections for everything.

EVS rents space from Time Warner Telecom, which will back up EVS' data if anything should happen to its system.

The name of the game is redundancy, punctuated by the fact that EVS has exactly the same system at a location in Dallas. For double the price, a business may have its data stored simultaneously in Memphis and Dallas.

The bunker is equipped with a state-of-the-art fire suppression system, built to resist high winds and is considered outside of Memphis' shake zone during an earthquake, Rose said.

Currently, EVS is preparing for the "gold standard of digital backup," a SAS 70 audit - an internationally recognized evaluation of a company's controls over information technology, Rose said. Auditors will try to hack into EVS' system to determine its security, and the process will be repeated annually, she said.

### **'A personal attraction'**

A philanthropist, Rose has been involved in groups such as the Memphis Arts Council, LeMoyne-Owen College and the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis.

She started the Rose Family Foundation in 1986 with her ex-husband, Mike Rose, to support education, the arts and health and human services in Memphis. To read more, see The Daily News' Sept. 13 story about the Mike Rose Soccer Complex at <http://www.memphisdailynews.com/>.

As an advocate for women in business, Rose's excitement for EVS not only lies in its impact on the marketplace, but in the fact that it's a woman- and minority-owned company.

"It was a personal attraction for me," she said. "I think we're unique in that way."