



Betsy Robinson
PRESIDENT & CEO
OF TIER4 GROUP

By Drew Farmer
Images courtesy of Tier4 Group



In 2019, two rising Atlanta-based Inc. 5000 IT consulting firms partner to launch Tier4 Group, an IT Talent, Professional Services, and Security firm. The company is a collaboration between Tier4 Advisors (IT sourcing & procurement firm) and Robinson Key (IT staffing & recruiting firm), two brands that delivered best-in-class services.

Tier4 Group now operates alongside and in partnership with Tier4 Advisors. At the heart of Tier4 Group is President and CEO Betsy Robinson, who saw the partnership between the two original companies as a way to broaden their overall reach and say “yes” more often to clients.

In a little over 12 months’ time, Robinson has seen Tier4 Group grow immensely as the organization is reaching further than ever before to work with clients across the country.

With new products and services announced for clients in 2020, Robinson continues to lead the company through uncertain times due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In spite of this, Tier4 Group is thriving as they work with clients to make necessary adjustments

to their overall IT strategy, enabling stability and growth during the current business climate, and well into the future.

Betsy, you are the President and CEO of Tier4 Group. Can you tell us about Tier4 Group and explain how the organization came together?

Tier4 Group is a women-owned technology talent, professional services, advisory and information security firm with a national reach.

Whether an organization needs to hire a software developer or IT executive, leverage our experienced team of consulting resources to complete an IT project and assessment, or secure its business through a comprehensive range of cybersecurity products and services, Tier4 Group’s award-winning team has resources in place to meet these needs with flexibility and superior service.

Tier4 Group was the result of combining Robinson Key with the professional services and security practice of Tier4 Advisors in 2019.

What inspired the collaboration between Tier4 Advisors and Robinson Key in February 2019?

I kept asking myself how we could better serve our clients. This drove me to look within my network of trusted friends and colleagues to find additional resources to support our clients’ initiatives.

I’ve known the leadership team at Tier4 Advisors for many years, and after having multiple meetings with them, it was a no-brainer as to why we should partner and launch Tier4 Group to provide added value to both our clients, who are often the same buyer.

As an example, Tier4 Advisors’ clients would have direct access to a network of quality IT candidates through Tier4 Group, and legacy Robinson Key customers would now have access to Tier4 Advisors’ global network of 700+ vendors and service providers.

Additionally, Tier4 Group gained two divisions and expanded our capabilities into professional services and cybersecurity op-

erations, which provided diversity to our portfolio. We also launched a CIO advisory practice.

Robinson notes the incredible upswing in business Tier4 Group has seen since the collaboration between Tier4 Advisors and Robinson Key. Tier4 Group has been able to take on new clients that would previously have been turned away. Since the partnership, it has been a win-win situation for all parties.

How has the collaboration between the two companies made the services offered even better?

It’s been a little over a year since we made the announcement of Tier4 Group, and we are really seeing things take off. Both organizations have been able to say ‘yes’ more often to business that we would have previously turned away.

It’s allowed us to support customers in a more complete way. I had known Jake Sherrill, Founder and Chairman, of Tier4 Advisors, and Eric McVey, Chief Information Officer of Tier4 Advisors for nearly a decade.

Both have stellar reputations in the market, commitment to superior service, and the same cultural and personal values as Robinson Key.

Working with Jake and Eric, along with the other Tier4 Advisors leadership team members has been energizing and we have a lot of synergies between us.

Betsy, you founded Robinson Key in 2010 and prior to joining forces with Tier4 Advisors, the company had been going strong for nearly a decade. What led to the founding of Robinson Key and what were some of the difficulties you had to overcome early on?

The creation of Robinson Key, now Tier4 Group, began as a vision of providing boutique, consultative, and quality IT talent and recruiting services in a market segment that had begun an extreme shift in quantity over quality.

The difficulties early on were mostly operational. Many entrepreneurs start businesses because they feel passionately about an idea or are good at “x” and I was no different.

But just because you are good at something, it doesn’t make you an expert in all facets of leadership or running a business.

Early on, I had to not only do client business development and recruit candidates, but also manage employees, manage payroll, and be my own COO/CFO/CMO combined.

But it’s those that learn, adapt, delegate, and eventually spend their time on the right areas that end up being successful and growing their business. We were even blessed to be named #245 on the 2019 Inc. 5000 list as a result of our hard work. Robinson found that the desire to open her own business and begin life as an entrepreneur came naturally. She comes from a long line of small business owners and the idea to do something fresh was exciting.

What inspired you to be an entrepreneur and own your own company?

I had inspiration from other friends and colleagues who I’d seen launch their own businesses and somewhere inside of me, I just knew that I had to give it a shot. Two

“TIER4 GROUP IS A WOMEN - OWNED TECHNOLOGY TALENT, PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, ADVISORY AND INFORMATION SECURITY FIRM WITH A NATIONAL REACH.”



of my grandparents were small business owners and my dad and stepmom also owned their own businesses, so maybe it's in my DNA? I don't know, but I asked myself "If I fail, what was the worst that could happen?"

I'd just go back to working for someone else like I did before and if I had to do that, I'd probably be a more well-rounded person than before. Luckily, that didn't

happen! I also wanted the freedom to be creative to help customers solve problems. Working for large corporations, often with conflicting internal agendas, meant that any changes to a contract, pricing, products or solutions often felt like going to battle and it was exhausting.

Even though I found success, I never felt empowered and enabled. Entrepreneurship removed those barriers.

One of the items that stands out about Robinson Key is much of the company's business is based on referrals from clients and candidates who recommend the services. How significant is it to be referred to by other brands to work with companies around the globe?

Extremely significant. As a business owner, this tells me that our customers and candidates are happy with the services they receive from us, and in a market where there's information and vendor overload, having someone provide a recommendation or warm introduction is a tremendous asset.

We truly value the relationships with have with our clients.

In 2020, Tier4 Group launched the Technology Advisory Partnership Program (TAPP) which gives clients a significant boost in their technology strategy.

Through the memberships offered by TAPP, clients have the opportunity to work with trusted advisors with real-world experience to get results that count.

Earlier this year, Tier4 Group launched the Technology Advisory Partnership Program (TAPP). Can you tell us about the program and how clients can benefit from it?

TAPP is an annual membership program available nationwide at three different membership levels.

The program was designed by a group of technology leaders, mostly former CIOs and VPs, for their peers and their direct reports, as we like to say "Designed by IT leaders, for IT leaders".

It is a unique program because members have access to their own trusted advisor who will intimately get to know their business and provide a fully customized approach to meet their IT strategy or transformation needs.

Oftentimes, our SMB customers would not have had the budget for this kind of talent in-house, but TAPP makes it possible.

Additionally, our trusted advisors have extensive hands-on experience in the corporate world, which makes their recommendations and advisory services even more valuable to today's IT leaders.



Tier4 Group also launched Tier4 Secure in May 2020. Can you tell us about this service offering and how it will help your clients?

Tier4 Secure is a machine-based threat detection and response service designed to protect our clients' business systems from malware or unauthorized access 24-hours a day, 7-days a week, 365 days a year. Tier4 Secure also incorporates human-based

threat intelligence from cyber threat exchanges and dark web syndicates across the globe and provides automated remediation of suspicious activity based on predefined business policies and pre-approved actions.

My team has been working so hard on this initiative and I am excited about bringing a premium service which would normally only be available to large enterprise customers to the small/mid-market segment.

Betsy, you are based in the Atlanta area. How has that helped cultivate the company's identity and molded your work as a CEO?

Seeing the growth and transformation of Atlanta as a tech hub over the past 15 years has been awesome. Atlanta is such a great city to do business in, and the technology community is thriving. Owning a business here has allowed me to connect with so many other collaborative entrepreneurs and there are great resources, such as the Georgia Small Business Development Center, and strong universities here.

I am also actively involved on the Advisory Council for Women in Technology and the Diversity & Inclusion Board for the Technology Association of Georgia — the connections I've made through these local organizations have helped me not only give back, but to grow both personally and professionally as well.

Robinson has been very honest about the way Tier4 Group will operate for the rest of 2020 due to the current Covid-19 pandemic.

In spite of the pandemic, however, she has seen upswings in segments of Tier4's operations including cybersecurity. In addition, the organization's TAPP program has the ability to help companies through the uncertainty that the world currently faces.



What is in store for clients as well as yourself in the next year?

With the pandemic, the next year may look a little different than we originally thought; however, in crisis there can absolutely be opportunity. We are seeing an increase in our cybersecurity business and we are thrilled to offer Tier4 Secure to new and existing clients. We have customers who are still hiring and we'll be there by their side making sure that we add talented consultants and employees to their teams. We have a large opportunity with our professional services practice to help customers on their digital transformation journeys and to enable their remote workforce. Lastly, our TAPP program can give much needed guidance to company executives during this time of crisis and our Advisors can also serve as fractional or interim resources for companies who may have had to greatly reduce their staff.

Betsy, what is a day in your life like?

Aside from running a business, I'm also a wife and a mom. Finding the proper bal-

ance between those three roles is often challenging, but my family always comes first and I am intentional about prioritizing them and their needs.

What is something most people don't know about you?

One of my hobbies is renovating and flipping homes. In 2018, we completed three major renovations and in 2019, we renovated our own home. It's very gratifying to see ideas come to life and to take older, tired properties and bring them back to life in a new way.

Can you share two of your favorite quotes with us?

"Life is too short to wake up in the morning with regrets. So, love the people who treat you right, forgive the ones who don't and believe that everything happens for a reason. If you get a chance, take it.

If it changes your life, let it. Nobody said it'd be easy, they just promised it would be worth it!" – Harvey Mackay

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." – Maya Angelou

If you had the power to change just one thing in the world what would it be?

I'm an animal lover, so I'd like to live in a world where we are kind to animals – shelters would be empty, there would be no endangered species list, and we would eliminate cruel and unnecessary experiments on animals.

In just over a year, Tier4 Group has added to and expanded upon what legacy Robinson Key did so well. Now, Tier4 Group clients are able to receive services like never before thanks to the partnership with Tier4 Advisors, and the newly created programs and services offered by Tier4 Group's trusted advisors and security experts.

For more information on Betsy Robinson and Tier4 Group, visit <https://tier4group.com>

