

Women in Technology

We're highlighting the stories, achievements, and experiences of
34 women working in the technology industry.

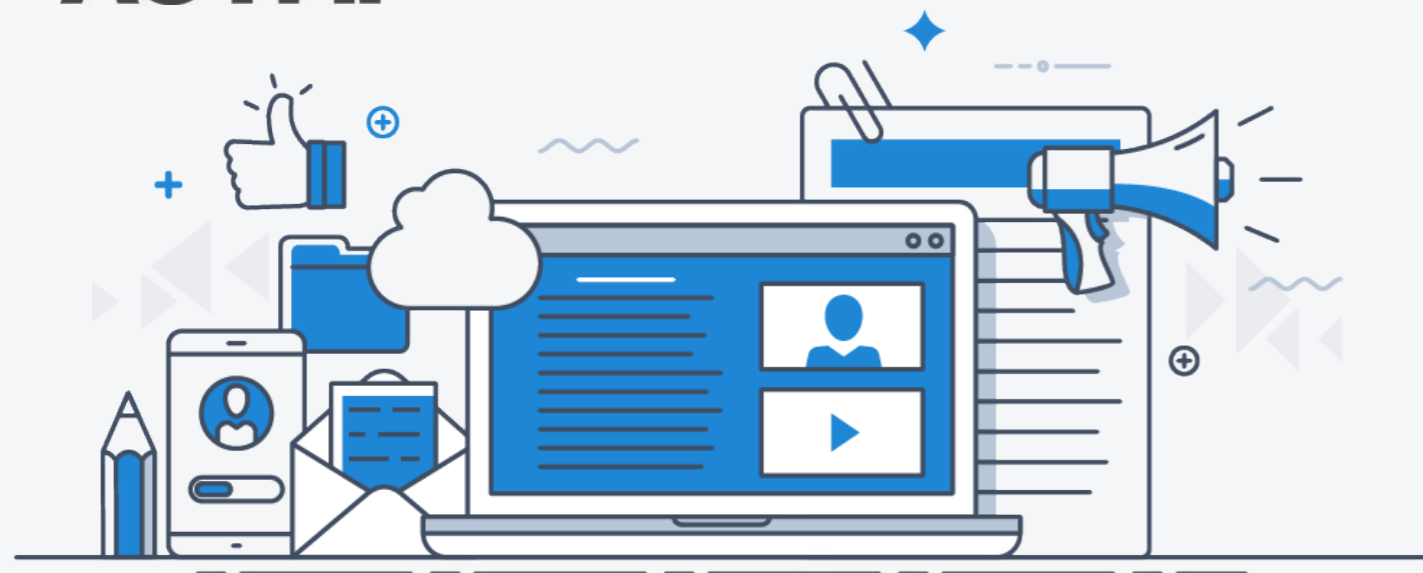


**Investing in What's Next During
Uncertain Times**

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**Vendor Awards & Recognition:
The Finalists**

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Message From The CEO

TIM LYBROOK, CEO

Hello Fellow Industry Professionals,

Welcome to the 24th edition of AOTMP® Insights, the publication for telecom, mobility, and IT technology management professionals across the globe.

Last June, we first recognized Women in Tech in this publication. It was the most popular issue of the year, by far. The readership was nearly 4x anything we had seen previously. As we launch this issue, there still has not been anything close. That tells you something.

Women in Tech is a powerful global initiative for many organizations, and we are very proud and honored to feature 34 outstanding women in this month's issue. The submissions this year were more than double last year, and we expect them to continue to increase substantially each year as we bring more visibility to the initiative.

This is our largest issue by far in terms of pages, and we expect it to bring in more readership than ever. As you read the powerful stories on the following pages, you will see why. Some of the stories are just unbelievable. Some will bring tears to your eyes, and some will amaze you. But they all have one thing in common. They are all amazing in their own way. They each offer a unique path for others to strive for. These are truly outstanding women. Read on to see for yourself.

With the interest we are seeing in Women in Tech, I am happy to announce we will be featuring outstanding women each quarter – September, December, March, and June. We decided this was too important of an initiative just to bring attention to it once a year.



And one other big announcement, which really pales in comparison to Women in Tech: we will be moving this publication to be online on our website only. Based on reader feedback, we wanted something easier to read, easier to view on a mobile device, and something that can provide a lot more reader opportunities. That said, you will see this publication, as it is today, go away and reappear on our website for the July 10th issue. And of course, if you are one of the 80,000 professionals on our distribution list, we will keep you posted.

For now, enjoy the stories of the outstanding women being featured this month.

As always, keep your foot on the gas and don't drive by looking in the rear-view mirror.

Tim

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FRONT COVER

Women in Technology

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Have a thought leadership article you would like to submit in a future issue?

Contact editorial@aotmp.com

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New AOTMP® Members!

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We would like to recognize our newest AOTMP® Members:



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Database Engineer - TEM
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



MICHAEL EDVALSON
Telecom Expense Specialist & Global Telecommunications Management Services
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



JEFF BIRD
Telecom Expense Analyst
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



MARCOS STELLA
Telecom Specialist
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



MATTHEW BROWN
Telecom Analyst
SYSCO Corporation



JOHN SCHMITT
IT Asset Coordinator III
Citizens Property Insurance Corporation



TONJA BRADLEY
IT Manager
Citizens Property Insurance Corporation



HAYDEN HUMES
Regional Vice President of Sales
Calero-MDSL



THOMAS SCHREINER
Systems Engineer
IKEA North America Services, LLC



LEKAN RICHARD
IT Lead
Underwriters Laboratories Inc



SUSANA ESCOBEDO
Telecom Analyst
Clark County



JENNIFER BAKER
Chief Technology Officer
Synovus Financial Corp.



PAUL LANOIS
Director
Fieldfisher



LISA TURNER
Vice President- Telecom Provisioning & Expense Management
Synchrony Financial



GLENN LEATHERWOOD
IT Manager
Valmont Industries, Inc.

CELEBRATING WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY



ELLA PAUL
AOTMP® Content Writer

This edition of AOTMP Insights is brought to you by women who have innovated, collaborated, challenged, and contributed within the field of technology. This second annual issue highlights 34 women who hold positions in the industry that are as diverse as the women themselves. We welcome their varied perspectives on passion, mentorship, and meaningful change on the road to gender equity.

Last year, AOTMP® made a conscientious decision to offer this forum as a platform to share thoughtful insights, experiences, and advice on gender diversity to thought leaders, customers, and members. This year, we celebrate a new collection of female voices that advocate for themselves and for other women in the industry through leadership, confidence, and visibility.

More and more women join the field of technology every year, but some paths to the industry are more circuitous than others – in this issue you’ll find women who started as high school teachers, pre-med students, and musicians. The diversity of backgrounds helps shape the ever-changing field. The presence of diverse voices fosters outside-the-box thinking, leading to creative innovation, fresh ideas, and cutting-edge problem solving.

In addition to innovation, visible women in technology pave the way for a younger generation of girls to see themselves in positions within the field. Many women in technology take the opportunity to lift others up, driving the industry further forward toward gender parity through mentorship and the creation of community. Women are more likely than men to leave the tech industry, but creating communities of support and inclusion can help retain women in the field, bringing the gender gap nearer to a close.

Despite the strides that have been made by women, technology is still primarily a male-dominated field. According to Deloitte Global, women make up only about one third of the industry. Change can be promoted, however, through technology learning programs for children, as well as support networks for those who show an interest in the field. Additionally, allyship from workplace colleagues can allow women to flourish professionally. By uplifting the voices of women, the spark of an idea that may otherwise go unnoticed can be fanned into a flame that lights a new path to discovery and invention.

Women being heard encourages more women to speak up, allowing space for ideas to grow. We thank the women profiled here for sharing the worldviews and experiences that shaped them personally and professionally. Though their stories all differ, a common thread is apparent: when women have mentors who encourage them to believe in, challenge, and advocate for themselves, the entire industry benefits from the diversity of empowered women.



We Want to Hear from You

AOTMP® provides a platform for women in technology to share their personal journeys, professional experiences, and perspectives.

- AOTMP® Insights Features
- Awards
- Education
- Conference
- Young Women in Tech
- Personal Branding





DEI ADVOCATE PROFILE

Cassandra Allen

Director, Talent Management
[vCom Solutions](#)



CAREER CHOICES

Sometimes it feels like the technology industry selected me. Some people know they have a passion for technology. It was less obvious to me that I would find passion for this industry. I started my career in oil & gas, and then moved into mortgage/banking, staffing, and transportation before finding my way into technology. Now that I'm in the industry, I realize why is such a great match for me. This industry calls for creativity, innovation, and fast-paced action with a love of change. All things that appeal to me and create opportunities for growth and engagement.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

While I love technology, my true passion is the people that strive to deliver technology that disrupts the status quo and creates solutions. It's the people that bring their creativity, ingenuity, tenacity, and a love for solving problems that truly make the industry amazing. My passion is identifying their aspirations and helping them see their future potential. With their vision, it's rewarding to create a path toward their goals and to see those goals come to fruition. I am frequently optimistic and do all I can to pour positive energy into others. I'm forward-thinking, love being proactive, and I believe in building confidence in others by acknowledging their strengths and aligning opportunities where they have the best odds at succeeding.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

Rekha Venuthurupalli, vCom's VP of human resources ops, has been the most influential mentor in my career. Working with her for the past 4.5 years has been so impactful on me as a professional and as a person. From the beginning of our time working together, she has made space for me to grow. She trusted me to try new ideas and encouraged me to find my voice as a leader. Rekha listened to

my aspirations, recognized my strengths and areas of opportunity, and coached me toward success through positive communication and encouragement. She is vulnerable, freely admits when she sees greatness in others and is willing to let others shine. Rekha leads with heart and consistently leads by example. Partnering with her on building our diversity, equity & inclusion (DE&I) efforts at vCom has been a highlight in my career!

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is incredibly important to support and advance the careers of women in technology. Having someone look out for your best interests, to provide honest feedback about how you can improve, and to help you build bridges and connections with other impactful professionals is invaluable. Career advancement can still happen without mentorship; however, mentorship enhances the careers of women in ways that are often not measurable, yet highly valuable.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

I can think of several women leaders that I admire – too many to list them all. Household names like Brene Brown and Kamala Harris. Industry professionals, like Yvette Steele with CompTIA and Maranda Dziekonski the chief customer officer at Swiftly. And last, but not least, my colleagues, like Heather Faison (VP of operations for QuantumShift by vCom) and Molly French (business development Manager for vCom). One thing all of these women have in common is a desire to achieve excellence and to lead with humility and passion.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

If you believe you can, you will. Even if you're the first in your field, your company, or your role, know that someone has to be first. If you're fortunate to be the first, be a trailblazer and remember to lift others up as you grow. If you're not the first, be humble enough to know that you're always learning, but confident enough to display your knowledge and abilities. Have grace for yourself on the tough days and celebrate both your wins and your challenges. Spend time learning what makes you unique and lean into the experiences that provide opportunities to showcase those talents. Lastly, remember that the road may not be a straight line, but the journey can be equally as rewarding as the result if you choose to embrace it.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

The greatest challenge to overcome that will lead to gender equity in organizational leadership, is for leaders to proactively identify and cultivate leadership potential in underrepresented groups long before there's a need to fill a leadership role. Supporting the development of women leaders through investment in mentorship and intentional career experiences will help to broaden the talent pool of leaders.

BIO

Cassandra Allen is the director of talent management for vCom Solutions, a mid-sized business that manages the lifecycle of IT spend for companies of all sizes. In her role, Cassandra works with vCom's team members to enhance their careers and deepen their engagement. From attracting candidates to supporting employees who are transitioning to new opportunities within vCom and beyond, Cassandra's authentic leadership approach cultivates the potential of others. She is a member of vCom's leadership team and a co-chair for vCom's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Cassandra enjoys spending time with her family, volunteering, crafting, and spoiling her two huskies!

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Professional in Human Resources (PHR)
- PI Certified Talent Optimization Leader

Women in Tech

Submit Your Profile

We Want to Hear from You

AOTMP® provides a platform for women in technology to share their personal journeys, professional experiences, and perspectives.

Celebrate Women in Tech

As an industry support organization, AOTMP® remains ever-committed to helping drive the entire industry forward on this important social issue.

Thank you to these companies for their commitment to celebrating Women in Tech!

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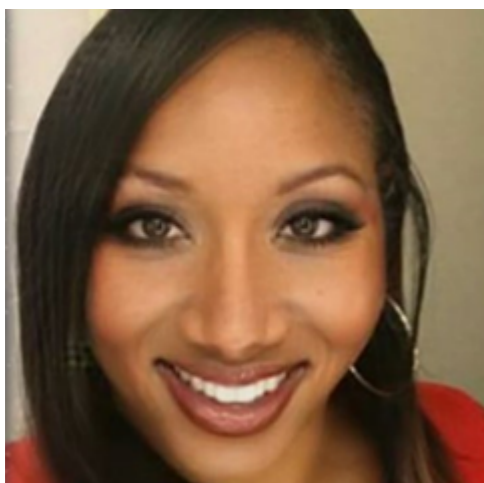


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DEI ADVOCATE PROFILE

Christina Paynter

Telecom Procurement Manager, Customer Premise External & Wireless Mobility

ADT



CAREER CHOICES

The technology industry is an innovative career field that has many growth and networking opportunities. There are so many people in this field that you can learn from and help to inspire new ideas daily.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

My passion is to help and give back. There are some people who have great ideas they just need help growing the process or the help thinking outside the box and that is my niche.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

Tiffany Galarza has been my most influential mentor in the telecom field. By trade, my initial role is more of a systems administrator and some network design. Tiffany saw some potential in me about 7 years ago, that has allowed me to become one of the lead telecom procurement managers at ADT and more of a SME for special projects with vendor relations.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is key to unlocking hiding potential that may exist in anyone in the IT field that hasn't quite found their niche. Being exposed to this lane of telecom and certain groups that report directly to the CIO and EVP has been great, not only for my growth as an employee but certainly as a person.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

- Tiffany Galarza – 40 under 40 accomplishments, ASIS consultant, vendor relationship management.
- Erika Walk – Senior Telecom Director for Waste Management. Woman of color in management role making changes.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Try your hardest to be open to all possibilities. Look for a good mentor who is willing to coach you and give honest feedback on your strengths and weakness and be receptive.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Realizing that your way isn't always the best way. Understand and empathize with experiences that may not be your own. Treat all with respect.

BIO

Christina "Chris" Paynter
 Telecom Procurement Manager, Customer Premise External & Wireless Mobility
 ADT
 Philadelphia, PA
 The woman with a plan

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- US Army Veteran
- Circle of Excellence Winner, McKinsey Leadership Selected Black Berg
- Women's Berg Veteran's Berg

Women in Tech

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DEI ADVOCATE PROFILE

Jeevantika Lingalwar

Cloud Solution Architect

[Microsoft](#)



CAREER CHOICES

"I don't fear losing, I fear not trying." With this quote, I stepped in the competitive world of the IT industry. I came to Ireland to do my Masters in Cloud Computing in 2018. While doing so, I did various part-time jobs to earn my living. After graduating in 2019, I was hired in one of largest logistics companies in Ireland as a Cloud engineer. Within three months of my work and with the leadership skills I demonstrated, I was promoted to chief technology officer. Leading a team of 15 male and experienced team members was a challenging phase. But with the growth mindset and my optimistic thoughts, I proved to be a successful leader. With this challenging experience I started a group called International Women in Tech for young struggling females who carry strong passion with them to bring a positive impact in the society but fear to speak upfront.

I started the group with 10 members, and now it has grown to a group of more than 2,700 amazing women from all over the globe. Within two years, various organizations with similar interest in women in technology have collaborated with International Women in Tech group, and we have successfully hosted 15 events based on various topics like women empowerment, job opportunities in IT, mindful coaching, etc. In the past year I have been invited to various CIO conferences, panel discussions, technology webinars and judging panels, hosted by organizations like Inspired Business Media, Eire Dialogue Society, Teens in AI, Clevered, Progress Foundation-International Conference, Transform 21-Digital Conference and Exhibition, etc. to speak on topics like quantum computing and its revolution, women leaders in workplace, importance of diversity and inclusion, artificial intelligence & machine learning (AI & ML) future, and innovative education for sustainable development.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

My passion in life is to help as many people as I can to grow and achieve their goals. I believe a successful leader is the one who helps others grow without any expectations. I have been doing all these activities without any commercial

aspects to it, as I want each and every one to benefit out of the experience and knowledge I share without any financial burden on them. I am also the founder of India Ireland Connect group, with over 4,000 members, helping businesses in India and Ireland to understand the trade between our two great republics. Our team helps businesses looking to grow in Ireland or in India to understand and choose the right path for the growth of their business. As cofounder of Quantum Computing Ireland, I have been raising awareness in the country to talk more about the future of quantum computing. The world has already jumped five years ahead due to the Covid pandemic, and it is now the time to learn and talk about the beautiful and mind-blowing wonders of AI and quantum computing.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My biggest influential mentor in my life is my mother. She is my backbone; a great advisor and a problem solver.

My former CIO, my current manager, and my peers are all my biggest influencers and mentors. I believe you can have multiple mentors in your life based on your experience and need. I have a few other mentors who have sponsored me and mentored me throughout to achieve my success. They have helped me in overcoming every challenge from personal to professional. I have 10* boosted my confidence because of my mentors' help and support. They always believed in me and have always trusted in my decisions, which led me to a successful career.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is extremely important. I am a mentor to 70 young kids aged 8-15 years and mentoring 200 young girls and women in technology. It is a step towards success. You can choose your own mentor. You are your own creator. First understand yourself, and then seek help. You need to know your worth and deserving identity so that you can express what you need from a mentor and sponsor who will support you and guide you throughout in advancing in your career.

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

There is no single name. Every woman out there inspires me in one or the other way. I started a "Coffee Chat with Jeevantika," a free 30-minute session for women and young talents out there seeking advice and help. After talking to 100 women in the last 60 days, I have realized how important listening to these amazing talents is. Their way of thinking and willingness to work makes them unique (each one of them). I believe it's not just the leaders who influence us, but early in careers, entrepreneurs, students, graduates, freshers, each one of them have unique ways of excellence and thinking towards their goals. I hosted an event on International Women's Day to celebrate little things because we always talk about big achievements. It's important to admire the small things and celebrate to embrace.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Confidence is the biggest challenge. Often, we do not own our skills and stand out. We start to feel that others are better, and we don't even try, which is proving to be a barrier. It's important to stand and speak your words to be noticed so that you're recognized and valued. Removing the phrase "impostor syndrome" from your dictionary will bring a drastic change.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Don't be afraid of failure; it's a part of success. Be afraid of not trying, because if you don't try it's neither a part of failure nor success.

BIO

Jeevantika Lingalwar is a Cloud solution architect in Microsoft. She holds a Master of Science in Cloud Computing and a Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Science Engineering. Jeevantika is very passionate about women in technology and diversity & inclusion. She founded International Women in Tech group and is leading a community of more than 3,700 amazing members. She is a technology speaker and talks about the trending technology like AI and quantum computing. Jeevantika is very determined to help and motivate young minds; she is a mentor to 60 young kids aged 8-15 years and teaches them about "Future in/of AI."

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

Award Winner

- WomenTech Global Ambassador Award of the year 2021

Award Finalist:

- Woman of the Year award 2021
- Mentor of the Year award 2021
- Community award of the year 2021
- Woman in IT Award of the year 2021

Celebrate Women in Tech

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DEI ADVOCATE PROFILE

Rebecca Bormann

Managing Director of Sales & Services
[Bell Techlogix](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I am blessed that tech found me! My family is filled with healthcare professionals, and I intended to pursue a career in pharmacy. While working as a pharmacy technician and attending college, I realized that as much as I loved my science classes, this was not going to be the best career choice for me. I made the decision to leave college and was determined to figure out what I wanted to do for a living. I started researching career options and organizations that I found interesting. I must have submitted my resume to at least 50 different organizations, including Verizon Telecommunications. Verizon Telecommunications had job openings in one of their Small Business billing, sales, and tech support call centers. I was fascinated with the idea of learning about telecom and helping small businesses across the country. I was fortunate enough to land the position, and at 22 my career in tech began.

I love my career in technology for so many reasons. I am a forever student and the fast-paced tech industry, that is continually evolving with new innovations is exciting for me. In information technology we often talk about people, processes, tools, and technology. I particularly love the intersection of technology and people and how we can leverage tech to improve our businesses, lives, and the world at large. From wireless tech to the Internet of Things to RPA and machine learning, tech innovations allow us to connect with loved ones from afar, provide the ability to work from anywhere, remove repetitive tasks from our workloads giving us back time, and that's just the tip of the iceberg. In my current role, I get to spend my days building relationships with IT leaders to help them use tech to enhance company culture, create exceptional customer experiences, and much more.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

My passion is empowering others to reach their full potential and lead a purpose-filled life. I feel a powerful call to do my part to advance equity and inclusion for all women in STEM, particularly technology. As such, in addition to my professional responsibilities, I also champion many community engagements and DE&I initiatives for Bell Techlogix. These efforts include sponsorship and employee

engagement with Women & Hi Tech and Techpoint for Youth Foundation. I also proposed the plan and led the efforts for Bell Techlogix to support and sponsor one of the only female Indy 500 race car drivers, Pippa Mann. Bell became a sponsor of Pippa Mann in 2018 and continues support today as a Platinum Shiftup Now sponsor, which has expanded the organization's support to four female racing athletes.

I am a founding member of the Bell Techlogix Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee, now called Unify, formed in May of 2020. The Unify Committee's mission is to make sure Bell Techlogix lives up to the idea that every human being enjoys a place of value, security, respect, and purpose inside the company, and that we as a company reflect those principles through positive action in our communities.

Since 2017, I have served on the all-volunteer board of directors of Women & Hi Tech (W&HT), which exists to change the landscape of women represented in STEM to be equally inclusive to all. I was elected as President in 2020. Under my leadership W&HT made many advancements in DE&I including, leading the most diverse board in W&HT's 20+ year history, creating two new Leading Light Awards, Equity & Inclusion Champion and Male Ally Awards, awarding \$60K+ in scholarships/grants (the most in W&HT's history) to a diverse group of females pursuing STEM degrees, and creating our first DE&I Director role.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I'm blessed to have many amazing mentors both professionally and personally. One of the most influential mentors I've had the pleasure of having is Andrew Varsano. In my late 20s I was one of 600 Business Development Professionals in the Verizon Enterprise organization that reported up to Andrew. His leadership style included getting to know his individual contributors and rolling up his sleeves and working right alongside us. Andrew took the time to get to know his team both personally and professionally. And because of that, Andrew saw my leadership skills and other abilities before I even saw them for myself. He was my first professional mentor that took the time to sit down with me and share with me the skills and talents he saw in me beyond consistently achieving my sales goals. His words and the time he spent lifting others up changed the way I thought of myself and how I could help others. He mentored me by including me in leadership meetings, enrolling me in classes with our engineers, and encouraging me to dream big. Andrew provided me the confidence and skills to accept a role as team leader for a geographically diverse team of inside and outside sales reps from Indiana to California. Andrew's mentorship and sponsorship of me in the early years of my career continue to guide me today. It's given me the confidence that I can achieve anything I set my sights on. Andrew modeled servant-leadership which lit the fire in me to lift others as I climb. He also showed me at a young age what an inclusive leader looked like. Andrew's joy came from seeing everyone grow and win. I am a better sales professional, technologist, leader and human being for having him as my mentor.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Beyond it is the right thing to do, mentorship and supporting and advancing the careers of women in technology is critical. The book, *Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men* by Caroline Criado-Perez, helps illustrate why investing in female tech leaders and including women in all places where decisions are made is not just essential but a life and death matter.

Researchers have known for decades that women are more likely to be killed or injured in a car crash, yet nothing has been done about it. A study from NHTSA shows that a female driver or front passenger wearing her seat belt is 17% more likely than a male to be killed when a crash occurs. Why, might you ask? Crash test dummies used by the government, automotive, and insurance industries for testing and safety ratings represent the average adult man. There are ZERO crash test dummies modeled after the average adult female.

As we continue to rely more on technology, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning, more women in tech roles are essential. Including diverse thoughts, perspectives, and experiences is vital in creating solutions where machines will be making decisions for humans, such as autonomous vehicles and robotics used in hospital operating rooms across the country. I also believe an opportunity to attract more female talent to tech starts with inspiring the next generation of girls to take an interest in tech at an early age. It's so important to model and mentor girls and young females to show young ladies what is possible in tech and STEM and fill them with the confidence that they have what it takes and are very much wanted and needed in tech.

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Ruth Bader Ginsburg is at the top of the list for me. As the second woman to serve as a Supreme Court Justice, that alone is enough to inspire, and yet she spent her entire career advocating for the underserved, for gender equality, and to stop sex discrimination. She used her talents, voice, and position to advance pay equity for women and create a better America for women, the LGBTQTIA+ community, and many other diverse people groups. RBG is inspirational, a game changer, and a role model I highly admire.

Michelle Obama is another trailblazer that I admire and look to as a role model. Her tenacity, drive, and passion for healthy living, poverty, and education – with a focus on empowering women and under-represented people – is contagious. I had the pleasure of hearing her speak at a Women's Fund event, in Indianapolis, and the connection she created with thousands of women and men at the Fieldhouse was palpable – she left us all feeling empowered and inspired to be the best versions of ourselves and to use our time, talents, and treasures to joyfully serve others.

On a more personal note, we have many phenomenal female trailblazers here in Indiana. Laura Larimer has been leading the way for women in roles including, CIO

for the State of Indiana, Director of Global Architecture at Cummins, and IT Officer at IPS. Audrey Taylor, CEO/Founder of netlogx, former President of Women & Hi Tech and NAWBO. Meredith Harper, CISO at Eli Lilly. Christine McDonnell, CEO/Founder of Codelicious, creates coding curriculum for K-12. Angela B. Freeman, Partner at B&T and one of only a few American female IP Patent attorneys. All these women are passionate leaders who model for women and girls, "if you can see it, you can be it."

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

My advice to women who are rising in a tech field and girls is to get involved. Connect with others in your field or STEM in general, get involved in local and national STEM and/or professional women's organizations, build your network and community. For girls check out the Girls Scouts of Central Indiana which has over 50 STEM badges, Techpoing for Youth Foundation's coding dojos and robotics teams, and Girls Inc.'s Eureka program focused on tech and STEM. There are so many opportunities for our young people to learn about tech today.

I would also share with all the young ladies and women in tech, you do not have to do it alone. Raise your hand. There are numerous community and nonprofit organizations, professional women, and male allies who are ready and willing to help you throughout your career.

Some other tips that have served me well both professionally and personally include:

- Authenticity and Transparency are essential in all relationships.
- The Why is more important than the What.
- Practice Conscious Listening.
- Adopt an Abundance Mindset – there is always more than enough.
- Network, Network, Network.
- Know your tech – be an expert in your tech discipline and surround yourself with other industry experts.
- Know who/what your tech serves – in B2B most technology solutions are not one-size-fits-all.
- Build your personal and professional Board of Directors.
- Be courageous. Ask for help when you need it.
- Network, Network, Network (Yes, it's on the list twice.)
- Own your seat at the table – you've done the work to get there!

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I believe the greatest challenge that needs to be overcome in technology that will lead to gender equity in organizational leadership is those in power today need to realize that we as humans, are better together. To attract and retain female

talent, I recommend that the men in charge make room at the table for women, including diverse women, from the top down. Organizations need to create and live cultures of inclusion and belonging where diversity of gender, background, race, sexual orientation, thought, perspective, experiences, etc., are wanted and appreciated. Inclusivity and equity for all must be core values to the individual leaders and employees and the organization’s vision, mission, and beliefs.

Practically, I say if the men in charge of tech companies want to attract female talent, they should go where the women are. I suggest supporting and getting involved, beyond writing a check, with organizations like Women & Hi Tech, The Startup Ladies, Pass the Torch for Women, Dress for Success, Black Girls Code, Executive Women in Finance, Indianapolis Professional Association, and NAWBO. Far too much time is spent on keeping those different from ourselves out instead of empowering all and giving everyone a seat and a voice at the table.

I also believe inspiring the next generation of girls to take an interest in tech at an early age is imperative. I invite the men in charge of tech to help bring tech education and learning opportunities to our K-12 girls. Help in all the ways you can. Join school boards, create curriculum change, advocate for tech education, help fund, start, share your expertise, volunteer at non-traditional K-12 schools like Rooted School and Purdue Polytechnic High Schools. Launch internship programs for high school girls at your companies. Fund and volunteer to lead all-girl coding and robotics teams.

BIO

Rebecca has spent nearly 20 years in tech. She is currently the managing director of sales & services for Bell Techlogix, a national leading IT Managed Services firm. Rebecca is passionate about empowering others to reach their full potential and lead a purpose-filled life. She’s actively involved in the community. Rebecca has served on the board of directors for Women & Hi Tech since 2017, she’s currently Past President. She is a mentor and a Pass the Torch For Women Legacy Leader. Rebecca co-founded R.A.D. Networking. She’s an investing member of The Startup Ladies and active at Heartland Church.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Advisory Board Member - Eleven Fifty Academy
- Former President - The Brandon Foundation
- Rebecca holds several certifications including ITIL Foundation, Cisco CSE, Axiom Sales, Presentation Advantage, 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, and Vision in Action. She’s also two-time (2020 & 2021) Indy’s Best & Brightest Technology Finalist.

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An introduction to SaaS Expense Management in action.

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NEXT GENERATION PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Emily Drexelius

Graphic Designer

[DMI \(Digital Management, LLC\)](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I selected the tech industry for the start of my career because of the endless growth opportunities it provides. This industry is focused on bettering the future for all generations to come, and I find that very inspiring. I see the technology industry as a very fast-paced, growing environment that is constantly changing and is exciting to be a part of. There's always a new challenge every day.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

My passion lies in graphic design and brand identity. I love creating something visual and tangible to communicate a new idea. I grew up doing all forms of traditional arts, such as drawing and painting, and chose graphic design as a career due to the fact that it is a perfect intersection between art and technology. I find passion in creating something that is visually appealing and enticing to the viewer, in addition to being functional and innovative.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

As a recent college graduate, my most influential mentor is a design professor that I worked with throughout my college experience. She showed me how you can turn your creative and artistic passion into a lifelong career through hard work, networking, and confidence. She helped me develop my portfolio, challenged me to become a better designer every day, and guided me through a successful start to my career.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentors are very important, especially to women in tech as they are a connection that focuses solely on your career growth and helping you find future opportunities. It also helps to see women who have achieved a lot of success in a primarily male-dominated field. From my experience, mentors can help increase confidence, communication skills, find new opportunities, and help guide you in your career search.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

There are a couple of leading female designers that have made waves in their fields that I have found to be very inspirational. One, Paula Scher, based in NYC with a design focus in brand identities, has had a major influence on tech and pop culture with clients such as Microsoft, Adobe, Bloomberg, etc. I admire her as a perfect example of expanding her career from starting as a layout designer to now being the partner of the design firm, Pentagram. She has been a major influence on innovative design, brand and visual identities, as well as traditional arts, such as painting, all of which I hope I can experience throughout my career.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

My advice to women considering a career in technology would be to start with something you are passionate about. The technology industry has endless opportunities in all different fields from design to programming to engineering to analytics etc. If you pursue a career in something you love, you come to the table with a confidence and ability to advocate for yourself that is unmatched. Making connections, though sometimes challenging, can also be a huge help in advancing your career. People like to work with people they know, so the more people you know and can share your passions with, the better.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I think that unconscious bias is the most debilitating obstacle for women looking to advance their careers in technology. As an industry that is overwhelmingly male dominated, it is challenging to make connections with men who are looking to hire someone they think they will get along best with. Even if your resume and portfolio are just as strong or more so than your male counterparts, men often get the job as they may have more in common with the hiring manager. Being confident in your abilities and advocating for yourself helps you stand out among the crowd of applicants.

BIO

I am a graphic designer in the beginning of my career. I graduated from Miami University with a BFA in Communication Design, and I work for DMI, which is a leading organization in the mobility and tech transformation industry. I am passionate about brand identity and using design to propel the success of a company through the use of innovative technology, brand consistency, and enticing visuals.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- BFA in Communication Design from Miami University



NEXT GENERATION PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Hayley Owczarzak

Global Director of Business Development
[CBI Telecommunications Consultants](#)



CAREER CHOICES

Originally, the opportunity to be a part of the technology industry just fell into my lap. My career started as an internship, and I cared deeply for the family-like environment that CBI provided. What eventually became a part-time job turned into a full-time job after graduating college. I chose to continue down this path of telecommunications because I enjoyed seeing the positive impact we had on our clients.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

My passion is people and I've come to find that some of the greatest people I've met have come from the telecom industry. I may not be able to tell you everything there is to know about technology, but I can guarantee you that my desire to help others is genuine. My job at CBI provides me the opportunity to help others with the challenges they face every day in our industry. I care deeply for others and getting to make their lives easier while building meaningful relationships along the way. This is by far the best part of my job.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My most influential mentors would be all my colleagues, clients, and prospects. I am constantly evolving and growing as a person because of them. As I sit in on client calls, I learn industry terms and how my colleagues solve their problems utilizing their expertise and past experiences working in the telecom industry. My prospects have challenged me in ways that are immeasurable. Speaking to people with the titles like IT directors, global procurement, and many others from Fortune 500 companies has given me a confidence in myself that has truly helped me excel in my career. Their acceptance and willingness to teach me has been critical to my growth and understanding this industry. But rejection and losing opportunities has contributed to my resiliency over the years and continues to remind me that persistence and determination are what truly build character. This industry and the people in it are my greatest mentors.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

I believe that having a supportive mentorship is essential for any women's success, especially in this industry. The majority of my growth has come from the people around me. Without their guidance and willingness to teach me I would not be where I am today. Whether it is one solid person or a group of people, having at least one person you can rely on to be honest with you and provide constructive criticism is what will drive the development you need to advance.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

I admire my CEO, Denise Booms-Pepin. I specifically remember one time, being in awe as I joined a TEAMS meeting where Denise and one of our core partners met in New Jersey. There she sat confidently in a room full of 6-7 other men. To see her in that environment made me proud. Not just because she was the only woman in the room, but because I saw the respect these men had for her and the knowledge she could bring to the table. Denise is and always has been fearless in her journey of technology. Being a woman in a male-dominated industry has never been seen as a barrier to her. Denise's mission and passion to positively impact the telecom industry has always outweighed any adversity that has stood in her way. She is truly a leader in this industry, and I know I am just one of many that admire her for that.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

The best advice I would give to other girls and women aspiring to pursue a career in technology is, just go for it! Understand that you don't know everything and take pride in this. Utilize your lack of knowledge as an opportunity to learn from others. My greatest lessons and understanding of the technology industry came from asking questions and LISTENING to the people around me.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I think we have made great strides as a society and a culture within this industry of gender equality. I have exposure to men almost daily. I have never felt rejected or less than by another man because of my sex. If anything, their encouragement and openness towards me and other women is what has helped close the gap of gender inequality in the technology industry. I believe our biggest challenge as women in this industry is having enough confidence in ourselves to know that we are capable of being here.

BIO

Hayley Owczarzak is the global director of business development at CBI. Her role includes sales and account management at CBI Telecommunication Consultants. Her main goal is to continue to help CBI become one of the most well-known telecom management companies in the world. Her biggest accomplishment was in 2020 with selling just over a million dollars in revenue. She loves building meaningful relationships with the people in the technology industry!

Investing in What's Next During Uncertain Times



NED D. ELDRIDGE

President/CEO and Founder, eLoop LLC

In March of 2020, Pennsylvania considered us an essential business. Between our contracts with Republic Services for e-recycling and weekly asset pickups from University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, our customers couldn't move forward without us. Our staff remained employed, but we cut down hours so that they could take advantage of some of the benefits that were available to them. By Labor Day of 2020, we began to see an uptick in ITAD clients as companies started asset refresh projects. The value of older assets increased and helped fill in some of the holes caused by supply chain issues.

After closing out 2020 on a high, we were fully staffed again in 2021. To invest in what was coming next, we launched a new ERP system in November of 2020 that would enable us to improve our services to meet current and future volume demands. The system included a customer portal so that customers could track the progress of their assets and access compliance documents to meet their sustainability goals. By the end of 2021, we moved into a new facility because as the business continued to thrive, we needed a more controlled lab environment for electronics harvesting and refurbishing. The new lab has temperature, air, and dust control which facilitates better quality control in repairing IT assets.

Starting in January 2022, clients started to purchase new equipment and schedule more projects with eLoop as part of their standard refresh programs. Bigger organizations, like hospitals, invest in new technology assets and refurbish or recycle their old assets through us. The refurbished, business-grade assets then get resold into an international market and to smaller local companies, creating a circular economy in the Pittsburgh area. Our business is primarily regional as transportation logistics necessitate pickups to maintain the chain of custody to ensure the security of assets, but for clients with operations in other parts of the US we provide a solution for their assets as well.

Today, our Last Call, a phone buyback program, controls the shipping of devices to our facility. eLoop inventories all of the phones and wipes the data from the phones with an enterprise grade software to meet security standards. Once wiped, these phones are graded and sold. Our objective is to pay our client within 30 days from the day of receipt. This data security, inventory control, and value predictability is appealing to a lot of organizations especially as device refresh projects resume and accelerate for many organizations.

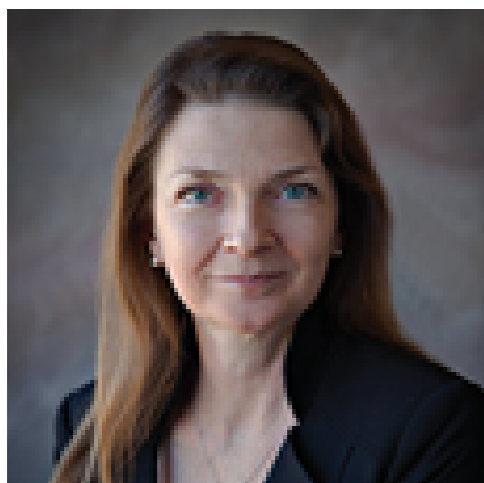
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ENTREPRENEUR PROFILE

Catherine Wendt

Co-Founder and President

[Syscon, Inc.](#)



CAREER CHOICES

True story – this industry found me, and a bit accidentally. I started a music business with my husband, Larry Wendt. We recorded and sold original music compositions with acoustical instruments and environmental sounds. To help fund our Realmusic label, Larry worked on computer-related projects. It wasn't long before our computer work eclipsed the music in both time and income. One client engaged us to write custom software for an adult education company that needed a multi-platform pre-GED program. This happened in the late-1980s when many industries, including construction, knew computers were about to change their world – faster bid alternates, more accurate and faster payroll delivery, to name a few. Larry's father was a respected, multi-generation mason contractor. His dad's peers knew Larry had worked for his father as a young man and that Larry would understand what was needed and could be trusted.

One of the large mason contractors in the Chicago area called us. The conversation went something like this; 'Your dad tells me you do computers. Mine's broken. Come fix it.' Then he hung up, we gathered our tools and headed to his office! Another mason called and said he had just purchased some construction-specific software and wanted us to get it up and running; so, we did. We've been supporting the technology needs of specialty subcontractors ever since.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

It's personal – when a client or prospect gets on the phone, they have a problem that needs a solution. If they're in construction, it's very likely we've heard something similar and have a solution or a solid idea to meet the need. Bringing some humor, stories, or a thoughtful quote is a great way to let them know they're not alone and we're here to help.

Being in business, in a position of leadership, it's important to have and be held accountable to a moral standard, a moral compass. What's legal is not always right; what's right is not always the most profitable or the most popular. When our chapter on this earth closes, will you be a book others would want to read? Will others feel that their lives, their careers, were enriched, blessed by having been touched by you?

We know our niche market – you won't find another company with as much breadth and knowledge when it comes to using technology to run a construction company. When our clients have a computer problem, they don't want to be told by their IT company that it's the software, or the software company to say it's the computers. When we get that call, we have all those roles on staff and can coordinate a solution – one place to call.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

When I was in grade school I had a guitar teacher, Kathy Miller. As the oldest of 11 children, driving to my lessons was a time to connect with my dad. Ms. Miller believed in me, befriended me, and led me to believe that I was important. I still remember a vacation she had in Mexico which to me was so exotic. She brought me back a bathing suit that I kept for years; so thoughtful. In junior high she drove from Chicago to the suburbs to accompany me on the piano at a vocal solo competition. My younger years were spent taking care of my siblings. With Ms. Miller, I truly believed there was more out there and that I could make it happen.

Ken Greenhouse was the choral director at our high school. He was an amazing musician and encouraged my music, taking the time to give me music theory lessons. Prior to that, my junior high choral directors supported my singing, giving me opportunities to perform, as did my first high school director, casting me in several musicals.

So, what does this have to do with technology and leadership? I learned poise and that it was not 'sinful' to have a talent and invest the time to practice, then share with others. I had opportunities to get up in front of people in various settings – a competition, a performance. I was given leadership roles within the music and drama departments.

Then I met the man that would be my husband, coming up on 38 years. Turns out I have a gift to take complex ideas and put them in laymen's terms, so others feel informed, educated. A whole new world opened up to me; leadership training, personal growth, and taking risks. What a blessing!

MENTORSHIP VALUE

A decade ago, I would attend industry events and realize how few women were present. About five years ago, I remember joking with the men who were lined up for the men's room at the break as I walked right by and straight into the ladies' room with no line.

Women are under-represented as Technicians and owners, no doubt. I've often struggled with why. When we run job ads for technicians, it's very rare that any of the inquiries come from women. When most people ask me about women in technology, they usually mean the techs, and women are truly under-represented here. I would also argue that there are many other opportunities for women in technology. Very few women are owners or in non-finance, non-sales roles in this industry.

For those of us who have been blazing this trail, our mentorship is critical. No need to bootstrap every step; we can help them soar to new heights, building on the foundation we've worked so hard to build. As technology continues its crazy pace, it is less and less hardware centric. I believe this will usher in a new interest in technology for women. The power of technology in business, data consolidation, workflow changes, cross platform availability, and hardware agnostic tools has changed IT from a network focus to an on-demand cloud focus. I believe this shift will bring women to technology as part of the changing workforce, multi-generational, multi-cultural, and highly female.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

When we started our company, I didn't know any women in technology or even in construction, our niche market. When I consider successful women I knew early in my life, they were unremarkable by the world's standards. Inspiring, kind, beautiful women at Osco corporate headquarters; a manager in the auditing department who was smart and well-respected by all departments and gave me a promotion; junior high choral directors who encouraged me and provided opportunities; the lack of women at industry events was inspiring in itself; the patriarchal leaders in the businesses, some of whom would not work with me, and others who embraced working with me after I showed I could walk the talk.

I would add that there were other women along the business journey that helped solidify professional and personal traits that are not professional, not to be emulated. These were also very important and helped shape the direction I took, as well as the roads I chose not to take.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Dig in, commit. Listen to podcasts; attend webinars; read the Microsoft blogs; choose a niche market and know everything about their business, their computer needs, and the needs of their staff. There's no such thing as life-work balance, it's a myth. You want a career? You want to be an expert? Everything around you involves technology. How are schools using technology to educate your children? What are people using on the train, in their cars, at the grocery store, at the airport? Try a variety of software solutions. Get some SQL training. Learn how to type!

Technology in business is no longer a luxury or an afterthought. Choose an industry and understand the data needs, the hardware needs, how people connect, where the critical points of failure are in their day-to-day. Get connected with industry-specific user organizations. Listen, then listen some more.

Then, read books, lots of books. Choose well-known personal growth leaders such as Darren Hardy, Jim Collins, and John Maxwell. Dive into other authors such as General McChrystal, Daymond John, Chris Voss, John Ruhn, and the like. Join an association with accountability groups, set goals, and hold each other accountable. Attend in-person trainings and speaking events to stay energized, inspired, and challenged. It's a big world out there. Get educated, stay engaged, listen, and read.

Lastly, have a hobby, something outside IT. Depending on your season of life, go to all the kids' events; choose a non-technology area of interest and be sure to stay engaged. For me, this has been music. Spending the evening at a rehearsal, directing a chorus or orchestra, learning new music, preparing for a recital or concert – all these things help me return to my work with balance, ideas, and ready to meet the demands of my role.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Learn how to relate to both genders in the business community. Stop the drama. Get involved. We're in the construction niche (heavily male) and we provide IT (heavily male). I wear dresses most of the time. There's no drama. Everyone wants to know they're contributing, that they matter, that they're doing their best, that they're seen. Give it to them, male or female, young or old, new or seasoned. A little encouragement can reap big rewards. Knowing someone believes in you and sees your efforts is often just the medicine for them to step up and get to the next level.

What if we did this for men and women? What if we left our own egos and titles at the door and listened? If we're truly leaders, we really know our stuff, who wouldn't want to follow that path? Many women have an advantage over many men; we know how to be supportive, how to encourage, how to empathize, and often (not always) we can put our own egos to the side. This alone is our advantage. Time to play the game with our strengths leading the way.

BIO

Catherine Wendt brings her unique background and 35+ years of business experience to the construction industry. Today, she is a trusted advisor for businesses across the country, the owner and president of Syscon, and an active musician.

Catherine became president at Syscon in 2013 after heading up the Network department for five years. As with many family businesses, she's held various roles at Syscon, including controller, sales and marketing, and project management. Under her leadership, Syscon has expanded its consulting, IT support, and cloud hosting services to the construction industry, introducing the company's first app focused on field time collection.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- WBE Certification
- C12 Affinity Group
- CFMA Valley of the Sun
- ASA Chicago and Educational Committee member
- ASA Arizona
- TUG
- Hinsdale Chamber of Commerce
- An Influential Women in Business award recipient from the Business Ledger
- Served as captain of an IT accountability group for 4 years



ENTREPRENEUR PROFILE

Diane Smith

CEO & President

[ChoiceTel](#)



CAREER CHOICES

My career began with Sprint in 1984 right after divestiture occurred and the birth of the telecommunications industry began. Having come from a family of engineers, my natural curiosity for new and innovative technologies pointed me towards the present-day changes and advancements. The massive changes and new choices led me to this fascinating new industry. Having thrived in my new position with Sprint, I realized that this was the perfect industry for me. The amount of change occurring in the telecommunications space was ideal for my personality because there was always something new to learn and change was occurring rapidly. After three years with Sprint, I moved on to a telephone equipment company based out of South Carolina. This was a great move for my new career because it allowed me to understand the equipment element in addition to the service element. There were very few individuals at the time who understood both. Having this broader understanding of the industry increased my value to customers and gave me a competitive advantage. The incredible amount of diversity and innovation clearly matched my intelligent curiosity and propelled me forward. The combination of my technical ability and natural ability to work and communicate well with others in a technical field, allowed me to achieve great success and propelled me to eventually start my own technology consulting business in 1994. A technical woman entrepreneur in 1994 was not common, and to some extent is still the case today. However, I never considered that this was an anomaly because starting my own business came very naturally to me.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

Leading people with truth and compassion is core to my personality. Truly caring about my employees, my customers, and my vendors, allows me to create a win-win-win for all. Focusing on accomplishing my customers' objectives with the right vendor partners and the right solutions with an agnostic approach is my goal and passion. My focus on the long game has always been core to my belief system. Building strong relationships based on these core values has allowed me to maintain relationships from the beginning and throughout my entire career. Having said this, I have had to make tough decisions along the way, which were in the best interests of everyone involved. My tenacity and perseverance

have allowed me to get through the hills and the valleys of running a business and adjusting through all of the constant state of change in this industry. I have always endeavored to be on the cutting edge of innovation in the technology industry including the changes from voice to data, and from cybersecurity to new cloud innovations. My intellectual curiosity has always led me to be in the forefront of the technology landscape innovations. My long tenure in the industry has allowed me to grow, change and adjust quickly, and thrive while doing so.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My most influential mentor that comes to mind is Andy DeVries, former Vice President of Sales at Teledial America. This mentorship took place early in my career and prior to me starting ChoiceTel. Andy had a way of seeing past my inexperience in leadership and gently focusing me in the right direction. For example, having to drive two and half hours on Monday morning for an 8 a.m. sales meeting, I was not always as polished as I should have been. As a cat lover and also loved by my cats, they loved sitting on my wardrobe in the closet. Their white fur would often remain attached to my clothes, and my eyes did not always catch it on those early morning drives. So, walking into his office, Andy quietly handed me a lint roller and smiled as he walked out. His point was made, and although somewhat comical, his attention to detail across the board has always stuck with me. Andy recognized my giftings and talents and customized his approach to me in a way that was meaningful. Investing in me with his time, training opportunities, and true care and concern, I knew Andy always had my best interests in mind. He customized his approach to each and every person on his team in a way that they could receive his guidance and mentoring, which created the intended impact. Not only did he mentor those around him, but he also allowed himself to be mentored by others as well. This included those that reported to him, and not just those over him. This has shaped my methodology and mindset and has allowed me to create greater impact with not only my employees and customers, but everyone in my life.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship for everyone is critical to ongoing success – you are never too old for mentorship. Before you can begin to teach anyone, maintaining a teachable attitude has to begin with yourself first. A singular mentor may be lacking certain elements that are required for success, therefore having a wide range of mentors in your life will offer a more rounded perspective. While other women mentors are crucial and very beneficial in the mentoring process, the unique perspective from a wide variety of people in your field and closely related field(s) will improve your overall experience. Consistency in mentorship is equally important as having multiple mentors. Having a regular cadence with those mentors in your life is critical to your growth. Ensuring that the cycle with each mentor is managed in such a way that when your time is concluding, you have another mentor ready to step into that role. Maintaining consistency of multiple mentors is very important to women as they are growing in their field. It's one thing to have regular communication with your mentors, it's another thing to actively apply the principles and methodologies that are communicated. Ensuring that you implement these new behaviors and approaches consistently is critical to growth. If you really want to move to the next level, you have

to be open to constructive criticism and new ways to do things. Some of these new behaviors may not feel natural initially. Once you commit to changing your behaviors, reactions, and thought processes, and you begin to see the positive results and repetition of these new behaviors, your perspective changes. Not only does your perspective change, but you begin to grow internally in new ways that you didn't know existed within yourself. That's what a new level looks like.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Mary Alice Annecharico was the CIO for Henry Ford Health, an extremely large regional health system with approximately 45,000 team members, headquartered in Detroit. Having started out as a nurse in the 60s and early 70s, Mary Alice had an extremely difficult role as a woman who migrated to technology in the medical field at such an early date. She held many different positions at several health organizations throughout her career. Having a variety of different positions at various types and sizes of organizations, she strategically built her skill set to drive value and demonstrated success throughout her career. Her tenacity and grace are an amazing display of strength and her longevity in health and technology is evidence of her great success and contributions at each of the organizations she served in.

Linglong He, CIO for Rocket Mortgage, America's largest home mortgage lender with over 100 different companies in many different categories. Being a female in a male-dominated field, not only in the technology field as well as finance, she quickly rose to the top. She has gracefully overcome multiple barriers including gender bias, cultural bias, language biases, and industry biases. Having a 25+ year career at this organization with only 7 people in technology when she started, the department is now 2000+. Her ability to be a technology forerunner, communicate, and tune into how people think and feel along the way greatly contributed to her success. The combination of these attributes allows her to be an effective leader and very well-respected in our community.

The primary reasons I admire these two great ladies are 1) their strength, 2) how they maintained their self-confidence and identity in the midst of great challenges and, 3) their longevity, and 4) their commitment to succeeding despite many roadblocks along the way.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Remove your own gender bias first. Just because you are female, does not mean that you cannot excel in whatever your heart desires. You must start with yourself first. In starting with yourself first, you must consciously and purposefully consider your reaction(s) and your natural conclusions concerning what women "should" behave like. For example, men should take the garbage out, and women should do the cooking; men should mow the lawn, and women should plant the flowers. Starting here, begin to free yourself from these foregone conclusions and this will allow you to give yourself more freedom in your own expression of your true giftings and talents in the technology field. Women CAN excel in math and science if you allow yourself to.

Particularly concerning leadership and self-confidence in many male-dominated fields such as technology, women can embrace the same bias as noted above in item 2. This can create a self-sabotaging effect unintentionally. In many cases, it's not what

you say, it's how you say it, and your supporting body language. Ensure that you surround yourself with people who support you in your career and encourage you to reach your potential instead of "putting you in your place." Enveloping yourself and your career in positive reinforcement(s) internally and externally will propel you in the right direction.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

My husband's great-great-great-aunt started Smith College for Girls in 1871, and her primary goal was to create equal pay for equal work. It is incredible we are still dealing with this issue after hundreds of years. Clearly, we haven't produced the answer. Smith College states, "Having a wide variety of female role models tends to boost the aspirations and career achievements of female college students... At Smith, all of the leaders are women." The normalization of effective women in leadership has not occurred. While Smith College has created an atmosphere of women excelling in their fields and in leadership and thus have created an atmosphere of normalization, the real world still hasn't achieved this. There are far too few women in leadership. A unified approach across all barriers; politically, within business, education, and culturally, must take place if we are to truly address gender equity. We are fighting an uphill battle because even in cases when women are excelling in leadership, many of these aforementioned barriers rise up to tear down. Our multi-faceted society is far too fragmented to provide a unified long-term approach for resolution. We have to start somewhere; nothing is insurmountable. Each of the barriers noted are contained within each one of us. Therefore, we must begin at the individual level and the complexity contained within us, and address each of these barriers identified individually. Only then, can we begin to make progress and remove the barriers that cause women to fail, and ultimately lose self-confidence and the will to continue to excel.

BIO

ChoiceTel's CEO/President, Diane Smith, has more than 30 years of telecommunications and technology experience across a wide range of specialties including but not limited to: consulting, cybersecurity, public/private cloud, wide-area-networks, expense management, and UC|CC. Diane works across many different verticals, including enterprise and medium-sized organizations. In an effort to give back to the community, Diane has implemented programs to support technology with non-profits to improve communications, reduce costs, and provide overall management services pro bono. Diane has served on the IT Kitchen Cabinet and Broadband Committee for the State of Michigan to improve services to the underserved communities.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

Diane has participated in several government cyber and technology missions and participates on several committees in Michigan, such as the Broadband committee. Having served on the board for Michigan Israel Business Bridge|Business Accelerator Non-Profit, Diane has been on the leading edge of innovation and the partnership between Michigan and Israel.



ENTREPRENEUR PROFILE

Jane Laino

President/Owner
[Dlgyby 4 Group, Inc.](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I got a job through a blind ad in the New York Times that turned out to be with New York Telephone. I worked there and at Southwestern Bell as a service representative in the business office supporting residential and then business accounts. After that I worked as a project manager for a small consulting firm in New York City. When they closed in 1979, I was able to hold onto some of the clients I had been working for and that was the start of Dlgyby 4 Group.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I never think of anything as a passion other than being in love. However, I do feel strongly about doing a good job for our clients and contributing to the communications technology industry. We keep our Dlgyby 4 clients for a long time which is rewarding, so we are good at maintaining long-term relationships. I have had some clients over 30 years.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

Cannot think of one particular mentor, but I had a few that helped me to get going in the early part of my business. They were mostly owners of interconnected companies, selling business telephone systems, which was a new concept in the 1970s. Before that, organizations rented their telephone systems from “the phone company.”

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship in general is important to helping others get started in their careers. I can point to many women and some men too, whom I mentored although I did not think of it as mentoring. But by working with me or being inspired by what I was doing in some way, these people were motivated to pursue careers in telecommunications.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Hmmm – maybe Ellen Hancock with IBM. She was ahead of the curve. I also used to belong to an organization called Empire Women in Telecommunications whose president was Beau Holland. They were trailblazers of sorts. So many women out there in technology now that it would be hard to pick.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Work hard and be willing to do menial jobs first to get a foothold. I still am willing to do what some may consider menial, but it helps with success. For example, I take good notes and they type them up and distribute them to meeting participants. Everyone loves it.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Hopefully by this time in history, people who are doing the hiring are enlightened enough to pick the best person for the job, regardless of whether that’s a male or female. If they are not, then you probably do not want to work for them (or with them) anyway.

BIO

Jane Laino is founder, owner, and president of Dlgyby 4 Group, Inc., a professional services firm based in New York City. Dlgyby 4 was an old Wall Street telephone exchange in the days when telephone numbers started with letters instead of numbers. Dlgyby 4 helps clients manage communications technology expenses, contracts, and inventories for fixed, mobile and cloud communications. Jane is a graduate of Queens College of the City University of New York and an active member of the Society of Communications Technology Consultants International. She has published several industry books and writes for the No Jitter website.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Member of the Society of Communications Technology Consultants International
- Dlgyby 4 Group, Inc. is certified as a Woman Owned Business by WBENC



ENTREPRENEUR PROFILE

Luz Maria Ramirez

Commercial Director

[Neobis](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I selected the technology industry for my career because it is a dynamic area; every day is different, and new challenges are experienced every day; work is carried out transversally in different areas of society and by intelligently applying technology; it is possible to improve the people's quality of life and it is possible to optimize resources. In addition, there is the challenge of being constantly updated on technological changes, new trends, and the global panorama.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

My passion is to make the world better every day and having the activities I carry out have a positive impact on people, improving their quality of life by applying technology. It is also very important for me to give my best effort and achieve the proposed goals based on ethics, honesty, and work.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My main mentor was my dad; he taught me that I can achieve all my dreams, and that there are no limits. He taught me that it is possible to make mistakes and start over, but that we must not forget that "everyone has to eat," so we must be generous and fair. In addition, he always educated me in equality, not only gender equality, but that everyone should be treated with respect, which has allowed me to be able to establish relationships with different people in different positions within organizations and in daily life.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentoring to support and promote women's careers in technology is very important to encourage the development of women in areas that have traditionally been defined for men. In addition, the area of technology is very challenging, and if the professional dedicates herself seriously to technology and applies knowledge and common sense, she can develop a career full of achievements, which are also compatible with personal development in areas other than work, such as family and sports. In addition, it is very important that girls and women learn that the limits are set by oneself, so it is possible to achieve dreams.

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Among the women I most admire is Justicia Mena, who was born on January 14, 1893, in Santiago de Chile and was the first civil engineer in Chile. Daughter of the builder José Acuña Latorre and Mercedes Mena Villalón, her parents raised her, along with her four brothers and three sisters, in an environment of cooperation and gender equity, which allowed her to develop despite the social schemes of that era. In 1922 she married the electrical engineer and university classmate, Alfredo Gajardo Contreras, with whom she has 7 children. Therefore, Justicia was a professional ahead of her time and, in addition to this, she knew how to develop her personal life with a family. She demolished all the myths regarding the roles that women should play in Chilean society at the beginning of the 20th century and paved the way for the women who followed in her footsteps.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

The advice I give to girls and women who are making a technological career is to pursue their dreams, all goals are achieved with perseverance and dedication. A technological career requires permanent study and being up to date with the innovations that are launched on the market every day, but always putting common sense first and never forgetting that technology was created to improve people's lives.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

The biggest challenge that must be overcome in the technology industry is to forget about the gender of the person who is going to exercise organizational leadership, because in the area of technology, what must come first to choose a leader is the professional quality of the person, her ethical principles and the perseverance and dedication with which she exercises her profession.

BIO

Mrs. Ramirez is Chilean. She's married to Manuel and is a mom to two daughters and two sons. She's graduated as a chemical engineer. During her business career, she has developed a deep know-how of the telecom and IT industries and customers' needs. That has allowed her to create value with services innovation. In March 2005, she and her husband founded Neobis, a Chilean-based company focused on Latin American markets and specialized in management of telecommunications and IT services with the single purpose of creating a differentiated management practice to add new value to customers' ITEM solutions.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Chemical Engineer
- Aircraft Accident Investigator
- Founder of Neobis
- Founder of the Chilean Association of Victims of Aviation Accidents and Their Families
- Founder, Tomi Foundation
- Member of the College of Engineers of Chile
- Board Member of Directors of the Foundation of Graduates and Friends of the University of Santiago de Chile



ENTREPRENEUR PROFILE

Shampa Bagchi

Founder & CEO

[ConvergeHub](#)



CAREER CHOICES

From the time I wrote my very first piece of software code I was completely captivated. I was fascinated by how you can take a complex challenge and break it down to small pieces and write software to solve it. And I could use my creativity to look at a problem and solve it in my way, which may be quite different from how another person solved the same problem. This was really interesting to me, and the possibilities seemed infinite.

Although software technology as a career choice was just beginning to open up at that time, I recognized that software was one way you could make your presence felt beyond your physical limits and reach people anywhere in the world. You could write a software program that someone sitting on the opposite corner of the world could use to change his or her life or solve a problem that you are not even aware of. The idea of touching people's lives directly without even knowing them was really fascinating to me.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

Although I am a technology entrepreneur, with a master's in computer science, having founded two tech companies – one a SaaS software product and another providing software services – and living in Silicon Valley, I do not get excited with technology for the sake of technology alone. What fascinates me is how we use that technology to improve people's lives.

My passion is to explore the intersection of business, technology, and people, and I love to dive deep into the dynamics there. I believe that all technology is built for people, that there is no B2B or B2C, everything ultimately is Human to Human, and how it helps that person in that specific situation improve his or her life.

That's why with ConvergeHub my goal is to build a product that will help each person do his or her job better. It's more than selling or marketing or providing customer service. It's about doing things in a better way, contributing more, making a difference right where they are.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

The first mentor I have ever had was my third-grade teacher. She was always very encouraging towards me and somehow, I had that special bond with her. One day she asked all of us in the class to write an essay on what each of us wanted to become when we grew up. I wrote about whatever my current ambition was at that point in time and submitted the essay. The next day she pulled me aside and started asking me more about my dreams and goals. Then she stopped, looked at me, and said 'I know that you can be whoever you want to be. Remember that you have the ability to be whatever you choose to be.' I didn't know at the time that she had some health issues. She stopped coming to class a few weeks later. And a few months later she passed away due to some medical complications. I was really young and had a difficult time understanding and dealing with the situation. But somehow that incident stayed with me and even now I can hear her words 'you can be whoever you want to be'.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

I believe mentorship is critical in supporting careers of women in technology, especially at a young age. When girls are growing up and making choices about what they want to study and what career path they want to follow, it is very critical that they are aware that every option is open to them, and they can choose to pursue any career that they are genuinely interested in. This may be a simple message and maybe most girls growing up today know that already, but it is one thing to know it theoretically, and quite another thing to actually believe it and internalize it. They should know that gender does not play a role in their career dreams unless they choose to let it.

Another important stage is when young women just enter the workforce. That is another critical time when mentorship is needed to help them gain confidence in the career of their choice and ensure that they are aware of all the options available to them.

And at any stage of life, if any woman feels that their career of choice is not really what they had expected it to be, and is not serving their needs, then mentorship is critical to help them make another choice and support them through the transition.

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

I really admire the women scientists of earlier generations, such as Marie Curie, Rachel Carson, Rosalind Franklin, Barbara McClintock, and even more recent scientists like Jane Goodall or Sylvia Earle. They did their research and work at a time when a career in science for women was an impossible dream. I really admire them and can't even begin to imagine the courage and the single-minded dedication it took for them to be able to become successful in their field.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

To any girl or woman pursuing a career in technology, my advice would be to be open to changes, and at the same time to keep their focus on the problem that the technology is aiming to solve.

When you follow a career in technology, there are two aspects to your work. The first is learning and using the actual technology itself, which is constantly changing and evolving, and it is important to be open to change and be able to adapt and learn new things quickly. But there is also another aspect to it – which is the underlying problem that the technology is aiming to solve. It is always important to know the big picture – to know exactly how the technology that you are working on will be used in real life situations, how will people interact with it. This aspect of technology doesn't change as quickly. Focusing on this second aspect will not only give more meaning to the technology you are building, but it will also make you more valuable in your career because not many people put in that effort.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Women tend to approach work in a different way than men. One of these differences is that women often tend to focus on the core work itself rather than other aspects of career development such as networking, relationship building, continuing education, etc. And as women gain experience and grow in their careers, their personal life often changes around this time, and this can lead to further narrowing down of focus. So, organizations need to recognize this and allow women more flexibility to get work done in their own time and in their own way. Organizations should also remove any biases or prejudices that often creep up unnoticed. It is important that organizations make their expectations and criteria for career advancement explicit and unambiguous so that every employee is aware of exactly what is expected of them in order to move to leadership roles and progress in their career.

BIO

Shampa Bagchi is the Founder and CEO of ConvergeHub, a customer lifecycle management (CRM software that powers business growth. Shampa specializes in taking ideas from concept to reality and is passionate about helping businesses grow by utilizing the power of technology to solve complex challenges. She also founded Corelynx, a software strategy agency providing innovative technology solutions to growing organizations. Shampa holds a master's degree in computer science and has been at the forefront of the technology revolution in the Silicon Valley for more than two decades. She has been a 'woman in tech' long before #womenintech became a movement.

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SOLUTION PROFILES

The following solution profiles are intended to educate and inform technology management professionals about a variety of telecom, mobility, and IT solutions across four solution categories.

SOLUTION CATEGORY	SCOPE
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	consulting, outsourcing, and managed services
CARRIERS, OPERATORS & SERVICES PROVIDERS	traditional and cloud-based telecom, mobility, and IT network services supporting voice, data, and video communications
SOFTWARE	user applications and applications used in the telecom, mobility & IT environment
HARDWARE & EQUIPMENT	physical infrastructure and endpoints

What is telecom, mobility, and IT?

TELECOM

Voice and data services, hardware, and software providing WAN, internet, voice and video connectivity.

MOBILITY

Cellular and satellite services, hardware and software associated with wireless communications.

IT

Information Technology services, systems, software, licenses, equipment, and peripherals providing networking connectivity.



Zeron is backed by cyber security professionals and researchers who aim to simplify cyber security with a one-stop solution for managing all things vulnerable in organisations with a bundled SaaS-On-Premise hybrid approach.

Zeron Cybersecurity Solution

ZERON is a Cyber Security Posture Management platform with an approach of Attack, Defense and Compliance mapped with Businessfallout making it the [A-B-C-D] of Cybersecurity. Zeron helps organisations to predict, prevent and mitigate cyber threats also, helps to increase their ROI on Cyber Security Investments.

What Sets it Apart?

Zeron stands out among the competitors with the following USPs:

- Revenue fallout mapping
- ADC approach (Attack+Defence+Compliance)
- Machine-learning-based threat intelligence
- Breach probability
- Z-Score (Security Benchmark Score)
- GRC

Company Size Supported

<100 100-999 1,000-9,999 >10,000

Customers

25

Users

10

Top 3 Markets Served

→ Finance → Healthcare → Telecommunications



Women in Tech

AOTMP® provides a platform for women in technology to share their personal journeys, professional experiences, and perspectives.

AOTMP® Insights Features

Featured profiles and interviews in March, June, September and December.

Awards

Recognizing outstanding achievements and successes of women working in technology.

Education

Sessions, panels, and interviews at AOTMP® events throughout the year.

Conference

A 1.5-day live online event with speakers, educational sessions and awards.

Young Women in Tech

Recognition, profiles, awards, and personal branding specifically for women in tech aged 15 to 30.

Personal Branding

Two-hour live online educational sessions with additional sessions for Young Women in Tech.



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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Alma Machado

Lead Functional Analyst – IT

[Office Depot](#)



CAREER CHOICES

Before beginning my IT career, I was the manager of a wellness center for a university. While the thought of switching careers was frightening, I knew I needed a change, took a leap of faith, and started at a temp agency. From there, I went on to become an executive assistant to the CIO of an IT staffing agency. During that period, I came across an open position in telecom which sparked my interest. After a discussion with my supervisor about my drive to find my place in IT, I transitioned to a job in telecom management where I provisioned cell phones that were granted company wide. I would administer the accounts, audit, and troubleshoot any issues that would arise. In the beginning, I was nervous, but I was eager to learn. I learned quickly and after my first year, I had a good handle on things. However, I wanted more. The telecom team was working on a VoIP migration, and I wanted in. I spoke with my supervisor, and he allowed me to be a part of the project. I once again was not sure where I would fit in or how I could be an asset, but I knew I would find a need that I could fulfil. Quickly, I realized that to seamlessly migrate over 200 retail locations and two headquarters, I would need to conduct site surveys and capture all the necessary data. I took it upon myself to do it. Soon enough, I was being asked to join meetings, and I knew then, that my work was an integral part in making this project successful and leading me to find my place in IT.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I care about what I do and about the people that I work with. I focus on devoting so much passion into what I do and treat every team goal with conviction. I take pride in my work because I feel it is an extension of myself. I also enjoy being part of a team. I come from a big family that required us to overcome many struggles in life, and I was only able to make it because we took care of each other. Those principles have become the defining factors of my life and have crossed over into my professional career.

Everywhere that I have found success, there was a caring atmosphere that made me feel comfortable and confident in myself. This is what led me to being where I am today, and I hope to create that same caring atmosphere for others.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I have had several mentors, women and men alike. When I worked for the university, a mentor of mine would take me to all of her meetings with her where I was responsible for taking notes and helping to keep her organized. She taught me how to see my self-worth. I come from a rough upbringing, and due to my past, I never imagined that I could be surrounded by executive level people and not feel invisible. In IT, I had the honor to work with amazing engineers that would have the patience to answer all my questions and they never made me feel inferior. My supervisors and the executive-level team encourage growth and are always willing to listen to my ideas. They have supported me throughout my tenure, and I have been able to grow professionally and personally.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship in supporting and advancing the careers of women is essential; especially in positions and industries that are historically male-dominated, such as IT. I was able to advance in my career because men and woman alike took me under their wing and showed me the ropes. I was able to gain confidence in myself and find my strengths and weaknesses. My life has changed due to mentorship, and I am forever grateful and willing to do the same for others. For example, I had a project where over 1,000 locations were migrating to new network technology, and I needed help. After many interviews we found the right candidate, whom I knew was the right person for the job. She was inexperienced but very eager to work and learn, and that was enough for me. After 5 months of intense training, I felt confident that she could manage her responsibilities without my presence. This allowed her to hone her skills and become confident in herself. After completing a successful project, she moved on to her new role as a technology professional in the world of telecom. We stay connected to this day and the mentorship continues. This was and continues to be one of the most rewarding parts of my job.

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Susan Wojcicki has been CEO of YouTube since February 2014. She advocated for Google's \$1.65 billion acquisition of YouTube in 2006. The site is now worth an estimated \$90 billion. She is a mother of five children and was still able to find success in her career. Once women start having children, it is commonly expected that we must make a choice, career or family. As a mother of two young adventurous boys, I faced that same difficult choice. It is hard to drive towards your professional career without sometimes feeling that you are neglecting your motherly duties. However, looking up to Susan, I feel confident in what I am doing because she has created a path for mothers that want both.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Do it and do not give up. Do not let anyone discourage you. I did not know much about telecom when I first started, and I took a leap of faith and asked a lot of questions. I still do today. Do not leave the room until you have had your questions answered. The worst that can happen when you ask the question is you will learn one way or another. Have the courage to ask for opportunities or make your own.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I would say the greatest challenge for organizations to overcome in the technology industry is to acknowledge and appreciate able women. I used to be the type of worker that did my work and stayed in the background, hidden behind my superiors. My supervisor made it his mission to get me out of my comfort zone from behind the scenes and put me in the forefront. I have had to present my ideas to business leaders. It was nerve wrecking at first, but I realized how important it was to advocate for my ideas, and now I do not see it any other way. I can see the growth in all of us, it has been great to have a supervisor that really takes a lead in taking the employees to the next level by promoting a “Lean In” mentality.

BIO

Alma Machado is a lead telecom analyst for Office Depot, a wholly-owned subsidiary of The ODP Corporation (NASDAQ:ODP), a leading provider of business services, products and digital workplace technology solutions through an integrated B2B distribution platform with an online presence and approximately 1,000 stores. In her role, Alma drives value for the business units she supports by leveraging partnerships across vendors and internal teams to implement enhanced solutions for the customers she serves. With over 14 years of telecom experience, she has built a record of success adapting to and managing technology changes, reducing costs, and achieving customer satisfaction.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Certificate of Accounting Telecom Specialist
- Certificate in Business Operations

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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Amanda Todd

Technology Asset Analyst
[Richmond Public Schools](#)

CAREER CHOICES

It is possible that the technology industry chose me, for as a young person I was interested in joining a company that provided great benefits and training, and I found these requirements within New York Telephone Company. As the years progressed, I realized that technology became my career. Additionally, as I continued to learn and grow within the network and telecommunications world, I realized that when given the opportunity, I could transition my skillset to other arenas. I transitioned from being the vendor to the public sector, hence, an urban Public School system. This gave me the opportunity to use my skillset to work within an entirely different arena and shine. For example, I was able to review contracts that Verizon put in place and see how they helped the public sector. I continue to embark on new skillsets as my technology career continues to thrive.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

My passion is working within a team where each person has a voice and is valued. Each team member is an arm waving them until we collectively gather solutions. Far too many people don't value others as I do, but I realize that the table should include many different ideas and strategies. I love the term "dream team" brainstorming until we all win. I pride myself on working with the strongest and weakest link. Regardless of formal training (or age) when set in place, you are surprised at what each has to contribute. Feeling left out and undervalued creates the type of environment that fails. My goal is to begin every project with a clean slate and team that wants to be exactly where they are. I do reflect on what went wrong (when necessary) – but every day is a new start to get it right. My passion is to treat each person like I want to be treated and keep it moving.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I have had many mentors in my extensive telecommunication career. I can remember many people who pulled me to the side and said to me, "let me help you get it right," and grateful I am for their help. Yet today, although I continue

my journey and pay it forward when I can, I can say my mentors have been all of the millennials that work on my team. I value each and every one for keeping me abreast of new technology and coaching me when I want to earn a new certification (CISCO). Many seasoned employees don't value them, but I do and scream it from the rooftop each chance I get. We must continue to value and understand what they bring to the table. I continue to be the subject matter expert on many levels, but they bring new technology my way, I study it and incorporate it when possible. What a team we have, seasoned employees and millennials working side by side, my dream team.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is very important to supporting and advancing the careers of women in technology. This cannot happen if we don't provide women with safe spaces to learn, grow and cultivate ideas. Mentorship provides just that. I charge anyone who is passionate about the advancement of women in technology and changing the landscape of the field to make investments in the development of diverse talent. It is great to see women advancing and bridging the gap, but men still make up the majority of the decision making in this field. It is time for each person regardless of gender orientation to take this pledge. Women can do it all – and we are proving it each and every day.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

As a woman of color, there are many I admire whom I consider to be trailblazers. Ursula Burns is a trailblazer that we all should admire. She was the first black woman to be the CEO of a Fortune 500 company. This is visibly so important for young women that aspire to be leaders. Her story is relatable and inspiring, as one who also grew up in New York City, my hat continues to go off to her. She had a humble beginning and worked very hard and wasn't given shortcuts on her way to the c-suite. I also love what Bozoma St. John is doing. It's inspiring to see a woman show up as herself and be so successful. It is another example for young women of color to look at and see a bit of themselves at the table.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Thirty years ago, this would not have been a question asked. Many of us were sat down and told to reach for the stars, but today it is said with conviction. Today when we sit our girls down and let them know they can be whatever they choose to be in our democratic society, it's obtainable. They now see people who look like them in positions of power and leadership. One piece of advice would be to become an independent thinker and go with your gut. Working towards those harder goals will reap the greatest benefits in the long run. Many of us have not and will not have the opportunity to be thrust into positions because of who we know, but aligning ourselves with organizations that we believe in is a good start. Volunteer and seek internships and most of all, network with those who have

similar goals. Sometimes standing alone is a good thing, it gives you time to think. I tend to jot down my goals and beliefs constantly, for seeing them in writing puts a fire in me, perhaps it would do the same for someone else.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

What is needed is training and opportunity. Technology is a white-male-dominated arena, which typically keeps women and minorities out. This may be because of the large incomes that can be generated and the prestigiousness of developing new concepts, which become new products for sale. Many times, women in particular are given a hard time throughout college because they are weeded out in certain course. The discouragement that this promotes keeps them away from the opportunity to provide for themselves and help support their families. So, more real mentorships are needed in order to combat this situation. Additionally, more supportive organizations and companies that provide study groups that will help them over these difficult changes. You also need an opportunity to work in your chosen field, to put those new skills to work. Real internships and workplace mentors will assist with the application of the newly minted degrees.

Additionally, mentoring on the high school level – for many great paying technical careers don't start with college degrees. As many are not college bound, discussing certifications and internships will help bring many young minds into organizations who didn't know jobs existed for them. Gender equity is obtainable, but each person must reach back and pull one person up at a time.

BIO

Amanda Todd is a seasoned telecommunications professional who has dedicated herself to providing excellent customer service as a vendor and now as a customer. Working with Verizon (formally New York Telephone and Bell Atlantic, Amanda was given the opportunity to grow in her craft and embark on a journey from the Northeast to the South with ease. She prides herself on being a team player regardless if I am in a classroom or conference room, working together has always been my motto.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Bachelor of Science - Business Administration
- Graduate Degree Telecommunications
- Graduate Certificate Aging Studies
- Master of Business Administration
- CWA Local 2201 - Executive Board
- Post Baccalaureate Certificate
- Real Estate and Land Development
- Licensed Health and Life Insurance Agent

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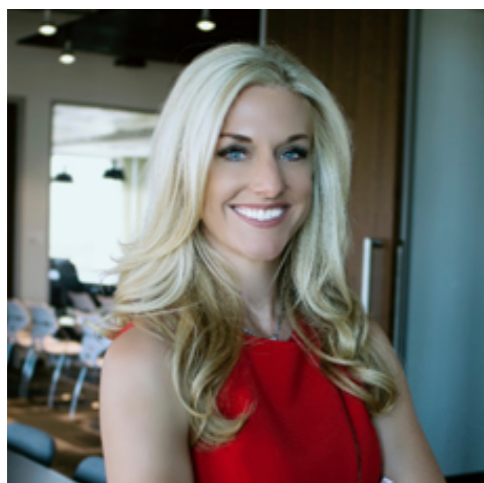


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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Amber Caramella

Chief Revenue Officer
[Netrality Data Centers](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I've always wanted to be a part of something that would provide me the opportunity to make a positive impact on people. I grew up in Northern California surrounded by entrepreneurs making bold moves to create and build companies that would forever change the technology industry. I knew I wanted to do something where I could drive change and make a material impact. I was focused on going to medical school due to the innovation happening in the medical industry. An opportunity presented itself to relocate from California to Georgia, where I began my career in telecommunications. There is a direct correlation between the tech and medical sectors. The industries are inextricably linked in that advancements in the medical field would not be possible without technological developments. Innovation is the foundation of where the world's economy excels.

After more than 20 years in technology and digital infrastructure, I've concluded this is my passion. I thrive in dynamic environments where things are constantly evolving, there is always something new to learn or discover. Data center infrastructure is the core of any business enterprise providing computing, storage, and connectivity. In the U.S. alone, there are over 2,700 data centers. By 2027, the global data center market is estimated to reach over \$288 billion. Advancements, including 5G connectivity, are revolutionizing the world with faster speeds, increased capacity, and ultra-low latency. 5G networks will advance the development of autonomous vehicles, gaming, telemedicine, and the Internet of Things (IoT). With the emergence of 5G, edge computing will play a vital role in developing data centers in the future. With an increasing number of people adopting smart solutions, the demand for edge computing will increase. Data centers are at the cusp of innovation, the forefront of all things new. They are the heart of any organization.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I am passionate about advancing innovation within the technology space, constantly learning, absorbing, and educating myself and others — being valued and leveraged as a subject matter expert at the forefront of the telecom industry. I feel like I am an entrepreneur. In my role as Chief Revenue Officer, I have the amazing opportunity to create the blueprint and strategic plan, which paves the way for our company and my team to increase revenue and experience accelerated growth.

The technology space is a dynamic industry that thrives because of change. Tech is responsible for transforming culture, the way we live, changing the existing systems we utilize, directly impacting our economy. It is the fuel that forges the world ahead with innovations to improve and positively impact people's lives, both nationally and globally. In technology, the reach is far, the impact is significant, and the effect is momentous. I am as excited to be in the tech industry as I was at the onset of my career.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I've been fortunate to have a few influential people in my life. One mentor who significantly impacted my career trajectory was Dan Caruso, the former CEO at Zayo. Dan is the epitome of a true entrepreneur and embodies all the characteristics, including inspiration, wisdom, tenacity, passion, and most of all — vision.

Dan built an environment allowing people to push past their comfort zones, set high expectations, and reinforce the importance of accountability to promote growth both professionally and personally. He taught and, most importantly, led by example. At Zayo, Dan spearheaded programs for employees to support their professional goals with rotational, academic, and mentorship programs to build and foster employees to not only follow but excel within their careers.

He is about transformation with the understanding that change is constant, flexibility is essential, fear is not an option, and the only choice is to pay it forward by paving the way for others to realize their full potential. On the other side, he was tough and constructive in his critiques and feedback, understanding that we all can improve and learn.

Mentoring helps you to grow as a person by introducing diverse ways of thinking, challenging yourself, and sharing the lessons you learned along the way. Dan certainly fulfilled this for me, and for that, I am grateful and feel I would not be where I am today without his leadership.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is pivotal. I feel it is my responsibility to support and advance the careers of young women in technology. Empowering women and implementing initiatives in the hiring, training, and education of all employees, is essential. In recent years, there has been an increase in corporate awareness around diversity, equality, and inclusion initiatives, which is a step in the right direction, but there is room for improvement.

Education is an essential piece of the puzzle. I am on the advisory council for Infrastructure Mason (iMasons, a global, nonprofit, professional association whose mission is to make a better-connected world, and enhance educational opportunities, championing diversity and inclusion for everyone.

By 2022, Deloitte Global predicts sizeable global technology firms will employ nearly 33% of women. The needle is slightly on an uptick year over year, but change does not happen overnight. Allyship of men in leadership roles along with their women peers is important. Women with diverse backgrounds provide fresh perspectives and different approaches necessary in today's landscape.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

One of the women trailblazers I admire is Carla Harris. I was inspired by a speech that was made during the 2016 MAKERS Conference, by Carla Harris, Morgan Stanley's vice chairman, wealth management, managing director, and senior client advisor. Carla spoke about how she took control of her career and personal brand by reinventing herself, changing the way people perceived her. She came to this realization after being passed up for promotions. It turned out people thought she was not tough enough. Carla knew this was not true and decided to change her narrative. She took a few steps back and evaluated what was limiting her success. It came down to professional and relationship currency. Both are equally important when climbing the corporate ladder and, therefore, need to be in balance. Relationship currency is investments you make to build relationships with people at work by networking and promoting yourself. Professional currency is an achievement by hitting your numbers or your deliverables directly related to your core responsibilities at work.

Some professionals, especially women, feel that they will get recognition and be promoted if they keep their heads down and work hard. This is where relationship currency and professional currency come into play. Working on one while ignoring the other will not work. Both need to be fostered and nurtured to achieve the outcome you desire. The difficulty with professional currency is the bar is constantly being raised. The other issue is that you miss what is happening around you when you keep your head down and do not nurture relationships. You will find your peers may get that promotion despite doing less work since they've invested time in relationships and their personal brand to achieve their goals. Carla Harris' ideology resonated with me then and rings true to me today.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

If I had to sum it up in one word, it would have to be authenticity. Always be authentic and aware of who you are and what you stand for. Being genuine allows you to express yourself and develop deep-rooted connections and relationships. Additionally, it brings openness and the opportunity to see the potential in new challenges while understanding your strengths and weaknesses.

The general advice I would give girls and women pursuing a career in tech is to believe in themselves. Don't let fear stand in your way. Find mentors to help guide you and pave the way to help you reach your goals. And never forget, you miss 100% of the shots you don't take. Take chances in life to get ahead, fulfill your dreams, and reach your goals.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

The answer is twofold. The first challenge is how to get more young girls interested in entering the tech field. The answer is simple. Early introduction is critical. Organizations and educators need to introduce tech careers to female students in middle and high school. Introducing prominent women in tech roles to young female students will inspire them to choose a tech path in college and enter the tech field.

Secondly, organizations in the tech industry need to implement strategies focused on creating an inclusive environment for women. The saying it comes from the top

is true. Men and women in leadership roles should be expanding gender diversity. Diversity efforts need to be integrated into company policies and HR practices and must be incorporated into your company pillars and values where leaders across the business are responsible for identifying, supporting, and advancing women. Leaders must invest in women, give them highly visible projects, assign executive coaches outside of the company, offer special training, creating a support system to nurture and build women up to succeed and thrive.

We should mentor women in our companies, mapping out paths, making introductions to higher-ups, fostering relationships, and building their connections.

The quote, "You can't be what you can't see," resonates with me in this instance. If young women do not see themselves reflected in the technology industry, they cannot dream, visualize, or act on it. Equal opportunities and diversity should be a pillar, a driver in all organizations to formulate a productive environment, find the balance needed for progress to alter preconceived ideas, and change the world.

BIO

Amber Caramella is the CRO at Netrality Data Centers. She is responsible for Netrality's revenue generation strategy and execution, overseeing sales, marketing, interconnection, network solutions, strategic alliances, and channel partnerships.

Amber has more than 20 years' experience in the telecommunications and technology industries. Prior to joining Netrality, she served as SVP of Sales at Zayo, where she built the company's global cloud, software, infrastructure, and data center vertical segment. Amber has held a variety of sales and executive roles at Lumen Communications, XO Communications, and Allegiance Telecom.

She is on the board of directors at Cato, on the advisory council of Infrastructure Masons, the global executive sponsor for IM Women, and is part of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee raising awareness and education for underrepresented groups.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Cato Digital, Board of Directors
- Women's Tech Forum
- Mission Critical Magazine's Top 25 Women in Tech 2021 and 2022
- Data Centre Magazine Top 10 Women in Data Centers 2022
- iMasons 100 Award Winner 2020
- The Modern Sale & Collective's, Top 100 Global Sales Leaders 2020
- iMasons Global - Master of Ceremonies 2019, 2020, and 2021
- Mission Critical's 2021 and 2022 Top 25 Women in Technology
- Data Centre Magazine April Edition 2022 Top 10 Women in Data Centers Infrastructure
- Masons IM 100 Award Winner 2020 — making meaningful contributions to industry awareness, education, diversity and inclusion, sustainability, and technical innovation
- The Modern Sale and Collective's 2020 Top 100 Global Sales Leaders
- Master of Ceremonies of Infrastructure Masons' Global 2019, 2020, and 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Gala and awards ceremonies in Monaco, London, and California
- Voted BizClick Media's best October cover for 2021



TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Anne-Louise Bee

Chief Operating Officer
[Cyferd Ltd.](#)

CAREER CHOICES

I chose tech because I wanted to be part of an industry that is always working at 1,000 miles an hour! Innovation is exciting to me, and I also have a strong vision to champion women in tech.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

My passion is collaboration between amazing teams. The skills and vision of development teams astound me. I love to be part of innovating projects.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

Ranjit Bahia! My boss!

He sets the benchmark for our business and my career.... The bar is set high, and as soon as I'm close, we reevaluate and set higher goals. I love his drive and ambition coupled with his genuine desire to have powerful women around him. Gender equality is important to Ranj, I'm a very true example of this.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is hugely important. To have a mentor enables you to strive for something real. Equality is talked about a lot, but a mentor is living proof of what can be achieved. If you have drive and ambition, along with the right mentor, that's a winning combination right there!

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

There are quite a few to be honest, one that stands out is Julia Grace! She works at Netflix as the VP of product engineering. She has also worked for Apple, Slack, and Tindie. She started programming at age 12 on a super old Commodore64! She is an inspiration as she has defied all odds and worked her way to an executive level within tech.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Drive, strive, never give up.

Don't be scared to have a voice, good companies will listen, believe that your input is worthy.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Companies need to allow everyone to have a voice. Give people the opportunity to shine, no one's asking for the best person not to get the job, they are asking for an equal platform to demonstrate their skills. Another challenge may be male counterparts taking you seriously. I'm lucky enough to work within a c-suite of hugely supportive male colleagues. However, this isn't always the case.

BIO

Born in Leicestershire, England, Anne-Louise was one of the first team members to join Cyferd with 14 years of executive experience running her own business. As the chief operating officer of the company, Anne-Louise works closely with the leadership team to ensure the smooth running of the business, as well as fostering a positive and encouraging environment in which to grow. When Anne-Louise is not being active in her spare time she enjoys visiting new places and understanding varied cultures.

Women in Tech

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Zoom Acquires Solvvy, Expands Contact Center



Zoom Video Communications Inc. announced on May 12 that it has entered an agreement to acquire Solvvy, a leading conversational AI and automation platform for customer support. This will allow Zoom and Solvvy to offer elevated customer service and customer support experiences, answering questions and solving issues faster. After the close of the transaction, Zoom will incorporate and expand Solvvy's capabilities across the Zoom Contact Center, a cloud-based platform built for scale to support businesses of all types and sizes.

Read the [Press Release](#).

Tangoe Debuts New Partner Experience Program for IT Expense Management and Advisory Services



At the Channel Partners Conference & Expo, Tangoe debuted its new Partner Experience Program. Tangoe is a leader in IT Expense Management (ITEM) and managed mobility services. The new Partner Experience Program combines ITEM and advisory services for indirect sales partners to help businesses better manage the myriad IT assets and expenses that are present in today's complex IT landscape. The Partner Experience Program will offer benefits like referral fees, reselling discounts, dedicated solutions architects, and partner marketing resources to every level of partnership and increase across the three levels of commitment and engagement.

Read the [Press Release](#).

IBM to Deliver Software as a Service on Amazon Web Service



IBM announced on May 11 that it signed a Strategic Collaboration Agreement with Amazon Web Services, Inc. (AWS), planning to offer some of its software catalog as Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) on AWS. The companies are also committing to a range of joint investments to make it easier for clients to consume IBM Software on AWS, including integrated go-to-market activities across sales and marketing, channel incentives, developer enablement and training, and solution development for key verticals and industries.

Read the [Press Release](#).

MachineQ, a Comcast Company, Debuts Real-Time Location Tracking System Solution



Comcast's MachineQ announced on May 18 its MachineQ for Asset Management, an end-to-end IoT solution providing enterprises with a comprehensive, real-time view into the location of indoor inventory, equipment, and moveable assets. Using wireless technologies, the solution offers a differentiated, scalable indoor asset tracking capability to RFID-based (radio frequency identification) options currently in the market. MachineQ can track an asset within 3 meters and is separate from the Wi-Fi network, relieving security concerns and getting the solution set up quickly.

Read the [Press Release](#).

\$45 Billion Biden-Harris "Internet for All" Initiative to Bring Internet to Everyone in America



As part of the Biden-Harris Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, it was announced May 13 that the Biden-Harris Administration's Internet for All initiative will invest \$45 billion by the end of the decade to provide affordable, reliable high-speed internet to everyone in America. The U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration will spearhead the initiative. The programs will build internet infrastructure, teach digital skills, and provide necessary technology to ensure that everyone in America has the access and skills they need to fully participate in the modern society and economy.

Read the [Press Release](#).

From the AOTMP® Newsdesk: AOTMP® Announces Telecom, Mobility, and IT Management Industry Business Award Winners



AOTMP® announced the annual award winners for ten prestigious 2022 AOTMP® Industry Business Awards. These awards recognize individuals and organizations for innovation and excellence across the telecom, mobility, and technology management ecosystem. Winners were announced on April 27th at AOTMP® Engage, an annual 4-day event held in Orlando, Florida.

Read the [Press Release](#).



TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Bianca Whitson

People Development Program Manager

[DMI](#)



CAREER CHOICES

Starting out my career as a high school teacher, I had no clue it would lead me to the technology industry one day. Learning continues to be a core passion of mine, and I love being able to work in such an innovative, ever-evolving field with endless learning opportunities. In my role, I love being able to also create the opportunities for others to develop themselves professionally and personally, and ultimately drive this industry forward.

We need to feel supported, engaged, and inspired with a sense of purpose to be able to bring our best selves to work, and it's my priority and mission to create the culture and space that enables every person to thrive. This ranges from focusing on the small, yet meaningful moments in the day-to-day work to rolling out large scale development programming. Being able to work in an industry that unifies all my passions of supporting people, developing an inclusive culture, and continuous learning and innovation is a true gift.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I'm incredibly passionate about supporting the people behind the technology. I believe we need to create a psychologically safe work environment for teams to be able to truly excel and inspire the next generation. If we don't take care of our people, it's impossible to expect innovation and new ideas to come to life. I'm also passionate about prioritizing power skill development in the workplace, such as emotional intelligence, communication, teamwork, and leadership skills, just as much as technical skill development. When we arm ourselves with both universal power skills and the unique technical skills required for our roles, that's where the magic happens.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I've been so fortunate to have many mentors throughout my career that propelled me forward. Transitioning across professions and industries was not an easy task, but having incredible managers along the way that realized my potential and gave me the confidence I needed to believe in myself made all the difference. They not only gave me the continuous positive and constructive feedback I needed to grow, but actually gave me real hands-on stretch projects and access to training and new roles that pushed me outside of my comfort zone and led me to where I am today. And now, I'm so fortunate to work for a leader, DJ Oreb, that wholeheartedly supports his people and truly believes in the value of continuous learning and development.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is so, so important. We all need allies in our corner, supporting us and cheering us on especially when faced with challenges. We need mentors to also nominate us when exciting new projects or new roles become available, as I have been fortunate to experience personally in my career. It not only boosts confidence but gives us the real, concrete chance to show our talent and gain access to so many important professional connections. One of the many lessons we've learned over the past few years is that we need community and connection, now more than ever.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

So many women inspire me with the work they do to not only make a difference in their industry today but to also pave the way for future leaders. Brené Brown continues to inspire me through her work and research to challenge the way we think about work and leadership. She motivates me to lean into the vulnerability it takes to show up, be brave, ask questions, and have the tough conversations that will ultimately help us all grow. She also reminds us all to stay curious and focus on learning rather than knowing, which is an incredibly powerful tool in an ever-changing industry that thrives on innovation.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Believe in yourself and seek out peers and mentors that will support you and challenge you to keep going. There will be great days and challenging days, and I encourage you to lean into it all, identify the lessons learnt and carry them with you as you grow in your career. Create regular time and space to continue to develop yourself and learn new skills. And always use your voice, even when it feels hard, and believe wholeheartedly that you deserve a seat at the table or in that meeting, because you do! Oh, and make time to celebrate your wins, no matter the size, daily. And lastly and so important, also celebrate the successes of the women around you. We can't go at it alone. We need community. So, let's show up for one another the way we hope for others to also support us in our journey.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Recognizing the incredibly talented tech professionals from diverse backgrounds and promoting them into positions of leadership is key. It's so important for young professionals to actually see people that look like them in leadership positions as it turns dreams into reality. We need allies on leadership teams that are making talent decisions to create opportunities to showcase our talent. I challenge today's leaders to ask themselves if they are doing their part to seek out diverse high performers that can become the next leaders to represent the diversity in leadership that we all deserve.

BIO

Bianca is a lifelong learner with experience in learning & development in the tech and financial services industries, secondary education, and non-profit programming. She currently supports People Development at DMI Managed Services with a focus on continuous professional development and org-wide culture initiatives. She is constantly exploring and implementing new ways to create connection, development, and engaging experiences for employees. Outside of work, you'll find her spending time with her husband and 2 playful pups staying active and enjoying all that Chicago has to offer.



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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Carolina Lobos

Vice President of Marketing

[Asignet](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I didn't really select the technology industry. I always liked marketing, communications, and technology, and when I moved to the USA, it was clear to me that I had to find something for me that didn't require 100% of English speaking/writing abilities. When I was going to grad school in Chicago, they just started offering database marketing as a minor, and I was one of the first to graduate from that program. I got hired by UPS to be the database marketing supervisor right after grad school, and the rest is history. I haven't left the tech world ever since. I have experience in several different corporations promoting marketing technology and selling technology. We breathe technology at home, my husband and kids are all computer geeks, and I am now responsible to go to market one of the highest technologies available in the technology expense management industry. I can't imagine not being involved in tech. Technology is everywhere, and it is vital to the future.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I am absolutely in love with technology and automation whether is in my industry or it is within my marketing function, and I have embraced it. But my real biggest passion is to bring technology and automation together with people relationships. I truly believe that people must be at the center of everything we do. I love building relationships, getting people together, and seeing people flourish. I want to see the next generation of women leaders show up, stay, and don't be afraid of speaking up.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I came from a very chauvinistic and paternalist household. I grew up with two sisters and my mom. I watched my dad dictate everything around the house, and I also watched him promote and incentivize his girls to be quiet. NEVER speak up. I turned to the person who influenced me the most not only in my career but also in my life. My grandmother. She was way ahead of her time, she was the

first woman to attend university – majoring in economy, was a great painter and awesome novelist. She taught me that I could do anything I want if my heart was in it. She thought me that it is OK to make mistakes, to change ideas, to speak up. Later in my career I had a couple male mentors that mostly helped me navigate the corporate waters without making too many waves – which I think was a disservice to me. I would have loved to have had in the beginning of my career someone to encourage me to speak my mind, chase my dreams and don't be afraid of failure. In the absence of a mentor, I hired a coach who helps me survive in the extremely male-dominant world. I also started listening to Brene Brown, and I am fascinated by the concept of vulnerability. Being vulnerable makes you open and forces you to be open.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is KEY! Having a good mentor can have a dramatic effect on someone's life. I believe that a good mentor can open several doors that wouldn't be open otherwise. Mentors are valuable sources of knowledge. Good mentors, mentors who will give you the best insight at your current career level. They will provide constructive and valuable feedback. Friends and family members may hesitate to provide the type of feedback you need to make a change in your professional life. Mentors look for ways to encourage your growth. Once they understand your skills and abilities, they can shape your career accordingly. A good mentor is essential because of the words of encouragement. When you need an extra boost of confidence, mentors offer support and words of encouragement to keep you going when life gets tough. Successful mentor relationships define expectations, make you feel you are in safe hands, and let you know that conversations are confidential. Mentorship in the tech industry is no different than any other. It must exist, and organization MUST spend resources on it.

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

As I said before, my grandmother is a great model for me. Also, I have an aunt (my grandmother's niece) who was twice the President of Chile. I wasn't super close to her but just the fact that someone from my family could be a President was absolutely amazing! She opened the door to several other women in politics in Chile. She is a very smart woman, but what I admire the most about her is her simplicity. She is humble, open, and honest. She has three kids from three different dads and never apologized for it. She owns who she is! No apologies, no excuses. In this male-dominant world being a female leader is hard. I feel that we are always apologizing for things that we shouldn't. We are always being judged by things that have nothing to do with the capacity for us to do our jobs. The other woman I admire in the workplace was a lady who took a leadership position in my former company, made several positive changes, and was let go after five months. That was soul crushing to me, I knew that she only got fired because she was "too much" for our CEO.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Go for it!! It is fun, dynamic, and never stops! And we need women in all roles throughout the technology industry!

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Salary equality and transparency. As long as we don't have salary equality, we won't be able to truly have our voices heard. We need equal opportunities.

BIO

Carolina Lobos was born and raised in Brazil, grew up with Chilean parents, has a Turkish husband and is a mother of three beautiful All Over the World boys! Carolina is an accomplished senior marketing professional with over 15 years' experience in designing, building, and running strategic global multi-channel demand generation and account-based marketing (ABM) programs. She has a proven ability to develop long-term business relationships, build strategy and execute comprehensive, strategic marketing campaigns for multinational corporations in the tech, telecom, security, logistics, and financial industries across the US and Globally. Carolina is passionate about family and the good life and believes that every second is worth living to the fullest!

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Strong background in both digital and traditional marketing, trend and demographics analysis, and client-focused capabilities presentations
- BA and MBA from Loyola Chicago University
- Certified Project Management Professional (PMP)
- Trilingual: English, Spanish, and Portuguese

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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Cierra Smith-Voytek

IT Manager, Intelligent Process Automation
[Sherwin-Williams](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I had gone to college for the Arts and graduated with a degree in Fashion Merchandising. I wanted to stay close to home, so I took a position merchandising for a telecom company. After working with technology, new innovations, and around sources of tech, my interest had been piqued. I decided to return to college and learn more about technology fields and positions. More often than not, I was the only female in my classes, and I only had one female technology professor throughout my education. I knew then that I wanted to help grown women in tech and stay steadfast with my career pivot. I graduated with a degree in IT Network Administration and have worked in tech ever since. I love working in technology because it is always changing, always provides new ways to learn and grow, and the small female community in this field is becoming stronger.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I am passionate about two things: 1.) Expanding and supporting more women in tech, and 2.) Process improvement through automation tools like robotic process automation (RPA). Expanding and supporting more women in tech will help increase awareness, and maybe even empathy, in a very fast-paced stressful job sector. Having women show up in tech and bring a different level of skills and attributes is vital to keeping tech (especially for social media tech) ethical and positive. My second passion is process improvement with automation. There are so many tools available now to help companies and employees make their days more efficient and devote time to creative value-added activities. With process automation there is a whole new world of low-code/no-code skills that can empower traditionally non-technical people to create process improvements and become citizen developers. Using automation tools like RPA, process mining, and more will help companies going through digital transformations keep up with the speed of technology while maintaining their working processes in the current state.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I have a few influential mentors that have helped me; I refer to them as my personal board of advisors. First would be my RPA mentor, Carlos Viega. He is so passionate about RPA that it is hard not to absorb his positivity. Second would be Angela Salviejo. She pushed me to move out of my box in my first tech role and has never stopped supporting me. She was one of the first female managers I had in corporate technology and continues to lead innovation and technology efforts, at work and with non-profit young female STEAM organizations. The last but not least would be Karla Desso, who is the most fearless yet strategic leader that I have worked with. She truly is an example of being so good at your work that you are rewarded with more responsibility and has excelled in her career at a pace that is both impressive and humble.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

This topic is extremely important, and I am so happy that more is being done to address this at all ages. Getting young girls interested at an early age, and keeping engagement throughout the years with mentorship, can help close the gender gap for technology. Having multiple organizations support and provide education, networking, and support for women who currently work in tech and want to break into tech is a big inclusion, diversity & equity (ID&E) effort now for most companies, and we are seeing the numbers slowly climb. Making sure to include the tools for women to continue to stay engaged, have a voice, and create a support system is something that all leaders need to drive for their female employees.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Gascoigne – She founded Girls in Tech and has been instrumental in amplifying the message to include more Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) women in technology from the heart of Silicon Valley.

Cierra McDonald – Principal PM Lead for Xbox Engineering – She has been a trailblazer in the gaming sector, which has a rough history of female inclusion, and she continues to lead in this space for engineers and women.

Dr. Florida Starks – SVP Chief Diversity Officer for Pearson – She is leading diversity and inclusion efforts in a mostly technical educational platform and is a huge inspiration for ID&E.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

The greatest challenge that I think needs to be overcome is the notion that ID&E is unnecessary or a fad. Gender equity is needed for balance in work and home lives. Gender equity leads to more innovative ideas because you have new and untapped resources to pull from. Inviting new women into leadership brings new energy, care, and empathy into rooms where mostly men are, and having a new voice can amplify making technology stronger and more aligned to our current world environment.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I say, “Jump in the water, and be a duck.” I know that sounds funny, but jumping in means you won’t let the doubts, fears, and imposter syndrome hold you back from your journey. Be a duck means to let water slide off your back, don’t let any drama, naysayers, being the minority upset you. Jump in the water, have a great time, be yourself, and let any drama roll right off you. Also, sign up for any local women in IT organizations that you can. Building your network and putting yourself out there to make connections is something that is so helpful, and the more you do it the less awkward it is.

BIO

Cierra is a passionate advocate for technology adoption and technology education. She is a lifelong learner with two degrees completed, and a third in progress from Baldwin Wallace University. Cierra enjoys supporting women in STEAM/STEM efforts, including her board position for Women in IT at her employer, and most recently the Vice President role for the Cleveland Chapter of GetWitIT. She is also a creative crafter and enjoys time spent knitting, sewing, reading, and spending time with her family.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Women in IT Secretary Chair for Sherwin-Williams 2021
- Women in IT employee resource group advisor 2022
- Vice President Cleveland Chapter GetWitIT 2022

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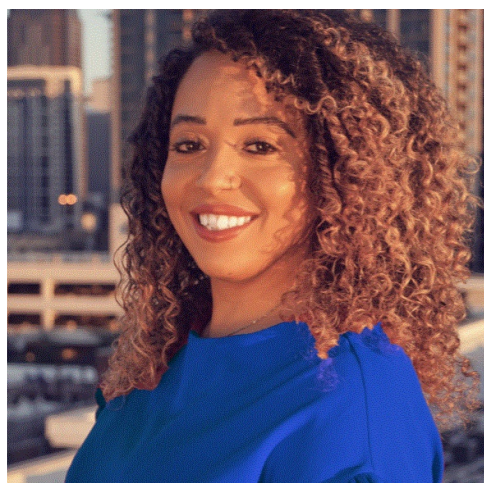


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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Danielle Barnett

Director of Acquisition

[Equinix](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I was brought on at Equinix to drive innovation to the sales organization. I am currently leading several projects to:

- Increase operational efficiency via internal platforms and applications (Salesforce, Clari, etc.).
- Drive inclusion for Women in Technology Sales via mentoring women and increasing women at Equinix.
- Advocate for Working Moms via leading our Working Moms committee via our internal Women's Network.
- Lead Community Outreach initiatives to make an impact in DFW through Equinix volunteer workshops and community impact events.
- Sits as a Stakeholder for Equinix BlackConnect to drive DNI initiatives as a voice for black employees.
- Establish an interconnected community and ecosystem in Dallas for Women of Color and People of Color via outreach to relevant technology providers, solution providers, technology resellers, customers, and alliance partners to create a safe space for Diversity and Inclusion in the technology space.
- Mentor kids interested in STEM-oriented careers via organizations such as GirlUp, Girl Scouts, Cafe Momentum, and Boys and Girls Club.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I believe that technology is a radical space for creating positive change. It is the wild wild west that allows us to create a better world and provide the world with access to resources tomorrow that they did not have access to today. Whether via creating new platforms, ecosystems, interconnections, or new worlds for people to access or providing jobs to first generation young professionals looking to accrue generational wealth. Technology is a space that creates a level playing field for all regardless of color, creed, or orientation.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

Pamela Osborne has opened so many doors for me and championed me into places I could have never gone on my own. When a door closed for me, she opened a window or bulldozed a new trail for me to follow – and then encouraged me to blaze my own new path and take as many people with me as possible.

As a Woman of Color in Technology, Pamela taught me that you had to have advocates in your network who both look like you and look nothing like you. She pushed that you are only as good as your work ethic and people you know and keep in touch with. These lessons pushed me to never settle or become comfortable - which allowed me to focus on constantly elevating myself.

Her selflessness has made me a better leader, mentor, mentee, champion, and innovator. It's difficult to keep up with how much good that she puts out into the world. But I have found that the more good I put out into the world, the more positivity I see echoing back into my life and others around me.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

In addition to advancing and advocating first generation young professionals and people of color into leadership positions, uplifting and mentoring women is a top priority of mine as a female leader in technology.

The world is becoming more and more diverse and inclusive. As women climb into leadership positions in high tech, we as a society, are feeling their impact in all that they do. Women are now buyers, solution makers, architects, developers, executives, and business line leaders. As such, it is critical that women elevate in all areas of business. Why? Because our opinions matter. Businesses that do not have more women at the table making decisions will miss out on the opportunity to drive revenue, influence decisions, and understand the needs of other women in various markets.

This access to these opportunities provides an opportunity for advancement in equity and inclusion that creates generational wealth and access to financial security for women of all backgrounds.

ADMIRABLE LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Kimberly Bryant - I LOVE Black Girls Code. Introducing young women to coding provides a skillset that will ALWAYS be relevant and garner revenue. For many of these young girls, adding this skill to their quiver provides lifelong job security.

Boozma Saint John - I sat on a panel with Boozma and attended an ELC event with her, and she is an inspiration. I appreciate how she encourages women to talk about finances to ensure pay equity and how she makes space for others in every room she enters. Her joining Netflix at the c suite was an inspiration for so many women looking to be "the first" but certainly not the last at the respective companies we represent.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

A career in technology makes it easier to bust through the glass ceiling. This is often due the fact that a career in technology focuses on technical aptitude and technical acumen. Focus on these two areas via acquiring technical certifications and expertise to level the playing field.

Establish a solid mentor, champion, advocate network, and sponsor network. Decisions are often made in rooms that you will not be in. If you have a rich diverse network of men and women who do and do not look like you to influence those discussions, you can elevate your career greater than sheer grit and production.

Invest in your career and know your worth in the marketplace. When you are willing to invest in your career and understand what that worth translates to, it makes it nearly impossible for someone to undervalue your worth.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Sharing the load. We are ALL responsible for creating a world that we are proud of – both as it relates to technology and society. This requires everyone understanding their part. For some people that means acknowledging privilege, for others that requires upskilling, speaking up, and advocacy. There are people who need to listen with intent, and some who need to strategize less and execute more. We all have a part in this, and at the end of the day we all care about making the world the best place possible for those we care about. If we look to see the humanity in people and learn to communicate in a way that is less combative, it makes it easier to see the humanity in others. We have more in common than we often like to admit; when we give others the benefit of the doubt and work toward the greater good, we bring out the best in humanity. Technology CAN enhance society. In order for this to take place, we need to reintroduce the soul and the best of humanity back into the tech space.

BIO

Danielle is an advocate of bold ideas, a conduit for transformative thinking, and a “we” oriented leader. She has spent over 10 years in the high tech, digital transformation, and the SaaS and infrastructure industries leading teams, driving revenue, and sparking innovation at ADP, Salesforce, AT&T, and Equinix.

In the last 5 years Danielle is proud to have helped roll out Salesforce to over 6,000 users at AT&T (Salesforce’s largest deployment), helped design Fiber networks for SLED organizations, implemented software platforms, and now leads a sales organization at Equinix while also sitting on the board for Cafe Momentum.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Black Engineer of the Year Award – Modern Day Technology Leader AT&T Service Excellence Award
- Top 2% of Talent WOC Cohort Leader
- Salesforce 201 Admin Certification

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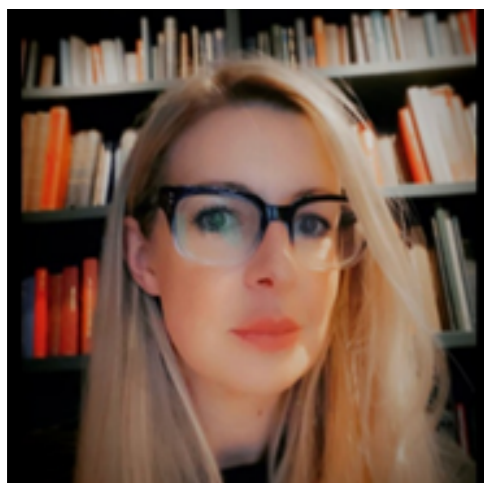


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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Gemma Levers

Director

[Edricorp Limited](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I have always had career in a male-dominated industry, and took a position as an administrator in a telecoms company, but it was quickly brought to my attention that I had an eye for telecoms expense management which then developed into a telecom engineering path. I have always been interested in technology, and the business I now own and operate is a reflection of this.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I am a business communication and technology specialist with one mission: to deliver reliable infrastructure, connectivity and security systems that add real value to your business. We offer a one-stop solution, whatever your sector, whatever your size.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My most influential person was my late father, Paul Levers. When I was 13 years old, he came in with a box and dropped it on my bed.

I asked him, "Dad what's that?"

He responded, "Something called a PC, Gem."

I said, "OK, but what am I supposed to do with that?" and he told me, "Build it, Gem, and work it out yourself."

So, I did. This gave me the confidence to build and repair IT equipment. I don't think he realized that one act would turn into me owning and running a technology business.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is massively important in supporting and advancing the careers of women in technology. Just 17% of people working in the UK technology industry are women. It destroys me that the last two years I have not had one female apply for an engineer/IT/apprentice position at all. Women in Technology is a huge passion for me, but I feel more still needs to be done to bring women into a male-dominated industry.

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Simon Roche from Northern Power Women is someone I greatly admired for pushing the boundaries in Women's business.

Karen Brady is also a strong businesswoman in a very male world. I greatly admire her for her strength and resilience to stand up and be heard in a male-dominated industry.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Believe in Yourself! Women can do whatever they set their minds too, and with help and guidance there is nothing you can't achieve.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

There needs to be a massive change in the way our schools support young women, especially in regard to utilizing IT and Tech skills for possible careers. Otherwise, the gender gap is not going to change. We need to teach young women they are just as capable to thrive in this male-dominated industry. I don't want young females having to go through what I have in my career; being told you have gone as far as you can go. The sky's the limit and I would love it if a young female worked for me and then progressed to an amazing career in tech.

BIO

Gemma is the owner & director of Edricorp Ltd. and of Beaver Broadband Ltd. In January 2020, after realizing that she was not going to progress further in her career working in a male-dominated industry, Gemma and her business partner launched Edricorp Ltd. She is an experienced systems provisioning specialist and engineer with a demonstrated history of working in the telecommunications industry.

Gemma is skilled in business telecommunications planning, sales, technical consultancy/fraud protection, and telecom expense management. She is a strong IT/office management professional, NEC-qualified engineer, and well versed in Mitel/SIP/VOIP/Hosted/INVOSYS and NIMBUS systems. Her current position allows her company to assist in all low voltage, alarms, security, fire, data, fiber, IT, telecoms, and broadband systems.



TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Inhi Cho Suh

General Manager Global Strategic Partnerships

[IBM](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I love to learn, and I believe that every industry has the opportunity to be disrupted and reinvented by technology – every job, every category, across every industry.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I have multiple passions including teaching and mentoring people to achieve their potential. I believe one of the greatest human gifts is the ability to choose what we think about.

As a technology professional, I'm always reimagining the current state, looking at the future state, and working towards it. There are so many big meaningful problems in the world that need to be solved – next generation of energy, sustainability, privacy and cybersecurity, how to apply quantum computing, rethinking digital networks and digital sovereignty, rethinking quality of healthcare, rethinking education, and learning and rethinking the customer experience. It is fun to innovate with technology, data, expertise, and people in new ways.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

IBM's former chief brand officer, John Iwata, was a powerful mentor to me over the years. He provided me unique insight on how to frame a conversation, how to see the world and how to think big in different ways.

He nurtured two things in me. The first was the ability to think big about the world around us and think strategically at scale – globally. The second was about character and the type of leader I wanted to be. This means how I show up every day, how I make decisions, and how to build effective teams. Enabling the growth of others is an important leadership capability. Collectively, all of these distinct skill sets are powerful and can have a meaningful impact in the world.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentoring, sponsoring, and developing all kinds of people with diverse points of view is incredibly important. There are problems that need to be solved across every intersection of business and society. The scale and complexity of these problems require the intellectual capacity of everyone on the planet. Access, education, opportunity, and mentorship are key.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

I am a board member of AnitaB.org, an organization which is all about the recognition of women in technology and advancing women and diverse candidates in categories of STEM. Our goal is envisioning a future where the people who imagine and build technology mirror the people and societies for whom they build it.

There are many role models both inside IBM and outside IBM, including leaders in the next generation semiconductor space, cloud platforms, applications space and others with deep vertical expertise. We're better than we've ever been in terms of women representation; however, we still have a long way to go.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

I would tell women considering a role in tech to learn how to advocate for a decision or point of view that is not necessarily supported by the majority or by management. This is a skill set learned over time and through practice.

Layered in that challenge of advocacy, whatever it is – it may be a strategic investment bet, a hiring decision, or a pivot in the company – there are biases of history, of group think, of fear, beliefs, constraints in the business system, and metrics.

For advocating I'd give them five steps:

1. Document a point of view.
2. Find allies to help socialize your ideas and gather support.
3. Listen and understand the opposing points of view.
4. Potentially reframe the problem you are trying to solve to more of a shared outcome.
5. Remain open to the possibility that your point of view may need to change with new data and input.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Inclusion – meaning not just diversity or demographics, but inclusion in the culture you create and the way you show up every day allowing for more trusted conversations, transparency and speed of decision making.

A simple example of this would be valuing people's time and really listening to

content rather than trying to win an interaction or move too quickly based on past experiences alone. When you prepare for a meeting, be present and focus on the content as well as behaviors and how you show up. The everyday micro-behaviors and micro-cultures in meetings, the participants, the tools used, in decisions making can lead to greater inclusion.

BIO

Inhi Cho Suh is a senior executive whose career has been defined by her use of technical and business development expertise to lead organizational transformation in support of growth.

Inhi is currently the general manager of global strategic partnerships, where she leads business development of IBM's relationships with the largest system integrators, consultancies, hyperscalers, independent software vendors, and infrastructure companies. Prior, she led Watson Customer Engagement, where she drove the strategic restructuring of a multi-billion dollar SaaS portfolio to launch a suite of solutions that can create intelligent, self-correcting supply chains through the use of hybrid multi-cloud, AI, and blockchain.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Aligned with her experience and passion for emerging technology solutions, Inhi is a member of the board of directors of DocuSign and a TEDTalk speaker.

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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Isabel LeBoutillier

Vice President, Customer Operations

[Kymeta Corporation](#)



CAREER CHOICES

My career in technology was an accident! After a summer internship with a government agency got defunded during my college years, I had to scramble for a job and ended up working for a satellite communications company. Although my academic background was in foreign affairs and the Middle East, I enjoyed the faster pace of the private sector and the opportunity to advance professionally in direct relation to my value to an organization rather than a pre-defined career track.

Although my arrival in the tech space was somewhat serendipitous, it is exciting to be a part of an industry that feels like it is constantly developing. The satellite industry in particular relied on relatively older technology until recent years, so it is a particularly interesting era. In that time there has been huge inflows of capital, including major investment from high-profile tech leaders – i.e., Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates – so we are in a high-growth, high technology development phase. The technology Kymeta is producing today was almost unthinkable when I started my first internship.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

While I would love to be considered a visionary type, my strength is being an operator. I work well with idea people because I can take the dream and make it a reality. The first guy I worked for remarked that what made me unique was always finding a way past the obstacles – around, over, or if necessary, straight through! At Kymeta, I have been able to take strategy requests (i.e., develop a new service offering, optimize the way we sell to our customers, improve internal processes and work with the right people to execute on the vision).

As a former (and still recovering) small business owner, I learn very quickly, I love efficiency, and I try to put myself in others' shoes to understand and eliminate blockers. I think it has been helpful to a startup like Kymeta that faces the same growth challenges as any high-growth phase company to bring an outcomes-focused, can-do mentality to the table.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My mother-in-law, Susan Swanezy, paved the way in many respects for women in real estate finance, having started on Wall Street in the 1980s. Over a fruitful career, she has demonstrated that women can be strong leaders and contributors in a male-dominated environment without losing a sense of femininity or levity, and she has been a strong advocate for women in her industry. She has always brought a practical, market-based perspective to helping me understand my value. She also reminds me that I can be myself and be respected.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

I think women need male and female mentors in a professional setting, particularly one that lacks gender parity, so they have access to different perspectives. When I got pregnant with my son, I wasn't sure how my organization would react to an executive taking maternity leave. Susan helped me understand comps across other industries so that my request was fair to me and to the company. My dad helped me prepare for "the talk" and (correctly) predicted the male leadership's response – very supportive!

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Sheryl Sandberg published *Lean In* when I was starting my career. I took so many lessons from her book and would recommend it to any woman working in a professional setting. She helped me understand that women have to be responsible for their own outcomes – if we wait passively for a promotion, a salary raise, a seat at the table – we are likely to be passed by. Her anecdotes about underqualified men knocking down her door to explain why they should get a newly posted job while overqualified women held themselves back, fearing they "needed more experience" before going for a new role, were eye-opening.

There are of course systemic reasons that women do not advance professionally at the rate of men – but our stereotypical "pleaser" personality is also part of the problem. Women have to advocate for themselves. Having an objective third party (mentor) to help you understand your market value and argue for that recognition is key.

Sandberg's book makes the point that sometimes you just have to grit your teeth and go for it – even if the answer is no, raising your hand at work puts you on the radar and will increase your chances of being considered in the future.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

1. Be a problem solver: Everyone will want you on their team, and you will create opportunities for yourself.
2. Be brave: Experiences you may be nervous about at work – presenting to your executive team, meeting a contentious third party, having a difficult conversation with a staff member – are always easier after you've done them once. I spent a lot of time being anxious about moments that actually weren't so bad once I went through them!

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Federal support for early childhood care is absolutely critical to keeping women in the workforce and getting greater gender parity at the executive level. CEOs in the tech industry should make this a focus. It costs around \$30,000 in pre-tax income to send my 9-month-old son to daycare every year, and I don't live in a big city. Imagine having 2 or more kids – even if you make \$80-100k annually, at some point it just doesn't make economic sense to work. And working with young kids isn't easy!

We are losing so much female talent at the child-rearing juncture; even if someone decides to get back into work, once a woman has been out of the workforce for 5-10 years, she obviously won't rise to the executive level at the same rate as her male peers.

While we are doing a better job of supporting paternity leave (which is so important in so many ways!) the US is one of the only developed nations that basically tells parents, "Good luck with the kids" until they are 5 years old. This is undoubtedly one of the reasons that the birth rate in the US has dropped 20% since 2007 (a shocking and highly problematic statistic for the US economy and society in general) – and it has dropped across all demographics.

We desperately need pro-natal policies, and I hope technology CEOs push for this at the state level and in Congress.

BIO

Isabel LeBoutillier joined Kymeta when the company acquired her business Lepton Global Solutions in 2020 to build out a global network services offering. In her role, Isabel oversees the connectivity offering, technical support operation, and works closely with Kymeta's BSS/OSS teams to effectuate strategic business offerings. Isabel founded Lepton Global Solutions in 2013 after starting her career in satellite communications at MTN Government Services. She is a University of Virginia graduate, where she studied foreign affairs with a focus on the Middle East. She speaks French, enjoys the outdoors, and lives in Charlottesville with her husband, son, and two dogs.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- 2017 DCA Live Trending 40 – Federal Entrepreneurs and Innovators
- 2018 Boeing Pathfinder Award – Lepton Global Solutions awarded Pathfinder award: one of 13 global suppliers out of 30,000 to win annual supplier award
- Founded satellite communications business at age 23, and sold it to Kymeta Corporation in 2020

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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Jill Ransome

Chief Marketing Officer

[Jitterbit](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I have been working in tech for the better part of my career – or over 20 years. I have always been fascinated by technology. Whether it was learning html code to update a website at the start of my career, or market research tool sets, mobility solutions, or now enterprise integration technology – the industry is constantly evolving. I am both intrigued and motivated by its fast pace of change and acceleration. As a marketing professional it means constantly learning, fine-tuning my own skill set, working and communicating in many new ways. Think about the marketing technology that is now available to us – automation tools, digital marketing methods, social media, intent data and tracking systems. The list is endless. I wouldn't be able to do my job as well without technology at my side! Technology makes working easier and more efficient for myself and my team, but it is also fun to keep learning, and that change keeps me excited and on my toes.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I geek out over data. Without the data that technology enables us to have, I would be challenged to make difficult decisions. And because there is so much data available to us, I can get caught up inside those reports digging deeper and deeper. It is like solving a jigsaw puzzle or maze. Where do we go from here? What happens if I plug this piece in here? I will literally spend hours analyzing different data points. A good example of this, that many have heard me talk about before, is applying this same analysis and data deep dive into understanding your customer and their journey with your product or brand. Understanding where and how they engage with your brand is something that is enabled by technology. It also provides us the opportunity to better serve them, to personalize the experience, to offer touchpoints for better service and communication.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I have been lucky to have had several great mentors throughout my career, but one in particular, stands out – not only because she was a woman in leadership, but because she took the time to get to know me, to show empathy, to invest her

time and energy in teaching me, coaching me and guiding me – not only in my professional life, but in my personal life as well. Never underestimate the power of a mentor. She helped me to identify my strengths. She gave me opportunities to build on those strengths and challenged me by putting me in often uncomfortable situations. It was through this mentor that I learned that some of the biggest growth comes out of moments of uncertainty or being uncomfortable. It is in those moments that you need to dig deep to trust in yourself, be confident and take ownership.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

I do not know if it is my own experiences that give me so much passion for mentors, but I believe that mentors – both male and female – are extremely influential for any individual looking to grow. For women in particular though, mentors can help build confidence in a highly male-dominant industry. Mentors can help push an individual and create those challenges that many women desire but do not know how to ask for.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

There is probably a list of commentary on this topic that looks something like this:

- Find a Good Mentor. You don't have to navigate your role, a new industry, or your career on your own.
- Don't Let Self-Doubt Get in the Way. No one knows everything.
- Learn How to Take Negative Feedback. And get better or stronger from it.
- Never Stop Learning.
- Read; be inquisitive and curious.
- Communicate Clearly. Not just about wants and desires, but how you think.
- Collaborate With Colleagues or peers.
- Often times, we shy away from things because we think we cannot do it or that we shouldn't do it. Everything is a possibility in today's world, and if you are curious, and have the desire, just dig in. I give the same advice to my own teenage daughter. No one is stopping you.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I personally have not seen a lot of inequality in my career and position. Maybe I am lucky in that. Maybe it is because I have had the privilege to work for some great leaders. There is an opportunity likely though for employers to work with women through the struggles of balancing careers, families, and this new age of remote work by creating a culture of acceptance and inclusion, offering opportunities for continuous learning and coaching, and creating flexible and supportive networks.

BIO

Jill Ransome leads the Jitterbit global marketing organization responsible for driving its growth strategy, demand generation, elevating brand awareness and consideration, and creating differentiated experiences that result in client loyalty.

Jill has more than 25 years of marketing and communications experience across technology, software, and research brands. Prior to joining Jitterbit she held the CMO position at Tangoe. She has spent nearly half of her career with high-growth companies and has a passion for brand transformations.

Jill earned her Bachelor of Science in Global Marketing from Pennsylvania State University and currently resides in Fairfield, Connecticut.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Active member of AOTMP and ETMA (Enterprise Technology Management Association) Board Member 2020 – 2021
- Featured on the Rockstar CMO Podcast and in Sales Tech Star for insights around customer experience and building marketing teams in this day and age
- Recipient of the Stevie Women in Business award, Oct. 2020

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INDUSTRY BYTES

Industry Bytes explores industry terms, notable trends, and regulatory information every telecom, mobility, and IT management professional should know.

- An **Evil Twin** is a Wi-Fi hotspot that mimics a free public Wi-Fi hotspot and is used by bad actors to capture sensitive data transmitted from a laptop, tablet or mobile phone that connects to it.

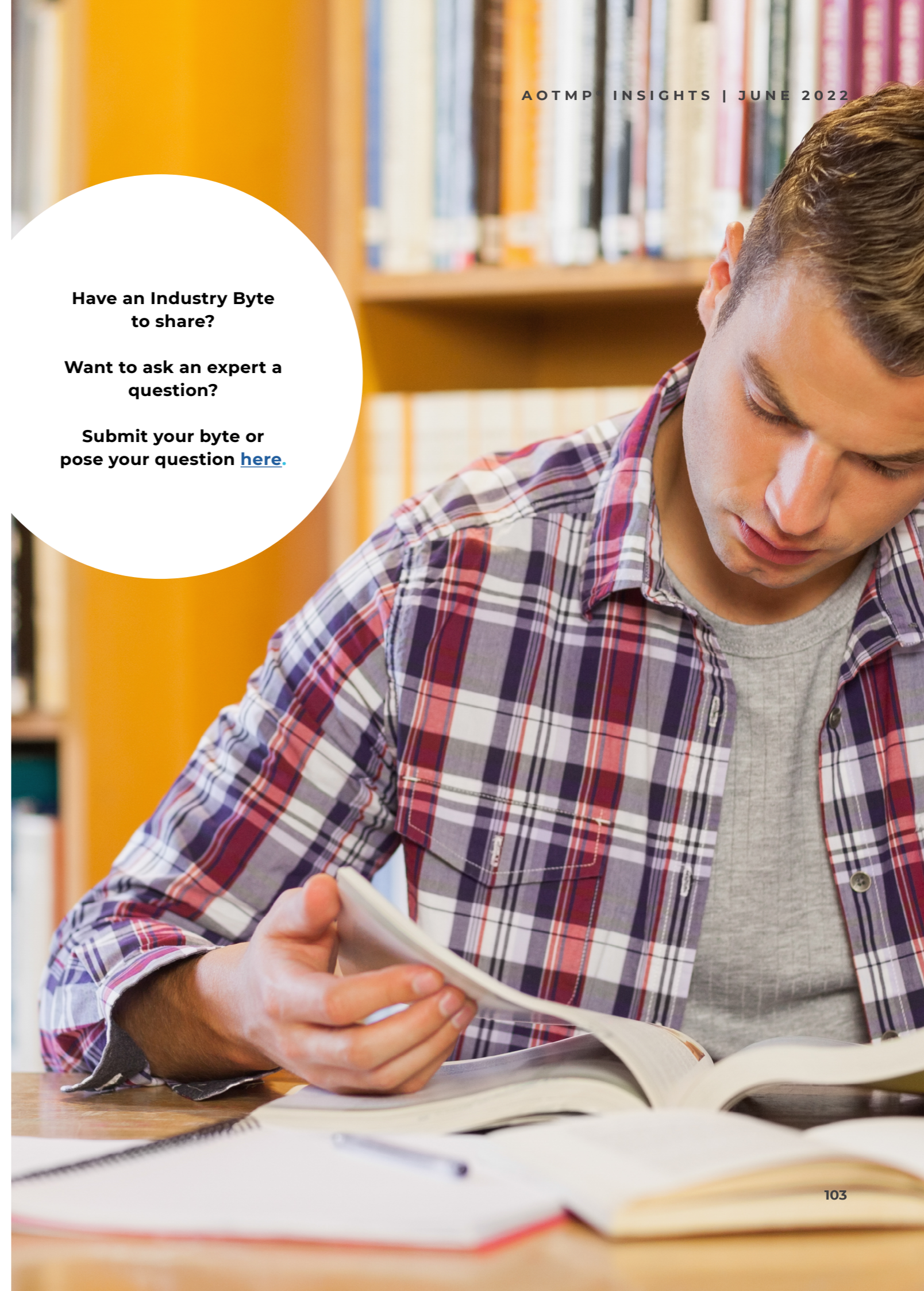
[Wi-Fi Alliance](#)® is a non-profit organization that owns the Wi-Fi® trademark and “drives global Wi-Fi adoption and evolution through thought leadership, spectrum advocacy, and industry-wide collaboration. Our work includes the development of innovative technologies, requirements, and test programs that help ensure Wi-Fi provides users the interoperability, security, and reliability they have come to expect.”

- A **Value Added Tax (VAT)** is a tax assessed against the value added to goods and services at each stage of the supply chain, which may include developing, sourcing, manufacturing, assembling, fulfilling, distributing, selling, etc.
- Verizon’s **Economic Adjustment Charge** is a per line user fee levied to help Verizon Wireless cover administrative, regulatory, and network costs.
- **Average Revenue per User (ARPU)** is a widely-used metric in the communications industry by vendors and suppliers to quantify the value of each customer in terms of revenue.
- **Lifetime Value (LTV)** is a metric used by vendors to estimate the average revenue that will be earned per customer over the span of a commercial relationship. This metric may be applied to the relationship as a whole or just to certain products and services within the scope of the relationship.

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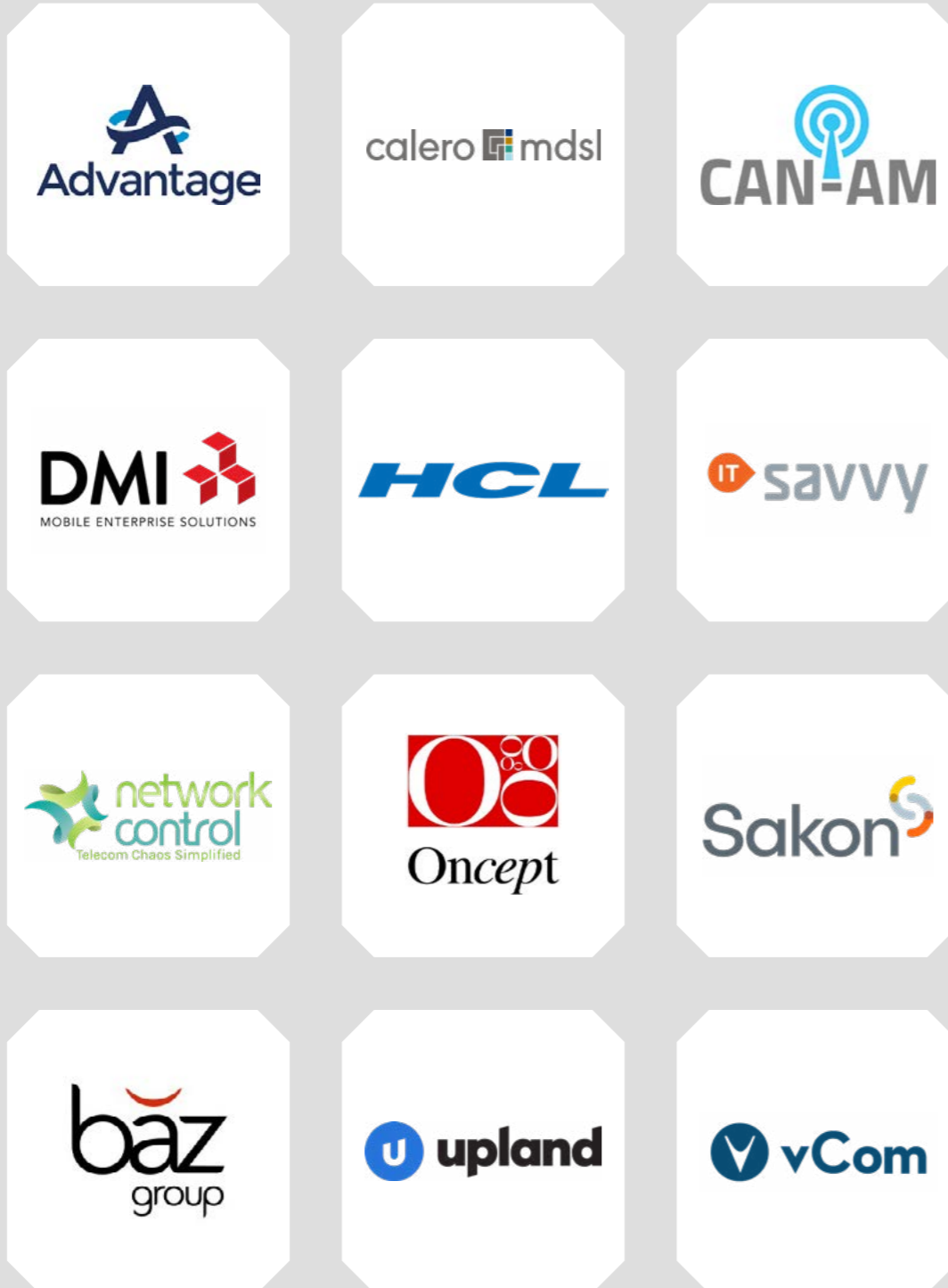


Vendor Awards & Recognition

The Finalists

Winners announced on July 28th at the Industry Solutions Showcase

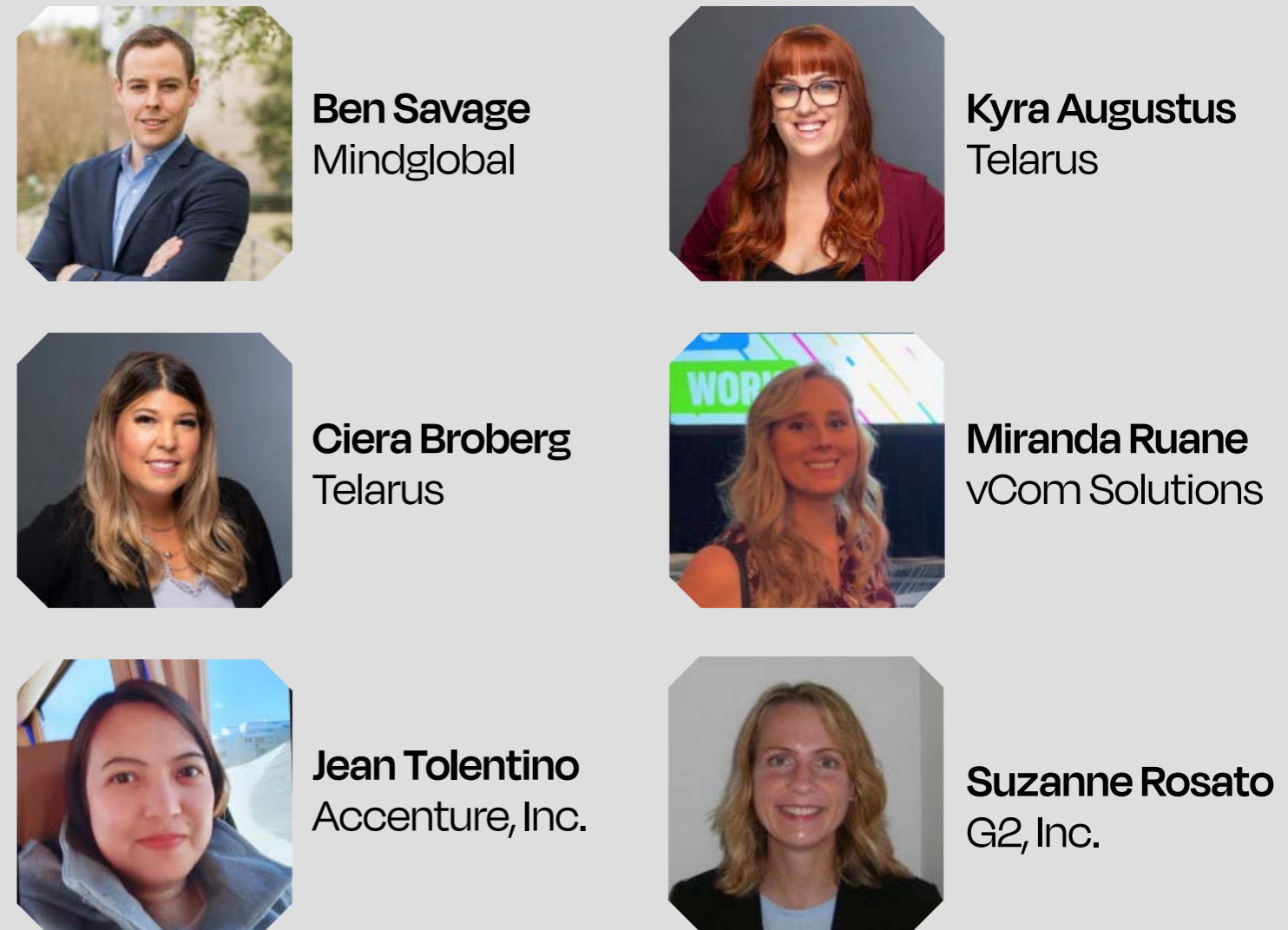
Company Awards Finalists



Solution Awards Finalists



Individual Awards Finalists





TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Joan Torres-Saez

Global Director of Business and Data Analytics

[Aristocrat Technologies Inc.](#)



CAREER CHOICES

Actually, the technology industry chose me. I was studying physics at University of Colorado, Boulder in the 1980s; I was doing administrative work at my job while I was attending school. My employer needed some help with organizing customer data, and I volunteered to assist. I had taught myself and very much enjoyed computer programming and databases. I built what would eventually be known as a CRM database. I specifically remember thinking that I was amazed that I could earn a great salary doing something I was good at and thoroughly enjoyed.

Soon after, I joined an international engineering firm and went to work in Switzerland. In addition to working for large enterprise consulting/technology companies, I've worked for small-to-medium, as well as enterprise businesses architecting and deploying technology projects for Tumi, Home Depot, Audiovix, and American Honda Motors.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I strongly feel that the key to solving business issues and improving business processes lies in the understanding and analysis of the organization's data. Data analysis yields the answers to the who, what, when, where, and why of any business issue. I also very much believe that the key to success in technology is also having a deep understanding of how technology gets deployed. I believe that understanding and employing strong project management processes and procedures is key to success in IT.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I have had the good fortune of working for some large IT organizations through my career. I have learned many different skills from dozens of business and technology thought leaders and subject matter experts.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Throughout my career as a woman in technology I've known that IT is primarily a male-dominated field. I especially enjoy working for my current employer (Aristocrat Technologies, Inc.) because they are fully invested in putting the most qualified people in leadership roles regardless of gender.

I speak at conferences and university technology events and focus on what a rewarding field of study and career information technology can be for women. I am an active voice in educational programs and encourage and extol girls and young women that choose to study technology.

I am in the process of joining a group of people that will be working with human trafficking and abused women in the Dominican Republic to teach them technology skills in order to help them get out of, and leave behind, their painful pasts and develop business and technical skills that can lead to good paying jobs in IT.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

As I previously mentioned, I studied physics at UC Boulder. I recently headed a volunteer project to digitize tens of thousands handwritten notes and data from NASA's moon missions from the 1960s. I recently read a story about Diana Trujillo. Since her childhood in Cali, Colombia, she dreamed of working for NASA. That was her dream and she set a goal. She now works with the group that designed and examined the robotic arm and two instruments for the Mars 2020 mission, which seeks to demonstrate whether there was life on Mars. She has been a member of the Goddard Space Flight Center and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. I can only imagine her struggles, desires and focus that she put behind her quest to join NASA. I applaud her for her resilience and drive!

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

I believe that solving the gender wage gap in the IT field is a major hurdle that needs continuous improvement. Salaries in technical fields vary greatly according to technical skills, knowledge and experience. There is no reason why women should get paid less than a male counterpart just because of gender. When more women are in leadership positions, salary discrimination based on gender alone will balance.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I try to keep my advice simple - it doesn't matter if you're a boy or a girl, or what types of toys you play with or what kind of books you enjoy reading. Technology is all around us. Technology is in everything we do each and every day. Whether it is creating, converting, or maintaining technology, you need to study STEM fields to get access to this giant field that will continue to shape the future of the


world. Girls and women need to participate in classes, committees, and projects throughout their school years and in their jobs that give them exposure to the field of technology.

BIO

Joan's career in IT has spanned over 30 years. She started in IT (before it was called IT) as a self-taught programmer. She's held leadership positions at major IT companies including HP, Oracle, and IBM. Joan is a Big Data expert and has additional expertise in the areas of project management and software application development. She has delivered IT projects in the United States and in multiple international countries. In her current role, Joan directs a team of more than 20 business and data analysts, along with helping her multi-national organization with global enterprise data initiatives.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- I have multiple technical and professional certifications and am a participant in Aristocrat's global Diversity & Inclusion program chartered with creating a more inclusive, diverse and welcoming organization.
- I am an activist in helping get more women and people of color get exposure, training and employment in the technology industry.



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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Julie Elmore

CTO
[Dollar General](#)



CAREER CHOICES

Having a career in technology is a great and meaningful way to help enable business delivery of a variety of opportunities.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

The industry is constantly changing, available resources are evolving and business opportunities are adapting to customers' needs. Continuous learning helps professionals learn multiple paths to address issues. It's also interesting to see why and how each one could work.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

It's hard to pick just one, but one who comes to mind was a passionate, great storyteller who pushed you to be a better version of yourself, always insisting on leaning into discomfort and challenging the art of what could be. The lessons were endless, but one of my favorites and most memorable lesson was to stop talking when you have buy-in, regardless of where you are in the pitch.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Advancement is so much easier when there is a solid mentor, sponsor or ally to help your professional career journey.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

There are so many amazing women, but the earliest leader would have been Grace Hoper and her skill to break the glass ceiling and command leadership. Ruth Bader Ginsburg with her fight for gender equality and the great leader Indra Nooyi with her personalization of discussion and great ability to be an expert listener are two additional of my most admired female leaders.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

I encourage females in technology to find the spaces that excite them. If it is understanding the problem, solving the problem, or building things - go get it.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Organization leadership values must include diversity, inclusivity and equity. Organizations should invest to hire, inspire and build the talent, which will come when an investment is put toward the solution.

BIO

Julie Elmore is a balanced leader in driving pragmatic transformational strategies and supporting the innovation, ROI, and risk objectives for the organization. Elmore is passionate in collaborative efforts, continually identifying and implementing technology solutions and leading top-performing teams. She has multi-channel experience in delivery across warehouse operations, mobile, RFID, e-commerce, store operations, engineering, employee systems, and building construction. Elmore is self-driven to continually improve her self-awareness and building skills to continue to be a value-added leader. She is also technically astute in building behavior-driven development frameworks, continuous integration and delivery pipelines to provide self-monitored, robust and stable systems supporting business process and enabling future capabilities.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Most Influential Women - Mass Marketers 2021 Top 100 Women in Supply Chain March 2021
- Top Women in Retail Tech 2020 - Chain Store Age PMI - PMP Certified
- SIX SIGMA Black Belt
- Team Performance Certificate - The predictive index



TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Laura Silivestro

Manager, Mobile Order Management
[vCom Solutions](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I don't know if I selected technology or technology selected me. I came to telecom back in 2005. I had been in a publishing role and then in computer resale, both of which were really dying industries. I ended up having an opportunity to move into telco and I jumped at the chance because it was a growing industry. I've been in tech ever since.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

A large part of what we do at vCom is service based. If you're not good at the service part, no matter how good the technology, customers aren't going to use it. So, I would say that's my passion: ensuring that the delivery of the service surrounding the technology is not just excellent but exceptional.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My most influential mentor was the first manager I reported to at PAETEC. Her name was Noelle Bulka. She was probably the most passionate manager I know. She was a great leader. And by that, I mean that she got to know each one of her employees and knew what motivated them. The same with customers; she got to know them and got to know their needs in depth. She took leadership to the point where many leaders aspire to go but never really reach—that place where they gain real understanding of what makes people tick and how to motivate and drive them. I model a lot of my management style on her.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is critical. Women don't have enough leaders and mentors to look to as good examples. We don't lead in the same style that men do typically. That's why it's so important to be able to work with other women and learn the techniques that have helped them advance their careers and skill sets.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

I would say Melinda Gates. She helped build Microsoft. And over the years she's really stayed true to her own kind of ethical makeup. It's important to her to bring other women up in the industry. She's also not focused on acquiring things. Her goal now is about lifting up other people throughout the world. I also think Jacinda Ardern, the prime minister of New Zealand, is amazing. She had a baby and she's leading the country! And she's not leading using the same playbook that male leaders use.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

I have a team full of females right now, and I always tell them you must be true to yourself. Plus — and this is applicable to any career not just tech — your greatest strength is going to be your ability to communicate effectively. Don't be afraid to communicate assertively — which is not to be mistaken for the "B" word! It's important that we not reduce our behaviors to a negative slur. I also advise everyone, not just women, to step back and take stock of what you've accomplished in your career in the last six months. Don't just look at your performance metrics, but at projects and things that you've done outside of those parameters. Build a story of what you've worked on in the last six months, because those things really help you assess your strengths and weaknesses. Otherwise, you lose sight of it all.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I think it's going to be a combination of two things. First, women have to lift each other up constantly. We must build and support each other and not focus on tearing each other down in our climb upwards. Second, we have to work at getting our male counterparts in the workforce to understand the challenges that we go through. That is inclusive of some of the other diversity initiatives that we engage in. It's about telling our story and getting people to understand where we are coming from, what our background is, and what kind of skills we bring to the table. Men don't communicate the same way women do. And that doesn't mean that we're weaker or less skilled. It's just different.

BIO

Laura Silivestro is a success-driven manager with 20+ years of experience in delivering operations performance innovation, designing, and launching strategic plans across multiple departments, and developing customer-centric solutions and employee workflow resolutions that ensure satisfaction and retention. My expertise includes implementation of new systems, processes and tools that enhance workflows and ordering/ticketing management systems. My goal is to always achieve optimal daily operations that promote business growth and integrity while ensuring customer satisfaction and organizational profitability.



TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Linda Jeffries

Vice President of Operations
[Bluewave Technology Group](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I started in the 90s with the wireless division at Comcast Metrophone and then migrated to the wireline sector with various carriers and vendors. Telecom services have become more and more complex with hundreds of service providers. Our team provides a bird's eye view to our clients for all of their solutions which informs their strategic decisions and budgets. I love helping clients make informed decisions. It is very fulfilling to lead a group of people who positively impact our clients' business goals.

I strive to be an inspirational leader for my team and Bluewave by demonstrating integrity, teamwork, and a high degree of communication. I like to be the first person to praise my team and others for a job well done while also giving immediate feedback so that we can all improve together.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I am on this 20+ year career path because of my passion for telecom and collaboration. It is essential to have contagious and positive energy when working with clients and partners. Growing and nurturing relationships are a big part of who I am. A highly engaged team means clients know we care, and the team knows they are adding value. Now that most people are remote, I believe coaching, enhancing individual communication skills, and genuinely caring about each other are front and center to personal well-being and the team's success. Outside of work, I love international travel. I enjoy going to wineries, and I am a devoted wife and mother with two grandchildren and one on the way. I also have a love of interior design and refinishing furniture. Enjoying my life outside of work makes me a better leader.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I was truly fortunate to have my first mentor and manager at Comcast Metrophone when I started my telecom career. He was inclusive, encouraged women in technology to grow, and provided equal pay based on education, drive, and willingness to learn. He genuinely cared about people and listened. His work ethic and loyalty were beyond measure, and he led by example. He allowed me to grow, and his actions always followed his words.

One memory stands out to me that shows he was not only a wonderful mentor but just a great person who believed in his employees. While I was going through a divorce and raising my toddler, he gave me a promotion. I will never forget that act as it helped me tremendously and he did not see my situation as a risk. He told me I deserved it [which I did!]. He also encouraged me to work across other departments to learn other functional areas. As a result, I grew professionally and hired people to support our growing company. He continued to help support me from afar once I moved on to other opportunities. I like to provide those growth experiences and opportunities for my team.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

I strongly support and promote all women and their professional development in the technology and telecom industries. I have mentored and encouraged many women over the years to push for more and show up with hard work and dedication. All women can attain their goals with the right mentors, great opportunities, and encouragement. I believe in equality in the workplace and have advocated for women to advance their careers. As a woman leader in my company, I hope to create opportunities for my team and encourage women to break the barriers.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

I have admired many women in society over the years, but some stand out, such as Katherine Johnson, a Black woman mathematician at NASA. Katherine's mathematical calculations helped us orbit the earth in 1962 and calculated the precise trajectory that would land us on the moon in 1969. To have both achievements in a lifetime is remarkable. Her quote about teamwork says it best: "I certainly never expected any glory. I was doing the job I was hired to do. ... I was always proud of my work, but for Pete's sake, I didn't do anything alone."

Also, I have admired Maya Angelou, a famous American author, poet, and civil rights activist. Her famous quote about thriving is words to live by: "My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style."

These quotes are my guideposts for the work I do for my company, my team, and my family.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

I would encourage women to be their advocates and follow those they admire, set good examples for themselves, and find a mentor that will boost their growth and pursuit in technology. Never stop learning. Talk to everyone you meet. Don't be intimidated. Collaborate with team members and be a team player. Have an unprecedented work ethic, and go above and beyond to show your dedication and passion for what you do. I have also found that clear and concise communication and knowing your audience are critical.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Though strides have been made, the industry still has a gender pay gap and glass ceiling. Unfortunately, through the years, I experienced that men can develop into a role, whereas women have to demonstrate achievement before being considered. I have seen women take on more responsibilities with less pay and less respect. As with any role, the best person for the job should be considered based on their skill set and has nothing to do with gender, race, religion, or political affiliations. We need to work together to create inclusivity and a supportive environment.

BIO

At Bluewave, Linda oversees the technology lifecycle management teams, including telecom expense management, wireless expense management, technology assessments, and provisioning/implementation departments. In addition, she maintains revenue responsibility for the entire operations department to meet company goals and results. With more than 20 years of experience, she has helped clients with carrier contract negotiations, cost comparisons, and optimization. At Bluewave, her focus is on creating an excellent client experience, optimizing client technology spending, and ensuring a smooth transition for clients when adding or upgrading service installations.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- I have been involved with AOTMP and have participated in AOTMP Fixed & Mobile Telecom Management Conferences. I look forward to being more involved with AOTMP in the future. I have also been engaged with Enterprise Technology Management Association over the years.

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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Marisa Viveros

VP, Global Telecommunications Industry

[IBM](#)



CAREER CHOICES

My choice of a career in technology was the result from a combination of personal evolution, the inspiring advancement of information technology, and a knack for math and science. As it is said, “being in the right place, at the right time” leads to challenging opportunities, and that was my personal experience. Initially, I was motivated to pursue engineering by my father and my brother who was already studying electrical engineering; they helped me in visualizing the role I could play. A bachelor’s degree in EE gave me the foundation to later pursue a graduate degree in computer science, followed by joining IBM Research, one of the largest industrial research institutions in the world. It was humbling to start my career by working alongside distinguished scientists and engineers in emerging technologies, on projects that had ambitious innovation goals and sought to have impactful results.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I’ve always had a passion for turning ideas and emerging technological advancements into solutions that address challenges and opportunities in the marketplace and society, whether that is creating new user experiences, accelerating the speed of computation, securing critical infrastructure, or maximizing the benefits of 5G networks, to mention just a few. I have been fortunate to be able to apply that passion throughout time in the different domains I have worked, leading to tangible innovations in areas such as parallel computing, mobile computing, cybersecurity, and now the effective deployment of telecommunication networks that are virtualized while getting value of 5G communication networks. As a technology professional, I feel I have been able to contribute towards meaningful advances in the fields.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

Throughout my career, I have been privileged to count on mentors and advisors that believed in my capabilities; even capabilities I had I not yet fully visualized. One of my mentors motivated me to go beyond my expected role and activities, made sure that I was publishing notable work, that I was filing ideas that later would become patents, that I pursued higher certifications to advance my position in the organization, while helping me cultivate relationships. Furthermore, technical executives sponsored my transition into an executive position. Those experiences influenced my career and helped me in becoming a mentor to others.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentoring, coaching, and sponsorship are very important to advance the careers of women in technology. Mentoring is about believing that a person has the capabilities to succeed, and about providing the guidance and support that can help a person achieve such success, specially by those in higher positions. I was fortunate to have managers in IBM Research who also acted as mentors and supported my career advancement with opportunities in new domains and with higher responsibilities.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

I began my career at IBM Research, where I had the opportunity to interact with Fran Allan, among other successful technical leaders. Fran was a computer scientist and a pioneer in the field of optimizing compilers for parallel computers. She was the first woman to become an IBM Fellow and the first woman to win the Turing Award, just to name a few of her many accolades. Most importantly, she served as a role model for many women in computer science. She was very inspiring to me, as a person and as a technical leader. I have also had the pleasure to work alongside female technical executives in creating and promoting programs for the advancement of women in technology, learning from them on how to secure sponsorship from senior leadership and how to develop graduate programs and training for women. These have been highlights in my career growth throughout the years.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

The advice I have for other women in the tech industry or considering a job in tech is to be disciplined, be curious, be persistent, and never give up. Pursuing a career in technology requires long hours of studying math and science, which are the fundamentals to technology. At times, these fields may seem overly complex or overwhelming, yet the concepts from these fields provide the principles and structured thinking process needed to analyze difficult problems and devise solutions for them. In addition, curiosity, and desire to continuously learn are fundamental in a field that is constantly evolving, as it is the case with technology.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

The greatest challenge is getting young women to be interested in math, science, and technology, while encouraging and supporting them to remain interested and persist in the field despite the challenges that may arise in their path to success. In the workplace, I believe it is important to provide the opportunities and access to projects and positions where women can develop themselves to their highest potential and demonstrate their contributions.

BIO

Marisa Viveros is the vice president of strategy and offerings for telco at IBM. She's held leadership roles at IBM the past twelve years, and she has been a speaker at key industry events including Mobile World Congress and Open Networking and Edge Summit. Marisa is a member of the IBM Industry Academy, the Linux Foundation Networking Governing Board, the Advisory Board for TM Forum Open Digital Framework.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- Marisa has been recognized in HITEC Top 100 as among the most influential and notable Hispanic Professionals in the IT Industry in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Nicola Whiting

Vice President/GM

[Calero-MDSL](#)



CAREER CHOICES

Technology has always been an area of interest for me from a problem-solving perspective. Technology enables us every day to solve mission-critical problems and I've always been intrigued by the process. Telecom and billing stuck with me because there is madness in the math, leaving much to be resolved.

Technology empowers us (Calero-MDSL) to make real differences to customers – the decisions they make and technology they use daily can solve their own unique problems with the technology we've made available. Our job is to combine our technology to solve issues as quickly, efficiently, and accurately as possible.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I am a problem solver. That basically encapsulates everything about me. I like to use technology to solve problems, remove manual process, and increase automation.

I love to look at problems from a different perspective, and technology allows me to be creative. As tech is always evolving, I've learned that I enjoy the challenge.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

A previous boss of mine taught me many lessons, one of the most important being how to manage upwards. Together we created an environment of striving to learn, and through their support they helped me instill skills in myself that I didn't have before. This managing up skill came as a direct result and pushed me onto a journey of continuous growth.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is massively important. There are not enough women in technology. It's a part of the business world that's perceived as difficult to get into for women because of how male dominated the field is. For me personally, I prioritize instilling the skills I've learned (managing upwards for example) through my experiences as a woman in tech to my team and organization.

I'm a big believer in the concept of unintentional reputation. It's something I work on with all members of my team – the idea of not placing individuals into buckets of assumptions.

I've never had a woman boss/supervisor. Now, I supervise and lead a team of six men and six women. I'm beginning to see more equality and representation as I continue my career.

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

When I think about advocates for diversity, especially in the technology business, my mind immediately goes to Kris Sleeper (VP, Human Resources - Calero-MDSL). Kris spearheaded a new, internal committee focused on diversity and inclusion to help bring awareness to issues and create an environment for employees to open up the discussion. The work this group has done has proved Kris is leading the charge for diversity at Calero-MDSL, the technology industry, and beyond.

Additionally, I find inspiration and admiration for our women technology leaders in our customers' organizations. These include immensely large enterprises and some extremely dedicated women that are trailblazing in their own right.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

Be unapologetic, and even more so, unapologetically yourself.

Ask questions - find your need to understand the "WHY".

Make it a point to learn more about the decisions that your company makes and challenge them when you disagree or have additional thoughts.

Find the people you want to make heroes at your organization. I believe as a technology leader, that's a core part of my role.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

One challenge that I've seen is the fact that we just don't see women in leadership roles in the technology field. The majority of applicants I see for leadership roles are men. If you have 10 men and 1 woman applying for the same leadership role, the chances of a man getting that job are naturally higher knowing the ratio isn't equal. I've seen that many women don't always feel comfortable putting themselves out there when it comes to their work. In many cases I've seen, there is a lack of confidence or hesitation that they aren't in the right place – even when the experience and qualifications meet or exceed the role. Women have struggled with being unapologetic and being themselves out of fear that they will not genuinely be considered. This absolutely needs to change, and this again starts with finding heroes in your organization and encouraging each other to have faith in ourselves.

BIO

Nicola Whiting, vice president of operations at Calero-MDSL, has worked in the telecom and technology field for over 25 years.



TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Randi Potter

SVP, Director of Technology & Business Systems

[Busey Bank](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I did not select it, it found me. I received my B.S. in Technical Project Management and worked as an accounting manager while completing my MBA. During that time, the company I worked for was acquired by an offshore BPO, and I had the opportunity to leverage my project management skills through the decoupling of my former employer. I obtained my Six Sigma Black Belt certification through the process, which allowed me to land a role with a new employer as a business process manager, responsible for building a team to focus on technology and processes. The BPM role served as a launchpad into my career within technology.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I enjoy being a problem solver, and I'm pretty good at it. I am passionate about helping others. That may be driving change through my direct and indirect organization or assisting a team member to achieve their career objectives. Breaking down complex challenges and implementing technology to resolve is what I enjoy most about my job.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I am fortunate to have had several mentors throughout my career, and all were perfectly timed throughout my growth. Each mentor provided support and guidance on overcoming current challenges while planning for my future and implementing small steps to allow me to take on more.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is essential throughout everyone's career growth. While I did not have a female mentor within the technology field, I did have female mentors who were very successful in male-dominated fields. Having them in my corner to support my growth and bounce ideas off was career changing. Understanding their paths and watching how they approached situations was truly inspiring, and I hope I can continue to pay it forward.

ADMIRE LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

I admire all successful women because I know they all carry their own inspirational stories of success.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

We need to continue developing support programs to encourage women to seek opportunities within the technology industry. Provide education on career paths within the technology field to create transparency around opportunities, and drive the message that not all positions require a technology background or programming experience.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Go for it! You'll often find that the only person holding you back is yourself. Choose what you want to do and create a plan to get there. Build a strong support system to get you there and know that it's perfectly fine to change your plan along the way. I'm 20 years into my career, and I still don't know what I want to do when I grow up.

BIO

Randi is the Senior Vice President of Technology and Business Systems for Busey Bank, a \$12.8B financial institution headquartered in Champaign, IL. She leads a team of over 50 associates focused on driving innovation, optimization, and digitalization of Busey's systems and infrastructure.

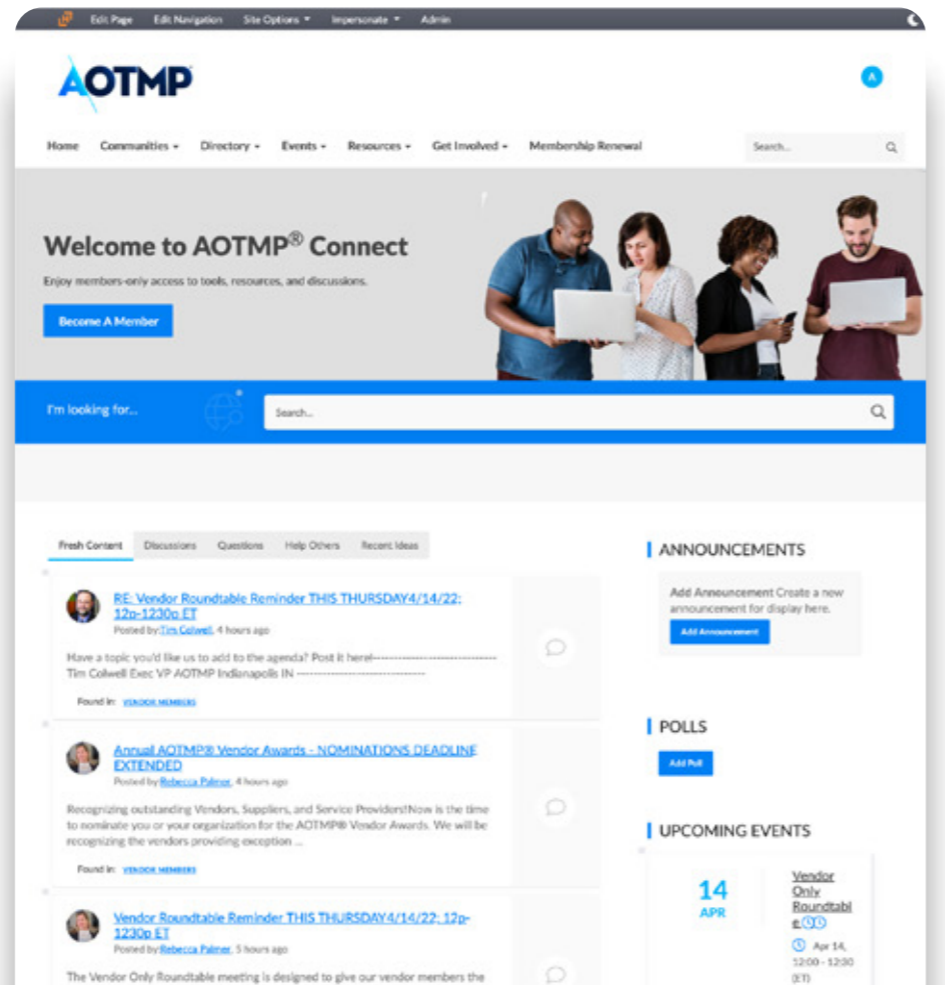
ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Sangeeta Krishnan

Data Solutions Lead

[Daugherty Business Solutions](#)



CAREER CHOICES

Right from my school years I had a passion for math and solving problems. I got my own home computer at an early age and got interested in coding which resulted me in getting my major in computer science. Technology is innovative and evolving at rapid speeds and can be used for the betterment of society. During Covid, data was used in every possible way to know things from when schools can be opened to how much vaccine is available. Without enormous progress in technology leading to close to real time analytics, none of these would have been a possibility. Working in an area using my analytical mindset to help solve problems led me to select technology as a career.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

My passion is building better technology solutions and driving adoption. Many times, solutions are built, but no one uses them as there is not enough understanding of what they do, or a solution is way too complex to follow along. My passion is to simplify and help people become comfortable with using technology. I like the knowledge sharing aspect, hence writing my first data book to help people understand the ins and outs of working in data technology. People struggle with not knowing where to start, and I like to help people enter the technology field and mentor them to see the benefits of working in technology. I like data visualization and data storytelling; both are such needed skills to help people get comfortable with enormous technology advancements in today's world.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

I had the opportunity to work with several mentors or managers, and it's tough to narrow it down to one. The most common belief is people who code are introverts, focused, and people shy. My mentors helped me to get out of that comfort zone, taught me how to run effective meetings and present confidently in front large

audiences. This help in my initial years shaping me to become a public speaker and able to communicate technology to audiences of varied experiences. In addition, mentors also helped me to navigate the company culture better. No matter where you work, it is important to know the company's culture which helps work better and collaborate as a team. This is valuable knowledge which is impossible to gain without mentors' valued experiences.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

There is only so much technical knowledge books can supply to help gain expertise. There is the people side of things, and that can be learnt only with the help of mentorship. Mentorship programs for women are extremely critical as the path of women in technology has several nuances which can be navigated only by tapping into other women's journeys and improving the process. Women mentorship programs help with identifying skill gap evaluation and ongoing support needed to succeed. This helps women making the same mistakes to try a different viable method. Leadership is something that needs to be groomed and developed in addition to natural instincts, which is what mentorship programs provide.

ADMIRER LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

There are few like Sheryl Sandberg, Indra Nooyi, and Eileen McDonnell.

They are all unique and exceptional in their own style of leading, bringing new ideas, pushing the gender barrier further. Being a woman in technology leadership is tough by itself but being a single mom and a leader is an exceptional achievement which deserves kudos. The judging act of balance these women have between professional and personal lives and never giving up is what I admire the most. Single mothers in executive leadership is an area least discussed and the most challenging.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

In technology, things change very fast, hence the importance of embracing agility to learn new things frequently. Also be careful to fight the shiny object syndrome, to chase every new thing thereby losing focus. It is very easy to get carried away with temptation to learn every new thing, but always evaluate with 1. Is learning this going to create new opportunity or improve existing process, and 2. Will I be able to practice what I learnt immediately, or I will I forget it before I can use it. Finding a balance of how you spend your time to learn the things that matter the most determines your sustainable success.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I see flexibility, career advancement opportunities and travel expectations as the biggest challenges to women’s advancement in technology. The more senior a woman becomes, opportunities to grow somehow evaporate due to less flexibility or expectations of frequent travels. With video conferencing and virtual collaborative tool options, eliminating these barriers will help to put more women in leadership.

BIO

Sangeeta brings diverse experience in business intelligence and analytics, and software development from a variety of industries – including specialty pharma, healthcare, supply chain, insurance, and billing. She joined Daugherty Business Solutions as a data solutions lead. She has worked with Fortune 500 organizations, not-for-profits, and everything in between. She is passionate about creating better data products and currently writing her first data book to be published in fall 2022. She is an engaging business intelligence and analytics leader possessing a winning blend of subject matter expertise, skill in team leadership, and practical experience.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

Sangeeta was recognized as a Finalist of the Women in IT Awards 2018 (USA) in the Data Leader of the Year category. Several others highlighted in her LinkedIn profile.

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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Tanya Rivers

Senior Technical Analyst

[King & Spalding](#)



CAREER CHOICES

My introduction to IT was not my first option as a career. I was absolutely interested in cutting edge technology, but it was quite foreign to me as to where I would fit in. It was my father who encouraged me to take a class to gain some insight into setting up local area networks. That initial introduction was overwhelming, as I was one of a few women in a predominantly male class. It sparked a competitive spirit in me to show that I was just as entitled to be there as were my counterparts. I quickly became interested in computer languages such as UNIX and Linux. At the time of my training, Novell Groupwise and Zen Works were the preferred networks that I was able to easily comprehend and interpret to those who did not have a firm grasp on the concepts. This was my entry into the world of IT.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

As applications and systems rapidly change, there has to be someone who can stay ahead of the curve to assist those who are thrust into new technologies. I find that people have a fear of the unknown and only want to know enough to perform their job or personal tasks. That behavior is akin to leaving money on the table. This is what drives me to educate my client when they have engaged my services for assistance. I tend to under promise and over deliver. My stance is to show the client that I am attentive to their needs and will give them the more than expected. By understanding the problem, researching the root cause and sharing that with not only the client, but also my colleagues, I foster a better experience in eradicating the offending behavior. At the end of the day, it's about keeping the stability of the environment in place for better productivity.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My most influential mentor is a phenomenal woman by the name of Margaret Ross. It was the first time I saw an African American woman at the head of a project management team who was extremely poised, polished and very

particular. Previously, in my first encounter with Ms. Ross, I worked under the guidance of men. She brought a different type of energy to the role, as she was skilled at building steadfast, inspired groups, establishing a workspace that supported innovativeness and advancement, and who can stop to defuse conflict and keep it from derailing a project. Of course she had her share of naysayers, but it was difficult to distinguish who they were because of the personal interest she took in her team. She made it extremely difficult for someone to blatantly ostracize her or her directives by way of team venting. I learned from her how to navigate around many of the pitfalls along the way in this career. She has taught me to have confidence and competence in this and any field that I would venture into.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Mentorship is extremely important for the advancing of women in these roles because they need the knowledge of other women who blazed the trail ahead of them. Those pioneers serve as a compass to keep you on the course of a charted trajectory. Many times, we may need honest feedback that is in our best interest, but is not always the advice we want to hear. A true mentor will not skirt the edges to spare your feelings if brutal honesty is required. Those moments of difficult conversations should be embraced as these are our trusted allies. They are in place to make us accountable for our actions, encourage our forward march in the face of challenge, and present connections that we may not encounter on our own. Mentorship is a resource that is a necessity and not to be confused as a mere colleague or acquaintance.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

A leader in the field of technology that I think of first is Valerie Thomas, who is the Former associate chief of NASA space science data operations. Her creation of Landsat, which is the primary satellite to send pictures from space, is still in use today. During the era in which she worked at NASA, women of African American descent were not looked upon favorably. She still continued to excel under adverse conditions and rose to a rank far beyond the expectations of her peers.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

The advice that I offer girls who may want to pursue a career in a STEM field is to continue to be open to the vastness of what you can create or discover. This field is open to those who have dreams of the day they cure a common ailment or create a technology that transports the human body from one location to another via beams of light. The point is we need the dreamers with the big outrageous ideas, because those are the ones that breakthroughs are born from.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Although the number of women entering various divisions within IT has steadily grown in recent years, this field is still largely underrepresented. The steps that are currently being taken for equal pay are steps in the right direction. We now need the respect of our counterparts that we can excel in technology as they can and have.

BIO

Tanya Rivers is a computer analyst with 20 years of experience across several disciplines in IT including global video conferencing, offsite trial support, project management, network administration, mobile applications, and client support services. Tanya has also worked closely with vendors such as Microsoft, Research in Motion and Crestron to enhance productivity and user experience. Tanya has received several awards for service excellence throughout her career. In her spare time, she has served as an EMT and the chief of operations for her local volunteer ambulance corp.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- International Legal Technology Association City VP Microsoft Certified Professional
- iManage Certified Administrator
- National Association of Professional Women Proclamation from Governor Floyd Paterson
- Proclamation from Governor Andrew Cuomo
- Proclamation from New York State Assemblywoman Kimberly Jean-Pierre
- Proclamation from Town of Babylon Supervisor, Rich Schaffer

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TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Theresa Park

Lead of Solution Services
[Samsung SDS America, Inc.](#)



CAREER CHOICES

I started my career in technology as part-time business support for Samsung Networks. I never thought I'd pursue my career in the technology industry since I didn't study engineering or computer science in school. As I worked with the technology company, I realized that there are so many opportunities in this industry beyond engineering and computer science. As technology is a significant part of modern-day life, it requires diverse talents and experiences. And it continues to evolve and change. Fast. I love that the opportunities and challenges are limitless here.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I hope my passion is as grand as changing the world, but I'm content with being able to enhance someone's a small part of daily life. If my products can put a smile on someone's face by providing convenience to finish work early to enjoy more in life, that would be a priceless reward for my time and efforts.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My most influential mentor is Emily Oh. She was my first manager when I started my career in technology. She is a skillful technical engineer, a great leader, a loving mother of two girls, and a royal friend. Working with her closely for 10 years, I learned so much about how to balance your career and life. And it is possible to have both worlds. I admired how she gave her best in every role she played in her life and was able to find happiness in her everyday life.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Women's mentorship in technology is needed to encourage more women in the industry. It is still true that we have more men in the technology industry today. It is essential to create a support system to encourage more women to apply for the field. We need networks to share and encourage each other that we are not alone. When we all work together, we can reduce the gender gaps today and create a better future workplace for the next generations. "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" – Martin Luther King Jr.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Allie Miller is one of the women leaders I admire most. She was the youngest woman to build an artificial intelligence product at IBM, and she continues to contribute to the development of machine learnings through the greatest AI companies in the world.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

People often think of computer science or engineering fields to associate with a career in technology, but that is only the tip of the iceberg. The technology industry requires diverse skills and contributions beyond R&D. It requires a business analysis to understand the market trends and requirements, a finance expert to analyze the profitability of the productions, and a designer to engage or enhance user experiences to increase productivity. So, if you are interested in a career in technology, I'd say go for it. Possibilities are endless on how you can grow your talent and contribute your skills.

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

I believe the greatest challenge in leading the next generation of women in tech is to increase awareness of the gender gap that exists in the technology industry. We need more women in IT to influence the next generation of women. Creating gender equity is not a task just for women, but it requires changes as a community.

BIO

Theresa Park is the lead of the solution services at Samsung SDS America, focusing on enterprise innovation solutions that can optimize processes and enhance user experiences. During her 16 years at Samsung, Theresa implemented an all-inclusive managed mobility program to efficiently manage and support mobility asset management services in alignment with Samsung's growth in the mobility world. Theresa continues to develop and productize enterprise solutions to meet the latest technology trends and requirements.



TECHNOLOGY LEADER PROFILE

Tiffany Thompson

Sr. Director, Infrastructure Portfolio Delivery
[Southern Glazers Wine & Spirits](#)

CAREER CHOICES

I am responsible for delivery of network, telephony, information security, end user computing and platforms projects.

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS & DRIVE

I love change. It can be very hard for others to adapt to change, and my comfort with being uncomfortable helps me find purpose in all that I do delivering new technologies.

MENTORS & INFLUENCERS

My most influential mentor has been hard on me when I needed a nudge and supportive when I needed a pat on the back. To me, this honesty and unconditional support has been such a gift through the ups and downs within my career. Having her as a cheerleader, always in my corner creates so much comfort for me should I ever need a sounding board. I try to emulate this exact behavior in those that I mentor and hope I am leaving a similar lasting mark on their careers.

MENTORSHIP VALUE

Without the mentorship of other female technologists, I would have never envisioned the opportunities I have already experienced in my career. The perceived glass ceiling gets higher and higher the more I surround myself with talented, courageous women in this industry. This inspiration drives me to always try to achieve more for myself and my team, and I hope I am able to create the same level of inspiration for others.

ADMIRED LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS

I am very privileged to work for one of few women CIOs in the packaged goods industry, Ann Dozier. Having this direct role model is an amazing opportunity for all women working within this team to witness firsthand best practice in relationship management, technology innovation, and personal growth. Ann's ability to continue to inspire and grow her team never ceases to amaze me and creates the vision for the leader I wish to be someday.

ADVANCING GENDER PARITY

I encourage every girl and women to own their own career. Identify where you want to go, how you can get there, and who the people are that can help you accomplish your plans. Once you have this laid out, it is on YOU to make it happen. Make the introductions to those who can help you get there, those that have already been there, and those who you want to learn from. People love to talk about themselves and their success. Creating and building the relationships with these people (men and women) will help you on your journey to the next step in your career even if it is to learn what you don't want to do or how to do it. No new experience, relationship, or role is bad. See every new opportunity as a way to grow, and if your personal development plan isn't working, change things up. Keep changing, learning and growing!

LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION

Women need to raise up other women. So frequently I see a competitiveness between women in technologies always vying for the same next promotion or opportunity. Supporting each other doesn't remove opportunities from YOU, it opens doors for YOU for even more opportunities. The "Queen Bee" mentality doesn't help grow the number of women in technology or technology leadership roles. Women are simply stronger together!

BIO

As a self-proclaimed technology-evangelist, I love solving business problems with the right technology married with the needed processes. Having an opportunity to do exactly this day in and day out in the beverage alcohol industry is a true privilege and gives me the opportunity to be on the forefront of delivery for new technologies supporting one of the largest packaged goods sales forces and distribution networks around.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

- SAFe Agile

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



There is always something happening at AOTMP®, which means there is always a way to get involved with your peers and other professionals around the industry.

2022

MONTHLY 2nd Thurs.	Vendor Member Roundtable 12pm - 12:30pm ET
MONTHLY 3rd Thurs.	Enterprise Member Roundtable 12pm - 12:30pm ET
JULY 21	Online Member Meeting 11am - 1pm ET
JULY 27 - 28	Industry Solutions Showcase 11am - 5pm ET Daily
OCTOBER 20	Member Meeting TBD

2023

MONTHLY 2nd Thurs.	Vendor Member Roundtable 12pm - 12:30pm ET
MONTHLY 3rd Thurs.	Enterprise Member Roundtable 12pm - 12:30pm ET
JANUARY 19	Online Member Meeting 11am - 1pm ET
APRIL 30 - MAY 4	AOTMP® Engage 2023 8am - 9pm ET Daily
MAY 4	Live Member Meeting 8am - 5pm ET
JULY	Industry Solutions Showcase 11am - 5pm ET
JULY 20	Online Member Meeting 11am - 1pm ET
OCTOBER 19	Member Meeting 11am - 1pm ET

To view our most up-to-date event schedule, visit the AOTMP® Event Website.

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