

# GlobalSecurityIQ riding fast growth in cybersecurity industry

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Holly Hubert has always wanted to do two things: become a federal agent and start a business.

She achieved the first goal with aplomb, joining the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1992 and ultimately becoming assistant special-agent-in-charge of the FBI Buffalo Field Office.

After hitting the 25-year mark with the FBI and retiring in 2017, she moved on to the second part.

She is founder and CEO of GlobalSecurityIQ, a firm dedicated to working with companies to prevent cyber attacks.

“I am working as hard as ever and enjoying every minute of it,” Hubert said. “I appreciate all the young people I work with, just the collaboration and the exciting exchange of ideas.”

Her startup resides in a burgeoning industry.

Globally, the cybersecurity market is expected to grow in value from \$120 billion to more than \$300 billion in the next five years, according to Global Market Insights, a



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Holly Hubert is a retired FBI agent who started GlobalSecurityIQ, a cybersecurity firm.

research and consultancy firm.

That growth is the result of the ever-increasing threat of cyberattacks against businesses and the need to establish products and processes to guard against that threat.

As an entrepreneur in the space, Hubert has a significant leg up.

Her interest in technology goes back to her time at SUNY Buffalo State.

She graduated in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in information system management.

After working for the FBI in New Orleans on matters as diverse as gangs, fugitives and crimes against children, she came back to her hometown in 1999 and two years later launched the Buffalo office's first cyber crime task force.

That would define the rest of her career.

"It was a multi-agency task force that did computer intrusions, cyberterrorism, computer fraud and crimes against children on the internet," Hubert said.

That task force led to the Western New York Regional Forensics Computer Laboratory, one of 17 FBI-affiliated labs in the country.

In 2012, Hubert was named assistant special-agent-in-charge of the FBI's field office in Buffalo, making her the bureau's regional second-in-command.

After her 2017 retirement, Hubert found herself contemplating her life goals.

"I only ever wanted two things," she said. "One was to become an FBI agent; the other was to own my own company. So naturally I leveraged my security and computer skills together."

A variety of IT firms and new companies have poured into the cybersecurity space in recent years, she said, responding to the demand from companies that are motivated by fear or regulation.

GlobalSecurityIQ is unique in that it re-creates her experience at the FBI in a privatized environment, enabling the company to do the usual consulting and

monitoring but also digital forensics and incident response when an issue arises.

She spends much of her business-development energy inside companies, teaching them about the scope and relevancy of the threat.

“About 50 percent of cybersecurity attacks target small- to medium-sized businesses, so they’re just as vulnerable as larger organizations,” Hubert said. “The average attack costs those businesses about \$120,000. That’s enough to put a company out of business.”

Her client list has grown in a rapid, word-of-mouth fashion.

She’s up to six employees with a range of contractors and expects to add several team members this year.

The long-term goal is to turn the company’s focus outside of Western New York.

“We have clients all over the country already,” she said. “I think we will become a nationally known service provider in cybersecurity.”

**Dan Miner**

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