

# WOMAN IN TECH

M A G A Z I N E

 **Carrier  
Community**  
GLOBAL TELECOM CLUB

ISSUE 03, SUMMER/FALL 2022

## BEING THERE FIRST

How the women at iBASIS  
are paving the path  
for innovation, change,  
and the next generation.



**iBASIS**  
BE THERE FIRST



# GIVING FULL CONTROL OF SMS BACK TO MNOs

## PROTECT & MONETIZE

### STAYING RELEVANT

SMS remains the most ubiquitous communication channel regardless of your data connection or lack of one, your roaming status while traveling, or whether you have an old feature phone or a smartphone. The universal features and affordability of SMS are what makes it a reliable communication tool for government, hospitals, schools, enterprises, and brands to effectively reach a wide range of subscribers despite the emergence of various OTT channels in the market.

### INSPIRING TRUST

MNOs recognize the importance of their role as a **credible gateway of messaging** to reach end users. Trust of subscribers is paramount to MNOs.

Fraudulent activities such as spam, phishing, spoofing and scam are rampant everywhere and SMS as a channel hasn't been spared. Fraud-related SMS messages are able to pass through MNO networks because bad actors can bypass and abuse routes from multiple entry points (e.g., international, domestic, SMPP, and SIM farms). Subscribers—especially those who are not tech savvy—are vulnerable to these possible fraud attacks.

### END-TO-END PROTECTION FOR EFFECTIVE MONETIZATION

The need for securing and protecting MNOs' networks is more crucial now than ever. SMS Firewalls are available in the market to protect the network from frauds including grey routes, which are channels being used by some aggregators to make bigger profits by abusing the vulnerability of mobile phone networks. **Choosing the right firewall provider is key to MNO's success in protecting against frauds.** The right partner not only provides cutting edge SMS Firewall technology, but also has the market knowledge and expertise of A2P SMS to deliver a full managed services option that will allow MNOs to effectively monetize to its full potential the addressable A2P revenue. Partnering with a neutral provider is also important to guarantee MNOs' best interests.

According to Mobilesquared, there was an estimated worth of **USD \$3.64B in lost income of MNOs in 2021** from A2P events via SMS channel due to grey routes. This number represents 16% of the total potential A2P SMS income of MNOs. SMS attacks increased in 2021 by an average of 30% according to 55% of MNO respondents in ROCCO's SMS Firewall Vendor Benchmarking Report 2022.

iBASIS offers a **comprehensive A2P messaging monetization solution** with a Tier-1 Independent Firewall technology partner inclusive of full managed services and a 3rd party firewall efficiency test that provides an extra layer of firewall evaluation.

### ABOUT iBASIS

iBASIS is the leading communications solutions provider enabling operators and digital players worldwide to perform and transform. Powered by Tofane Global, iBASIS is the first independent communications specialist, ranking third largest global wholesale voice operator, Top 3 LTE IPX vendor with 700+ LTE destinations, and a leading Carrier Cloud Communications player and IoT solution provider. iBASIS provides the end-to-end Global Access for Things™ connectivity solution, delivering single source cellular IoT access (LTE, LTE-M, and NB-IoT) worldwide provisioned through GSMA-standard eSIM/eUICC technology. iBASIS today serves 1,000+ customers across 18 offices worldwide.

The iBASIS SMS A2P comprehensive solution helps MNOs to effectively maximize messaging revenue and improve subscriber security. The solution includes managed services which constantly monitor traffic and identify new revenue opportunities. It leverages Next Generation Tier-1 SMS firewall technology, categorization filter, traffic insights to provide MNOs with differentiated pricing schemes, and monetization strategies.

For more information, please visit [iBASIS.com](https://ibasis.com) or contact Ricardo Martins, VP Global Messaging [rmartins@ibasis.net](mailto:rmartins@ibasis.net)



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**50+** countries directly connected

**100+** interconnects globally

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**20+** subsea cable investments

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## EDITOR'S LETTER



Dear Readers, I would like to warmly welcome you to this new Summer/Autumn 2022 edition of *Woman in Tech Magazine*. A year has passed since we launched our first issue, a year full of changes, innovations, and most importantly progress: Today, as of 2022, women hold 26.7% of technology jobs. Although by a very small percentage, the number of women in the tech industry constantly is increasing, and that makes me hopeful about what's next to come.

Moreover, 50% of the youngest world's generation—Gen Alpha girls aged 12-15 believe they can do any job they want to. Although there's another 50% that need to learn they can, too, as I always say, progress is what matters.

I am truly proud to see this ongoing evolution and to be witnessing various initiatives supporting women in getting out there and taking leaps towards their professional aspirations. In my wildest dreams, I envision next-generation women who are even bolder, braver and are celebrated for their ambition even more.

Meanwhile, back in June, we hosted our 6th annual CC-Global Awards 2022 (CCGA) with 320+ guests attending an exclusive event physically in Berlin, where Anne Morel, Senior Vice President Global Carrier Sales for Orange International Carriers was awarded as Telecommunication Woman of The Year. It was a true honor to take part in celebrating Anne's achievements within the Telco industry, which is also still, a male-dominated industry.

I would also like to highlight female role models in leadership positions within the industry like Keri Gilder, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at Colt and Marisa Trisolino,

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at CMC Networks, and Elisabetta Romano, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at Sparkle who continuously support Carrier Community's Woman in Tech initiative.

This new edition of *Woman in Tech Magazine* is sponsored by iBasis and promotes female leaders within their company. We are proud to feature iBasis female leaders on our cover and an inspiring article: *How the women at iBASIS are paving the path for innovation, change, and the next generation.*

And, while our Cover page features outstanding women and industry game-changers, I'm also proud to include insightful articles on a range of inspiring topics, such as:

- Mentoring Women in Tech
- The Role of Women in the Tech Industry Today and Tomorrow
- A Spotlight on Elevating ESG Programs in the Data Center Industry

...and many others.

All our articles have been provided by female leaders and industry experts from major global player companies like *Google, CMC Networks, Cloudscene, Stack Infrastructure, Enxoo, and Horisen*. And now, I'd like you to enjoy *Woman in Tech Magazine* and immerse yourselves in an empowering journey...

Wida Schmidt,

CEO of Carrier Community



### ABOUT CARRIER COMMUNITY

Carrier Community est. since 2008, is an exclusive global telecom club and industry media, branding and networking platform for wholesale telecom service providers, including Voice, Data, SMS, Mobile, Data centers, VAS, MVNO, ISP, Cable Subsea, Telehouse and other related sectors. Since its launch our telecom club has qualified more than 8500+ members, representing 2300+ operators from more than 130 countries. Our members occupy C-Level, VP, Director and Manager Positions at incumbent, mobile and alternative and small operators.

Carrier Community offers the industry a meeting place where members can share ideas, contacts and business information. Members have the possibility to connect with their peers, have access to latest industry news, publish articles and advertise their companies on the club publications, attend various members conferences globally and other benefits. Please visit different members portals to learn more.

[www.carriercommunity.com](http://www.carriercommunity.com)

To become a member of Carrier Community, please visit:  
[www.carriercommunity.com](http://www.carriercommunity.com)

To find out more about CC- Events around the world, please visit:  
<https://carriercommunity.com/cc-events-calendar/>

## How the women at iBASIS are paving the path for innovation, change, and the next generation.

Diversity is essential in a constantly evolving tech industry. It brings a range of perspectives, skills, and experiences that affect real change and make a true difference in the lives of people who rely on and use technology every day. Companies that embrace diversity and inclusion are proven to be more innovative, more attractive when hiring and retaining employees, and more profitable.

According to a recent Deloitte study, the number of women working in telecommunications and technology has increased by nearly 20% over the past five years. While encouraging, this trend presents an ideal opportunity to increase that number and tap into a new pool of talent, supported by a growing movement to promote equity in the workplace, and ensure that women have equal opportunities to succeed.

iBASIS recognized and fostered Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) as a fundamental element of its DNA from its inception 25 years ago. Today, and post its acquisition by Tofane Global in 2018, the women at iBASIS are leading the path and pushing boundaries across the playing field: innovation, technology, service excellence, and opening the technology world to the next generation of women.

“Here are the stories of women, from different countries and core functions, who have come together to share how their experiences helped them “be there first”—first to thrive, first to advance and reinvent careers, first to reach new heights—and how they’ve become the blueprint for change and success beyond origins and genders,” shares Alexandre Pébureau, CEO iBASIS.





# I. Keeping up with technology and complexity

## STAY THE COURSE

Integrating a series of acquisitions while bringing new technologies to market can be a daunting task. It can also be a tremendous opportunity to secure future success. In the case of investing in voice and systems development, iBASIS not only keeps up with market dynamics but also creates equity across the company.

Hailing from Portugal, India, the United States, and the United Kingdom, six women leveraged their IT and Business expertise to translate market requirements into IS developments. Taking on the challenge to automate and optimize vendor offers, customer rates, deals, Origin Based Rating (OBR), and Number Portability management platforms, they have been collaborating on a global voice system enhancement project over the course of 24 months through the pandemic.

Driving the value of the evolving iBASIS voice platform and systems, to managing international voice complexity and keeping up with market dynamics, are Isabel Antao, Voice Product Manager (Portugal), Rama Devi Pulakandam, Principal Business System Analyst (India), Prabha Gopal, Manager Analytics & Data Management (Massachusetts, USA), Ravit Erez, Director, IS Applications (California, USA), Samina Hussain, Director, Market Management (United Kingdom), and Manuela Simoes, Head of Business Operations (Portugal).

## WOMEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**Isabel Antao**  
Voice Product Manager  
(Portugal)



**Manuela Simoes**  
Head of Business  
Operations  
(Portugal)



**Rama Devi Pulakandam**  
Principal Business  
System Analyst  
(India)



**Prabha Gopal**  
Analytics & Data  
Management  
(USA)



**Ravit Erez**  
Director IS  
Applications (USA)



**Samina Hussain**  
Director Market  
Management (UK)

### What made you interested in the Telco/Tech industry?

VoIP was far outside my scope of knowledge as an English major. When I joined iBASIS 22 years ago, I found the technology both confusing and interesting. Learning something brand new while also being given the opportunity to contribute to a business destined to disrupt an entire industry was too exciting to pass up.

### Was gender inequality an issue in your work life, to progress in your career?

Gender inequality was not an issue, yet finding the balance between work life and family life was a challenge. I consider my career path a success even if I didn't take any managerial position, because I gained respect and credibility in an environment where women did not find their correct place yet in the Middle East region.

### What is the best leadership advice you would give to young women?

Listen to your colleagues' input and seek out opinions and ideas other than your own and learn from them. Embrace change in order to survive and grow. When you know your material, be fearless in your convictions and ideas for improvement.

### What's most important for you to foster a culture of diversity, gender equality, and inclusion?

Embracing diversity, gender equality, and inclusion helps us all to be better human beings. Listening, questioning, understanding, diverging, accepting it is easy if we are exposed to diversity. Gender equality is non-negotiable and a matter of human rights. Inclusion starts to be natural once our minds are open and human rights are seen as a basic pillar of our existence as human beings.

## II. Focusing inward to lead Customer First

### NURTURE TO LEAD

International telecom and digital businesses are intricate and complex. Customers require real-time support, and expect intelligence and monitoring that can anticipate issues, keep pace with changes, and ensure peak performance. They also rely on experts who can successfully assess and resolve incidents before business strategy is affected, assuring that forecasts are met and key revenue streams are maintained.

Mary Jane Horne, SVP of Network Operations & Engineering, Rachel Albert, Sr. Manager of Global Delivery and Deployment, and Leatha Bazillion, Director of Voice Products, all based in the United States, and Saritha Bellapu, Senior HR Manager & India Country Manager (India), collaborated to define iBASIS' customer service strategy and ensure its execution continues to meet the goals of the customer. Their joint efforts span the service chain from seamless carrier provisioning, to integrating product management guidance on best-in-class service, to operational excellence in issue resolution, resulting in industry-leading customer engagement and satisfaction.

In parallel to improvements in carrier onboarding and white glove handling of key customers, the team drove a paradigm shift in iBASIS approach to customer service with the recently launched India Center of Excellence. This transformed model of insourcing vs. outsourcing strengthens iBASIS' direct relationship with the customer and enables uncompromised control of the quality of resources and processes that serve customer needs.

### WOMEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**Leatha Bazillion**  
Director  
Voice Products  
(USA)



**Mary Jane Horne**  
SVP Network Operations  
& Engineering  
(USA)



**Rachel Albert**  
Sr. Manager Global  
Delivery and  
Deployment  
(USA)



**Saritha Bellapu**  
Senior HR Manager  
(India)

### WOMEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**Caroline Gow**  
Product Manager  
Messaging Services  
(UK)



**Maïssa Jamli**  
Senior Product  
Manager 5G  
(France)



**Patricia Martins**  
Business Development  
Roaming and IoT Advisor  
(Portugal)



**Vanesa Matamoros**  
Principal  
Innovation and Business  
Development (USA)

## III. Driving new solutions and innovation

### DESIGN THE FUTURE

There is a dearth of role models and mentors for women who want to enter software and engineering fields. iBASIS gathered a bright new wave of talented young women in product development in high-growth sectors such as messaging, IoT, and 5G.

They are innovating and enabling customers with new solutions, working tirelessly to identify and collaborate with new partners and new technologies. They strive to develop the right ecosystem to accelerate the learning curve and launch go-to-market strategies off the ground.

The powerful combination of Caroline Gow, Product Manager, Messaging Services (United Kingdom), Maïssa Jamli, Senior Product Manager, 5G (France), Patricia Martins, Business Development, Roaming and IoT Advisor (Portugal), and Vanesa Matamoros, Principal, Innovation and Business Development (United States) is preparing for the future with Messaging, IoT, and 5G, as well as the iBASIS Sandbox for R&D and MNOs interoperability and testing.



## IV. Enabling success across markets

### DRIVE THE CHANGE

As new technologies are developed and new markets emerge, adapting products and sales strategies becomes paramount. Delivering services to the 'traditional customer'—those with whom iBASIS has long standing relationships and whose patterns and rhythms are familiar—does not necessarily translate into efforts to expand into new markets and segments.

The need to focus on diversity becomes imperative when expanding into new segments like IoT SPs and CPaaS providers, and requires a sales force that is as diverse as they are. Connection is key to that understanding, and mobilizing local teams is essential to successful customization of strategies for these new demographics.

Six women impacted iBASIS' expansion globally into new segments like OTTs, CPaaS providers, and IoT SP by providing new solutions, technical, commercial, and truly, relational. Hakima Malek Atchi, Senior Director Maghreb & Mediterranean (France), Gretchen Fuster, Account Manager (United States), Salam Kallas Nader, Carrier Relation (Lebanon), Catherine Brighenti, Account manager, (United States), Michelle Hallinan, Senior Manager Commercial Services (Netherlands) and Valentina Dorogan, Account Manager (Ukraine) are succeeding at increasing cross selling, significantly increasing opportunities and bottom lines in new markets and segments.

### WOMEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**Catherine Brighenti**  
Account Manager  
(USA)



**Gretchen Fuster**  
Account Manager  
(USA)



**Hakima Malek Atchi**  
Sr. Director Maghreb  
& Mediterranean  
(France)



**Michelle Hallinan**  
Senior Manager  
Commercial Services  
(Netherlands)



**Salam Kallas Nader**  
Carrier Relations Manager  
(Lebanon)



**Valentina Dorogan**  
Account Manager  
Messaging Services  
(Ukraine)

### WOMEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**Celine Gregoire**  
EVP, Marketing and  
Voice Products  
(USA)



**Stephanie Raymond**  
Senior Marketing  
Associate  
(USA)



**Valerie Tartrou**  
Director, Marketing, Mobile  
and Value Added Services  
(France)

## V. Driving relevance, values, and change

### BE THE HUMAN FACTOR

Behind the reinvention of the iBASIS brand and the integration of six major acquisitions over the past four years is a room filled with women who think and execute through fresh, ambitious, and differentiated ideas. These concepts can only truly be inspired by meetings made up of multiple, cross-functional, diverse talents who share their individuality and backgrounds to collaborate toward a common goal.

With diversity at the core of all iBASIS strategic decisions, inclusion is the commitment of all stakeholders, working together in a dynamic of international growth. There is no better illustration of the power of inclusion in leadership roles than these game-changers, the women who have led the company's brand reputation and industry standing to some of its great successes.

Celine Gregoire, EVP, Marketing and Voice Products (United States), Valerie Tartrou, Director, Marketing Mobile and Value Added Services (France), and Stephanie Raymond, Senior Marketing Associate (United States), spearheaded the strategies that led to the launch of numerous new products in high growth sectors and the wins across 40+ global industry awards.

## Conclusion

While there is still a long way to go before equity is achieved, the women at iBASIS are helping to close the gender gap through both their professional and personal choices. By defining their roadmap, serving as mentors to the next generation of women in their field and building a network of support, knowledge sharing and goal-setting, they are charting new paths.

iBASIS is proving that anyone with the right attitude and skills can succeed and be a change agent.

As more women enter the tech fields, they create more opportunities for other women to follow in their footsteps.

Women are remapping the DNA of iBASIS in their own image. Their versatility, curiosity, and motivation are setting this team apart as they embrace the industry and introduce new advancements in technology to foster the future.



# iBASIS

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For more information,  
visit us at [www.iBASIS.com](http://www.iBASIS.com)



# CARRIER COMMUNITY(CC)



## ORGANIZES ITS 3RD HYBRID CC-TELCO INFRASTRUCTURE SUMMIT IN ROME

*Carrier Community collaborates with its strategic partner Sparkle and hosts the 3rd specialized hybrid CC-Telco Infrastructure Summit (TIS) 2022 event – physically in Rome and virtually via CC-Webinar.Live with 200+ delegates joining*

2<sup>nd</sup> September, Italy, Carrier Community (CC) to host its 3rd hybrid specialized CC-TIS 2022 event on the 14th and 15th of September at Parco dei Principi Grand Hotel & Spa – Rome, sponsored by Host Diamond Sponsor – Sparkle.

During this exclusive two-day event, leading industry members from Telco and ICT will come together to learn, shape the industry and discuss digital development, transformation, and current market trends. This hybrid event will be attended by 200+ global company delegates from various telecom sectors, including Data/ Capacity, Submarine, Content Providers, Technology Providers, Internet Exchanges (IX), Security, Datacentres, and Cloud. During the two-day event, exhibitors will also have a unique opportunity to share information about their services and promote their brands.

The specialized event is going to gather top telecom industry executives from global player

companies such as Sparkle, Google, Singtel, ASN, Fiber Telecom, Omantel, IslaLink, Telecall, HORISEN, Juniper Networks, Infinera, Cato Networks, Equinix, NewTelco GmbH and many others.

All event guests will have a chance to network, meet industry peers and form new valuable business partnerships as well as learn from the industry experts during Panel discussion sessions. 6 hybrid interactive Panel discussions will be focusing on the Wholesale Industry, Enterprise 5G & Cybersecurity, Internet Exchanges, Data Centers, Submarine Cables, ISPs and more.

Members and partners will be invited to network with peers throughout the event – including Registration-Morning Coffee Networking Reception, Networking Session during the Lunch and Coffee Breaks, and Official Evening Welcome Networking Reception with drinks and canapés at Giardino D'Inverno, Parco Dei Principi Grand Hotel & Spa - hosted by Sparkle.

Moreover, on the 14th of September members will be invited to join the Villa Borghese gardens guided City Walk Tour (Meeting point at 16.45 Parco Dei Principi Hotel entrance).

“I am still re-living incredible memories from our CC-TIS 2021 Rome event last year. I am thrilled to witness even more companies joining our specialized event this year. I would also like to say a special Thank you to the Host Diamond Sponsor of the event – Sparkle for bringing top industry experts together in one room, here in Rome, once again.”–

– said Wida Schmidt, CEO at CC

For upcoming GCCM events, please check our CC-Events Calendar: <https://carriercommunity.com/cc-events-calendar/>



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# C-LEVEL 2022 SUMMIT BAHAMAS 8TH-9TH DECEMBER

## CARRIER COMMUNITY COMMUNITY UNVEILS NEW TROPICAL DESTINATION FOR C-LEVEL SUMMIT

*The Bahamas C-Level Summit is the latest arrival in a year of new events and features for Carrier Community (CC) Members and Partners*

At the halfway point of a successful year once again hosting full capacity in-person events, CC is delighted to share the news on an all-new specialized event, the C-Level 2022 Summit Bahamas. First announced during the June CC-Days in Berlin last month, this new Carrier Community meeting point invites C-Level players and Executives to come together this December against the breathtaking backdrop of The Bahamas for an exclusive, leadership-oriented summit.

Taking place on the 8th and 9th of December and featuring automatic and complementary registration for CC-Leaders Club members, this event will offer attendees the opportunity to unwind, reflect on a busy year, and avail of productive discussions during the panel discussion,

topic: 'Digital Transformation in the Telecom Industry & Future Investment Opportunities', moderated by the Analyst Research House. CC-Leaders Club Members in attendance will further benefit from 3 nights complimentary stay at the event venue including complimentary breakfast and assistance with flight arrangements.

**"We have enjoyed a very successful year of events so far, and I have found that the only thing missing has been a greater opportunity for connection for our busiest members: The CEOs, Managing Directors, and C-Level Executives. Following the success of the C-Level**

**Lunch during our Berlin GCCM last month, I am certain that the C-Level 2022 Summit Bahamas will offer industry leaders the perfect opportunity to connect and exchange ideas in a rejuvenating setting" – Wida Schmidt, CEO at CC.**

To register your attendance for this event, please contact [info@carriercommunity.com](mailto:info@carriercommunity.com). Please accept this disclosure that CC reserves the right to deny access to the C-Level 2022 Summit Bahamas should your profile not match the position requirements for entry.

# WE ARE YOUR CPaaS ENABLER

**Sales-driven. Carrier-neutral. Built for messaging.**  
For messaging superheroes who create awesomeness with messaging.



# CARRIER COMMUNITY LAUNCHES THE CC-LEADERS CLUB

*Carrier Community (CC) unveiled the brand-new membership club exclusive to C-Levels and top executives during its June CC-Days in Berlin*

Ensuing the successful launch of its new website and networking platform, CC further shared the release of another exciting new feature to come late this year: The CC-Leaders Club, an exclusive forum for C-Levels and top executives from across the Telco sphere. With advantages tailored to the modern leader, the CC-Leaders Club offers benefits that maximize the effectiveness and utility of being a part of the global telecom club. These benefits include VIP access to another new CC feature, the annual C-Level Summit in The Bahamas, of which further details and news will be released very soon.

Targeted towards leaders seeking to enhance their presence in the industry and to take full advantage of all the media and event services Carrier Community has to offer, the CC-Leaders Club presents the following benefits:

- Complimentary VIP pass to the annual C-Level Summit in The Bahamas.
- Complimentary stay at the Summit event venue / 3 nights with breakfast.
- Assistance with flight arrangements.
- On-site assistance at the summit with business center access.
- 12 months free subscription to the CC-Global Media Content 9 Channels.
- 1 Executive Interview plus one GCCM Magazine Cover.
- Free Access to the Institute of Directors' (IOD) Lounges, London, UK.
- Complementary pass to the annual CC-Global Awards and Premium Lounge.
- Complementary pass to attend annual CC-events.
- Complimentary access to the annual C-Level Summit in Oman.

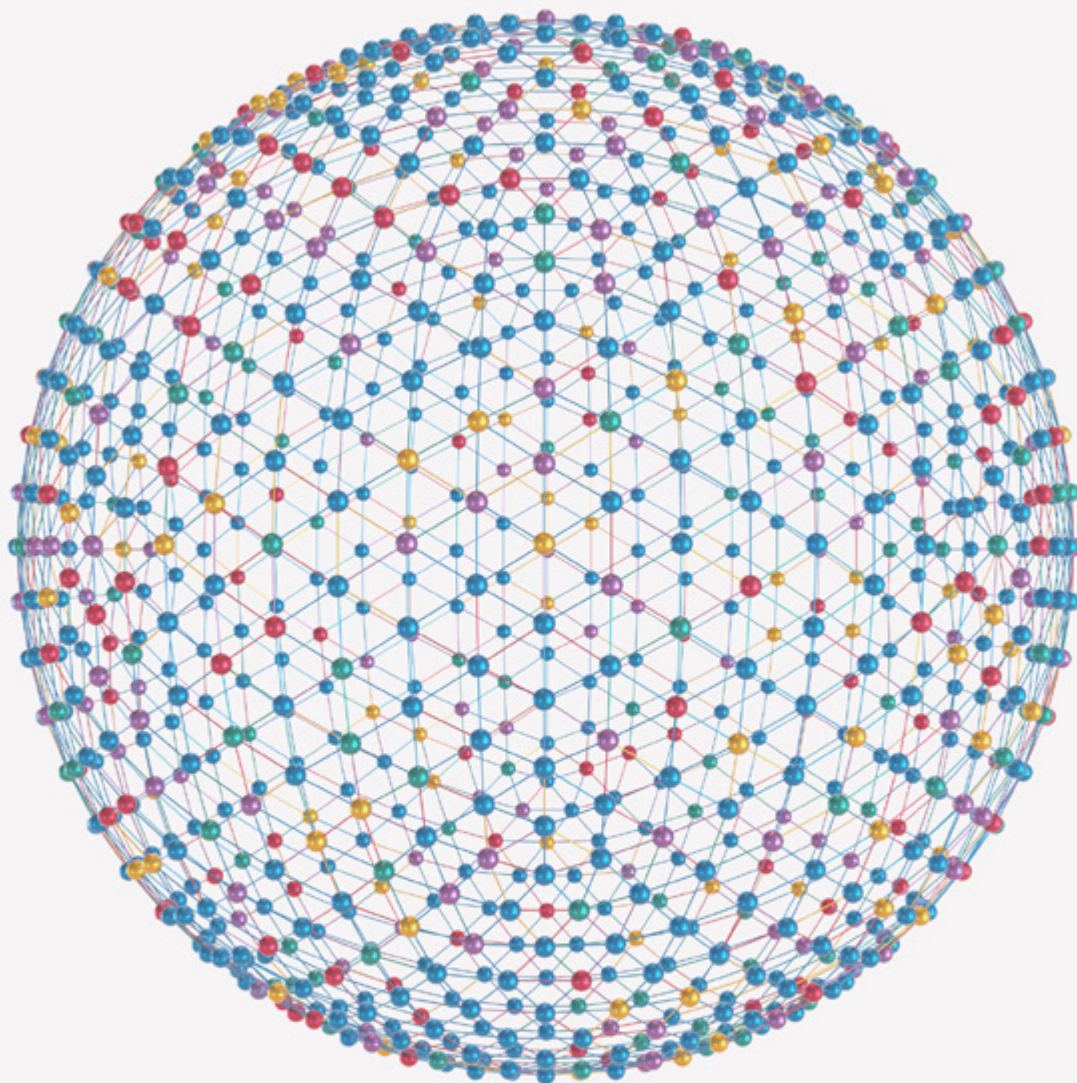
"My team and I are delighted to at last present the CC-Leaders Club. This

new feature is the result of a great deal of reflection of the wants and needs of the modern industry leader, and the framework of advantages it brings has been specifically tailored to the observations we made and the feedback we received from a trusted circle of industry experts. It's very exciting to finally have this opportunity to show our most loyal and involved members everything we have prepared so we can give back. I believe that this new, streamlined forum will offer our great industry leaders' podiums to be inspired and to inspire, and to connect on a more profound level with their esteemed peers" – Wida Schmidt, CEO at CC.

The CC-Leaders Club is now accepting new members. Please contact [membership@carriercommunity.com](mailto:membership@carriercommunity.com) to begin the application assessment process. Please accept this disclosure that CC reserves the right to deny access to The CC-Leaders Club should your profile not match the position requirements for entry.



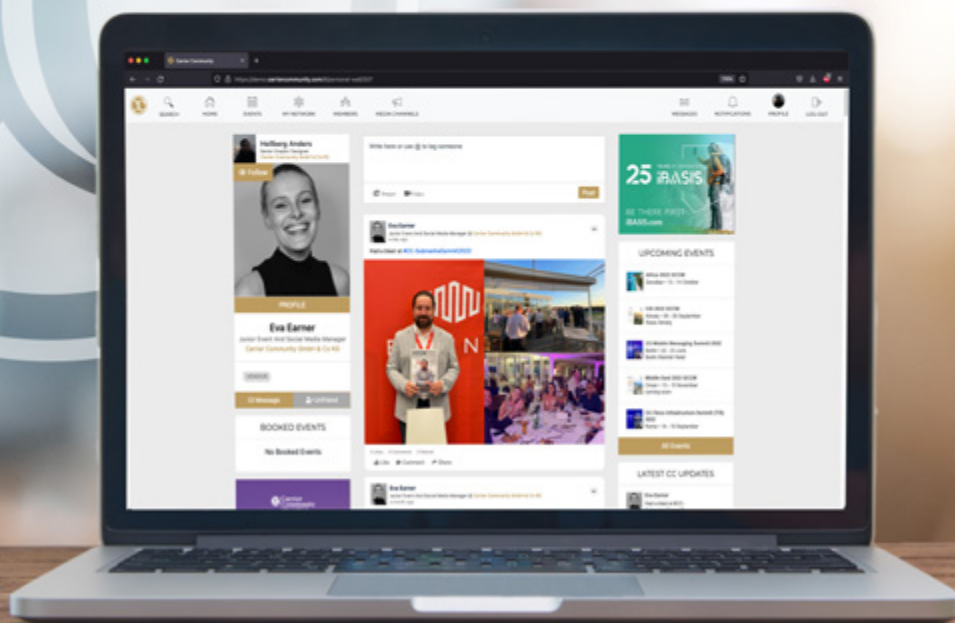
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# CARRIER COMMUNITY LAUNCHES NEW VIRTUAL NETWORKING PLATFORM

*Carrier Community (CC) makes virtual Networking Easy by Launching its new Platform for the Professional Telco Community*

22nd of June Berlin, Germany, CC launches its new networking platform for CC members to engage, connect, and network. The focal purpose of the platform is to create a space made for and targeted exclusively toward the Telco Community, where industry professionals can engage and network online without the distractions of mainstream social media channels. The platform is a part of an updated version of the carriercommunity.com website which also includes various new features for all visitors, including non-members. For more information, please visit <https://demo.carriercommunity.com/#/sign-up>

This platform is predicted to be the new principal way of online engagement for the Telco Community. The new networking platform is complimentary for all CC-members, and Carrier Community invites all 80,000+ existing official CC-members to join and access all features completely free of charge.

The new networking platform offers features such as a member and company filtered directory, network building for community members, an instant and private messaging forum, and a user Wall with publishing features to keep connections informed.

The platform's user-friendly features are designed to help users network and connect, emphasising the following:

- Multifunctional landing page
- Personalised profile page
- Members and Companies page
- Event Booking page
- Online Meeting Platform
- CC-Members Networking Directory
- Members' Social Media Wall
- Messaging (...and more)

"I am looking forward to seeing our telco community even more connected, our partners' brands getting even stronger, and new opportunities opening up to our clients and partners. Our new networking platform is all about developing telco business faster, by connecting faster. Business is all about people, we all know it. The past few years have proved that the face-to-face interactions that CC members experience during our events cannot be fully replaced. I encourage our members to make the most of this new opportunity, and use it as an additional tool to connect, network, and do business online. May you and your company find a new place to connect and thrive!" – said Wida Schmidt, CEO at CC.

The new CC website was successfully launched in June 2022. If you don't have an account automatically generated, please register as a new member user.



# MARISA TRISOLINO

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
AT CMC NETWORKS





# Q & A WITH MARISA TRISOLINO CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | CMC NETWORKS

## CC: WHAT MADE YOU INTERESTED IN THE TELCO/TECH INDUSTRY AND WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO PURSUE A CAREER IN THE SUBSEA INDUSTRY?

**Marisa:** It was not a conscious choice. It was more the other way around in having the opportunity presented to me.

I was born and raised in South Africa, and moved to Italy after completing high school. In the final year of my undergraduate program in Rome, AT&T offered me an internship role. I snapped this up and a year later I was offered a permanent role. I learned several facets of the business: consumer markets, military markets, business operations, sales and procurement. I was with AT&T for 21 years, and then moved on to my current role as CEO of CMC Networks.

## CC: WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS THE MOST – WAS IT A SCHOOL YOU HAVE CHOSEN, PERSONAL DRIVE AND WORKING VERY HARD, INFLUENCE OF THE CAREGIVER, OR COMBINATION OF MANY FACTORS?

**Marisa:** There is no magical formula nor playbook I am afraid. There are several factors that contribute to professional achievement which has a different value or means something different to different people. First and foremost

it is really up to yourself. Nothing will be handed to you without you rolling up your sleeves and this certainly applies to me personally. And yes, education or schooling is important as it gives you a good jump off point but ongoing learning is continuously required and necessary, including learning from other people's mistakes. Surround yourself with positive individuals - and those that see the good and believe in you. Have a clear objective or plan in your own head and work towards it. And yes - being at the right place at the right time is part of the equation.

## CC: WHO HAS BEEN YOUR MOST IMPORTANT MENTOR IN THE WORKPLACE AND WHY?

**Marisa:** I had a few mentors and yes this is important for everyone. You always need someone to bounce ideas and challenge your approach, style and give honest feedback. A good network also helps and opens doors. Once the door is open, it's up to you to take the baton and run. But I do have to add that unless your immediate family – may that be your spouse and children or parents etc – are not 100% understanding and supportive of your career ambitions, you are running a losing race.

## CC: WHAT IS YOUR BEST LEADERSHIP ADVICE FOR YOUNG WOMEN YOU COULD GIVE?

**Marisa:** Couple of things: Whatever you do, don't forget yourself in the process. Don't feel you need to keep

## “BE YOURSELF AND DO WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY, AND NOT WHAT YOU BELIEVE WILL MAKE OTHERS HAPPY”

up with the crowd. Be yourself and do what makes you happy, and not what you believe will make others happy. Be patient - this is something I am still trying to master. Success is not overnight - it takes hard work, diligence, and patience. Find your voice, deliver on what you stand for and don't be too afraid to express interest in new opportunities – don't settle on a role just because you are comfortable and confident in that current environment. Explore new avenues, and who cares if you make mistakes? The most important is that you learn, and move on. Get comfortable with feeling uncomfortable. Ask yourself the question - How badly do you want it achieve your success goals? Because it takes sacrifice. There is no free ride - and if there is it will come to an abrupt halt. There is always something you will have to forego. This is extremely personal, as each person has their own milestones and ambition. And lastly – have fun. If you are spending the majority of your time doing something that you are not enjoying, or it feels like a daily battle, then change.

Marisa comes to CMC from AT&T, where she had a successful career for the last 21 years, serving in a variety of roles including sales, supplier management and strategic planning.

Marisa is an accomplished and energetic leader with a track record of improving service quality, increasing sales and managing costs and carrier relationships in the wholesale industry.



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Marisa Trisolino

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# Interview with **Judith Gardiner**

VP Growth and  
Emerging Markets  
at Equinix



EQUINIX





**1. WHAT MADE YOU INTERESTED IN THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS/TECH INDUSTRY?**

I love the complexity, innovation, and pace of change. There's always someone or some company doing something that wasn't considered possible but now is. It's also why I love working at Equinix: We have a unique view of the digital world that we occupy. We help our customers solve problems by bringing fresh ideas and opportunities to life, made possible through our digital infrastructure that stretches across the globe. I actually started my career in accountancy, and I qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 2000. While it certainly wasn't my passion, the training gave me a great base for the business world. When I finished my training, I started working in the tech industry. I stayed in finance for a few more years after my move to Amsterdam, and I eventually joined Equinix in 2013. As Vice President for Growth and Emerging Markets at Equinix, I am responsible for 10 European countries and the Middle East, so it's a very interconnected and diverse role. I work with the Managing Directors in each country to ensure they have the ecosystems in place to be successful, so they can support our customers and continue to fuel growth in their respective markets. This never stops being an exciting challenge because we get to discover what customers want from us, which continuously pushes us to be creative to provide solutions to meet their needs. We do this by providing our own digital solutions and by partnering with other innovative solution providers. I'm very thankful that my career journey so far has got me to a place where I love my job and the people I work with. It's truly a source of passion for me.

**2. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS THE MOST – WAS IT A SCHOOL YOU HAVE CHOSEN, PERSONAL DRIVE AND WORKING VERY HARD, INFLUENCE OF THE CAREGIVER, OR A COMBINATION OF MANY FACTORS?**

It's definitely a combination of factors. I've always been quite driven and have a strong work ethic which I got from

my parents. While I probably would have chosen a different starting point knowing what I know now, it did teach me to have the courage to take risks, embrace new challenges, and ultimately to trust myself. Deciding to take on my current role definitely felt like one of those moments, as I hadn't had any general management experience, although I had been exposed to many areas of the Equinix business. I have a great support network at Equinix that I regularly tap into - current and former managers, peers, and the Equinix Women's Leadership Network. It's so important not to shy away from asking people for help. Having benefitted so much from the encouragement and support of my colleagues, I want others to feel like they can ask me for help if they need it.

**3. WHO HAS BEEN YOUR MOST IMPORTANT MENTOR IN THE WORKPLACE, AND WHY?**

I'm very happy to admit that I've had a few. I learned early in my career the importance of working 'with' someone as opposed to 'for' someone, and how you should work with someone you can learn from. Respect and trust sound basic until they aren't. If you don't have those, it's harder to grow. The most important mentors so far in my career have been at Equinix. The trust and culture we cultivate here at Equinix have helped me a lot. At the same time, I also think it is important to recognise the need for role models. At Equinix, we have consciously focused on improving our diversity within teams. Where we have been successful in doing this, it has a knock-on effect for those respective teams and their results. We have a number of employee networks that are committed to supporting minority groups within Equinix, such as the Equinix Women Leaders Network, ConnectAbilities, PrideConnect, and BlackConnect. These networks provide learning and mentoring opportunities to help minority groups within the company discuss their challenges, build plans to advance their careers, and voice their ideas so that Equinix can continue to benefit from the innovation and creativity that diverse teams bring. As a senior female leader

at Equinix, I participate in the Equinix Women's Leadership Network by sharing my story, listening to other people's stories, and also participating in the Allies Council.

**4. WHAT IS THE BEST LEADERSHIP ADVICE YOU COULD GIVE TO YOUNG WOMEN?**

My best piece of leadership advice for anyone, not just young women, is to find a role you are passionate about and help others to do the same. When I began my working life, my sole focus was to get into a stable and secure career. My daughter recently started a Saturday job. After her first day, she came home beaming and said she couldn't believe she got paid for doing something she enjoyed so much. My advice to her was to carry that lesson through for the rest of her life - follow your passion and discover what you love. If you find yourself in a leadership position, one of the best things you can do for your direct and indirect reports is to help them identify their strengths and find work they are passionate about. I think you can get to a place where you love what you do much earlier in your career if you have that lens. You should take the opportunities that feel right in your gut, rather than in your head. I believe leading people and managing is all about trust and empowerment. Building mutual trust with your team and the indirect teams you work with is essential for getting things done. We very much operate a matrix model at Equinix, so there can be a lot of management by influence required across the many functions. I'm often asked what advice I give to other working mothers on how to juggle career and family. Besides having that mutual trust I've already referred to, you need to be able to get to a place where you never feel the need to apologise for being a working mother. This could be by leaning in on more external support while your kids are younger, or asking for more internal support depending on the situations that arise. I'm very thankful that I found this type of supportive environment at Equinix, and I encourage others to seek it out as well.





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# Q&A with **BELLE LAJOIE** Chief Executive Officer at Cloudscene



## 1. WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR BUSINESSES TO HAVE FEMALE LEADERS?

The data speaks for itself. Diversity in executive teams is afforded a broader range of insights and perspectives which ultimately leads to greater success and innovation.

## 2. IN WHAT WAYS CAN MEN SUPPORT WOMEN BOTH AT HOME AND THE WORKPLACE SO WE CAN HAVE MORE FEMALE LEADERS?

I think a fundamental issue that we need to address in workplaces is the reproductive gap in our careers which is still seen as a curse. A lot of us hide our desire to start a family, or hide our pregnancies (yes, I did that too!), and why? Because we fear a lack of support from our organizations. Employers and people in Executive leadership positions need to start to look at parental leave, miscarriage and stillbirth leave as people initiatives, not women's initiatives. We have a long way to go around work-life integration and creating healthy boundaries for working parents. Every organization should reflect on not only their policies to support this, but how they can create a safe environment for women to return to the workplace. That woman returning from parental leave could be your next high performing employee, in fact, I think I can probably bet money that she will be!

**Belle** has been working in the Internet industry with Soda founder Bevan Slattery for 14 years and has a deep industry knowledge focused on delivering large scale sales and operations solutions to peering, data centre, dark fibre infrastructure, and data services organisations. She has spent her career as an integral member of leadership teams during the growth and commercial success of successful technology startups including NEXTDC, Global Chief Commercial Officer for Megaport and now Chief Executive Officer at Cloudscene.

## 3. AND WHAT ABOUT WOMEN, HOW CAN WE SUPPORT EACH OTHER IN THE WORKPLACE, SO WE CAN SEE MORE OF US SUCCEED IN OUR PROFESSIONAL LIVES?

The most integral lesson I have learnt is to stick together, support each other, and share your story not just with each other but with your entire organization so you can collectively create a better workplace from your experiences.

## 4. WHAT WOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOUNG FEMALES ENTERING THE TELCO/TECH INDUSTRY NOWADAYS?

Your work speaks for itself. Be confident in your abilities, listen and soak up as much as you can, ask questions, no matter how silly you think they are and learn that constructive criticism is how you master your strengths. These things take time, but they're crucial to women across all industries, especially in a male-dominated sector like tech.



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# A SPOTLIGHT ON ELEVATING **ESG** **PROGRAMS** IN THE **DATA CENTER** INDUSTRY



By  
**BRITTANY MARLEY**

Vice President, Client Executive  
at Stack Infrastructure



**E**nvironmental, social and governance (ESG) practices are at the top of every business mind nowadays; and if they aren't, they should be. In

years past, ESG programs were a "nice to have," and now, they are a "must have." Thankfully, partners, vendors, employees, and customers expect robust goals and initiatives in the companies they support. Brand reputation and loyalty are made and strengthened through a company's commitment to fostering a fair and equitable workplace with environmentally responsible business practices. I take great pride in boasting that digital infrastructure developer and operator, STACK Infrastructure, has developed a robust ESG program and implemented impactful strategies to improve our company's carbon footprint, increase opportunities for women in a male-dominated industry, and establish a sustainable mindset within our company culture.

Last year, STACK launched OnePurpose, its company-wide program dedicated to its ESG practices. Since then, we have executed a number of ESG initiatives, from inaugurating internal mentorship programs and events to fostering advancement of women in the industry to investing in renewable energy and climate accords to support our corporate sustainability goals.

Let's walk through a few of my favorite OnePurpose initiatives that may inspire ESG-focused actions at your own place of business.

In May 2022, STACK and IPI Partners' inaugural Women's Leadership Summit brought together more than 50 colleagues across the two companies to discuss a variety of topics focused on professional development, leadership, and industry trends. The agenda was purposeful, focusing on informative and thought-provoking programming which centered around empowering women

of all ages, cultures, backgrounds, geographies, and career paths.

There was quite a buzz from the attendees who were deeply engaged with the content, conversations, and connections that came out of the summit. Keynote speaker Amy Blankson, Chief Executive Officer of Fearless Positivity, Co-Founder of the Digital Wellness Institute, and bestselling author of *The Future of Happiness*, shared methods of conscious innovation to balance productivity and well-being in a digital era. A panel titled "Using Your Voice in a Virtual World" provided tools and inspiration that lead to personal and professional success and enable opportunities for women.

Corporate events like this summit enable professional networking and provide opportunities for women at all levels to begin or continue mentorship dialogues throughout the year. Other initiatives including STACK's mentorship program, which pairs digital infrastructure leaders with employees from underrepresented groups interested in growing their careers in the data center industry. These mentorships create a space to continue the conversation of equity in the workplace and the opportunity to further elevate all people.

Companies need active support from senior leadership to implement impactful initiatives empowering women and advancing sustainability. Heather Paduck, Chief Financial Officer of STACK, is an active participant in STACK's mentorship program to guide and champion emerging women leaders. In 2021, she won the Leading Allies Of... Data Centers & The Cloud's DEI Trailblazer Award for her tireless efforts advancing diversity and equity in the workplace. Additionally, Donna Lynch, Vice President of Environment, Health, and Safety, at STACK, was honored for her safety efforts supporting OnePurpose in Infrastructure Masons' 2021 IM100 Awards, which celebrate leaders making a difference in education,

diversity and inclusion, sustainability, and technical innovation within the digital infrastructure industry.

Beyond its programs focused on furthering equity and inclusivity in the workplace, STACK's investment in putting its sustainability values into practice is a critical differentiator. Just this year, we have made some tremendous announcements of impactful actions STACK has taken towards being more environmentally-friendly. We accomplished our goal to operate on 100% renewable energy across all STACK Americas locations by the end of 2021; we joined the Infrastructure Masons Climate Accord to reduce carbon emissions; and we've been sharing our progress with innovative solutions like green concrete and the use of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) in backup generators at our data centers.

We at STACK take pride in working towards our environmental, social, and governance goals for many reasons: It is the right thing to do for our people and the planet; it lays the foundation for our industry to operate long into the future while consistently being considerate of our resources; and it aligns with the goals of our customers who share our passion for ESG. Our entire partner ecosystem is on the same page, relentlessly striving to operate our business in a more responsible and sustainable way from start to finish.

Whether it's working with partners to secure the best power options from a sustainable grid mix or aligning aspiring female leaders with cross-department mentors, there are a lot of positive and powerful steps companies can take to make a difference in their business and industry. It's an exciting time to be walking this path.



## BRITTANY MARLEY

Vice President, Client Executive

Brittany is responsible for solving complex infrastructure requirements for strategic hyperscale, cloud and content clients. Her expertise lies in developing long-lasting, meaningful partnerships for business growth. Prior to joining at STACK, Brit spent over four years managing some of largest strategic alliances at Equinix.

Brit has a BA in Telecommunications from San Diego State University, an AA in Applied Mathematics from Mesa College, and completed certification in Artificial Intelligence from MIT CSAIL executive program.





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Interview with

Sales Manager  
Power & Industry Services  
Schneider Electric GmbH

**GERGANA** KAKRINSKA





## 1. WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I work as a sales manager in the Power Services business. My task is to support German companies in reaching their energy goals through services. I have always been passionate about sustainability, so I feel my daily work corresponds to my personal value and is an excellent motivation source. Additionally, the great thing about services is that they are green. With our solution, companies make most of their energy and equipment. In sales, I enjoy a lot of freedom to decide how to organize my time and manage my work. However, freedom always comes with responsibilities to bring aimed results. Therefore, it is inspiring for me to actively contribute to our business success and make a measurable difference.

## 2. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BEING A WOMAN AT SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC?

I feel very much responsible for my behaviour. I am often on the spot as a woman in a male-dominated domain. I need to perform to break the stereotype that women are not into tech. However, I am lucky with my employer as we have a culture that supports diversity and inclusion. One of our core values is "Embrace Different". We get training on this, which is also a part of our annual evaluation. I believe that we truly live according to this value! Additionally, there are many initiatives, especially for female employees.

## 3. WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CAREER-DEFINING MOMENT

## YOU ARE PROUD OF?

My most career-defining moment was getting my first mentor while studying at TU Munich. I had a great mentor in a management position in the industry. At the end of my master's study, he supported me in finding out what I wanted to achieve in my career, and we drafted a plan. As a result, I understood what was essential for me and could focus on my priorities. Without him, I would not be where I am here. During my first mentoring, I developed the skill to open up, speak about challenges and ask for advice or support from someone more knowledgeable or senior.

## 4. WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED IN THE WORKPLACE, ESPECIALLY YOUR EXPERIENCE IN MALE-DOMINATED ENVIRONMENTS?

It is funny, but the biggest challenge for a woman is often another woman. If there is only one female in a team, she typically gets a lot of attention. However, if she can integrate, she can influence the team's culture and position herself as an essential team member. The problem is when another woman joins the team, probably younger than the first one. Suddenly, the newcomer gets a lot of attention, and this brings tension. I personally believe that women who engage with other women through different networks, events and mentoring tend to act differently. Another challenge is old-fashioned managers who are not aware of their unconscious biases. For example, sometimes men treat female colleagues differently than male ones without being aware of this.

## 5. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST AND WORST WORKPLACE INITIATIVES YOU HAVE HEARD OF TO HELP PROMOTE DIVERSITY?

The worst a company could do is to create programs for women instead of promoting them. Talented, ambitious women need a chance to show what they can do and shine. Different programs can support them to grow their skills and manage their work more efficiently. At Internal Schneider Electric, I participated in a great program where we were trained about typical challenges women can face at work. Afterwards, we discussed possibilities to overcome those challenges. We worked out creative solutions, but more importantly, we became aware of problems we don't personally have. Furthermore, a massive informal network came out of this event.

## 6. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A WOMAN CONSIDERING TECHNOLOGY AS HER CAREER?

My father was confused when I told him I wanted to be an electrical engineer. This did not fit his expectation of me as a young woman. It took me a lot of energy to convince him that it was the right decision for me. In my career, I have met quite some men like my father. However, my passion for technology drives me to keep going on. Therefore, I would say that women should be brave and persistent in following their passion.



LUISA H. B. MUNERATTI

Luisa leads DOCOMO Digital's business across Europe and Latin America. Luisa has over twelve years of experience in the mobile payments ecosystem and is responsible for partnering with our telco, merchant, and payments partners in the regions. Luisa is an expert in the Latin American payments' landscape and is passionate about helping telcos scale their digital services businesses. Luisa graduated in marketing from Fundação Getulio Vargas and is currently pursuing an executive MBA from Insper Instituto de Ensino e Pesquisa in Sao Paulo.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/luisamuneratti/>

# Q & A with Luisa H. B. Muneratti

Senior Vice President of Sales - Americas & Europe na DOCOMO Digital



## 1. What kickstarted your interest in the telecommunications industry, and why did you decide to pursue a career in the telecom sector?

When I was graduating from University, I was already involved as an intern in the telco industry. At the time, 15 years ago, the industry was pretty heated: We were conducting an innovative and promising content distribution business via hyper tags, all while using feature phones and Bluetooth technology! Believe it or not, yes, this is how content was shared before! I was so passionate about it that I completed university with the highest degree by using this technology for my undergraduate thesis. Since then, I never changed away from the telco industry. It became something very natural to me, to continue growing while the technology evolves. I was fascinated by how fast we change our habits as the technology evolves, and how many different operations can be involved within the telco industry. The advantage it is that you have new solutions coming every year. You can reinvent yourself, even while working at the same company, and grow together. The industry opened so many doors to me that I preferred to stay. This is why I became passionate about it!

## 2. I believe most of us are curious, what was your dream job as a child?

Believe it or not, I really wanted to be an investigative journalist, and work collaborating with the police! I was always passionate about criminal minds; how they work, and how to solve crimes. I even tried to apply for a job as a prison guard when I

was 18, how crazy, but fortunately my father prohibited me. I'm so glad I listened to him, because it is such a dangerous world! So, I started my university to become the journalist I planned to be and follow the path of my mother. Eventually I changed my path when I started my internship within the telco industry!

## 3. What do you believe contributed to your professional success the most – was it a school you chose, personal drive and working very hard, the influence of the caregiver or a combination of many factors?

Having a good education is obviously something that will support you on the professional path, but nothing will help you to the path to the top if you don't have determination, a mindset focused on the long term results, and proactivity. Many of us decide to change job or career because we are not patient to see the growth in a mid term plan. If you are consistent to your plan, you must continue pursuing inner growth first, and it will reflect externally. I never allowed myself to be accommodated over the years, I always preferred to show that I wanted and needed to grow. The results are now here. I'm still 35, I have so much to do yet, but I am so glad I'm in this position today and I'm able to think about my future while I still work to become better. I never stop studying and evolving my skills, and this is what makes me see what is next.

## 4. Who has been your most important mentor in the workplace and why?

I never had a mentor in my workplace that followed my career. During the 15 years I've been in this industry I obviously had many colleagues helping me to grow and giving me important advice, however the people who helped me more than anyone else were my husband and my father! I took 2 examples from them: a resilient, strong person that fought to raise 3 children, never gave up, was kind and always studied to grow and build his career. He was my father. He gave me so much confidence and I owe him so much for who I am. Another example is of a person that studied so much to become a reference on the financial market. He sees the long term and helped me so much to pursue growth and be patient. That's my husband. We always think that we can do everything alone, but when we have people around us that love us and support our decisions, it makes life much easier!

## 5. What is the best leadership advice you could give to young women?

Something that helped me a lot is that during my MBA we learned some negotiation skills. When you learn how to negotiate with different profiles, you will be successful. Always consider studying people's minds, as in the end of the day everything comes down to what people think. Last but not least, definitely do not let anyone judge you for your gender! Depending on the industry it may be led by men, but if you stand up for your truth, your vision and talk to people equally, you will be able to set your reputation at the level you want, and not let anyone make you feel less than who you are. Never be afraid of speaking up and giving your opinion, always with respect and professionalism.



# EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

with **Judith Gardiner**  
Vice President, Growth and  
Emerging Markets at Equinix



EQUINIX

## **Judith Gardiner:**

*„Strategically located between Asia, Africa and Europe, our new data center in Muscat (MC), in partnership with Omantel will serve as a regional interconnection hub providing ultra-low latency connection points between key global business markets.“*



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# EXECUTIVE ROUND-TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION SESSIONS

15:30 - 16:15 (local time Muscat)

## TOPIC: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE TECH INDUSTRY TODAY AND TOMORROW

- **HOW DIVERSE WORKPLACES COULD LEAD TO HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY, GREATER INNOVATION AND HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT**
- **CORPORATE STRATEGIES AND STRUCTURES TOWARDS BETTER INTEGRATION AND DIVERSITY**
- **KEY CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN THE TECH AND TELCO INDUSTRY**
- **COMPANIES' INTEGRATION AND RETENTION PROGRAMS IN PLACE TO MANAGE KEY CHALLENGES**

Moderator  
**SOH LAY KHUAN,**  
Head of Carrier  
at OneQode

Panellist:  
**EWA JAŚKOWIAK,**  
Business Development Manager  
at Enxoo

## MANEL JENDOUBI

PRODUCT MANAGER AT ARC SOLUTIONS  
LLC, AN INTEGRATED NETWORK SOLUTIONS  
PROVIDER IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

Manel Jendoubi has over 15 years of expertise in the ICT industry with extensive multifaceted experience in product, engineering, and program management. Her core expertise is in operating and transitioning complex ICT solutions and improving standards, policies, processes, and controls for testing, with a thorough understanding of connectivity, IoT ecosystem, and cloud.

She has worked with Retel, Nokia Alcatel Lucent, Ooredoo & Unlimit Reliance.

ARC



# Q & A WITH MANEL JENDOUBI, PRODUCT MANAGER AT ARC SOLUTIONS LLC

## WHAT'S THE MOST EXCITING THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?

Being in a Product Management position in a thriving environment drives you to streamline and adapt your communication skills toward the audience that you are interacting with. You need to be techy with technology folks, you need to be able to understand finance jargon when you deal with finance teams, but also need to be able to simplify the solution when you explain it to the sales and marketing teams.

## HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BEING A WOMAN AT YOUR COMPANY?

I'm fortunate as I was the first woman to be hired at my company, and as I joined in the beginning of the business I'm considered as a key pillar of the company. I have been part of developing the strategic direction and aligning the business activities to that strategy.

## WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CAREER-DEFINING MOMENT THAT YOU ARE PROUD OF?

I have been humbled over my multifaceted and versatile career as I've worked in various positions and different kinds of businesses in the telco industry. I started my career as a technical presale within vendors that define solutions and manage RFPs to serve telcos. I then moved

to a Telco as head of engineering to design the network, launch the RFPs, work closely with vendors, and deploy and manage these projects. During that phase, I took the opportunity under a tight schedule to work on a submarine cable and deploy from scratch a Fiber to the home network, a 'first of' in the country at that time, and at a time when the Telco was transitioning from a Mobile operator to a global one. This project gave me exposure to the various business units (marketing, sales, IT, customer care, etc.) so in addition to being accountable to design and deploy the project I had to work closely with different units and speak their language to make this launch a success. Looking back, that was my most career-defining moment as I decided to leave my comfort zone and switch to more of a business role as Product Management for Cloud and IoT. I then pushed myself further, leaving Tunisia to land in India and then Dubai in a startup environment.

By leaving my comfort zone in switching from Network Engineering to product management in Cloud and IoT, I proved to myself and my colleagues my ability to adapt to a new role, learn fast, and build solutions from scratch

## WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED IN THE WORKPLACE, ESPECIALLY YOUR EXPERIENCE IN MALE-DOMINATED ENVIRONMENTS?

I feel blessed that I have mostly worked in diverse and multi-cultural international environments where women are respected. Nevertheless, I have of course faced the usual challenges women face in the workplace such as not being listened to, being ignored, and often being misunderstood when exposing a different perspective of a situation.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST AND WORST WORKPLACE INITIATIVES YOU HAVE HEARD OF TO HELP PROMOTE DIVERSITY?

I strongly believe that leadership, competence, and skillset do not have a gender. It's simple: You need to hire the right people for the job. The worst initiative is to try to match the diversity by focusing on the ratio, by containing women in certain levels and positions within an organization. The best initiatives are the ones that focus on the well-being of their employees, that strengthen their complaints systems around harassment, and promote the use of inclusive language in the workplace.

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A WOMAN CONSIDERING TECHNOLOGY AS HER CAREER?

Don't hesitate and just go for it! Your perspective is a must to shape the technology of the future which is impacting our lives. Who's better than you to define it and tailor it? As technology is a fast-paced environment, keep learning, researching, and be active in completing certifications to be up to date and evolve in your career path.





# NEWS



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**EVA EARNER**

Junior Event and Digital Media Manager  
at Carrier Community (CC)



**WIDA SCHMIDT**

CEO at Carrier Community (CC)

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# EWA JAŚKOWIAK

Business Development Manager at Enxoo





**Ewa** has more than 7 years of experience working with various companies on their digital transformation journey. As a mathematics graduate she started her professional career as a data analyst, working with major pharmaceutical companies in Poland. She moved into the IT space to work with customers on their challenges with enhancing customer experience and increasing sales, first in finance then in manufacturing. She has recently started her work in the telco industry, using her experience with a vast range of companies to help drive the Enterprise market forward.



Q & A

## 1. Why do you think it is important for businesses to have female leaders?

We have all seen the research about how greater gender diversity in executive teams corresponds with higher performance of companies. It is also a fact that female leaders bring a unique combination of leadership traits that translate into increased productivity, better collaboration, enhanced organizational dedication, and decreased employee burnout. I think women tend to care more about how people actually feel and are more empathetic towards their employees which helps to create more engaged relationships based on trust and mutual respect. This translates into loyalty and a sense of belonging in workplaces. This of course does not mean women are less demanding and result driven, but they really care about what happens on the way to success.

## 2. In what way can men support women both at home and the workplace so we can have more female leaders?

Equal and supportive workplaces start at home. Children notice an unequal distribution of chores around the house and often fall into these patterns subconsciously in their later lives. I am lucky enough to come from a home where both of my parents worked and it was natural for my father to be a part of chores such as cleaning or cooking and also taking care of my brother and me. When we talk about workplaces we need to understand that the way we are brought up and how we are perceived as girls has a great effect on our later lives. Fathers should definitely rethink

buying a pink vacuum cleaner as a toy for their baby daughters and instead buy them a cool blue microscope or a car to play around with. Some biases are so ingrained into society that we often populate them in kindergarten or later on in school - women and men alike. Our culture sends strong messages about who women should be, what women should be, and how they are supposed to look and behave.

Lack of self confidence and support in difficult areas like STEM also translates into less girls going into the field of new technologies. My father had a big influence on my upbringing. Since he is an engineer himself, he tried to get me excited about physics and mathematics early on. I ended up getting a BSc in Applied Mathematics which has helped me get to where I am today - solving problems for customers all over the world. When it comes to the workplace it is important that men include and sponsor women. Working in male-dominated environments we can often feel like we don't belong. Many women receive subtle signals that they are not part of the team and because our conceptions of ourselves often are highly defined by interpersonal relationships, such exclusion experiences can cause loneliness at work. Another thing is that men can ensure women's voices are heard in meetings. Men have a tendency to dominate conversations in customer meetings, virtual meetings or even everyday discussions. As women we are often socialized from an early age to hold back until there is a clear break in the conversation. Men should also encourage the women they work

with to say "no" more often. Recent research shows that women tend to volunteer for non-promotable tasks more than men and are more likely to be asked to take them on. It's important to help us notice and have our backs when we actually say "no". Above all, male leaders and managers must take personal action to evolve and improve behaviors so that talented women are advanced.

## 3. And what about women, how can we support each other in the workplace so we can see more of us succeed in our professional lives?

Each one of us should commit to using our strengths to elevate other women. I see a myriad of organizations being set up every day, we even have one at Enxoo and we are rolling out a campaign as we speak. It's important to understand that we don't need to be C-level to be able to give back and help women take a step up. Speak up whenever a female colleague needs that second voice in a meeting but also ask other women for help - because from what I have seen so far, they will never deny you.

## 4. What would be the most important piece of advice you would like to share with young females entering the Telco/Tech industry nowadays?

Find mentors along the way who will help you overcome barriers and point you in the right direction. Women and men alike - they will be able to support you and help you develop, find new ways to solve issues and work with you to lay a foundation for your successes - big and small.

## 1. **CC-Webinar.Live**

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## 2. **CC-Executive** Interviews

Total website viewers: **1500+**  
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## 3. **GCCM** Magazine

Total website viewers: **7500+**  
Total social media engagements: **15950+**



## 4. **DIGITAL** Advertising

On all CC website online event pages  
Size 400x300 pxls



## 5. **CC-Social** Media

Total views TW: **74000+**  
Total views IG: **49000+**

Total views LI: **167000+**  
Total views FB: **6000+**



## 6. **CC-Monthly** Newsletters

Total website viewers: **88638+**



## 7. **CC-News.Live**

Total website viewers: **1200+**  
Total social media engagements: **6780+**  
Minimum 50 words to share by 15th of the month. Production of volumes monthly

LIVE

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Targeting special focused group with  
Content provided by the client  
Total opened by **18000+** viewers



## 9. **CC-Podcast.Telco**

Podcast listeners: **400+**



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## CC-EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

# WITH SOH LAY KHUAN Head of Carrier at OneQode

**CC:** What made you interested in the Telco/Tech industry and why did you decide to pursue a career in telco industry?

**Soh Lay Khuan:** I started to pay attention to telecommunication technology when I was able to communicate with my cousin who had migrated to Canada from Singapore when I was still young. It was just so amazing then that we could speak to each other even though she was half way around the globe. It was later that I learnt about submarine cable and satellite systems, and these technologies immediately drew me to this industry. Learning about the OSI layers and the various protocols was the start of my journey in the telecommunications industry and I just find so much fun in it.

My first job after graduation was in telecommunications, and after more than 30 years I am still in this industry and looking at how it is now the essential building block of many ecosystems. It is the industry that has now become essential to modern life, and we just can't do without it.

**CC -** I believe most of us are curious, what was your dream job as a child?

**Soh Lay Khuan:** My dreams evolved with my changing levels of awareness. At first I wanted to be a teacher, then a pilot, then an astronaut ... but by the time I finished university I knew my career would be in telecommunications.

**CC:** What do you believe contributed to your professional success the most – was it a school you chose, personal drive and working very hard, the influence of the caregiver, or a combination of many factors?

**Soh Lay Khuan:** If you do what you love, you'll love what you do. In my case it was true. My passion for the fast changes in these technologies has been in me throughout my career. I was fortunate to have a network that grew with time and I could rely on from time to time. It was also the continuous learning that kept me here. I have worked with the changing telecommunication protocols from X.25, to Frame Relay, to ATM, to SDH, and many more to end up with ethernet and IP. Now, all things are virtual. Digital transformation is the current journey and some may not even realise their deep dependence on it for all aspects of their lives.

**CC -** Who has been your most important mentor in the workplace and why?

**Soh Lay Khuan:** There have been by far too many mentors over these past 30 plus years. Even though less than 30% of the workforce in this industry are women, the lady coaches and colleagues I have had have left a significant impact on me. Deep understanding of any telecommunications topics and the ability to discuss and impart knowledge always drive me to seek more. When women have the ability to be at a level with their male colleagues in these discussions, it does encourage me to stay in this male dominated world.

**CC:** What is the best leadership advice for young women you could give?

**Soh Lay Khuan:** I believed that passion will survive all doubts and all odds. Follow your passion.

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### SOH LAY KHUAN

CC Ambassador APAC

Lay Khuan has been in Telecommunications industry for over 30 years; her experience ranges from being in the back end of Operations, Network Design and Development, Product and Process Development; Market and Partner Establishment to the front end of Sales and Marketing. She drives business results through active partner engagement for market expansion, product differentiation, and service development that meet customers requirement.



## CC-INTERVIEW WITH



# CRISTINA CONTI

Customer Engineering Manager at Google

**C**ristina Conti is an experienced technology lead, focusing on helping customers in their journey transformation to the cloud, from migration to embedding AI applications. She currently leads a team of cross-vertical customer engineers at Google Cloud. Prior to Google, Cristina worked at SAS Institute for 10 years in the machine learning space.

Cristina holds a Master's Degree in Statistics and Biostatistics from University of Bologna, preparing her thesis at University of California, Berkeley. She currently lives in Milan with her husband and two kids.



## 1. WHAT'S THE MOST EXCITING THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?

**Cristina:** There's a lot of exciting things about my job that I love. First of all, I get to interact with engineers and developers of innovative solutions that are and will continue to define the notion of technology as we speak and are changing the way enterprises will look at technology moving forward. I imagine that what I do in my daily job, although sometimes seems like little progress, has an impact into what we will do in the next 10, 15, 20 years. Second of all, I appreciate my team and my peers, there is an atmosphere of trust that I hope we have built within the team that I lead and I am proud of the progress we made in the past almost two years. And I have a group of amazing peers which are always ready to lend a hand or to give advice, and to resonate together how we can make a difference for our company and for our teams!

## 2. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BEING A WOMAN AT GOOGLE?

**Cristina:** Honestly, I feel at the same empowered and with a lot of responsibilities. Google is doing so much for diversity, equality and inclusion both within and outside the company that I am honored to be able to be involved in and, at the same time, I feel like I have to be representing this by example. I guess it can even just be summarized by knowing that my daughter, who is 6, tells everyone that mom works at Google and she's the one in the family that knows about computers!

## 3. WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST CAREER-DEFINING MOMENT THAT YOU ARE PROUD OF?

**Cristina:** I don't think our career can be defined by just one single moment that makes us proud, but every step of the way counts, even the difficulties when things are less easy, knowing we

“I WOULD SAY THE SAME TO EVERYONE ASKING ME FOR SIMILAR ADVICE: **STUDY, STUDY, STUDY AND CONTINUE TO LEARN!**”

will rise back again!

That said, if I look at the past couple of years since I have been at Google, I think the proudest moment was supporting the launch of the Google Cloud regions in Italy. We worked hard for this to happen and it was a great and exciting moment for the entire team, a realization of something coming true.

If I look more broadly than my experience at Google, I think that what has made me most proud is knowing to never give up and believe in myself - from deciding what to study in college into starting a new job, I didn't always feel like I had all the skills I needed, but I knew that it's a matter of constantly continuing to learn and listen.

## 4. WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED IN THE WORKPLACE, ESPECIALLY YOUR EXPERIENCE IN MALE-DOMINATED ENVIRONMENTS?

**Cristina:** I have to say that I have always had very supportive managers and leaders who never made me feel like I ever faced a challenge by being a woman. That said, I have two children who are 6 and 3, and it is often true that family care falls on the female representative of the household, even when the father is supportive and present. It's not always so easy to balance so many responsibilities! Lastly, parental leaves are a moment in a parent's life where everything changes, and you do not know how work will be when you return. I felt

exactly that way when I went on parental leave for my children, and this is something that, at least in Italy where I am based, mostly impacts women - although maybe things are changing

## 5. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST AND WORST WORKPLACE INITIATIVES YOU HAVE HEARD OF TO HELP PROMOTE DIVERSITY?

**Cristina:** I am proud of the many initiatives we have at Google to help promote diversity, internally and externally, in terms of mentoring, empowering, and career progression. If I had to name one initiative that I am really proud of it would be #IAmRemarkable. Such an inclusive approach to this topic!

## 6. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A WOMAN CONSIDERING TECHNOLOGY AS HER CAREER?

**Cristina:** I would say the same to everyone asking me for similar advice: study, study, study and continue to learn! Your biggest enemy is yourself and your fear of not making it, but remember, nobody is forcing you to 'make' it either. There's not just one single way to be in tech, and you will find the way to make it work for you, if that's what you wish.



**C-LEVEL**  
**2022 SUMMIT**  
**BAHAMAS**  
8<sup>TH</sup>-9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

# C-LEVEL

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# ANNE MOREL

Senior Vice President Global Carrier Sales  
for Orange International Carriers



## CCGA TELECOMMUNICATION WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Anne Morel is Senior Vice President Global Carrier Sales for Orange International Carriers, one of the world's leading players in its field delivering cutting edge wholesale solutions to over 1,000 mobile operators, international carriers, ISPs and content providers worldwide.

In this role, Anne is responsible for overseeing the global sales strategy and business development of wholesale services for Voice, Data, Mobile and Security. Since joining the International Wholesale Division at Orange, Anne has actively contributed to its strategy, growth and transformation into one of the industry world leaders. Anne has held numerous positions of increasing responsibility within the International Carriers management team including Head of European Carrier Sales, and since 2012, Senior Vice President of Global Carrier Sales. In her most current position, she oversaw the implemen-

tation of a new Global Sales organization to assemble the regional Sales teams across voice, data and mobile products.

In May 2021, Capacity Media has selected Anne Morel among the 100 most influential personalities in the wholesale telecommunications industry.

Prior to working in international wholesale, Anne has held various management positions spanning the fields of business development, regulation and merger & acquisitions in both international and multicultural environments. In particular, she worked as Managing Director for Orange in the UK, and actively contributed to the development of the Orange group in the UK through partnership and acquisition.

Anne lives in London where she enjoys spending time with her husband and 2 children.



**NIMISHA TAILOR**  
Competition and Regulation Specialist

# MENTORING WOMEN IN TECH

We need more women in tech, and advancing women's equality could add **US\$12 trillion (11%) to global GDP by 2025**. However, women in tech are under-represented. In 2022, two thirds of the workforce in global tech firms will be men, yet women comprise nearly half of the world's workforce. Even more worrying is that companies are struggling to retain women in tech. Despite the work being intellectually stimulating, women are dropping out of their tech jobs at a 45% higher rate than men. Lack of career advancement and mentoring support have been reported as some of the top reasons for this. A mentoring programme to boost women's careers can transform company culture and keep women in the industry. This article explains the value of mentoring women and what actions companies and women can take.

## WE NEED MORE WOMEN...

Not just more women in technical roles like software engineers but also in leadership roles to drive digital transformation, particularly in growing industries like e-commerce, health and finance. When women represent more than 20% of a company's management team, research shows that companies have approximately 10% higher innovation revenues. However, in financial services, an industry with a high rate of digital transformation, only 5.6% of all fintech CEOs are women. Increasing female participation can deliver significant economic benefits. For instance, increasing the number of women working in IT could generate an extra £2.6 billion a year for the UK's economy.

## ...BUT WOMEN WORKING IN TECH ARE LEAVING

**A US survey revealed that 38% of women working in tech are considering leaving their jobs within the next few years.** A joint report by Accenture and Girls Who Code said that by the age of 35, almost half of the women in tech will leave.

The pandemic has worsened the situation; according to TrustRadius, women in tech were twice as likely as men to have lost their jobs and 57% felt burnt out. This is a problem as the demand for digital talent around the world continues to rise. One of the top challenges for women has been a lack of mentorship with 40% of respondents in the New View Strategies survey reporting this concern.

## MENTORING CAN RETAIN FEMALE TALENT

A mentoring programme can be a game-changer for companies in improving diversity, work culture and retention of female employees. Women that are mentored are better prepared for promotions, stay with organisations longer and feel more satisfied in their jobs. Changing the company culture to be inclusive could help retain 1.4 million women in tech roles by 2030. Anna Radulovski, CEO of WomenTech Network, says that "to create a more diverse and inclusive tech world we need to inspire and empower the next generation of female role models to pursue and develop their career in technology and become innovators, leaders and entrepreneurs." Mentoring enables women to be more connected to the company and their colleagues. When software company SUSE launched its internal mentoring programme to promote diversity, its CEO said that "Almost 100 percent of the women we've brought into the mentoring program so far, say this has improved their understanding of the company, what a career path could look like and how to get there."

## WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is when a trusted professional supports another person to achieve their personal and professional goals. By sharing their knowledge and experience, a mentor can inspire and encourage a mentee to learn, progress and define their own success. A mentor can offer a roadmap to show the mentee the

big picture, where they are, where they want to go, the roads to take and the roads not to take. Both the mentor and mentee must be committed to the relationship with clear objectives and responsibilities.

## THE ROLE OF MENTOR

- ◆ Focus on skills and competence
- ◆ Gives feedback and provides structure
- ◆ Helps mentee discover their own solutions
- ◆ Initiates ideas and provides resources

## THE ROLE OF MENTEE

- ◆ Sets the mentoring agenda
- ◆ Identify development needs
- ◆ Is open to new ways of doing things
- ◆ Asks questions and seeks advice

Mentoring can be implemented in different ways depending on the objectives and circumstances. Apps and software like Mentorink, eMentorConnect, and MentorCloud can facilitate virtual mentoring by matching mentees and mentors in different locations. The key types of mentoring relationships are:

### One-on-one mentoring

One mentor and one mentee enter a mentoring relationship to help the mentee develop

### Peer mentoring

Two individuals in a similar job level or age range share experiences and expertise and learn together

### Group mentoring

Mentor leads group of mentees to impact more mentees in a shorter amount of time

### Reverse mentoring

All one-on-one mentoring relationships can be reversed to learn from one another

## HOW CAN MENTEES BENEFIT?

Many highly-skilled women are less inclined to self-promote, present at industry conferences (especially when technical content is involved) and don't always apply for jobs/promotions unless they meet 100% of the criteria. Amy Hood, CFO at Microsoft, said that "every job I took was deeply uncomfortable in terms of feeling unqualified." A mentor can build confidence and provide honest advice on navigating careers.

For example, a female executive was struggling with long hours in a tech start up. With mounting work responsibilities and constant changes, she was finding it difficult to keep up. A mentor advised her to develop work boundaries and gain the courage to ask for additional resources. In response, the company gave her the opportunity to hire and lead her own team.

## MENTORS CAN SUPPORT WOMEN IN TECH IN A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT WAYS. THEY CAN HELP WITH:

- **Leadership skills.** To improve communication and presentation skills in a safe environment.
- **Career progression.** To boost self-confidence and visibility to advance any stage of their career.
- **Work-life balance.** To set work boundaries and focus on high-impact projects.
- **Networking.** To open new doors through introductions to people and organisations.
- **Navigating tech careers.** To pick the right role, ranging from data analysis or cybersecurity.
- **Knowledge.** To share tips and resources to learn quickly and keep up to date.

## MENTORS (MALE AND FEMALE) CAN BENEFIT TOO

Mentoring is a two-way street and mentors themselves, regardless of gender, can become better leaders. Mariela Dabbah, a leadership expert with tech clients, summarised it well when she said "the question is not only who can be your mentor but also who can you mentor." Mentoring provides mentors with opportunities to develop perspective, self-knowledge and compassion. It can even improve their own careers. Research from Sun Microsystems found that mentors were six times more likely than their non-mentor peers to be promoted within a five-year period.

## WHAT STEPS CAN COMPANIES TAKE?

Whether you are a large or small company in the tech field, below are some suggested steps to kickstart mentoring in your organisation.

- **Design a female focused mentorship programme.** Ask women about their needs to develop the programme's goals, type of mentoring, frequency, and duration.
- **Ensure you have sufficient female mentors.** Women often feel more comfortable discussing difficulties and aspirations with other women. If your organisation lacks female mentors, consider partnering with other women in tech organisations or industry associations.
- **Encourage men to mentor women.** Male mentors can break biases between male and female colleagues and build better working relationships. For men that are new to mentoring, structured programmes and mentor guidelines can provide good guidance.
- **Create a "culture of mentoring" within your organisation.** Mentoring is often seen as an extra-curriculum activity rather than a regular activity for developing employees. Senior leadership must lead by example and champion mentoring throughout the organisation.

## WHAT STEPS CAN WOMEN TAKE?

Women in tech can be proactive in finding the support they need and can:

- **Find mentors outside their organisation.** Industry associations and community platforms like the Carrier Community and women networks like the WomenTech mentoring programme can help meet new people and broaden skills and perspectives.
- **Find different mentors for different goals.** Anthony Tjan, a business expert, recommends a "Master of Craft", a mentor that is an expert in your field, a mentor that "Champions your cause" and a mentor that is your "Co-pilot" to talk through projects.

## THE FUTURE

Mentoring can help companies in the tech industry retain

female talent, as it enables women to pursue fulfilling careers in a dynamic environment. By retaining women in their tech jobs, there is an opportunity to build a new pipeline of female talent and attract more women to technical roles as well as broader strategy roles for digital businesses. With more women in tech contributing, not only will companies benefit but gender equality has the potential to maximise the digital transformation taking place in our economies and societies.

### Bio

**Nimisha** is a competition and regulation specialist with international experience. She is passionate about developing the next generation of leaders and mentors young female professionals and university students with career planning. As a mentor, she is able to draw on her work experience at consulting firms and at competition authorities in UK, New Zealand, Singapore and Australia (secondment). As a Consultant, she has advised tech companies, central banks and international organisations like World Bank and OECD in the areas of digital finance, digital trade, data governance, e-commerce and logistics.







# BECOME A CC-LEADERS CLUB MEMBER!

## NEW CC-LEADERS CLUB

Carrier Community (CC) is launching its CC-Leaders Club and inviting C-level and top executives from the global telco community to join and become members. Each CC-Leaders Club member will automatically be granted complimentary VIP access to the annual C-Level Summits (in Oman and the Bahamas).



Please contact us:  
[membership@carriercommunity.com](mailto:membership@carriercommunity.com)

Panelist

**SARAH NARAC**

Senior Manager Wholesale Billing & Collection at Omantel



Keynote Speaker, Panelist

**SABINA MAJERIC**

Chief Commercial Officer at HORISEN



Moderator

**ERIK VAN STOKKOM**

Chief Moderator at CC/ M&A at GTC



Panelist

**JOANNA KULIGOWSKA**

Head of Global Market Intelligence at HAUD



Panelist

**LUANNA DE LUNA SENA**

Business Development Manager at Global Telco Consult (GTC)



## THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE TECH INDUSTRY TODAY AND TOMORROW

In this discussion hosted during the London 2022 GCCM, we are invited to learn more about how diverse workplaces could lead to higher productivity, greater innovation and higher achievement. Moreover, female leaders from HORISEN, Omantel, HAUD, Global Telco Consult (GTC) and Apiro Data outline the key challenges women face in the telco industry and current companies' programs introduced to tackle them.

### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Good morning. Good day everybody here at the GCCM in London and out there on the World Wide Web. Today we're going to discuss the role of women in the tech industry today and tomorrow. For this, I would like to welcome my fellow panelists. Sabina, how are you? Maybe you could briefly introduce yourself.

### SABINA MAJERIC:

I'm doing great, thank you, Erik. I am the CCO in HORISEN

and I'm working in the IT and telco industry... Do I need to say how many years? (laughs) So, for 24 years. It's kind of a long career and I wish that many more ladies would choose this career because it's amazing. I'm looking forward to seeing many more ladies in the tech industry.

### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Fantastic. Thank you, Sabina. It's always good having you, and congratulations on being around for so many years. Sarah, over to you. How are you?



### SARAH NARAG:

Good afternoon from Muscat. I wish I was there in London with you guys, it is my home. My name is Sarah Narag. I'm currently the senior manager of billing collections in the wholesale unit of Omantel. My career started not too long ago, let's say maybe about 13 or 14 years ago in the telecom industry. I started in Tier one and I moved here maybe six years ago to do what I'm doing, and very much like Sabina and I think everyone here, I would love to see more women in leadership, more women in telco, and let's see how we can achieve this.

### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Fantastic, and welcome. Thank you for being on this panel, and greetings to the lovely city of Muscat. Now, here live in London, Joanna - welcome.

### JOANNA KULIGOWSKA:

Hi everyone. My name is Joanna Kuligowska. I am head of global market intelligence and management services at HAUD. I have close to over a decade of experience, specifically in the messaging field. This industry is my great passion - I'm very passionate about technology. I'm pleased to be here and I'm very happy to see so many familiar faces. It's nice to be back to Woman in Tech.

### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Thank you so much and good having you. Always a pleasure, Joanna. And yes, Luanna, I'm so happy to have you here as well as my colleague at GTC, as well. Maybe you can take a minute to introduce yourself, please.

### LUANNA DE LUNA SENA:

My name is Luanna. And yes, I am your colleague now from GTC, Global Telco Consult. I am the business developer manager, and it's been 10 years since I started studying telecom engineering. It's been one year since I am in the industry of business messaging. I am one of us ladies that are proud to be a lady in tech. Happy to be here.

### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Sabina, if I can start with you, the tech industry landscape. Give us an overview. What are we talking about? Where do the women in tech kick in and where do they not kick in, or not yet? What do you see around you?

### SABINA MAJERIC:

I would say that the ladies are kicking more and more in, and I don't see a place where women should not kick in because it's nothing that women cannot do. The problem I would see is that it's still not enough ladies choosing tech universities. That is a problem. That's why they're not kicking in: Because we can talk about our wishes to have more ladies in the tech industry, but if you have just 20% of young ladies joining and finishing at tech universities, then you cannot expect that you will have 50/50 with employees because it would be unreal. The math would not work. I think that should start much earlier.

That should start in the family and home environment where parents can say to girls, "Yeah, choose a tech industry. It's the environment for you in the same way that it's the environment for guys and it's no longer a man's world. So, you can be an engineer." That's the point where it should start, because if it's not starting there, if these young girls and young ladies don't have a female role model in the tech industry, then they will not go in this direction. As long as we have a much

smaller number of women finishing technical university, the workspace diversity when it comes to gender will never be equal or even close to equal. So, it's like a seed and we are at the point to put the seed in the ground. And then in a decade or two decades, maybe we will come to the place where men and women will be in equal amount joining the tech industry and the telco industry.

### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Okay. Thank you. Great opening statement, Sabina. Sarah, what do you see around yourself? Well, what environment?

### SARAH NARAG:

So, I think back in 2019, there was some research undertaken which showed that within large tech companies, the female workforce is sitting at around 30%. Now we're looking at 2022 and that number is approaching about 32.8%. It's great that there's an upward trajectory and especially in light of the pandemic that we are going through, as females are disproportionately affected by it as well. It's great that within our industry, we are still seeing that upward trend. I think that is directly related to the ability of our industry to be flexible and change with these flexible working models. As for the reasons why there are not enough women in the industry, I think Sabina touched on it perfectly. But for me, it's twofold. I think there's the issue where we do have some social and cultural responsibility. If we look at how girls have traditionally been brought up, it's to be perfect - to stay away from risk - whereas we have men who as boys were traditionally taught to be braver and take more risks.

There's an HP report that shows that women only apply for jobs when they have 100% of the qualifications. Men do it when they have 60%. The thing is, there's research showing that women are smart and girls have always outperformed boys when it comes to subjects in school, including STEM. There's a gap here because we are intelligent enough. We can do it, but there's a social aspect where we're not brave enough. We're not stepping out of our comfort zone. I think this has a direct impact on why there are not enough women in STEM and C-suites.

**“IF WE LOOK AT HOW GIRLS HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN BROUGHT UP, IT'S TO BE PERFECT - TO STAY AWAY FROM RISK - WHEREAS WE HAVE MEN WHO AS BOYS WERE TRADITIONALLY TAUGHT TO BE BRAVER AND TAKE MORE RISKS.”**

- Sarah Narag

# “WHAT I PERSONALLY SEE IS A LACK OF LEADERSHIP AND MENTORSHIP FOR WOMEN IN THE INDUSTRY.”

– Joanna Kuligowska

## ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Thank you, Sarah. Joanna, I saw you nodding, would you like to add something?

## JOANNA KULIGOWSKA:

Yes, I think I really couldn't agree more with Sabina and with Sarah. What I personally see is a lack of leadership and mentorship for women in the industry. It's a bit of a chicken and egg story. We don't have more women coming into the industry because very often as women we don't see ourselves being able to progress our career in another two or five years because there are not enough female role models in senior management and leadership. That is very important from an organization's point of view and that has to be stimulated from C-level. There is also the aspect of girls not joining technical universities, from which I can imagine... Well, I didn't graduate from a technical university; I studied languages. It just felt like the right choice at that time of my life because tech was too intimidating, and it seemed very complicated to enter a university that can be so male-dominated. It takes more women like us to go to those universities and to share our experience that actually- "Hang on, working in technology is fun". There are many types of jobs in that sector that are very often not that technical or overwhelmingly challenging: We can do it. We can do anything, just like Sabina said.

## ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Well, I'm in tech, and I'm the dinosaur here. I'm in tech for 35 years. So, yes: I'm the dinosaur here. (laughs) And tech is funky and it's becoming funkier than ever. Luanna, your opening statement. What do you see around you?

## LUANNA DE LUNA SENA:

So, first when we are really young girls we are taught to play with dolls, we need to behave well and dress well, while the guys go play with video games, for example. They can be technical. They can play there. So, why, since we are young, are we taught that we need to be perfect? You

need to be a princess. No, we can deal with technology, and we like it! It's interesting. So, why not? It is challenging to be an engineer. Yes. My God, at my university, we were lucky that we had 20–25% women – that is a lot. It's hard to join the industry. All the professors, all the old men. But if you see one lady, as you said, they can be the leader. Wow. It's inspiring. So, it's hard but we can do a great job. I believe it's 19% women that study computer science in America, whereas for engineering it's now 25%, but it's growing. For example, last year at the web summit in Lisbon was the first time in history that we had more women than men in attendance: 50.5%.

## SARAH NARAG:

That's a lot.

## LUANNA DE LUNA SENA:

I'm celebrating, it's beautiful! That's how it should be. We can now see the industry changing and we want to change it even more. So yes please, let's talk about women in tech. At our company GTC, we are growing more in diversity. Sabina here, CCO at HORISEN, what percentage of women are at C-level? It's really low. Why? Because they say if you are a lady, your chance of progressing upwards in the company and in your career is 40% compared to 60% of a man. We're going to change that. Don't worry, Erik. (smile)

## ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Sabina, can corporate strategies and structures support better integration and diversity, and do we already see some good use cases? What can you share with us?

## SABINA MAJERIC:

Yes, of course they can, and look at all the good cases you have around you and in front of you on video now today. It can be done. I don't believe that one very special thing needs to be done, it's really easy: Women should have the same chance when it comes to promotions and getting the place as men do. No special treatment, no special opportunities, just equality. Touching on what Sarah has already said: When it comes to a promotion or applying for the promotion when we talk about women, we do the analytic part and we think "Am I good enough? Am I perfect? Oh, I'm missing this 5%. Maybe I'm still not good enough to apply."

When it comes to men, they think, "Okay, I know this. I don't know this. I'm good enough, I'll go for it." Women should think about this self-confidence, or where we should teach younger ladies even at university level that you can risk it and you don't need to know everything perfectly because you will have a way and a time to learn it. The first thing is the mentality of women that you need to be perfect to go, but the second is that they should be treated - or we should be treated - equally. In most cases, it's not like this.

## ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Okay. So, no special treatment, just whatever you are. Whoever you are, whatever you are, doesn't matter. Just the same treatment.

## SABINA MAJERIC:

In the end, if I have a team I'm leading, I would never say "I will give the job to a lady instead of this guy just because she's a lady," even though he's better, because in the end as a team and as a department, I need to deliver results to the company. The best professional is the one





who will get the job. Just treat all professionals equally, no matter if they are men or women. That is the point.

#### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

You have a point, absolutely. Isn't it true though that, let's say, only 20, 25%, 30% are graduating so the pool of female candidates is smaller than the pool of male candidates? Isn't it therefore important to note that until we have achieved a 50/50 balance of university graduates, with these corporate strategies and the processes at least the women are a bit more pushed, helped, supported to help them secure certain positions? Because of the pool, the cake is just smaller. Right? From men to women in tech nowadays. Should it be promoted more or what's your take on that?

#### SARAH NARAG:

I think it should, and the reason why is because we have to look at it from a privileged perspective. If we're looking at diversity, equity is a massive part of diversity and inclusion. It's about ensuring that people that haven't had the same start in life do get some sort of justice. This talks specifically to the industry and the workforce in general, and now we're looking at stats that show that executive teams that are more gender diverse are likely to experience up to 25% more profitability. If you add greater racial diversity in those teams, they're 36% more likely to experience higher profitability. We need to look into why that is, and I think if we look at it at its most basic level, those who are starting off more privileged encounter a different struggle: Those who face more adversity are more resilient, more creative, and more innovative. It's up to companies to then be able to leverage those inherent skills and qualities that come with a more diverse workforce, and you do that by giving them the space. Right? Giving them the opportunity. Giving them a seat at the table and making space for them.

#### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Okay. Before I go to Joanna and then Luanna, let's get this interactive. If the audience has something to add, then please feel free to share because the subject is more than important. Now Luanna, do corporate strategies and processes need to be more in place to help women get their position more and more within tech corporations? Do they help?

#### LUANNA DE LUNA SENA:

Yes. I agree with both Sabina and Sarah on two points. Yes, you need to be a good professional otherwise I'm not going

to hire you. Yes, we should incentivize you. So, how can we do it? Start from the beginning, okay - let's get this lady and discover that she's really good. Make her an example and let her train someone else to grow it as well. We feel more comfortable. Then everyone around, even male colleagues will see it's good. We're going to try even harder. So, like this, talking here at the GCCM about women in tech is already something. This is a start, and I think this is the direction we should all go in.

#### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

With Carrier Community there's also the Woman in Tech magazine. So, please take your copy to the desk and read it. Men, you should read that as well. Joanna, what should we do? How can corporations help and support their workforce to get a more equal balance?

#### JOANNA KULIGOWSKA:

There are so many things that can be done and I believe in many organizations are being done. If I take the example of my company, HAUD, we have a very good personality assessment system that we use in recruitment. It's really important when it comes to recruiting talent to perform an unbiased mutual assessment of the candidate's skills. When I say unbiased, we have to talk about the unconscious bias and training within any organization

**BUT MEN ALSO  
MUST SUPPORT  
THE WOMEN AND  
MENTOR THEM  
AND HELP THEM  
AND PUSH THEM.**

– Nassia Skoulikariti

top to bottom across any level. It's needed because it's an unconscious bias, and very often people might not be aware of that when recruiting people. The very important thing which I said already is to have a proper mentorship program. And that's not just for women, it's for men and women. It's about nurturing talent and finding people within the organization and allowing them to grow and show them, okay, we see these qualities in you. You could do this job. Let us teach you how. Let us show you how to do it. There are so many things that can be done on the corporate level, but I think the most important thing is that it has to be from the top to the bottom of the organization. Here in the UK, it's not that bad, right? We just had Boris Johnson announcing transparency in pay. So, things are improving, but there are still so many markets where women are discriminated against, and as a business and in how we conduct business we have to show that we don't tolerate that sort of behaviour against our employees. This has to come from the top management in every organization, I believe.

I AGREE THAT IT SHOULD BE THE BEST ONE, BUT IN MANY, MANY CASES, EVEN IF THE WOMAN IS THE BEST ONE, SHE WILL NOT BE CHOSEN. SO, THAT'S MOSTLY THE PROBLEM.

– Sabina Majeric

#### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Nassia, please jump in and share what you have to say.

#### NASSIA SKOULIKARITI:

I started my company, Apiro Data, three years ago, and I made a point to help as many women as possible. All my developers to start with were female. Every woman in leadership needs to make a point to support other women within our network and outside our network as much as we can, we need to start with the women as well as the men within the organization, across the board and across the different levels for it to work. Once a female makes it to a certain level, we must support the people that come in after us to teach them, to mentor them. But men also must support the women and mentor them and help them and push them, because as it was said earlier by this panel, we need mentorship and women are not confident in many ways until they reach a certain level of expertise to put themselves forward. So, the men can help with that. Another change - a more HR-oriented and practical solution that will help women and bring in more workforce equality is to make paternity leave equal. I don't know if you've looked at the statistics out there but every time a woman has to leave the work environment, they lose 40% of their income for a lifetime, and it then takes them longer to catch up. So, they go back every time a woman has to leave for any given reason. Allowing men equal rights on paternity when they procreate will help women overall in the industry.

#### ERIK VAN STOKKOM:

Well, we see that in Scandinavian countries where the men go on paternity leave as well, paid or not paid, or for a certain period. I fully agree with you, but I do value as well the point that Sabina says: "Guys, by the end of the day, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter who you are, what you are, whatever. I just choose the best, and then by the end of the day, the best will come to the job." On the other hand, I'm still struggling a little bit with the thing that the pool of women of the total cake is still not enough.

#### NASSIA SKOULIKARITI:

I'll give you another example, if I may. When I was trying to get funding for my organization, I discovered that women only get 6% of the fund available. 6%. It might have grown since; 6.2, 6.3. I had an instance when I was talking to investors and they told me straight to my face - in fact, were two different companies that said this: "We like what you're doing. Get a male co-founder and then we'll talk to you." And it happens, guys. It happens. And it's unfortunate.

#### LUANNA DE LUNA SENA:

We need to deal with these problems just because we are born like this. It's unbelievable.

#### SABINA MAJERIC:

I mean, Erik, I agree that it should be the best one, but in many, many cases, even if the woman is the best one, she will not be chosen. So, that's mostly the problem. So, not in percentage. Not to have the same percentage of men and women. It's basically that when women are good enough or even better than guys, they will not be chosen. That is the problem.

#### LUANNA DE LUNA SENA:

Sabina, even if she's chosen, she's not going to stay in the industry because she's going to be discriminated against or mistreated so it's really hard to fight and stay.

#### SABINA MAJERIC:

You need to fight harder, yes. Correct. I would say that you need to prove yourself much more and many more times than the guy needs to do. But still, the problem is the promotion. I would say that this is leading to the main problem because when you are on the way to being promoted, it will be a guy on the other side of the desk. Here's where we are missing the role models. Here we are missing the ladies who can be shown as C-level or can be seen as C-level, and they're the main role model for all the ones who will even do the first step to go in this direction because they will be motivated. They will have something. They will have a goal. They will have a picture. It's not so much a problem of a woman getting into tech. It's the woman getting promoted in tech.

#### JOANNA KULIGOWSKA:

And staying in tech as well. We spoke about this and I think we have to address that a lot of women leave their job because they have to decide whether they want to have a family or whether they want to have a career. I know we've been through a very special time with the pandemic. We've transformed the way we approach business and how we work and certain flexibility in working has emerged that actually will help a lot of women.

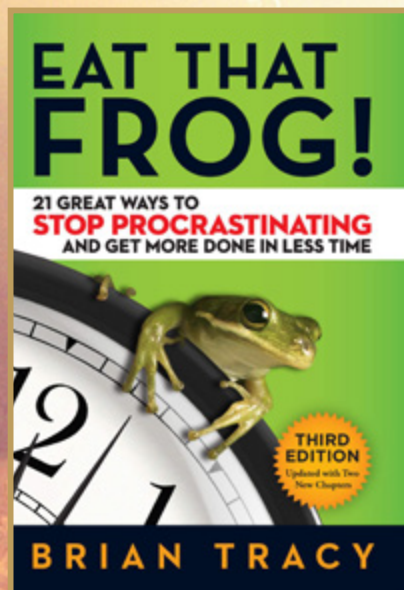
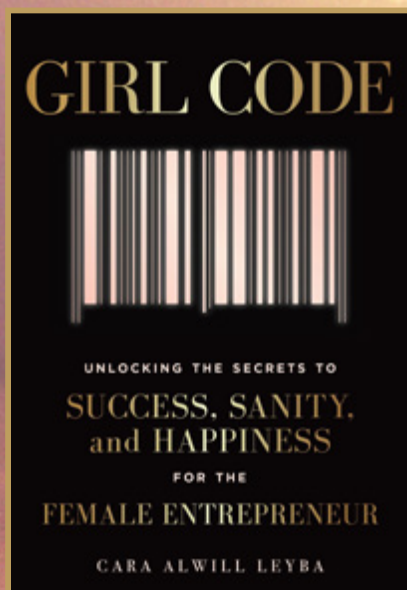
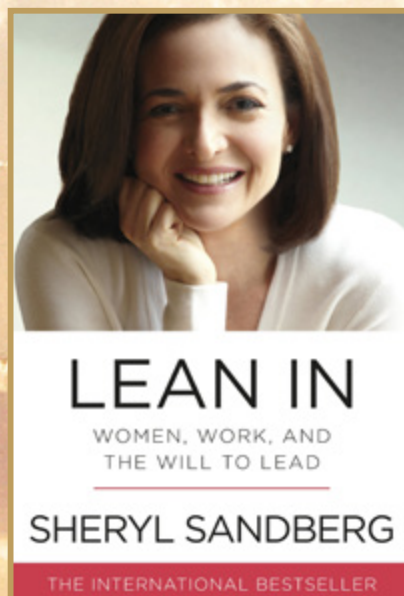
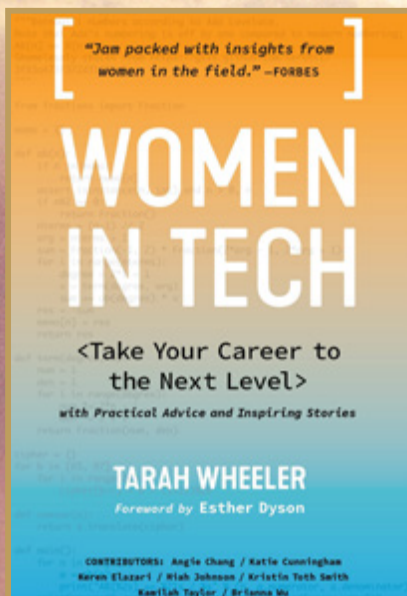
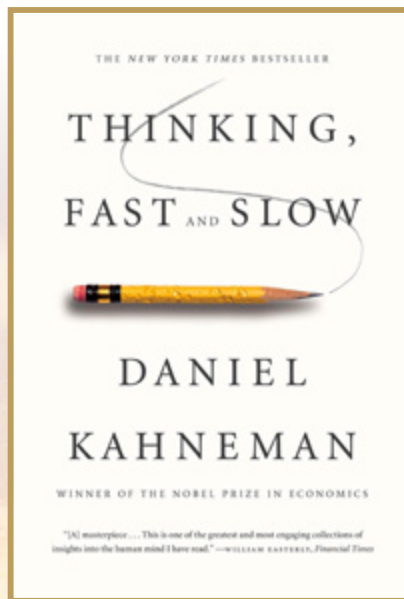
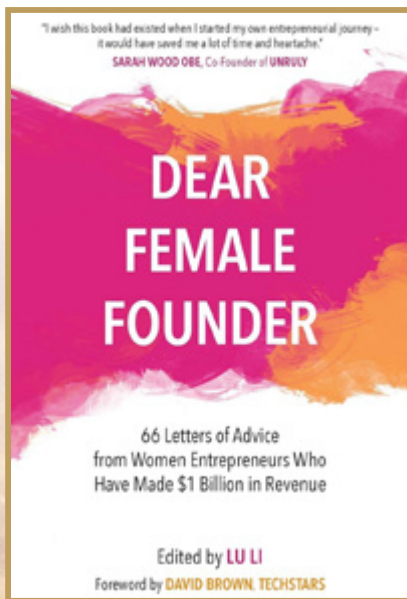
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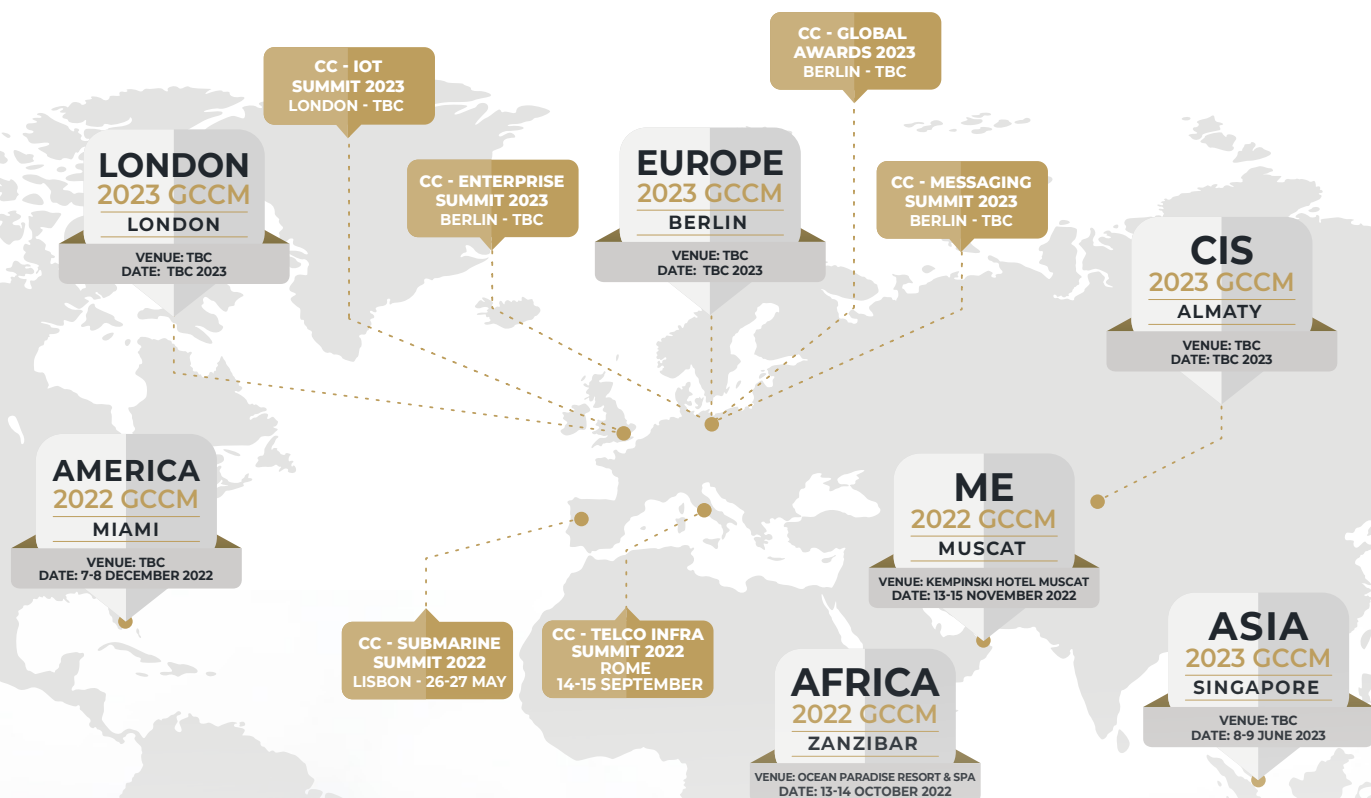
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Have your own recommendation? Reach out to [laura@carriercommunity.com](mailto:laura@carriercommunity.com) and your book recommendation will be featured in next Woman in Tech Magazine issue.



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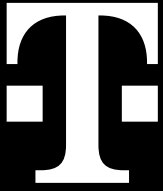


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