

## GENE LYTWYN NAMED FINALIST FOR 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TEKNE AWARDS

*MHTA will recognize Minnesota's top technology companies and individuals at the November 3<sup>rd</sup> awards ceremony*



2010 award finalist

*Minnetonka, MN, September 8, 2010* – The Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA) has named Gene Lytwyn, Founder & CEO of Element Data Group, as a finalist in the Technology Executive of the Year category for the 2010 Tekne Awards, which will be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center on Wednesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Tekne Awards recognize Minnesota companies and individuals who have shown superior technology innovation and leadership.

As a leader in technology management for more than twenty years, Gene Lytwyn has been instrumental in assisting hundreds of companies across the state of Minnesota discover and productize technology solutions that have contributed to revenue growth and expansion. Among his career accomplishments, Gene founded two successful technology companies and a foundation, all dedicated to enhancing technology advancement.

After graduating from North Dakota State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science, Gene Lytwyn began his career in 1986 as a software engineer for Lee Data. Early in his career, Gene developed a passion for elegant design and system-level engineering with a single focus: understand the needs of the market and develop solution-based hardware/software systems that significantly and measurably enhance the user's experience.

Following on multiple startup successes, Gene sought to address a need with IT management. Using a proven, client centric business model he implemented in past business ventures, Gene created Element Data Group in 2008. Element Data Group is an IT service firm dedicated to providing IT consulting services to the legal community. Starting with just one client, the Company has been on a rapid growth progression and is now providing IT consulting services to over 50 law firms. From its inception, Gene and his leadership team established the following core principles to guide Element in managing its business: recruit and train the best IT consultants in the market; stay focused on the needs of the legal community; make sure the IT investment has a strong ROI; use innovation to solve problems; and be passionate about customer service.

Despite the slow economy in 2009, Element invested significant resources to grow its legal IT consulting business. A new data center was built in downtown Minneapolis to provide more cost effective server and storage services for Element clients. Through a joint collaboration with WynEdge Software, RocVault was developed and is now being used by a number of law firms for secure backup. And, to give back to the community, Element began a partnership with Hennepin County Bar Association to provide CLE classes on technology issues related to legal practices.

“I am honored to be a finalist for the 2010 Tekne award,” said Lytwyn. “This nomination is certainly a tribute to both the talent that Element Data Group is built on and the impressive high technology community that exists in Minnesota.”

Presented by the MHTA in partnership with the BioBusiness Alliance of Minnesota, LifeScience Alley, Enterprise Minnesota, the Tekne Awards annually recognize Minnesota’s best and brightest technology users and developers in innovation, development, education, commercialization and management. A full list of finalists is available online at <http://www.tekneawards.org>.

“The Tekne Awards recognize those whose leadership and dedication to technological development helps demonstrate Minnesota as a global player in technology-based markets,” said MaryFrances Schurb, interim president of MHTA. “This year’s finalists should be extremely proud of their role in helping Minnesota excel.”

Recipients of the 2010 Tekne Awards will be announced at the award ceremony on Nov. 3. The event will begin with a VIP registration & reception at 4:30 p.m., followed by general registration and cocktails at 5 p.m., dinner at 5:45 p.m., the awards celebration at 7 p.m., and a post-Tekne party at 8:30 p.m. The event will be emceed by Paul Douglas, author, entrepreneur and meteorologist.

To register for the 2010 Tekne Awards ceremony, visit [www.tekneawards.org](http://www.tekneawards.org) or contact Kathy Marsh at 952-230-4554 or [kmarsh@mhta.org](mailto:kmarsh@mhta.org).

### **About Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA)**

The Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA) promotes the growth, sustainability and global competitiveness of Minnesota's technology-based economy through public policy advocacy, member collaboration and education, and community outreach. MHTA is the only membership organization that represents Minnesota’s entire technology-based economy. MHTA members include organizations of every size – involved in virtually every aspect of technology creation, production, application and education in Minnesota. MHTA works in partnership with TechAmerica, which represents Minnesota's technology organizations nationally. Find out more online at [www.mhta.org](http://www.mhta.org) or follow MHTA on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/MHTA>.