

GRAPEVINE ESCAPE LIVE!

# Missing Millions Mystery

A FocusTec Labs Story

Russell Sebastian  
[Date]



**Ben Browning** (Chief Executive Officer) – Ben is the leader of FocusTec Laboratories. Incredibly intelligent for his age, he doesn't use that trait as a power tool. Occasionally, his playful side comes out, and we are reminded that he is an incredibly young but successful entrepreneur. Still, he keeps things in check by choosing his words carefully before speaking. As a result, he is visibly patient, but decisive when action is needed. He has the respect of his team, and the company likes what he has done to build FocusTec Laboratories.



**Karen Taylor** (Head of Security and Operations) – Karen is a busy executive that has been around corporate technology most of her career. Karen always seems to have too many irons in the fire. Between her home life, job responsibilities and Amazon addiction, Karen doesn't appear to have life in order. However, more often than not it is a controlled chaos. That is, except for her spending habits, which have her maxed out on credit cards. At work, her ability to navigate chaos makes her an excellent problem solver and an essential employee.



**James Edge** (Chief Technical Officer) – James is a career technologist. In a social setting, James can be the life of the party. However, at work, James often uses his knowledge to prove he is the smartest one in the room. Because of this, others sometimes put up defensive mechanisms around James, and often try to find "faults in his armor." This leads to James always feeling attacked, having to defend himself. He lives alone with his cat, Marbles, admits to a gambling problem, and spends most of his vacations alone in Las Vegas.



**Martha Moorehead** (Chief Financial Officer) – Martha is smart and confident leader. She is the best at training her team to succeed and provides good feedback, and often her associates outperform other departments. However, she takes the lion's share of the credit, most often the result of her team's hard work. Though she has achieved success professionally, Martha has just gone through a very personal and bitter divorce that cost her a tremendous amount of money. She has an aura of "better than you," so when she does show compassion, people are often taken aback by it.



**Cindy Markussen** (Director of Human Resources) – Cindy is a positive, welcoming, and agreeable person. She keeps this facade up to cover her problems with her teenage kids at home, who are often in and out of trouble with the law. At work, people like Cindy – they feel she truly listens to them. She has a very trusting nature, though sometimes to a fault. She often believes exactly what is told to her, whether or not it is actually true. Cindy is a victim of malapropism, using made up words that are similar to the real thing, but not quite right, so she is often the center of interoffice jokes.



**Diane Lowe** (Finance Specialist) – Diane just graduated from a prestigious college, but the tuition has left her with serious bills, and this job is helping her pay them off. Diane is a meticulous, hard-working associate. However, she is not an executive, and it shows – she is not comfortable speaking with them or speaking up when she has an opinion. She prefers to do her job and not get pulled into outside affairs.

**Karen:** <<Karen enters the meeting, on mute. Starts talking, then realizes she is on mute, unmutes, then repeats>> Hello? Karen is here. Can anyone hear me? Am I the first on?

<<James enters, he is talking, but no one can hear him>>

Hello... James? James, you're on mute! <<frustrated, though she just did the same thing>> I can't hear you. <<shakes her head, points to her ears, uses her hand as a mouth>>

**James:** <<nerdy flirty>> Whoa! Is this better, Karen?

**Karen:** <<with disdain>> Yes, better. Though I could have done without all the smarmy attitude <<under her breath>>.

**James:** Pardon me, m'lady?

**Karen:** Charming. James, you are always so charming on these calls.

**James:** I aim to please, Karen. <<finger guns the camera>>

**Karen:** Anyhoo – hey James, do you know who all is invited to this meeting?

**James:** No. I don't know... probably just leadership. You know - the USS Enterprise. Captain Kirk and his bridge crew.

**Karen:** What are you talking about?

**James:** Bridge crew? Star Trek?

**Karen:** <<Deadpan - does not care at all>> I never saw it.

**James:** You never “saw” it? You’re kidding! The Klingon attack in The Way of the Warrior? Ricardo Montalban as Kahn? The Tribble Infestation....? Shatner is a. Genius. Of both. Cinema. And television.

**Karen:** Right... That’s nice. Oh, hey...one second. (to someone off-camera) Listen, go take the dog for a run. I’m in an online meeting. An ONLINE Meeting! I know...can you just....? <<Karen turns to the monitor>> Hang on a second. <<Karen leaves the screen>>

**James:** Sure. I’ll be here. <<flirty>>

<<Karen leaves the screen. James picks up his Game Controller and starts to play a game. SOUND EFFECT HERE. Martha joins the meeting.>>

**Martha:** Hello? James? Can you hear me?

**James:** <<James puts the controller down... but keeps playing>> Loud and clear, Martha.

**Martha:** <<nonplussed>> Uh, yeah. Any idea what this meeting is about?

**James:** Not a clue.

**Martha:** <as an aside> Well that’s about right. So, what’s up with Karen, where is she?

**James:** She stepped away for a sec, she’ll be back.

**Martha:** James... James are you distracted?

**James:** <<busted, and struggling to cover>> No, I... I was just trying to find some... copy paper... err... that is... staple clips... I mean paper clips. Online. You know... For the company, of course. For when we return to the office. <<pause>> Of course.

**Martha:** <<fake flirting>> Oh, so that's what IT does these days! I had no idea the server team was out shopping for us. <<chuckles>> Add a bag of oranges and some Oreos for me. Double Stuff if you don't mind.

**James:** LOL, Martha.

**Martha:** Okay, enough. All kidding aside... are you... all right?

**James:** Me? Oh, yeah, I'm okay. I'm good.... I'm always good. <<lecherous laugh>>

**Martha:** No, stop it, really. So, there's no new news then?

**James:** No, nothing. I'm assuming that's a good thing. Still, we...  
<<James cuts off short as Cindy enters the meeting>>  
Uh, let's discuss this later.

**Cindy:** <<over the top, way too sweet>> Howdee-do, everyone!

**Martha:** Good evening.

**Cindy:** Does anyone know what this meeting is about?

**James:** We don't. Kinda hoping you know something, given you are Human Resources and all.

**Cindy:** Nope, I got nothing. Am I late? I was on an end-of the year teacher evaluation. <<sing song>> My kids are doing... AWE-SOME! They may actually skip a grade or two, which is a blessing since they were held back three or four times already. So... fingers crossed! <slight awkward pause> Hey... umm... Martha, can I call you after this meeting to discuss something?

**Martha:** <<flippant and building>> If it's about my divorce, you might as well discuss it right now. The whole thing has gone public anyway, so, full disclosure... I mean it's all over Facebook, Instagram... even in newspapers... IF you haven't noticed. It's a travesty!

**Cindy:** It's not about your divorce, Martha, though I appreciate you being translucent. Wait, is that right? No – I mean, it's about that... uhhhh, let's not talk about it in a public foreman.

**Martha:** Public what?

**Cindy:** Public foreman... You know... with other people listening.

**Martha:** Oh, forum.

**Cindy:** Right...that's what I said.

**Karen:** <<Karen returns to screen>> I'm back everyone.

**Cindy:** Hi, Karen.

**James:** Hey, who were you talking to before you left, Karen? You don't have a roommate, right? Or did you meet someone on Bumble? C'mon, Karen, spill the beans!

**Karen:** It's... a boyf... a guy... OK, look, it was the Amazon delivery guy. I've gotten to know him better since working from home. I'm the last stop on his route, so he occasionally hangs out for a while. But he can't take a hint and sometimes overstays his welcome, so I tip him extra for odd jobs... like walking my dog, just to get him out of my hair. Now, can we just move on? Does ANYONE know what this meeting is about?

<<silence and shaking head no from meeting participants>>

Do we think it might be about our expense reports? I submitted mine this afternoon, and I think I may have spent a little too much this time.

**Cindy:** I doubt it. They aren't even due 'til tomorrow. I haven't even acquitted mine yet.

**Karen:** Acquitted? Oh, you mean submitted. <<eye roll>> Listen, do you all think we're going to start on time?

**James:** I would hope so. We do have a few minutes yet.

**Karen:** Let's just get this going. I have an Operational Status meeting tonight, so I hope this will be short. Ugh! That reminds me. I'll be right back... again. <<Karen leaves the screen>>

**James:** Karen has always got something going on. You ever notice that?

**Martha:** <<Said dramatically>> "Those who are wise won't be busy, and those who are too busy can't be wise."

**James:** That's deep... Where'd that little daily affirmation come from?

**Martha:** No, Genius, it's a quote from Lin Yutang. The Importance of Living?

**James:** <<Deadpan - does not care at all>> Never heard of it.

**Martha:** Hellloo...it's a book... and there are lots of them. You should try the lost art of reading sometime. Or at least stare at the pages and pretend you are reading.

**James:** <<points to head>> I have enough up here already, thank you very much.

**Martha:** <<Again, delivered dramatically>> "Anyone who reads a book with a sense of obligation does not understand the art of reading."

**Cindy:** Haha! You just got surveyed!

**James:** Lin whats-its-name again, I presume? Anyway, whatever. I'm just saying that Karen seems... preoccupied. <<Delivered with a bit of an accusatory tone>> I'm concerned that she may have other things going on that pull her focus from work.

**Diane:** <<Diane enters the meeting>> Hello. Diane's here.

**Martha:** <<Taken aback>> Diane? Uhhh, who invited you to this meeting?

**Diane:** Hi Ms. Moorehead. Mr. Browning, errrr, uh, Ben, invited me. I'm sorry, should I not be here?

**Martha:** No, I'm just surprised is all – you report to me and I wasn't aware you were invited. But it's fine, no big deal. <<Fake smile>>

**Cindy:** Oooh. Martha, you seem a bit paranormal!

**Martha:** Paranormal? What? Oh. Cindy, can you try to...uhh ... nevermind. Diane, did Ben tell you why he wanted you here?

**Diane:** Ummm.. yes ma'am.

<<beat, waiting for Diane to continue...it gets awkward>>

**Martha:** <<Growing frustrated, but with a veneer of sweetness and restraint>> Weeeeeelllll... Can you... like, tell us, then?

**Diane:** Uhhh, no, ma'am.

**Martha:** You... can't tell us? Tell me why you can't tell us.



**James:** Yes, Diane, for Pete's sake, PLEASE tell us why you can't tell us.

**Diane:** I can't tell you why I can't tell you.

**Martha:** Well, Diane, that is ridiculously cryptic.

**Diane:** You're telling me. I'm sorry about that, Ms. Moorehead. Mr. Browning, I mean, Ben, asked me not to say.

**Martha:** I guess we will find out soon enough. Ben is joining now.

**Ben:** <<Ben enters the meeting>> Hi Team.

<<in unison>>

**Martha:** Hi Ben      **James:** Ten-Hut, Captain on Deck!

**Cindy:** Hiya Ben!      **Diane:** Good evening, sir

**Ben:** Good evening, everyone. Looks like we are waiting on... Karen?

**James:** She's running around. I'll text her. <<James picks up his phone again>>

**Ben:** Good idea.

**Cindy:** Punctu-alogy is so important. The early bird gets the rolling stone, right?

**Ben:** <<Beat, with a quizzical look>> Umm, yes. <<Awkward pause for transition>> Listen, Cindy, I'm sorry if I pulled you away from your family time. I know you like to gather your kids together at the end of the week. But I wouldn't have called this meeting if it weren't important.

**Cindy:** No worries, Ben. Things do come up. My kids and I will procrastinate tomorrow night instead.

**Ben:** That's... good...I guess?

**Martha:** Ben, may I ask why Diane is here?

**Ben:** It'll all make sense in a moment... once we get started...IF we get started. Where on earth is Karen?!

**James:** I texted her. <<Snarky, like "I did my part.">>

<<Karen returns to the screen, a bit ruffled>>

**Karen:** Sorry, I'm back. Just have a few, uh, things going on.

**James:** <<under his breath>> You can say that again.

**Karen:** Excuse me, mister?!

**Ben:** OK, OK, enough of that – James, cut it out. We need to get down to business.

**James:** Aye, Aye, Cap'n.

**Ben:** Team, I'm recording this meeting for legal purposes. I'd like all of us to go around and announce ourselves for the record – full name and title please. I'll start. My name is Ben Browning, Chief Executive Officer for FocusTec Laboratories.

**Martha:** Martha Moorehead, Chief Financial Officer, FocusTec.

**Karen:** Karen Taylor, Security and Operations.

**James:** James Edge, Chief Technical Officer, IT. Also, level 71 Orc warrior.

**Ben:** James...

**James:** Sorry.

**Cindy:** Cindy Markussen, Director of Humans Resourcefulness.

**Diane:** Diane, uh, Lowe. I'm... I do Finance Data entry.

**Ben:** Thanks, everyone. Now, I've pulled you together tonight because I need your help solving a critical problem. As you know, FocusTec Labs has been in partnership with the Exaltus Corporation over the last several months to build out our latest technology implant. This implant stands to revolutionize enhancement of human brainwave activity and put our company on a powerful path. We were making our final payment to their company... and that payment has gone missing. Diane, the Finance specialist who entered the data, has confirmed this isn't a glitch in our system. Diane, am I leaving anything out?

**Diane:** No sir.

**Ben:** I have confirmed with the CEO of Exaltus that they have not seen the final payment. Somewhere, somehow, someone on this team sabotaged this company and misplaced 1.7 million dollars.

<<Big reactions from all>>

**James:** Whoa!

**Martha:** What?!

**Karen:** Not on my watch!

**Cindy:** Oh my – That seems auspicious!

**Ben:** Yes, very SUSpicious indeed, Cindy. Folks, this is a felony, plain and simple. We will get to the bottom of this. We will recover. And, be assured, we will press charges. I've entrusted each of you with the future of FocusTec, and SOMEONE has broken that trust.

**Martha:** <<Incredulous>> Wait, you think it was one of us!?

**Ben:** <<brief pause>> I believe it could be one of you, yes. Maybe two or three of you. The only people who have the capacity to sabotage FocusTec are here on this call.

**James:** Hold on. What about the rest of the Finance team? Aren't they suspects?

**Ben:** I've done a little vetting already. Diane is the only employee that was logged into the Exaltus account. Am I on point, Diane?

**Diane:** Yes sir, that is correct. I was the only one logged in to the account from 9:32 AM to 3:15 PM last Friday. We checked the logs.

**James:** So... this this issue happened... last Friday?

**Ben:** Yes, it looks that way.

**Cindy:** Then why are we just now finding out about this?! Wait... that's 7 days...and 7 days is a whole week!

**Ben:** Yes, Cindy, it took some time... on occasion it takes a few days for the payment to clear both systems. Then you have to add in the additional time it takes for someone to notice. Thank goodness for Diane catching it when she did.

**James:** <<raises hand>> Um, I have a few questions...if it's okay by you, Ben.

**Ben:** The floor is yours, James.

**James:** <<milking his moment in the spotlight...acting like an overzealous lawyer>> Diane, in the last few days, did anyone ask you, convince you, persuade, force, or blackmail you to do anything... suspicious?

**Cindy:** That's AWE-spicious, James.

**James:** <<sarcastic>> Cindy, you are amazing, thank you. Diane, I meant what I said...were you involved in any activity, voluntarily or otherwise?

**Diane:** No sir!

**James:** <<continuing his lawyer act>> Are you afraid to talk about it because that person is currently on this call?

**Martha:** Ease up, James. This isn't Law and Order. Diane is a good employee.

**James:** Look, I'm just...exploring solutions. Diane, were you ever away from your desk? Did you go get a coffee, take a stroll?

**Diane:** Umm, I received a call from Cindy around lunchtime to go to her office and sign some paperwork for insurance benefits. You remember that, too, right, Cindy?

**Cindy:** Abso-tively! We were up against a deadline and we didn't want you to lose your medical and dental benefits. It's one of the perks of being a part of the Focustec family, ya know.

**Ben:** Wait, let's go back. What do you mean, lose the benefits, Cindy?

**Cindy:** Oh, it's quite simplistic, Ben. Every associate has to sign that they accept the new insurgence given by the company. If you don't, well, you lose your health benefits. We hadn't heard back from Diane, so Martha suggested just having her come to my office to "get 'er done" in person and extradite the process.

**Ben:** So, why wouldn't someone want to sign that?

**Cindy:** Well, every once in a while, there are people that choose not to participate in the insurgence plan. Say, for example, you were married this year and your new spouse has coverage. Or, you have your own cheaper insurgence somewhere else. Or... maybe you just don't want coverage at all.

**Ben:** Diane, why did you wait so long to renew?

**Diane:** I guess I just forgot to sign it. I honestly don't remember getting any notification.

**Cindy:** I sent a paper copy to everyone by interoffice mail. All were submitted except for yours, Diane, and since the clock was ticking, we needed a physiological signature from you.

**Diane:** I never saw that.

**James:** Did you lock your computer when you went to Cindy's office to sign?

**Diane:** I'm sorry, what?

**James:** You know, Control-Alt-Delete. Windows-L. Basic PC security.

**Diane:** I... can't remember. I was only gone from my desk for like, three minutes max. That's it. I worked at my desk all day...I even ate lunch there...since it was Friday, I had tuna salad and saltines...I added some green grapes to the tuna to kick it up a notch, then I had....

**Martha:** <<Stopping her>> Diane, it's OK. Diane, you're fine.

**Karen:** Wait. Diane, one more thing. Can you prove that you submitted the payment transfer through the system?

**Diane:** Yes ma'am, I can. I know this is a bit crazy sounding, but I take a screenshot after every payment right after I send it.

**Karen:** Well, that's a bit quirky...

**Diane:** Maybe, but do you want me to share it with you guys?

**Ben:** Yes Diane, please do so.

<<Diane screen shares a picture of the screen invoice – must stay on the screen for 20 seconds! Once the image is displayed, the conversation can continue.>>

**Diane:** Can everyone see it?

**James:** Yes, we can see it. <<with an air of superiority>> Apparently, the network is running fine. Next?

**Ben:** Hang on a minute, James, let's just... take a look here for a second. <<brief 5 second pause>> Martha, when does the Finance system actually batch and send transactions?

**Martha:** Every Monday through Friday.

**Ben:** What time, exactly?

**Martha:** 2:00 PM... that's how James programmed it back in the day.

<<Diane removes the screenshot>>

**James:** <<defensively>> Not "James." The IT Department. And those were the requirements.

**Karen:** But... did you program it correctly?!

**James:** Oh, oh! I see what you're getting at, Karen! Let's blame the IT team, right? We're SO smart that we can program the system to make money disappear!

**Martha:** <<sarcastic>> Simmer down, James. I hate to add fuel to the fire, but didn't you also install a patch to the system just last week?

**James:** Yes. <<slight pause>> And that was validated and approved before we implemented.

**Ben:** Still... it is a change that happened recently, correct?

**James:** Yes, it was a change, but it was but it was a \*standard\* change. We make these kinds of changes all the time. It's a simple update patch we do to the Finance system every few months.

**Martha:** <<Lecturing>> I've been saying this for years...the Finance system is extremely outdated. It should have been replaced years ago. It is incredibly slow, can't deliver on new features, you can't log in remotely, and the security logs are vague and meaningless. It's seriously just one step above chiseling it into a rock.

**James:** But what does that have to do with the missing money? Here we go again, everybody pile on – our system has been in place for years with absolutely no problems. But we don't know what happened, so let's alllll blame IT!



**Martha:** Look James, I'm just "exploring solutions." Wasn't that what you said earlier? And, come to think of it, did you even oversee that patch? I thought you were in Las Vegas part of last week.

**James:** On. VACATION. D & D tabletop convention.

**Martha:** Maybe you needed some money to help fund that vacation... yeah? Those convention costumes don't come cheap.

**James:** OK, I've had enough. Ben? You need to reel these people in!

**Ben:** I agree, now calm down the both of you. Let's stick to the matters at hand.

**Karen:** Excuse me, Ben, I have a question.

**Ben:** <<Losing patience and sighing>> Go ahead, Karen.

**Karen:** I don't know how best to put this so forgive me - I'll just say it. What about you? I don't mean to imply anything, even though by just saying it I guess I am implying something, but if you can separate those two things, what I am trying to say is – you had the same opportunity to steal that money as any of us in this whole mess.

**Ben:** Your point is valid, and I had anticipated someone may ask. You see, I have read-only access to the financial system. Last year during the audit I had James remove any unnecessary access from everyone who didn't need it. That included me. Only essential personnel can make changes.

**Karen:** I see... but what if you are working with someone? You know, covert-like. Making it look like us when it was really you?

**Ben:** Then I guess we shall see in the end, Karen.

**Karen:** <<long pause>> Uhh, Ben - there's one more thing that I'd like to bring up.

**Ben:** Go on.

**Karen:** Well, at the start of this call I... I had to check on the Amazon guy.

**Ben:** The Amazon guy?

**Karen:** Its... a long story and not important. Anyhoo, I got back to my desk rather quickly and when I did... I heard Martha and James talking about... something. Martha was asking James if he had "heard any news."

**James:** What is up with you, Karen? You listened in on our conversation? What are you trying to hide? Seriously!

**Karen:** Nothing, I'm not hiding anything!

**James:** Just flying under the radar, huh, Karen?

**Cindy:** Snoopy-dogging on other people's private consternations!

**Karen:** I wasn't snooping on anyone's private... conversations, Cindy!

**Cindy:** Yes, but you hid off screen to listen in, when others weren't aware of it.

**Karen:** I'm sorry about that... but you were the ones being secretive! The whole conversation was just...

**James:** Private! It was private, Karen. But since you have it out in the open now, I guess I'll explain. <<James takes a moment, which makes it look like he is making it up>> My... cat has a life-threatening hairball condition. <<Getting a bit emotional>> It's...it's really hard for me to swallow.

Martha and I happen to go the same veterinarian, and we saw each other there last week. She was simply asking if I had heard anything from the doctor. Which, I have not. Are you satisfied?

**Karen:** I... guess. And I'm sorry to hear about your cat's... hairball condition.

**James:** <<Grief stricken and perhaps dabbing eyes or blowing nose>> Thank you.

**Martha:** Karen, since we are currently chatting you up, I have a few questions of my own.

**Karen:** Sure...bring it.

**Martha:** You run Security and Operations for the company, and your team is always on-site, correct?

**Karen:** Yep, I have a team on the ground 24-7. We answer calls, fix issues, and make sure no one breaks in the place.

**Martha:** Especially important, I'm sure. Were there any strange visitors or activities that took place last Friday?

**Karen:** <<checking notes>> No visitors of interest, but there was an implementation of a new security system on the front doors.

**Martha** Oh? Who performed the work?

**Karen:** Let's see...Charlie Voss... and Rob Barker.

**Martha:** <<leading>> Didn't you mention to me earlier this week that you were there as well?

**Karen:** Oh, yeah, that's right. I was there.

**James:** <<dogpiling>> Karen, the install - did it... go well?

**Karen:** Funny you should ask, James. It didn't. We actually had to revert back to the old system.

**Martha:** And did you test that the old system was functional after you switched it back?

**Karen:** <<With an air of superiority>> Well, as you said, the old system was working before, so it should work when it was re-installed, right? <<Switching gears>> Hey, I really need to make a phone call.

**Ben:** Not now, you don't. That can wait.

**James:** So, Karen, DID you test it?

**Karen:** Test what?

**James:** The doors, Karen. The front doors. Did you test to see if they worked after you reverted everything?

**Karen:** I... can't confirm that. I left for a lunch meeting before they were finished. I'll have to check.

**Cindy:** Wow – so the front doors could have been wide open for several days?

**Karen:** No! No, I am sure the guys tested everything. I just have so much going on that I forgot to ask.

**James:** So, let me get this right... your job is Security... but you were SO BUSY that you may have potentially left our doors unlocked to anyone who might walk by? Or... maybe... someone who needed to enter for the purpose of stealing. Talk about easy money!

**Karen:** James, I am not a thief!

**James:** I'm not necessarily blaming you for the money being gone, Karen. But I am blaming you for leaving the doors open.

**Ben:** OK, stop badgering each other. Karen, get those front doors checked and report back.

**Karen:** Yes, sir.

**Ben:** James, check the front door security camera footage on the server.

**James:** On it.

**Ben:** Let's see. Diane –

**Diane:** Yes, sir?

**Ben:** How many payments have we made to Exaltus?

**Diane:** Thirty-five payments. This would have been number thirty-six.

**Ben:** And were there any other payments missing, before or after this one?

**Diane:** No sir. The invoice numbers are consecutive.

**Ben:** Karen, do you have the contract agreement between our company and Exaltus?

**Karen:** I have it right here. As soon as I knew what this call was about, I pulled all the information in the event we needed it.

**Ben:** Great - can you screen share it?

**Karen:** Sure.

<<Karen screen shares the contract agreement between Exaltus on Focustec Labs>>

**Karen:** Hmm. Now that I am looking at this contract more closely, we probably need an audit to ensure Exaltus performed all the requirements.

**Cindy:** Good point. Look at that – I don't even think Belinda works for Exaltus anymore.

**James:** Wow, I barely remember signing that contract it has been so long.

**Diane:** If you don't mind me saying, it sure seems like we are going in circles.

**Karen:** I agree - we signed this contract ages ago. What does that have to do with this problem?

**Ben:** I don't know yet. But I have some ideas. Team, lets regroup in 10 minutes. I have to validate a few things before we can get to the bottom of this problem. One thing I can guarantee – once we have the answer, it is going to be a horrible Saturday evening for the guilty.

**INTERMISSION – 10 minutes**

**SOLUTION!**

**Ben:** Team, thanks for coming back on. It took me a few minutes to figure out what happened, but I am certain that I have the answer.

**Diane:** That was quick, if you don't mind me saying so, sir.

**James:** Well? Let's hear it then.

**Ben:** OK. First and foremost, I know that the Finance software didn't do anything automatically to lose the payment. This software handled every other transaction before and after the Exaltus payment that same day without an issue. Therefore, the incident must have taken place real time, at some point after Diane coded it into the system, but before the automatic batch process. That puts our target time between <<verbally punch this timeline>> 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM on Friday.

**James:** Makes sense, I agree.

**Martha:** Agreed.

**Ben:** James, this incident happened last week while you were on vacation. We don't have a remote logon to this old software, so for once, it's a good thing that the software is outdated. There simply isn't any way you could have been involved.

**James:** Boo-yah! I didn't think I was involved, but now I know I'm not! I'm so relieved! But if I didn't do it, who did?

**Ben:** I'm getting to that... Karen?

**Karen:** What? Me? What? Me?

**Martha:** Please. Say it again.

**Karen:** What?

**Ben:** Karen at first, I was convinced you were involved.

**Karen:** Me?

**Ben:** However, you're the only one on this team who submitted her expense report on time. After a quick review moments ago, I found a receipt showing you were across town eating lunch at Fabritzi's last Friday while the incident was taking place.

**Karen:** I was, that is right! I was meeting with an important vendor at lunchtime... at the same time you claim this happened. <<realizing this is why she missed the doors and it will make her look bad>> Consequently, that's also why I didn't know about testing the doors.

**Ben:** Look, I'm glad you're in the clear, but Fabritzi's is a pretty high-end place, so we'll definitely be having a talk about your expense report and some changes to your policies.

**Karen:** Understood.

**Ben:** Diane, you look nervous. How are you holding up?

**Diane:** I'm Okay, Mr. Browning...Ben...sir.

**Ben:** You have nothing to be nervous about. You performed your job as expected, even down to following your own seemingly unnecessary step of taking account screenshots. But it just so happens that your quirky behavior was the key that drove me to the answer. If you were guilty, there's no way that you would have offered that critical evidence up in this discussion. Diane, you should be proud of yourself. Thank you for your help. It won't be forgotten.

**Diane:** <<with an air of relief>> Oh! OK. You are so welcome, Mr. Browning. Thanks, everyone! <<She is ready to escape and is back to her insecure self>> Can I go now?



**James:** Don't you even want to know who is guilty, after all this? I'm literally popping popcorn!

**Diane:** Ah! <<thinking>> Yeah, I suppose I would like to see who is responsible. But I'm just gonna go ahead and mute myself...okay?

**James:** Then, sit back with me and watch the story unfold!

**Ben:** And so... that leaves us with... Cindy and Martha.

**Cindy:** Ben.... Don't you think you are being a little overjealous? Are you inspiring... me?

**Martha:** Implicating, Cindy! And this is totally absurd. Ben, what, exactly, are you insinuating?

**Ben:** I'm not insinuating anything... I'm saying that you are guilty of stealing from this company.

**Martha:** <<Staying calm and sweet>> Choose your words carefully, Ben. I know my way around the courtroom and – though I would truly hate to do it – I can sue you for slander. This whole thing is just a big misunderstanding. <<Laughs and shakes head>> You and I need to sit down together and –

**Cindy:** <<A bit frantic>> Ben, I've worked for FocusTec since the beginning... when it was just an idea. I helped build this company into the talented smelting pot it is today!

**Ben:** Yes, Cindy, you did. Which is why it's surprising that you helped Martha pull this off.

**Cindy:** <<surprised>> Pull what off? What did I do?!

**Martha:** Get to the point, Ben. What are you accusing Cindy of doing?

**Ben:** Not so fast...Martha, you switched the account information while Diane was distracted with Cindy signing the insurance paperwork. Diane had just completed entering the payment detail into the system, and you knew time was ticking before the account payment was going to be sent over at 2:00 PM. Timing was crucial.

**Martha:** You think I switched the account? Again, you aren't making sense.

**Ben:** You see, I almost didn't catch it either... but the name and the Tax ID were different on Diane's screenshot than what was on the contract. Subtle...you only changed the letter "L" in Exaltus to a number "1" – which switched the account in the system to a dummy account you must have created earlier.

**Cindy:** Wait, an optical inclusion?

**Ben:** Not exactly. Martha gambled that Diane wouldn't notice the change on the form, and her bet paid off.

**Martha:** <<Laughs and shakes head, but she is starting to panic>> I did no such thing Ben.

**Ben:** Oh, but there's more. You also knew the system was old. Once the transaction was made to the dummy account, you knew you could simply switch it back to the Exaltus account and no one could trace it.

**Martha:** No...it wasn't me!

**Ben:** Remember, there are only a few people who have that kind of access. But you knew Diane was careful – and a great employee. You had to find a way to get her to take her eye off the ball. So, you took the insurance notification from Diane's desk. Of course, that's why she never saw it. Once the deadline had passed, you asked Cindy to get that signature and distract Diane while you made the change. Cindy, being your friend and quite trustworthy, went ahead and did that for you.

**Cindy:** Martha? Is that true? You said we needed Diane to get those insurance papers signed immediately, because she was delinquent and the last one on the team to get it completed!

**Martha:** Cindy, stop.

**Cindy:** You told me that Diane was being belligerent about signing, and that is why you wanted HR to get involved! I did exactly what you told me to do!

**Martha:** Cindy!

**Cindy:** I gave you the opportunity you needed steal from the company by getting Diane to leave her desk in a rush! You made me look like an imbecile! I am so infuriated with you!

**James:** Whoa! On the bright side? Cindy is evidently now in full command of the English language, everyone. Bravo!

**Ben:** Martha, you would have gotten away with this... but you didn't count on Diane's payment screenshots. No log would catch that. It'll be a simple task to check out that Tax ID and see who owns it. I've already texted Karen and Security to check on it.

**Karen:** We're on it!

**Ben:** Martha, to think that you were going to let Diane take the fall for this is really, really low.

**Martha:** <<pleading>> Ben. Listen to me. It's a rounding error, you know? FocusTec won't miss it. Exaltus was overpaid. Those fat cats at Exaltus were... taking us to the cleaners. I did this company a favor.

**Cindy:** Ben! I didn't know about this! I honestly didn't know this was going on!

**Ben:** I know, Cindy. You are an unfortunate, unwilling accomplice here. But I needed you to help me get Martha to confess to the crime on this recorded call. And you need to take this as a lesson not to trust everyone so blindly.

**Martha:** <<grown into evil incarnate>> You rotten, rotten man. I needed that money to pay off the expensive divorce lawyers. I'm broke. My ex-husband took everything. I can't be expected to... downgrade! You know me, Ben! I can't live in an apartment!

**Ben:** Oh, you won't have to worry about the apartment, Martha. I would concern yourself more with how you'll be decorating your cell. Authorities will be arriving shortly, please stay put. The rest of you are dismissed.

<<people start signing off slowly in this order during James' speech below: 1-Ben, 2-Martha, 3-Cindy, 4-Diane, 5-Karen 6-James>>

**James:** (1) Hey, well since we are on here anyway on a Saturday night, anyone who is NOT guilty want to stay on and play some online trivia games? (2) Maybe some virtual chess? (3) Minecraft? (4) Any takers? (5) No takers? No? Aww, man. (6)

**Diane's Screenshot:**

Find Payments			
<b>Payment</b>			
Numbers	216618173	-	216618174
Dates		-	
Amounts	\$1,711,237.12	-	
Operating Unit		Bank Account	
Payment Method	Electronic	Document Name	
Payment Process Profile		Payment Process Request	Final payment
<b>Payee</b>		<b>Voucher Audit</b>	
Payee Name	Exa1tus Corp.	Category	
Supplier Number		Sequence Name	
Taxpayer ID	49-1803757	Number From	15902
Supplier Site		Number To	15903
Paid To Name	On File		
Remit To Account	On File		
<b>Status</b>			
Status	Paid ▾		
Dates			
Accounted	Complete ▾		
<div>Clear</div> <div>New</div> <div>Find</div>			

**Names and Tax IDs**

Exaltus Corporation      Tax ID 48-1902847

Exa1tus Corporation      Tax ID 49-1803757

## Statement of Work:

## Statement of Work

## EXALTUS CORPORATION

1221 North Whitten  
Seattle, WA 98105  
TAX ID: 48-1902847



## #4512: Electrogenesis Consulting Services for FocusTec Laboratories

## Date

April 3, 2016

## Services Performed By:

EXALTUS CORPORATION  
1221 North Whitten  
Seattle, WA 98105

## Services Performed For:

FocusTec Laboratories  
160 North Main Street  
Grapevine Texas 76051

This Statement of Work (SOW) is issued pursuant to the Consultant Services Master Agreement between FocusTec Laboratories ("Client") and EXALTUS CORPORATION ("Contractor"), effective April 3, 2016 (the "Agreement"). This SOW is subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Agreement between the parties and is made a part thereof. Any term not otherwise defined herein shall have the meaning specified in the Agreement. In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the terms of this SOW and the terms of this Agreement, the terms of this SOW shall govern and prevail.

This SOW # 4512 (hereinafter called the "SOW"), effective as of April 3, 2016, is entered into by and between Contractor and Client, and is subject to the terms and conditions specified below. The Exhibit(s) to this SOW, if any, shall be deemed to be a part hereof. In the event of any inconsistencies between the terms of the body of this SOW and the terms of the Exhibit(s) hereto, the terms of the body of this SOW shall prevail.

## Period of Performance

The Services shall commence on April 22, 2016, and shall continue through April 30, 2020.

## Signatures

FOCUS TEC LABORATORIES		EXALTUS CORPORATION	
Ben Browning, CEO	<i>Ben Browning</i> 4/3/16	Mark Salter, CEO	<i>Mark Salter</i> 4/3/16
James Edge, CTO	<i>James Edge</i> 4/3/16	Belinda Ertel, CTO	<i>Belinda Ertel</i> 4/3/16
Karen Taylor, Ops	<i>Karen Taylor</i> 4/3/16	Edward Fultz, Ops	<i>E. Fultz</i> 4/3/16