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FEMALE LEADERS IN TECHNOLOGY

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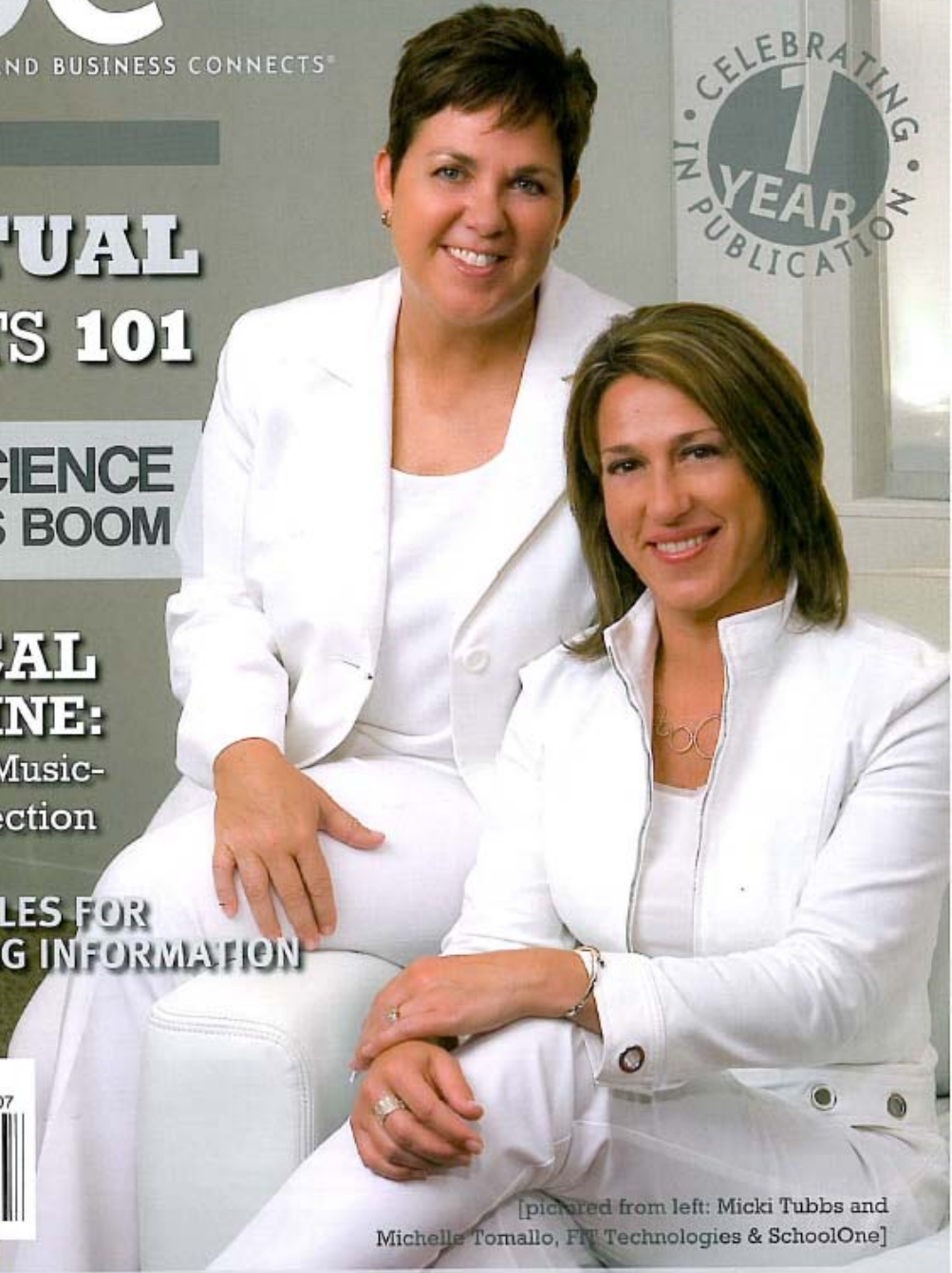
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July Issue - 2008

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[pictured from left: Micki Tubbs and
Michelle Tomallo, FTV Technologies & SchoolOne]

EVENTS, NETWORKING & CORPORATE TRENDS IN NORTHEAST OHIO

FEMALE LEADERS CREATE Opportunity With Technology

BY KATE BUDDENHAGEN AND ALYSSE DALESSANDRO

When looking for accomplished women in the information technology (IT) industry, you don't have to look far. CBC® found four local companies that thrive by either providing IT support or using IT in business. Leading each business are innovative and inspiring female entrepreneurs. And each of their stories are proof that you don't have to be a "techie" to be successful in technology.

SCHOOLONE AND FIT TECHNOLOGIES

www.schoolone.com
www.fittechnologies.net

Micki Tubbs and Michelle Tomallo, founders of SchoolOne and FIT Technologies, recently won the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year 2008 award. Their amazing story that makes them worthy of such recognition began in 1999 with SchoolOne, which developed a Web-based application to connect the home and school. Partnerships formed, creating opportunities to further grow SchoolOne and launch FIT Technologies, providing customized IT solutions beyond education and into the corporate sector. Starting with just an idea and a lot of dedication, they built a multimillion dollar business from the ground up.

"Neither of us had a background in technology when starting SchoolOne and FIT Technologies," says Tubbs. Both women started their careers in health care. When Tubbs' brother, Dan McDermott, approached them with an idea for SchoolOne, their enthusiasm for the product turned what they thought would be a six month supporting role into a full time \$14 million business. Their success, however, was not overnight.

"We invested a lot of our own capital; we had credit card debt to the max in every facet and our properties were all leveraged," Tubbs explains. "We went two years without getting paid. But we knew it was a great idea and were going to make this work."

With little financial support, the team took advantage of opportunities by responding to client needs. "Because the software package dealt with schools day to day, we kept being asked to customize," Tomallo says. With that, schools started coming to them for IT support, and then others outside education followed, which led to FIT Technologies.

"BOTTOM LINE," TUBBS STATES, "IT'S ABOUT BEING ABLE TO ASSESS THE NEEDS OUT THERE AND BEING ABLE TO ADAPT AND BE FLEXIBLE TO MEET THOSE NEEDS."



Micki Tubbs



Michelle Tomallo

But without an IT background, they couldn't have met those needs without help. They hired talented staff to help them grow the business and teach them about technology.

"Our staff has been a huge part of this. There's no way we could say 'We could have done this on our own,'" states Tomallo. "The opportunity for collaboration and partnership is essential for any organization to grow, and that is one of the strengths we bring to the table."

Tubbs adds, "We're committed to working hard and want this to succeed because we have all these people we want to share in it with. We're both really proud of where we are because six years ago, we were in the basement of a building with no windows, struggling, packed in alongside others trying to figure out how to make this work."

They have since upgraded from being in that basement with a handful of staff to a magnificent workspace in downtown Cleveland with over 120 employees. And they are dedicated to maintaining the culture they have worked so hard to create. "We take it personally in making sure everyone has a job and has meaningful work, allowing them to grow along with us," Tubbs says.

"We are all for bringing in seasoned, capable and intelligent folks to work for us because for many years, we were wearing lots of hats and our organization was very flat," Tomallo notes. "So the evolution in terms of growth has been setting up the organization to get us to where we want to be."

Tomallo stresses their objective to be an employer of choice in the competitive technology industry. Tubbs also notes their goal to continue to diversify their client base as well as reach a financial target "We have a big goal to be a \$50 million company in the next few years," she says, "and we think we're going to do it."

With a talented staff, a solid strategy and a lot of passion, they're certainly on their way.

- KB

**There's only
one b!@#%
in the office.**

**Luckily,
she's not one
of our bosses.**

We want to throw our founders,
Micki Tubbs and Michelle Tomallo,
a bone for making FIT Technologies
such a great place to work and play.
Congratulations on winning the 2008 Ernst & Young
Entrepreneur Of The Year award for Technology. We
are so proud of you and what you've accomplished.

— Pyper and your other 175 employees/fans

fit
TECHNOLOGIES
FITtechnologies.net
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*Pyper
Our founders' 9-year-old chocolate
Labrador who has been serving as
Director of First Impressions each day
at the FIT office for over 56 dog years*

