



OXYGEN INFLUENCERS 2025

50 people driving positive industry
change from outside the boardroom

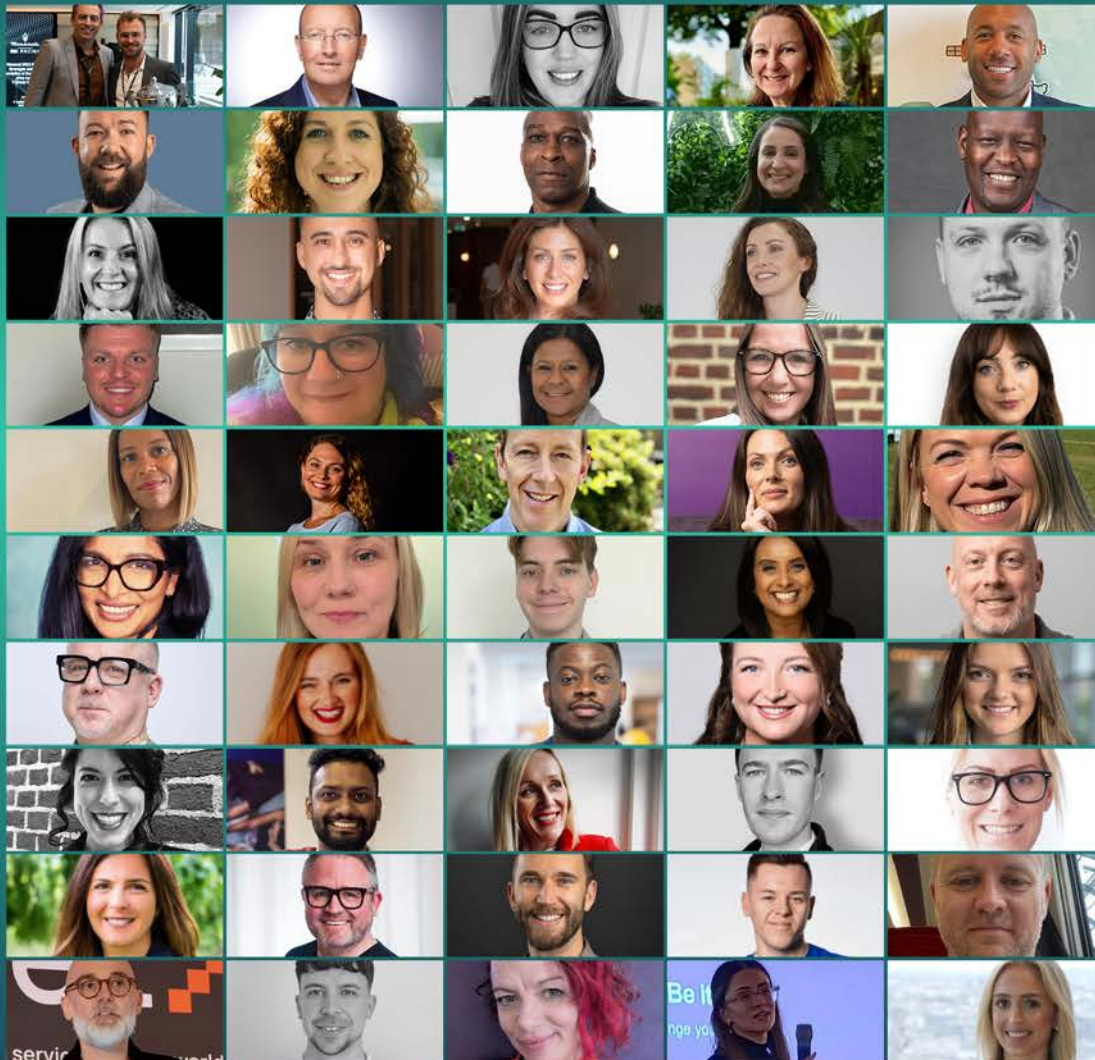
In association with

Nebula 
PEOPLE & TECH UNIFIED

Nebula is proud supporter of the Oxygen Influencers



We would like to congratulate this talented cohort of passionate people who are delivering positive change, to ensure the future success of our technology channel community.



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WELCOME TO OXYGEN INFLUENCERS 2025

DOUG
WOODBURN,
EDITOR, *IT
CHANNEL
OXYGEN*

A TEACHER TURNED TOP SELLER, a marketplace magician and a TikTok influencer taking the channel by storm.

These are among this year's 25 Oxygen Influencers – the UK IT channel's first-ever crowdsourced (anti) power list.

Backed by Nebula Global Services, the Oxygen Influencers concept was born last year amid a clamour for a new style of industry A-list.

As much as *IT Channel Oxygen* relies on CEOs to generate column inches, we realised we needed to look outside of the exec suite to find those capable of inspiring the next generation of talent.

That's why Oxygen Influencers shines a spotlight on those women and men driving positive industry change, but from outside the boardroom.

Last year's inaugural report spawned a spin-off VIP lunch and five video podcasts, and set our rivals scrambling.

Oxygen Influencers 2025 builds on this by expanding the total number of protagonists by a further 25 to 50 (and you can remind yourself of who made the cut last year on p38).

This year's crop includes a young sales leader who has built a team of outside-industry talent, a vendor exec put forward for her work around menopause in the workplace, and the reigning Channel Reality Show winner.

What makes Oxygen Influencers special is its crowdsourced nature, with all those featured either put forward by last year's Influencers, industry leaders (including some of those CEOs we impugned above) or our wider audience.

This is not a list of *IT Channel Oxygen's* favourite people. Beyond helping thin down the reams of nominations we received, we had a minimal role in determining who made the cut.

Instead, the 25 people in this report have all been held up by others for their role in



driving positive change. Various, they have gone above and beyond in areas such as DEI, ESG or schools outreach, are industry newcomers making a big splash, or have just achieved something amazing.

We have asked each around 10 questions, including not only about their own careers, but what they think on topics such as attracting fresh talent into the industry.

This year's more playful questions saw our Influencers having to compare themselves with an animal and nominate their preferred superpower.

Foxes, dogs, lions and owls were among the furry creatures that came up more than once in responses to the former.

When asked about her message for school leavers contemplating a career in the IT channel, one Influencer perhaps summed it up best by saying "whatever skills you have, we want them and we need them".

"Great people are what makes our industry so special and we need a whole variety of personalities and skills to continue our growth. Introverts and extroverts, top of the class or not, everyone can have a successful career in our industry," she said.

Who are these 25 role models that are inspiring positive change in the industry? Read on to find out.

THE NEED FOR HUMAN-LED INFLUENCE HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER

TWELVE MONTHS AGO, *IT Channel Oxygen*, in association with Nebula Global Services, launched the inaugural Oxygen Influencers 25; a celebration of individuals in the technology channel who were nominated by their peers for making a meaningful and positive impact. Today, we're proud to unveil the next chapter: Oxygen Influencers 50. This expanded list not only reflects the growing momentum of the initiative, but also the increasing appetite across the channel to recognise and elevate those who are driving real and positive change.

The Oxygen Influencers initiative remains a collaborative effort between *IT Channel Oxygen* and Nebula Global Services, two organisations deeply committed to spotlighting the people behind the progress. Our shared values continue to centre around community, innovation, and purpose-driven leadership. However, what's truly remarkable about this year's cohort is how they've captivated the attention of their peers, not through titles or hierarchy, but through action, authenticity, and impact.

Over the past year, we've seen a groundswell of support for this initiative, with nominations flooding in from across the channel. This is crowdsourcing at its most powerful, an organic, grassroots movement where the community itself identifies and uplifts those who are making a difference. These influencers haven't just been recognised by their companies; they've been celebrated by the wider technology channel community for their ability to inspire, connect, and lead with purpose.

The technology channel is no stranger to transformation. It thrives on innovation, adapts quickly to disruption, and constantly reimagines the customer experience. Yet, in an era marked by economic uncertainty, talent shortages, and evolving buyer behaviours,

the need for human-led influence has never been greater. The Oxygen Influencers 50 are meeting that need head-on.

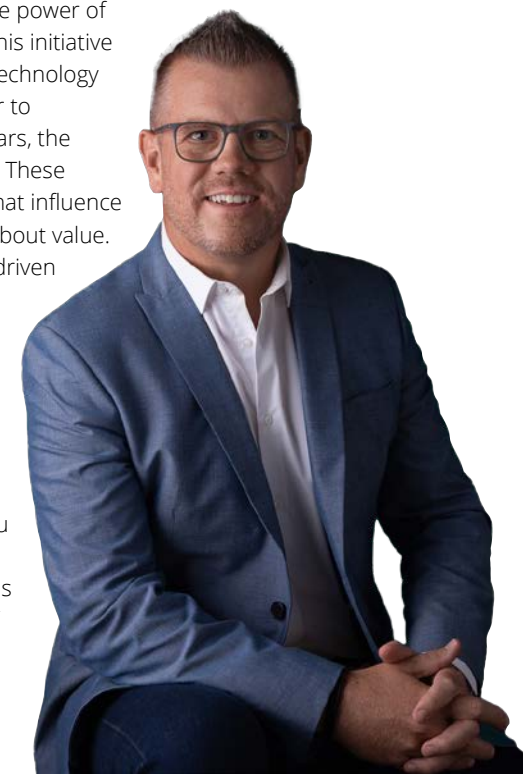
This year's list features a diverse mix of sales trailblazers, DE&I champions, ESG advocates, community builders, and digital pioneers. They are not just navigating change, they are shaping it. Whether through thought leadership, mentoring, storytelling, or strategic execution, these individuals are amplifying their voices and those of their communities to create a ripple effect of positive impact.

What sets the Oxygen Influencers apart is their ability to build trust and engagement in a fragmented landscape. In a world where buyers are influenced by a complex web of touchpoints, these individuals are becoming the connective tissue, bridging brands, solutions, and people with authenticity and purpose. They are not just influencers; they are architects of change.

As we celebrate the Oxygen Influencers 50, we also celebrate the power of collective recognition. This initiative is proof that when the technology channel comes together to spotlight its brightest stars, the entire industry benefits. These trailblazers remind us that influence isn't about volume, it's about value. And when that value is driven by purpose, the results are transformative.

To all those who made this year's list, congratulations. You've earned your place not just through what you do, but through how you make others feel, think, and act. Your influence is oxygen for the future of our industry.

RICHARD
EGLON,
CMO, NEBULA
GLOBAL
SERVICES



THE CHANNEL HAS SPOKEN

By Doug Woodburn



WELCOME TO THE UK IT channel's first crowdsourced (anti) power list.

You will find no CEOs in Oxygen Influencers.

Instead, this year's crop of 25 women and men includes a former hospitality exec taking the channel by storm, the winner of this year's Channel Reality Show, and a young sales leader who has assembled a team of outside-industry talent.

Together with last year's quarter-century of Oxygen Influencers (see p38), these are the people driving positive change in the industry, but from outside the boardroom.

WE ASKED, YOU ANSWERED

How did we find them?

In early summer, we sounded out scores of the industry's top leaders to ask them who should feature in a list like this.

We invited them to nominate colleagues or (preferably) employees of peers or partners who fitted any of the following criteria:

- Young/new leaders in waiting who have made a splash in a short space of time
- Those making a big impact in areas like ESG, DEI or bringing fresh talent into the industry
- Have achieved something exceptional either in or outside of their day job.

This year, we also put the call out for nominations to *IT Channel Oxygen's* wider audience.

Thirdly, and finally, we also looked back through the nominations of last year's Oxygen Influencers, who we'd asked at the time to recommend who else they felt should be in a list like this.

From this long list of nominations, we whittled it down to 25 people we felt best embodied the Influencers concept. Fortunately, all 25 of those we asked agreed to be part of the project.

The result is Oxygen Influencers 2025...

MEET THE INFLUENCERS

Who are this year's Influencers, and how did they make the cut?

Some 10 of this year's crop are employed by MSPs, VARs or other breeds of front-line channel partner. Nine work at vendors, four at distributors, and one each for an analyst and a marketing agency.

In their various ways, all have turned heads for the positive impact they have had on those around them and the wider industry.

This includes Softcat Recruitment Manager Elisha Kirkham, a young leader who was put forward for using her platform to help normalise women "taking up space and being visible in leadership".

"The reason I worked to build visibility across our wider industry is because, frankly, women being proactively and intentionally visible is still something that is not particularly comfortable for a lot of us," she tells us (see p21).

One of the more senior leaders featured in this year's report, Lenovo's Jane Ashworth, was selected partly on the basis of the "incredible work" she's doing to raise awareness around menopause in the workplace.

"It certainly affected me at a pivotal point in my career, and I wanted to help others navigate the struggles," she says (see p10).



"We lack LGBTQ+ representation, and we still have a long way to go."

Jack Hinchliffe, HP

"In the channel, and wider technology industry, we lack LGBTQ+ representation, and we still have a long way to go," adds Jack Hinchliffe, a Senior Partner Manager at HP who was put forward partly for the work he has done to support HP's Pride network.

Influence comes in many forms, however, with Microsoft marketplace wizard Darren Sharpe among those nominated for throwing their weight behind an emerging business model in the channel.

"I genuinely believe this model is the future of our industry. The marketplace isn't about cutting out the channel – it's about supercharging the channel," Sharpe says (see p32).

IBM's Joshua Lewis has enjoyed an unusual level of success using TikTok and other social media platforms to build traction in his role.

"The challenge is cutting through the noise. Be consistent, be authentic, and don't overthink it – people want straight talk, not polish," he says (see p23).

"This generation is all online, so you need to capitalise on that."

HPE Channel Reality Show winner Tiffany Nelson, Telefónica Tech

MARVELLOUS MOVES

Many made the cut on the back of bold career moves, including Westcoast Sales Manager Jack Bryant. He has built a team of new talent recruited from outside the industry.

"I still remember saying directly to our Sales Director, Phil Bell, 'Phil, if you want this new team to be a success, you need to hire me.' It was a moment of conviction – I believed I could make a real impact, even though I was young and stepping into leadership for the first time," Bryant says (see p13).

On the other side of the equation, it also includes teacher turned top seller Kieran Hignett, who left the world of pedagogy in 2021 to join Lepide.

"It was easier than I expected being that sales and teaching have a lot in common; in both industries you need to first engage your audience, gain their trust and convince them that the bus you are on is going in the right direction," he notes (see p18).

Having walked away from 11 years in the same company to jump into cyber security in 2016, Kocho's Anna Webb was last year crowned 'Security Changemaker' at the Microsoft Intelligent Security Association Awards.

"It was a leap into the unknown for so many reasons, but it turned out to be the best and most defining decision of my career," she says (see p36).

HP partners are already praising the impact of Nancy Powell after she joined the tech sector just two years ago to lead the vendor's sustainability efforts.



"Introverts and extroverts, top of the class or not, everyone can have a successful career in our industry."

Harriet Robbins, Giacom

She picked out founding her own start-up as her most daring career decision to date, however.

"I spent a lot of time in previous roles working in plastics and was keen to see if waste plastic could be converted into new products. I did this with herdbags.com and got comfortable with working way outside what I understood as my skills set," Powell explains (see p30).

FINDING FRESH BLOOD

Just like last year, we asked this year's Influencers how the IT channel could make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent.

"By doing things exactly like the HPE Channel Reality Show. This generation is all online, so you need to capitalise on that," responded recent HPE Channel Reality Show winner Tiffany Nelson, a Senior Digital Sales Representative at Telefónica Tech (see p26).

Former Exertis exec Jamie Brothwell said she felt the IT channel has become "a lot like the English football league", where top jobs are recycled between the same people.

"If you want to attract the next generation, you have to change the very people that have the same views and ideas of yester year. The next generation are looking for new leadership, people that look and think like them," she counselled (see p13).

Jonathan Griffiths, who in 2021 left the world of hospitality to join Pax8 (and is now Senior Director of Marketing, EMEA at Acronis), urged the channel to ditch the "burnout culture", meanwhile. "The next generation values balance, so let's use technology to give people more time back," he says (see p17).

HP's Hinchliffe said the industry needs to focus more on culture so that recent apprentice, intern and graduate hires stay in the sector.



"Back-to-office, although some are sceptical, enables the next generation to learn and watch more experienced people in the business," he asserts (see p19).

Bharti Lim, a Group Security Strategy Manager at Computacenter held up for being a role model in cybersecurity, agreed. The industry is doing a "great job" of attracting the next generation, but needs to do more to retain women once they are in, she claimed.

"We could be doing a lot more in this area, including programmes to bring them back into work once they have taken a career break, so we don't totally lose the skills and knowledge to another industry," Lim says (see p24).

What message would they have for school leavers contemplating a career in the industry?

Harriet Robbins, a Cyber Security Practice Manager at Giacom known for her work giving back to schools, said it best by stressing "whatever skills you have, we want them and we need them".

"Great people are what makes our industry so special and we need a whole variety of personalities and skills to continue our growth. Introverts and extroverts, top of the class or not, everyone can have a successful career in our industry," Robbins says (see p30).

We also asked our Influencers a range of more playful questions, including which animal most embodies them, and which superpower they'd select.

We hope you enjoy reading their responses as much as we did dreaming up the questions.

MEET THE OXYGEN INFLUENCERS



JANE ASHWORTH
DIRECTOR OF WORLDWIDE
STRATEGIC CHANNEL
PARTNERSHIPS, LENOVO

INFLUENCER IMPACT
Raising awareness around
menopause in the workplace

You were put forward for the “incredible work” you are doing around the menopause in the workplace. Why is this important to you? Menopause is a transition that impacts all women. It certainly affected me at a pivotal point in my career, and I wanted to help others navigate the struggles. My goal is to ensure Lenovo is a workplace where women receive the necessary support during this critical life stage.

What’s been your most daring career decision to date? I held the position of Channel Director in the UK and Ireland for several years during a period of significant success for Lenovo. I decided to take on a global role, which was new, unknown, and far from the customer. However, ultimately, it has been hugely rewarding, and I’ve gained a much

more holistic view of the company, which will ultimately serve me and our customers better when I return to customer-facing role.

What’s the best advice you’ve ever been given in your career? Be authentic and don’t be scared to be yourself.

What’s your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? Always focus on the “Why”. “Why” are we doing this? “Why” is this going to make a difference? It’s critical to ground any decision, providing both clarity and purpose.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? We need more diversity in recruitment. We need diverse thinking, backgrounds, and experiences to build high-functioning teams and to better solve today’s biggest challenges.

What’s your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? For anyone in education,

I’d recommend getting work experience as part of your course. It prepares you for a full-time workplace role and begins to build corporate and commercial acumen.

Also, good managers hire based on aptitude and competencies – knowledge can be taught. My best hire came from the education sector – they had no knowledge of IT – a few years later, their career is skyrocketing.

Do you have any hidden talents? My greatest talent is empathy – it helps me understand the needs of the personalities I’m working with, and bridge divides, ensuring everyone has a voice.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? Teleportation instead of long-haul flights!

What animal most embodies your personality? Probably a fox – cunning, intelligent, adaptable, resourceful.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? Pascal Borguet, Lenovo’s Chief Channel Officer, has been my biggest sponsor for the last 15 years. We started working together at HP, and I followed him to Lenovo, and now, within my worldwide role.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Stephanie Dismore, SVP EMEA at AMD, is a key figure within the industry. Not only is it essential to have more female leaders for role models, but she’s also driving a massive amount of change at AMD.

FAB BIRD
HEAD OF FINANCE,
HIGHGATE IT SOLUTIONS

INFLUENCER IMPACT
An up-and-coming leader

The leaders we asked felt you deserved a place on this list based on your swift ascent through Highgate’s ranks. Can you tell us more about that journey? It actually started with the ‘Open to Work’ symbol on my LinkedIn profile. I had a conversation with Highgate, joined as Credit Control Supervisor, and from there I have accelerated quickly through the business to become Head of Finance. Sometimes luck is just preparation meeting opportunity, and sometimes it starts with something as simple as saying you’re ready for the next step. If you’re on the fence about the ‘Open to Work’ banner, this is your sign.

What’s been your most daring career decision to date? Agreeing to take on ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) has been my most daring career decision, putting my knowledge to the test while daring my time management skills. As a remote worker, I’ve turned my former commute time and my four-day week into dedicated study time, proving to myself I can balance home life, a high-level role, and professional growth.

What’s the best advice you’ve ever been given in your career? Listen.

What’s your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? Ships are safe in the harbour, but that’s not what ships are for – John A. Shedd.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? The IT channel needs to show the next

generation it’s not just about knowing tech, it’s about solving problems, building relationships and making a real impact. We have even had employees relocate to Spain while continuing their careers with us, proof that the world really is your oyster in this industry. Share the stories, highlight the flexibility, and showcase the fast career growth. The IT channel already offers all of this, if we tell the story well.

What’s your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? Bring curiosity and drive, and this industry will take you further than you think.

Do you have any hidden talents? From ACCA study models to being able to do the iconic Cadbury eyebrow dance, talk about range!

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? Mind reading, so I know exactly what my golf ball is thinking, to make sure it listens when I tell it to go straight!

What animal most embodies your personality? I’m basically a Cockapoo. Clever, loyal and full of spirited energy.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? I’ve never felt more confident in my career than I do right now, and that is down to Jenny Latimer who believed in me from the very start. With Jenny and the whole senior leadership team (Stuart Marginson, Bob Sahota, Jenny Latimer and Paolo Rodia) cheering me on, it honestly feels like there is nothing we cannot achieve.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Chanice Downer, our Head of Operations. She is a fast worker and makes ops look effortless and has had an accelerated career journey, just like I have. Her vision helps turn ideas into smooth processes and helps elevate and collaborate the transactional teams across the business, and much more.

“Bring curiosity and drive, and this industry will take you further than you think.”

Fab Bird, Highgate IT Solutions



MARK BOYER
SERVICES OPERATIONS
DIRECTOR, SOFTCAT


You've been an "unsung hero" behind the scenes when it comes to transforming service portfolios into strategic assets, both at Softcat and other channel partners, according to one leader who nominated you. What's been the secret to your success? Putting people first and creating the environment for teams to find their flow. Add a healthy challenge to the status quo and introducing a focus on design thinking.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? My spell travelling the world in online gaming, where unregulated global markets meant every decision carried real risk. It forced me to adapt quickly, having to win trust without the gift of transparency is an interesting challenge.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? Lean into imposter syndrome. It means you're stretching yourself, and that's often where the magic happens.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? High-performing teams aren't built on perfection, but on trust, honesty and relentless marginal gains.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? By embracing diversity in all its forms and recognising the unique value the new generation of digital natives bring. They're not just tomorrow's workforce; they're the creative spark the channel needs right now.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? You don't need deep technical skills to succeed. Critical thinking, resilience and creativity are the real differentiators in an AI-shaped future. The channel is a place where those strengths can make an immediate impact.

Do you have any hidden talents? I'm over-obsessed with my Peloton. To the point I've shared private classes with Olympic athletes. It's my way of channelling energy, focus and a bit of healthy competition outside of work.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? The ability to see the world through other people's eyes. It would save a lot of second-guessing in meetings. Plus, empathy makes for better decisions, and I'd realise when I'm wrong a lot sooner!

What animal most embodies your

personality? I asked my partner and she said an elephant: loyal, community-driven, and impossible to ignore in the room. And yes, I never forget... which keeps everyone on their toes.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? There's been a few and I try to learn from someone every day, but right now Mark Forster. He's been in the industry forever and sets the benchmark for how to treat people. His example reminds me that respect and authenticity never go out of style.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Dean Gardner, Softcat's Tech Director. The team he has built at Softcat is incredible, not just for the impact they have here but they are re-shaping the industry. I could name so many others given the talent I work alongside, but Dean really stands out for me.


JAMIE BROTHWELL
FORMER MANAGING
DIRECTOR, EXERTIS
BUSINESS


You were put forward partly on the strength of your inspirational and vocal leadership, with one person calling you "the face" of Exertis IT. What's motivates you to put yourself forward so much? My motivations have always been to get to a position where I can make a difference, do the right thing and to be a voice for those that don't have one.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? To leave Exertis Business. I don't know what the future holds for me and whether I will come back into the industry or not right now, but either way I am proud of my 23 years in the Industry.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? Anthony Bate, former owner of Roche AV, said it's good to be different. I believe being your own true authentic self and being a change maker sets you apart. Be a shepherd not a sheep.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? The art of success is to make everything important to someone.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? I think of IT channel a lot like the English football league when it comes to the top jobs – the same people recycled over and over. If you want to attract the next generation, you have to change the very people that have the same views and ideas of yester year. The next generation are looking for new leadership, people that look and think like them.

"The next generation are looking for new leadership, people that look and think like them."

Jamie Brothwell



What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? It is an industry that changed my life and has been hugely fulfilling so I would recommend it highly.

Do you have any hidden talents? I am a karaoke queen!

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? Time travel, so I could go back and buy all the cars I now can't afford when they were cheap. Starting with a DeLorean for obvious reasons.

What animal most embodies your personality? Probably a Peacock

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? Mark Ash, an incredible and inspirational leader. He took a chance on me and changed my life in so many ways in the direction it took me.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Iffat Chaudhry


JACK BRYANT
STRATEGIC SALES
MANAGER, WESTCOAST


You're known for building a team of sales staff who'd previously worked in other industries. What's the key to success when it comes to recruiting and developing outside talent? I always go into the interview process open minded and I often know within the first 10 minutes of conversation whether the candidate is right for us.

SUPERPOWER SELECTOR

We asked our Influencers which superpower they would elect to have. Here's what some of them said...

Mind reading, so I know exactly what my golf ball is thinking, to make sure it listens when I tell it to go straight!

Fab Bird, Highgate

The ability to time travel, so that I could go back and tell my university tutor how wrong he was about the fact that I would never make it in the world of IT.

Anna Webb, Kocho

Magneto's metal-bending powers... purely to clear traffic jams.

Jonathan Griffiths, Acronis

Mind reading – imagine how useful that would be in sales!

Tiffany Nelson, Telefónica Tech

I'd choose the ability to clone myself. Not for world domination, but to finally solve the eternal tug-of-war between work and family. One version of me could be fully present with my loved ones, while the other dives into the work I love. That way, I could truly have it all.

Anjana Srinivasan, AMD

Time travel, so I could go back and buy all the cars I now can't afford when they were cheap. Starting with a DeLorean for obvious reasons.

Jamie Brothwell



I often feel you can unearth the best talent outside industry. Distribution is often seen as the stepping stone into the channel, and we can teach the products and the channel quirks once onboarded. But what is rare is to come across the right person that customers would enjoy working with, so I think, why not get raw and exciting sales talents into the team?

When recruiting from outside the IT channel, I focus on identifying individuals who are naturally curious, resilient, and coachable. These traits often outweigh technical knowledge, which can be taught. Whether it's retail, hospitality, or finance or even construction, they often bring fresh perspectives, customer-centric thinking, and a strong work ethic. I then invest heavily in onboarding and mentorship. We pair new hires with experienced team members, provide structured training on our solutions, and most importantly, create a culture where it's safe to ask questions and learn fast.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? Putting my hat in the ring to become a Sales Manager at just 23 was definitely the boldest step I've taken. I still remember saying directly to our Sales Director, Phil Bell, "Phil, if you want this new team to be a success, you need to hire me." It was a moment of conviction – I believed I could make a real impact, even though I was young and stepping into leadership for the first time. I am incredibly grateful that Phil and Ryan Lintott took a chance on me. Hopefully, I've paid that trust back. Since launching the Focus team, we've grown from just four people to a high-performing team of sixteen in just four years. That journey has been one of the most rewarding and defining chapters of my career so far.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? In my first year as a manager, I made the classic mistake of trying to do everything myself. A senior leader in

our business pulled me aside and said something that stuck with me:

"Jack, if you want to be a great manager and lead a motivated team, you need to empower others. Create mini, better versions of yourself. That means giving your people autonomy, being patient with mistakes, and always being available to coach – even if it means dropping everything to support them on a call or in a meeting."

Another great piece of advice I was given about recruitment was to think of building a sales team like building a football team – you don't want 11 of the same player. You need balance. That's why I deliberately look for people with different personalities, backgrounds, and thinking styles. It brings better ideas, stronger collaboration, and a more dynamic team culture.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? Cheesy or not, I'm a big believer in "work hard, play hard". I've always felt that if you're going to give 100% during the day, you should also be able to enjoy the wins with your team.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? Overall, the IT channel is doing a great job attracting exciting new talent. However, I believe more businesses could benefit from developing formal scholarships or academy programmes to nurture and develop young professionals. Westcoast has introduced such a programme over the past 12 months, and it's been a roaring success – providing clear career pathways, hands-on experience, and mentorship that resonate well with the next generation.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? Do it, you absolutely will not regret it. There

"One thing is for sure: technology and the industry is always going to elevate and grow in a uncertain world."

Jack Bryant, Westcoast

are so many different avenues and career paths you could take. One thing is for sure: technology and the industry is always going to elevate and grow in a uncertain world. So it certainly is a great career that you can make a difference in.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? Honestly, I'd love to be able to see 10 years into the future – not just to check in on my family, but to spot new trends and technologies before anyone else does. Our industry is always changing, and being ahead of the curve would help me make smarter moves and stay prepared for whatever's next.

What animal most embodies your personality? I'll go lion. I believe in leading by example, staying calm under pressure, and creating an environment where everyone feels motivated and valued.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? There have been many great colleagues who have influenced me, which is one of the best things about Westcoast. There are so many senior managers and leaders who genuinely make time for everyone.

However, Sunil Madhani, our CEO, has had an especially significant

impact on my career, definitely without even realising it. Early on, I learned quickly that if you come unprepared to a conversation with Sunil, he can politely but firmly humble you – he's incredibly knowledgeable and almost always aware of every detail.

That experience drove me to always come fully prepared whenever I needed his support on a project or an order. I make sure I'm completely across order flow, workflow, and cash flow, and that I can articulate these clearly and confidently.

I've carried this approach into every senior meeting or important conversation since. Even at a relatively young age, it has helped me get my point across and earn respect in the room.



BEN CADDY
SENIOR ANALYST,
CANALS (PART OF OMDIA)

INFLUENCER IMPACT
The go-to source on the tech channel's sustainable transformation

Sustainability and DEI have suffered some setbacks in the last 12 months. Can you offer any positivity? There have certainly been setbacks, especially if you focus on government policies worldwide, which is making people scared to talk about these issues. However, the many stories of positivity aren't so loudly amplified. From a channel perspective, our data shows that the



“They are cooperative, calm and approachable. They also eat a lot of fruit and vegetables, which I can appreciate.”

Canalys’ Ben Caddy sees himself as the animal kingdom’s largest species of rodent, the capybara

majority of partners say sustainability is no less of a priority today than it was a year ago, and in many cases, it’s actually a higher priority. What’s more, the circular economy is a larger focus than it’s ever been, so much so that vendors are finally taking it seriously.

For DEI, it’s depressing to see how many tech giants quickly abandoned it earlier this year, so they’ve lost a lot of integrity there. Although it’s being talked about less, the channel remains committed: over two thirds of partners still have DEI strategies, and partner survey responses tell us that DEI is the #1 social issue our industry should better prioritise in 2025.

What’s been your most daring career decision to date? I’m quite an anxious and introverted person, so it’s probably doing some live presentations and panels for the first time at our Canalys Forums events. That wasn’t something I ever thought I’d be able to do, but I did it and enjoyed it – thanks to many, many at-home practice runs with my fiancée, and the generous advice of my colleagues (who have keynoted thousands of times, masterfully I may add).

What’s the best advice you’ve ever been given in your career? To take a breather every once in a while, prioritise your tasks and make it a habit to log off at a reasonable time. Of course, there are busy periods, but burning yourself out is never worth it and it’s crucial to put your mental health, physical wellbeing and time with loved ones first.

What’s your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? As my work is about sustainability, a quote that’s forever resonated would be this one from David Bowie’s song Changes: “And these children that you spit on as they try to change their worlds... are immune to your consultations; they’re quite aware of what they’re going through.”

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? The obvious problem is low awareness of what the IT channel is. When you’re contemplating the early steps of your career, you’ll be aware of huge vendors like Microsoft, NVIDIA and Dell, but the chances are that you’re not familiar with the vast ecosystem of partners that connect businesses

to technology. Honestly, the first time I became aware of the channel was when I heard about this role at Canalys... I’d never considered that 70% of businesses’ IT spend was indirect and supported by partners.

As a way of improving that awareness, partners could be more present at careers fairs, offer paid internships and prioritise spreading the message among underserved demographics and communities. The only other thing I’d say is not to lose the human touch in recruiting – it’s a tough job market and there’s plenty of applicants using generative AI for CVs and cover letters, but resist the temptation to just hand over the screening process to AI as well, which could be pretty disastrous from the perspective of fair, equal and diverse hiring. Oh, and look after your employees – establish a sense of trust and flexibility around working hours and in-office time.

What’s your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? Remember that everyone had a first day at their company once, and they likely made mistakes along the way. Look for colleagues and mentors who

understand that philosophy and are willing to support you. And finally, if you’re not from a tech background, be kind and patient with yourself when approaching the learning curve.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why?

Time travel. I think a look into the future of our planet would be the ultimate motivator for regulators, world leaders and corporates to take the climate crisis seriously.

What animal most embodies your personality? I’ll go with the capybara. Perhaps it’s an odd choice

to choose the animal kingdom’s largest species of rodent, but I’m a fan of how they are cooperative, calm and approachable. They also eat a lot of fruit and vegetables, which I can appreciate, so they set a good example for all of us.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? Like

many people in our channels analyst team would say, the answer is of course Rachel Brindley, our Senior Research Director. Her work ethic, dedication and warmth has elevated our team and our research to new heights, and she’s always been so supportive and encouraging of me when facing new opportunities and challenges. Not only that, Rachel’s enthusiasm and genuine interest in what’s going on in the channel is infectious and inspiring.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. It’s a cruel question as there’s so many, from so many parts of our organisation globally... Just to name a few, Robin Ody (EMEA) is a relentlessly kind colleague and MSP genius, Devan Adams (NA) is a true joy to collaborate with and elevates our research with his telco expertise, and Sheena Wee (APAC) is simply awesome with her versatile channel knowledge, from cybersecurity to AI to sustainability.

JONATHAN GRIFFITHS
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF
MARKETING, EMEA,
ACRONIS



INFLUENCER IMPACT
The former hospitality
exec taking the channel by storm

You were put forward for the impact you’ve made since joining the IT sector from the sports/hospitality sector in 2021. How easy was it for you to make that transition? Marketing is about people and stories, not products. If you’re passionate about that, you can move across industries, so the transition felt natural.

What’s been your most daring career decision to date? Leaving global sporting events to join a disruptive US tech company with no EMEA marketing presence. Risky, but building the team from the ground up and seeing the results was hugely rewarding.

What’s the best advice you’ve ever been given in your career?

“Say yes and figure it out later.” Growth happens outside your comfort zone, not when you already know everything.

“Growth happens outside your comfort zone, not when you already know everything.”

Jonathan Griffiths, Acronis

What’s your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? “The standard is the standard.” Once you hit a new level, it becomes the benchmark and then you push past it.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? We need to ditch burnout culture. The next generation values balance, so let’s use technology to give people more time back.

What’s your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? It’s tough but thrilling. Be humble, hungry, and smart and you can thrive in this industry.

Do you have any hidden talents? I can recite the opening to Shakespeare’s Henry V from memory.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? Magneto’s metal-bending powers... purely to clear traffic jams.

What animal most embodies your personality? A labrador. Enthusiastic, positive, and always up for what’s next.



Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? My old Marketing Director, Miles Rimell, who showed me how to truly care for people while delivering results, which is a lesson I carry every day.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Don Jeter, now CMO at Torq. He redefined IT marketing at Pax8 and is doing it again. World-class, regardless of industry or marketing focus.



KIERAN HIGNETT
SALES MANAGER, LEPIDE

INFLUENCER IMPACT
Teacher turned top seller

You left the world of teaching to join Lepide in 2021, and are now one of their top sellers. How easy was it to transition to a new industry? It was easier than I expected being that sales and teaching have a lot in common; in both industries you need to first engage your audience, gain their trust and convince them that the bus you are on is going in the right direction.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? Leaving my career of 19 years to start something I had never done before.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? It came early on in my teaching career and the Deputy Head said to me that all behaviour is communication and from that point it impacted every decision I have made since when working with children and adults alike.

My other was from my Dad when he said, 'Find a job that you love, then you will never do a day's work in your life'.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? The one thing you can always rely on is CHANGE, which in a way is the biggest constant there is. Lean into change and be prepared and accept being vulnerable.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? I honestly think that you should link up with schools and provide materials which both encourage and inspire the young people. Encourage them early.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel?

Have conversations with as many people in the industry as possible and ask them questions. Be curious and brave.

Do you have any hidden talents? I can cook a decent restaurant-quality meal whilst enjoying a few cooking bourbons.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? The ability to freeze moments in time and revisit or the ability to see things through another person's eyes.

What animal most embodies your personality? Meerkat – they are constantly on the go and on the lookout.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? My Head of school, Mike, when I became a teacher and Head of Year. He showed me how to be able to teach and be authoritative but also to never forget that they are just kids who need to feel accepted, understood and listened to.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. James Bowen – Our COO for his problem-solving ability and the way he can think clearly, without emotion or ego getting in the way.



Image: ElenaPivovay

INNELOXYGEN.COM



"It is so, so important people can bring their whole self to work!"

Jack Hinchliffe, HP Inc

JACK HINCHLIFFE
SENIOR PARTNER
MANAGER, HP INC

INFLUENCER IMPACT
Pride champion labelled
"one to watch"

You were put forward partly for the "incredible job" you've done supporting HP's pride network. Why is this important to you? Visibility is crucial. If you don't see it, create it! In the channel, and wider technology industry, we lack LGBTQ+ representation, and we still have a long way to go.... It is so, so important people can bring their whole self to work!

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? Anyone who knows me knows I am incredibly ambitious. The best advice I have ever received was to be open with your goals, align champions and be patient. When you're no longer embarrassed to say you want to be the CEO, people genuinely take an interest in your journey and will support you with growth opportunities.

What's your favourite work-

related philosophy, saying or quote? I'm a big believer in continuous learning and the quote by Zig Ziglar: You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? It has been great to see the increase in opportunities for the next generation with established channels into the industry through apprenticeships, internships and graduate opportunities. Where there needs focus is on culture, so they stay. Back-to-office, although some are sceptical, enables the next generation to learn and watch more experienced people in the business.

In my internship I was surrounded by Sales Directors, Managing Directors and experienced colleagues. You subtly pick up on soft skills, learn from listening and watching and can more easily build your network. I would say this was invaluable to my career progress.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? What's stopping

you? The IT channel is so diverse there really is a career path for everyone!! It is such an exciting time to be in the technology industry – as development in AI spearheads innovation across all aspects of tech the personal and professional growth is huge!

Do you have any hidden talents? Unfortunately, if I have a talent, I have already told you about it...

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? I'm not sure about superpower but I would love to be able to sing. I would be completely relentless, and I fancy myself as the next Adele.

What animal most embodies your personality? My ENTJ personality type would suggest a lion, which I don't disagree with, but I would need to cross that with a meerkat or something to cover off the social and creative side of my personality.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? To sound cliché, there are too many. I have been very fortunate to have fantastic leadership, management and mentors. I would say one of the most positive influences on my career was starting it at HP on their internship programme. HP is a school of talent, their professional development, continuous opportunities and culture allow everyone to thrive – I have been very fortunate to start my career there!

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Jeramie Sutton. I have looked up to her for many years, love how she champions DE&I and she gave me the confidence to come out at work and go on to make the impact I have. More recently her openness around her health journey has been completely authentic and inspiring. I am very proud to know her and the IT channel is a better place with her in it!

"A £100BN INDUSTRY NOBODY'S HEARD OF"



HOW TO ATTRACT more young people into an IT channel "nobody's heard of" emerged as the key discussion topic at a lunch debate involving last year's Oxygen Influencers.

The event saw 16 of the 25 individuals highlighted break bread at Ivy Asia St Pauls.

Ian Kilpatrick, who in 2023 founded Tech Channel Ambassadors, called on everyone in the room to visit their local schools to promote the industry.

"We're a £100bn industry nobody's heard of," he said.

"The view you have of your career is determined by what's shown to you, and if we go and show it to them, we can change their lives.

"We need ambassadors from your companies to go into schools, say 'this is the IT channel; this is my story; you've never heard of it but it's a lot of fun; it's continually changing; and you can make good money and a career out of it.'"

Dr Colin Williams, CTO, Cybersecurity at Computacenter, said he was "proud to be one of the oldies" in a room that included up-and-coming sales staff and leaders in their 20s and 30s.

"The reason I'm pleased is that when I started, the industry didn't do this. It didn't care about this; it didn't care about looking at people who weren't inherently white, middle-class males from Surrey. I'm over the moon to be here just to see people round the table like this, because this wasn't the IT industry I used to see."

IKRAMUL KHALED
GROUP HEAD OF VENDOR
ALLIANCES, QBS
SOFTWARE

INFLUENCER IMPACT
Influential behind the scenes

You've been described as being "really influential" in a role that is carried out largely behind the scenes. Is that a fair summary? I'll let others be the judge of that. I just love championing the value of the channel, and I'm grateful to QBS for letting me do that.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? Jumping from telecoms to the IT channel with just sales, Java, and some Front-End experience. It was a leap into the unknown.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? An effective leader will ask questions instead of giving direct orders.



What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? If you don't ask, the answer is always no.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? Bring IT channel into the mainstream media. Think reality TV shows and Hollywood films with channel stars and stories.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? You can learn any skill you need; your hunger to grow is what counts most.

Do you have any hidden talents? I can sing in five languages!

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? Telekinesis. Imagine multitasking without dropping the ball (or anything else).

What animal most embodies your personality? A horse. I'm driven, focused, and always keep my eyes on the finish line.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? Andreea Dumitrescu, QBS UK MD. Her journey at QBS is inspiring, and her guidance and relentless drive have helped shape my own approach.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. It should be Martin Clarke, Account Director at QBS UK, hands down. He consistently goes above and beyond to evangelise about the IT channel.

ELISHA KIRKHAM
RECRUITMENT MANAGER,
SOFTCAT

INFLUENCER IMPACT
She's built a platform to promote psychological safety, representation and authentic leadership

You're one of the industry's most visible young leaders. What motivated you to build such a high profile and what advice would you have for those wishing to follow in your footsteps? The reason I worked to build visibility across our wider industry is because, frankly, women being proactively and intentionally visible is still something that is not particularly comfortable for a lot of us. As women we're raised to keep our heads down, work hard, and hope someone notices, not to intentionally showcase our value and put ourselves out there. The first time I shared my story in public, I felt exposed. But I knew that if I pushed through that discomfort, I could help normalise women taking up space and being visible in leadership. My advice? Don't wait for it to feel comfortable – because it won't. Do it anyway, and by doing so, you'll make it easier for the next person.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? My most daring career decision has been committing to trusting my gut and my values rather than the opinions of others. It sounds simple, but in a society that constantly pushes us to seek approval or fit a mould, it's actually quite radical. Choosing to back myself, even when it went against what others thought I

"should" do, has been super uncomfortable at times, don't get me wrong. But it's also been the most liberating and rewarding decision I've made. It doesn't always make you popular, but it keeps you authentic, and honestly, I'd rather be trusted for that than praised for being agreeable.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? The most impactful advice I've ever been given was funnily enough, actually some of the simplest. A few years ago someone said to me, "I don't understand why you don't see that you can do anything you put your mind to." It genuinely stopped me in my tracks. I'd honestly never looked at myself that way, and it was the moment where I realised the only limitations I had were the weird, abstract ones I'd been putting on myself for most of my life. That has truly stuck with me ever since, and I regularly remind myself it, as well as passing it on to others whenever I can.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? "Don't shrink yourself to make others comfortable." It's

something I remind myself of often, especially as a woman in leadership. Making yourself smaller might feel safer, but it doesn't serve you... or anyone else watching you. I would never intentionally set out to make anyone uncomfortable, but sometimes just taking up space as yourself does exactly that. And that's not a reason to hold back. If anything, it's a reminder that visibility and authenticity matter even more, because the more we do it, the less uncomfortable it becomes for everyone who follows.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? I think the next generation of talent are less interested in the traditional playing of the game and more interested in being true to themselves. They want to work somewhere they can bring their ideas, make decisions based on their values, and trust their gut without constantly worrying about fitting into a rigid mould. The IT channel has an opportunity now to show we're not just about following the old rules, but instead about rewarding authenticity, curiosity, and initiative. If we can create an

"A lot of what I try to do is about bringing people together and making them feel valued."

Elisha Kirkham, Softcat



environment where people feel safe to be themselves and take ownership of their work/ideas/opinions, we'll not only attract the next generation, but we'll also have a much better chance of keeping them!

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? We're an industry where, often, results matter more than time served. In my experience, if you're curious, proactive, and willing to take ownership, you can learn, grow, and excel faster than in most other industries. It's one of the few places where your ideas and effort can accelerate your career almost immediately, which I think is incredibly exciting for anyone early in career wanting to build something great.

Do you have any hidden talents? I have a weird talent for shortening literally anyone's name, even the ones you'd think are unshortenable. I challenge you to find me a name I cannot shorten. It's either my greatest skill or my most irritating habit – the line is super thin.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? I'm pretty obsessed with human behaviour and why we do what we do and say what we say, so the ability to read minds would be unbelievably interesting to me. I love trying to figure out motivations, reactions, and the "why" behind a person, so it'd essentially be like getting an access-all cheat code.

What animal most embodies your personality? Probably a golden retriever. Loyal, energetic, and emotionally invested in everyone around me. Very heart-led and occasionally needs to retreat to a quiet corner to reset. A lot of what I try to do is about bringing people together and making them feel valued, which is very golden-retriever energy I think!

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? It's hard to single out one person, but the people who have had the biggest impact on me have been the ones who believed in me before I fully believed in myself. I've been lucky enough to have a number of managers and mentors over the years who have encouraged me to take on challenges, gave honest and sometimes brutal feedback for the sake of my development, and helped me see that my perspective and voice mattered, which is exactly what I now try to be for others.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Seleeta Walker from Computacenter. I've actually only met Seleeta once in person, but in my mind, that's kind of the purpose of this initiative – showcasing people who are having an impact and influencing people, even from a far. Everything I see/hear of Seleeta, whether that be on LinkedIn or word of mouth via other connections in the industry, it's clear she is incredibly passionate about creating lasting and meaningful change not just for CC but across our industry as a whole. Excited to see what she does next!

HAYLEY KNOTT
SENIOR MARKETING
MANAGER, NATILIK

 **INFLUENCER IMPACT**
A women in tech and diversity powerhouse

You were put forward for the "incredible work" you are doing around promoting women in tech. Why is this important to you? I am a big believer that building a diverse future in tech is beneficial to everyone. I love my career in this industry and I want to showcase to women and girls that there is space in this industry for them and they too, can thrive in it.



What's been your most daring career decision to date? Moving from a large vendor organisation to Natilik as the first Marketing Manager in a team of two... myself and the CMO. Shaping and constructing marketing as a function in an organisation that previously outsourced everything, was a challenge. From building out processes, systems, channel partnerships to establishing working relationships between sales and marketing was a risk but an exciting journey. Eight years later, it's been a privilege to watch the function I work in grow to become award winning and receive vendor recognitions.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? 'Align with leaders, not follow blindly'. If you are lucky enough like I, to have great leaders in your career it can be very easy to try model yourself in their image. I recently was reminded that every person, every leader, builds from their unique mix of skills and life and not to ignore your own knowledge, experience and style when developing in your career. It is the variety of this mix that powers creativity, curiosity and innovation in our industry.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? 'It's easier to rip something apart than build it from scratch.'

There is a twofold reason why I love this saying. Firstly, sometimes you just have to start. Get something down, it doesn't have to be perfect first pass, but sometimes the hardest part is putting that pen to paper, you can edit, shape and revise from there. Secondly, a reminder it's much easier to cast an opinion than generate an idea from nothing. Feedback and critique are all part of the building process but take solace that you laid the foundations.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? Be flexible. Consider that not everyone succeeds at work in the same way and align your policies to support people to thrive. There are great organisations doing fantastic work promoting our industry such as the Stemettes and SheCanCode, if you aren't already supporting them that's a great place to start.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? You get out what you put in. Be ready to constantly connect and learn. It is a very close-knit industry – staying true to your values, and acting with integrity will go a long way.

Do you have any hidden talents? Most people are surprised that I've been part of a British Sign Language (BSL) choir for the last fourteen years. My hidden talent is learning 200+ songs across that time!

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? I would love to be able to time travel. To see the city of London evolve through the ages would be fascinating.

What animal most embodies your personality? A magpie, I love history and studied conservation and restoration of historical objects, so anything golden or shiny with

character always makes me stop and look!

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? So many people over the years have helped guide and shape my career, shown up when I have felt lost and sponsored me when I haven't been in the room. Some of the most positive influences have been colleagues that inspire my curiosity, whether in a new area of technology, a new way of thinking, a new framework to apply or even just introducing me to new connections and networks.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Emma Simpkin – her relentless energy to continuously push for higher standards in everything she does in our industry.

JOSHUA LEWIS
TECHNOLOGY PARTNER
LEADER, IBM

 **INFLUENCER IMPACT**
The TikTok Influencer taking the channel by storm

You've enjoyed incredible success using TikTok and other social media platforms to build traction

"Be consistent, be authentic, and don't overthink it – people want straight talk, not polish."

Joshua Lewis, IBM

in your role. What challenges have you met along the way, and do you have any top tips you can share? The challenge is cutting through the noise. Be consistent, be authentic, and don't overthink it – people want straight talk, not polish.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? I pitched to my CEO to create this role and lead what's now one of our biggest UK partnerships [Softcat] – and it's paid off.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? Don't be afraid to bet on yourself.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? "If you don't ask, you don't get."

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? Focus on giving talent opportunities for hyper growth and challenge earlier in their career that they can't get access to in other industries.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? Don't hyperfocus on the first job being your passion – focus on the skills and career capital you are building from it.



Do you have any hidden talents?
Dyslexia. It forces me to cut through complexity and think differently.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why?
Future vision

What animal most embodies your personality? An eagle: Bold, fearless, and decisive, with the ability to see opportunities others can't.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? Nicola Hodson and Karen Fletcher – they weren't afraid to bet on me.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Andrew Gill.

BHARTI LIM
GROUP SECURITY
STRATEGY MANAGER,
COMPUTACENTER

INFLUENCER IMPACT
A role model for women in cyber

One of your peers described you as a "role model for women in cyber". What's your message to young people considering a career in the sector? There are many types of roles available in this area so don't limit your options to one area. Security is always evolving as are the roles available. Get as much knowledge from people doing the various jobs before you make any decisions. Ask for ideas of what might suit your talents or what you enjoy doing and never doubt yourself; you belong in this industry as much as the next person.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? While it won't sound that daring I would say it was going part-time (three days a week) and hoping that I hadn't put a nail in the coffin of my career. I quit

"A big issue is retaining women once they are in the channel. We could be doing a lot more in this area."

Bharti Lim,
Computacenter

my full-time job before I had secured a new role and hoped for the best that I would find something. This is still seen as a bit of a unicorn; not many roles exist that are three days a week. I have been very fortunate to have been doing a part-time role for seven years now and progressed my career more than I expected.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? There is no shame in asking for help. Pretending you know something when you don't is worse.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? I am not sure it's work related as such, but it is a great quote that more of us should be inspired by: "Every woman's success should be an inspiration to another. We're strongest when we cheer each other on."
– Serena Williams.

My other favourite is "The question isn't who

is going to let me; it is who is going to stop me." – Ayn Rand.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? Personally, I think we are doing a great job of attracting the next generation now. There are so many events being run and organisations doing great

things to encourage both young men and women into tech. I think our bigger issue is retaining women once they are in. We could be doing a lot more in this area, including programmes to bring them back into work once they have taken a career break, so we don't totally lose the skills and knowledge to another industry.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel?

Ask lots of question to different people. Tech is such a large industry with a wide variety of roles. Don't just

assume you have to be technical; there are all sorts of opportunities in the IT channel.

Do you have any hidden talents? This is a hard one because I am quite crafty and love creating things, so I guess I have quite a few but I think the one that surprises most people is my cakes. I seem to have a skill baking and decorating cakes!

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? Teleportation! Because I love to travel and take myself away to places.

What animal most embodies your personality? A butterfly – not a necessarily a social butterfly, although some people may say I am but for me it's more around the resilience and transformative traits.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? Ahh, I have been very fortunate there are so many

throughout my career that have had a huge impact on me. I could be cheesy here and say my husband who I worked with when I met him and is my biggest supporter. But excluding him, if I had to pick just one, I think it would have to be my dear late friend Ahmed. When I first started out in security back in 2005, he took me under his wing to teach me all about Check Point firewalls. It was so hard as a woman in security to get a break, but he helped me get started, from giving me hands-on experience in a lab, to what certifications to take and CV edits over numerous years.

My next role after working with him was really the beginning of my real security journey and I will forever be grateful for him believing in me.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Another tough one. I could name about 20 people but am going to say Holly Foxcroft. Her energy is contagious; she is a huge role model to so many women and men. She champions others, especially in DEI topics around neurodiversity and shares her knowledge so openly. She inspires me!



JOACHIM MASON
MANAGING DIRECTOR,
PARTNER SALES, CISCO

INFLUENCER IMPACT
Hugely influential among Cisco partners

Cisco partners called you "hugely influential". What's your top tip on maximising influence as a vendor channel leader? That is very high praise indeed – something in me wants to refute that claim!

I'm actually not too keen on the terms 'vendor' or 'channel' and much prefer 'partnership'. A partnership is two-way, it has depth, is long-standing and is built on trust through the ups and downs. Approach it that way and, in my view, the partnership itself will be what's most influential.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? If you can call moving from IBM to Cisco 'daring' (!) then that would probably be it. I knew pretty much nothing & no-one when I landed at Cisco and it most definitely sharpened the mind!

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? I've said this before, but it's true so I'll say it again. 'Be yourself'. Trying to do anything else is exhausting and just grinds you down in the long run.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? I'm not going to lie, I struggle to remember them. One recent one that stuck with me was "Winners Go Again". You might think it sounds a bit cheesy, but for me it speaks to picking yourself up, renewing and remaining energised about what lies ahead.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? To really captivate the next generation of talent, we need to find as many ways as possible to engage this generation. In my experience, universities, schools, and colleges are eager for industry collaboration. Today's students often find the pathways into tech confusing and opaque, so it's important to shine a light on the many and diverse opportunities available to them. That means not just communicating what a career in IT looks like, but also inspiring students through real-world stories, hands-on experiences, and mentorship. I believe that, collectively, there is a lot more we can do as the Tech sector in the UK and in Ireland on this.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? It was through education that I landed my opportunity in this sector; I perhaps didn't fully appreciate it at the time but I'm incredibly grateful

for that now. Having a career in the technology industry means you have the chance to work with customers, solving some of their biggest challenges, helping them realise their biggest opportunities. Given the pace of constant change, you'll be learning & developing continually, and you won't get bored.

Do you have any hidden talents?

My talents are extraordinarily well hidden.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why?

Teleportation – I'm no stranger to a motorway or train.

What animal most embodies your personality?

I think I have range... everything from a big grumpy bear to Tigger.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why?

A great many in truth, but my very good friend Charlie Johnston has been a constant source of friendship, guidance, support and oodles of sage advice along the way.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. My wife, Jess. She's someone who understands the true meaning of partnership.

TIFFANY NELSON
SENIOR DIGITAL SALES
REPRESENTATIVE,
TELEFÓNICA TECH

INFLUENCER IMPACT
Channel Reality Show
Victor

You won this year's HPE Channel Reality Show. What's the biggest lesson you learned from the process? Fake it till you make it – it's all about perception! On the surface I was calm and collected but internally I've never been so stressed.



"You don't have to be the loudest in the room to be the most powerful."

Tiffany Nelson,
Telefónica Tech

What's been your most daring career decision to date?

Dropping out of Accounting & Finance at University for Business and Psychology; it set me up great for sales and completely changed my perspective on life.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career?

You will never know everything. The sooner you accept that the faster you will progress.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote?

You don't have to be the loudest in the room to be the most powerful.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent?

By doing things exactly like the HPE Reality Show. This generation is all online, so you need to capitalise on that.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? IT is the place to be, and it will only become more and more relevant. If it interests you – why not give it a shot?

Do you have any hidden talents?

Cooking (if you can call that a hidden talent?). I absolutely love it.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why?

Mind-reading – imagine how useful that would be in sales!

What animal most embodies your personality?

A leopard – quietly confident and observant, with an unexpected edge that is ready to strike when the moment is right.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why?

My VP of Sales and Marketing, David Norris. It makes such a difference having someone champion you and push you to what you are truly capable of.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this.

Former CEO of Telefónica Tech Mark Gorton – he is an inspiration and taught me the formula for guaranteed success: 1. Know where you want to go, 2. Know where you are now, 3. Know what you need to do, 4. Do it.

EMEKE ONWUGBONU
DEMAND GENERATION
MANAGER AND TEAM
LEAD, RESOURCEIT

INFLUENCER IMPACT
Marketing wiz and racial
equality advocate

You were characterised as an "inspiration to young people from under-represented communities" after speaking at the Technology Community for Racial Equality (TC4RE) event last year. What was your key message?

My key message was that being different is a strength. No matter how you look, where you come from, or how you think, embrace it. Diversity of thought is a superpower. When harnessed, it allows you to bring fresh ideas, new perspectives, and even game-changing innovations others might miss.

I encouraged young people not to be discouraged by prejudice, misunderstanding, or ignorance. Instead, walk confidently into the rooms you belong in, speak up when you have something to share, and take pride in bringing your unique perspective to the IT channel.

Finally, I stressed the importance of being an example. By showing what's possible through determination and achievement, you inspire other young people from under-represented backgrounds while challenging peers who may not yet see the value of diversity. If you stand out, see it as your chance to shine brighter.

What's been your most daring career decision to date?

The most daring career decision I've made was also the most consequential. After two years of smashing it as a Solutions Architect and getting promoted three times in 18 months, I made the seemingly crazy decision to pivot into marketing strategy. I wanted work that was more creative and strategic, so I took the leap, pioneering and building a marketing

function within the company, which grew into a team of nine.

Eight years later, I've done some of my best work in marketing, holding senior roles such as Group Marketing Manager and leading campaigns for some of the world's biggest tech companies, including Microsoft, Logitech, Lenovo, TD SYNEX, and EY.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career?

Seek discomfort. Be a sponge. Do it scared. Embrace every challenge. And always celebrate the little wins along the way.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote?

a) True creativity isn't about producing more; it's about producing better. Quality outlasts quantity every time. b) Aristotle: "Quality is not an act, it is a habit."

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent?

While the



"No matter how you look, where you come from, or how you think, embrace it. Diversity of thought is a superpower."

Emeke Onwugbonu,
ResourceIT

tech sector as a whole is appealing. I don't think the wide range of exciting, and often non-tech roles within the channel get spoken about enough. There's real variety here: from creative roles in marketing and events, to innovation, sales, operations, partnerships, and relationship management.

What makes the channel unique is that it isn't just for "techies." It's a space where people with creative, commercial, strategic, or operational skills can all build meaningful careers. If we showcase that breadth more clearly, the next generation will see the channel not just as part of the tech industry, but as one of the most exciting and varied places to grow.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why?

The power of a mimic; the ability to take on anyone else's powers. That way, no two days would ever be the same.

What animal most embodies your personality?

Octopus.

A WORD IN YOUR EAR

We asked our Influencers what was the best advice they'd been given in their careers. Here's what a selection of them said...

"Lean into imposter syndrome. It means you're stretching yourself, and that's often where the magic happens."

Mark Boyer, Softcat

"Clear is kind, particularly when it comes to feedback."

Steph Wiwsiany, Protiviti UK

"It was way back when I first started – take the job, learn everything you can, then move on. Keep growing until you find the work you truly love and can build a career around."

Anna Webb, Kocho

"'Align with leaders, not follow blindly'. If you are lucky enough like I, to have great leaders in your career it can be very easy to try model yourself in their image. I recently was reminded that every person, every leader, builds from their unique mix of skills and life and not to ignore your own knowledge, experience and style when developing in your career. It is the variety of this mix that powers creativity, curiosity and innovation in our industry."

Hayley Knott, Natilik

"'Never waste a good crisis'. It's amazing how much clarity and creativity emerge when the stakes are high and the slides aren't ready."

Anjana Srinivasan, AMD

"Be authentic and don't be scared to be yourself."

Jane Ashworth, Lenovo

"Growth doesn't come from a comfortable place."

Nicola Tiffin, Insight

"Early in my career, a mentor told me: 'Look after the people and the results will look after themselves.' It's simple but it really stuck with me. In the rush of targets and technology, it's easy to forget that business is fundamentally about people."

Darren Sharpe, Microsoft



BOB PIGOTT
STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES
DIRECTOR, CAE
TECHNOLOGY SERVICES LTD

INFLUENCER IMPACT
A sustainability and social
value powerhouse

You were nominated for your efforts and accomplishments in sustainability and social value. What's been your proudest achievement on this front, and can you tell us more about the rationale for your new venture? I have become increasingly aware of the danger of 'social value washing' – think 'green washing' but for social value – where, in public statements or in responding to tenders, loosely worded, generic responses with vague commitments seem to be deemed acceptable by both supplier and customer.

We are driving a programme of transparency in our social value activities by recognising that partnering with identified charities that align with our key social value priorities can deliver expert levels of support to our customers where they need it most. It provides additional income to our charity partners, who are challenged in raising funds in the current climate, and it also provides evidence-based metrics (via the TOMS framework) that we can prove we deliver what we say we do.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? Leaving a company some years ago due to its toxic culture, with nothing to go to, and very little savings in the bank to become an independent consultant. I liken it to jumping out of a plane without a parachute – it quickly changes your frame of mind and mental models to see what is important and what needs to be prioritised. It was scary, but it was probably the best thing I have ever done.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career?

You don't need to know all the answers; just ask good questions, and the answers will follow.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? Especially in leadership, always ask yourself: Am I delegating or abdicating this responsibility? And if I am allowed two: You were born with two ears and one mouth, use them in that order!

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? The old blueprint paradigms of work hard, play hard, and dream, believe, achieve are proving themselves to be empty and hollow mantras to the younger generation. We are living in an 'attention economy', look at LinkedIn, Instagram and TikTok – when is enough attention/money/fame/influence enough?

I believe that the younger generation are searching for purpose in what they do. They want to be a part of something that is bigger than themselves and something that delivers meaningful change. The channel needs to consider what its purpose is (outside of pleasing shareholders with dividend returns) and live that purpose and not just use it as marketing collateral. We also need to nurture talent, give them space to work with new technologies, and encourage them to think critically about how these are applied to everyday use.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? Whilst there will always be the need for highly technical skills in the IT channel, the lower to mid levels of these skills are now becoming democratised through AI and vibe coding etc. The ability to understand people, business, define clear problem statements, and ultimately ask good questions will be the most valuable skills moving forward. Therefore, do not be intimidated into thinking you have to be technical to work in this

industry. Be curious, think laterally and be prepared to learn – aptitude and attitude win over knowledge and qualifications every time!

Do you have any hidden talents? I wouldn't say it is a talent, but I have just completed a full-time degree in Theology, Ministry and Mission, which is about as far away in subject matter from the IT channel as you can get!

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? The ability to resist Haribo!

What animal most embodies your personality? Probably an owl. I like to keep a low profile, observe and reflect, but when I speak, you hear me!

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? I once had a manager early on in my career called Jane Barnaby, who taught me that integrity in business is everything, especially when leading teams or driving change. These values have helped me tremendously over the years.

"I like to keep a low profile, observe and reflect, but when I speak, you hear me!"

Bob Pigott would liken himself to an owl



NANCY POWELL
MANAGER,
SUSTAINABILITY UK&I AND
EMEA MARKETS, HP INC



Although you only joined the tech sector two years ago, HP partners are already praising the impact you've had on their sustainability progress. What's been the secret of your success? Building relationships, finding opportunities to collaborate and making myself and resources within HP available to our partners.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? Founding my own start up. I spent a lot of time in previous roles working in plastics and was keen to see if waste plastic could be converted into new products. I did this with herdbags.com and got comfortable with working way outside what I understood as my skills set.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? Keep making decisions. If it turns out to be the wrong decision, then make a new one. A departing CEO from my first employer was asked what he thought made people successful. He said something he observed is that people who weren't afraid of making decisions led teams that had creativity and momentum in abundance. This has overwhelmingly been my experience.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? Nothing is ever as good or as bad as it seems.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? The variety, opportunity and 'team-sport' nature of the IT channel is something that once experienced (thinking about



"Keep making decisions. If it turns out to be the wrong decision, then make a new one."

Nancy Powell, HP Inc

the HP Intern programme) really sells itself as a workplace. In societies that are becoming as concerned about isolation and loneliness among the young as much as the elderly this kind of career is an absolute antidote to that and is something that should be front and centre in recruitment.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? The IT channel is competitive, but also collaborative. Success here depends just as much on being someone others enjoy working with and having a reputation for delivering results as it is down to being a tech Jedi.

Do you have any hidden talents? Knitting and piano playing (not simultaneously).

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? It isn't a superpower but I would really love to have a great singing voice.

What animal most embodies your personality? My dog.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? A manager that I had in the first part of my career. She was an exceptional role model. She demonstrated complete faith in me and the rest of her team and gave us all space to learn and grow.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Jon Steggles.

HARRIET ROBBINS
CYBER SECURITY PRACTICE
MANAGER, GIACOM



You were put forward for your passion for supporting the next generation and participation in charity events. What's been the high point of your efforts on this front? I loved being a part of Careers Week at my local high school. Over four days I presented to students about career opportunities and I especially loved the younger year

groups who had so much excitement and enthusiasm around IT. I felt so welcome, and I even had the teachers asking me questions.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? Switching specialisms – leaving an established career and network in print to dive into the world of cyber security was daunting. Trying something new and leaving your comfort zone is scary, but incredibly rewarding when you jump in with both feet.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? Treat everyone like they'll be your next employer. The industry moves very quickly and you never know what comes next, but it's unquestionably grounded in the relationships we share – so building a strong and credible network at every opportunity will do you favours long-term (and make the journey way more fun).

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? In my bathroom I have a homemade print that says "If you want to achieve excellence, you can get there today. As of this second, quit doing less-than-excellent work" by Thomas J Watson. Speaks for itself and it's relevant to everyone.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? Be present, be visible, advocate for the importance of keeping the economy moving via technology. Bust the myths around needing a technical background and get in front of secondary school students early – before the walls go up and they write off technology as a career path.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? Whatever skills you have, we want them and we need them. Great people are what

makes our industry so special and we need a whole variety of personalities and skills to continue our growth. Introverts and extroverts, top of the class or not, everyone can have a successful career in our industry.

Do you have any hidden talents? I can name a dog's breed just by looking at it. I love dogs and I carried around a book about dog breeds when I was little and I still can name most of them now. My dream dog is a Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever, and my daughter says I am the "Can I pet that dawg" meme.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? I'd love to remember everything I've ever learnt, from significant dates in history to the simple things like the names of people I've met at events. I would be really great at pub quizzes, and I'd never have the awkward "I know that face" when networking.

What animal most embodies your personality? I'm good at

spinning lots of plates, problem solving and being flexible in my day to day so I would have to say an octopus best embodies those personality traits.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? My manager, Carl Oliver, is a huge cheerleader for me. He champions the growth of his team and encourages me to own my journey and shape my role. He took a chance on me when I was breaking into the cloud and cyber security market, and invested time in helping me grow both professionally and personally. Without that support, I probably wouldn't be celebrating a place on this list today.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Kristina Bennington from Giacom – she's capable, credible, hard-working, has time for everyone and is one of a kind. Translating Microsoft is her superpower.



"Leaving your comfort zone is scary, but incredibly rewarding when you jump in with both feet."

Harriet Robbins, Giacom

DARREN SHARPE
MARKETPLACE PARTNER
LEAD, MICROSOFT UK



You were put forward for your enthusiastic championing of marketplaces as a new route to market for partners. What lies behind your fervour? Great question. I really enjoy proving the business transformation and change opportunity – and to my mind there's no bigger than how channel and cloud marketplaces interact and build value. It's taking stakeholders from many different channel and ISV business areas on a journey to new routes to market and service opportunities.

I genuinely believe this model is the future of our industry. The marketplace isn't about cutting out the channel – it's about supercharging the channel. It fascinates me how some people embrace the change and some people still believe they'll be doing things the same way they have for many years. Winning those hearts and minds, earning trust and collaborating with old and new channel colleagues to do more is what gives me my energy.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? When I decided to step away from a well-established position and join a nascent team building out the AWS Marketplace Channel in EMEA.

This was at a time when "cloud marketplace" wasn't yet a buzzword – it was a bit of a leap of faith. But I've never regretted it. Diving head-first into the cloud marketplace world – when it was still an emerging concept for channel – was exhilarating and taught me to trust my instincts about where the industry is headed.

That experience ultimately paved the way for what I'm doing now at Microsoft. And just last week, Canaly

"The marketplace isn't about cutting out the channel – it's about supercharging the channel."

Darren Sharpe,
Microsoft UK



now calling out that 60% of this cloud SaaS and agents world will be delivered through partners – shows that this new world is STILL channel first – but marketplace delivered. It's been worth the journey.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career?

Early in my career, a mentor told me: "Look after the people and the results will look after themselves." It's simple but it really stuck with me. In the rush of targets and technology, it's easy to forget that business is fundamentally about people. Focusing on building genuine relationships – whether with colleagues, partners, or customers – has been the cornerstone of whatever success I've had.

Another piece of advice I value is to never stop learning. The tech world changes so fast; staying curious and humble as a learner has served me well. I've been in this industry for decades, but I still treat each day as an opportunity to pick up something new – be it a fresh marketplace feature or a lesson from a new colleague's perspective.

Combining those two insights – put people first, and keep learning – has guided a lot of my decisions.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? I don't know why this stuck with me – but in the early 90s (!) there was an ITV drama called "Chancer". A suave management consultant called Steven Crane had a plethora of phrases "Crane's law rule number one" – his finest was "Don't join the rat race, always be the person in the white coat". Take from that what you will! I think it's about being your own person, having the confidence and clarity of thought to take charge of your own destiny.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? I think it's about recognising, valuing and practising allyship, diversity, flexibility and social impact. The channel should spotlight career paths for all backgrounds – whether you're technical or not – and create environments that are collaborative and inclusive. Mentorship programmes, clear progression tracks, and investments in training will show new talent that joining the channel means a long-term professional growth story.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the

industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? The IT channel can sound intimidating from the outside, but it's one of the most welcoming and rewarding parts of the tech industry. My message to someone on the fence would be: don't worry if you're not a "techie". The channel thrives on diverse skill sets – from sales and marketing to project management and technical consulting. If you're eager to learn and passionate about solving problems, you'll find a place here.

Do you have any hidden talents?

I've got an engineering degree in acoustics and vibration (genuinely), used to compete a comedy club – and play the trumpet in a dance band. Whether any of those are actual talents I'm unsure. It's translated nowadays into a love of presenting in an engaging style (I hope) – I'm still learning that, but people tell me it's a talent...

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why?

Empathic influence – The ability to sense and amplify the best intentions in others, helping them communicate more clearly, collaborate more effectively, and adapt to change with confidence. If you're after traditional superpowers then teleportation obvs – who wouldn't want that?

What animal most embodies your personality? I work for Microsoft – so of course I asked Copilot for this. Here's what I asked "Help me come up with an animal that embodies my personality. I'm an extraverted introvert (I think!). I love managing change, presenting, and having a very personal style – but actually really enjoy my own space and time ultimately". Copilot thinks I'm a fox. Personally I think I'm a bit more donkey...

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? Being

brutally honest, it was the early career management/leadership bullies and narcissists. I've had some tough times historically (not necessarily in the IT world!) with really poor leadership styles that caused huge anguish and heartache at the time. Actually, they are the ones that have now positively influenced me to be more empathetic, listen and learn – and don't be a dictator.

I wouldn't wish this learning journey on anyone though, and thankfully we're in a more adult world now where these traits aren't tolerated (I sincerely hope).

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Do you know what, there's actually so many in my world that are fighting the good fight for transforming the way channel works with cloud marketplaces (sorry for bringing it back to "the cause...") – it's those that have the belief, and have advocated for the difficult over the years when others doubted them.

It's the likes of Pen Bridger and Ryan Edmonds at Bytes, Debbie Farrell and Lesley Poole at Computacenter, and Callum Logan and Amber King at Softcat to name a few.

"The channel is where innovation meets impact, and that's a story worth telling."

Anjana Srinivasan, AMD

ANJANA SRINIVASAN
EMEA COMMERCIAL
CHANNEL CHIEF, AMD



Multiple leaders we spoke to put you forward for Oxygen Influencers 2025. Do you have any tips on how you've managed to maximise your influence?

Influence isn't about volume; it's about value. I focus on listening first, then amplifying ideas that matter. And if you can make complex things simple, people tend to lean in.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? Multiple times in my career, I've made choices to step into roles outside my core discipline. Each time, it stretched my thinking, taught me new skills, and gave me a broader lens on leadership. It wasn't always comfortable, but it's been invaluable.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career?

'Never waste a good crisis'. It's amazing how much clarity and creativity emerge when the stakes are high and the slides aren't ready.



SIX POWERFUL OPINIONS

From warnings against “fishing from the same puddle” to ESG bombshells, here we round up the best moments from the Oxygen Influencer podcasts that aired earlier this year



“The acronyms were kind of like, ‘ooh’.”

Episode 1 saw two young channel pros – Westcoast’s Olly Jeffery and Ampito’s George Lavender – compared notes on how they have adjusted to life in the industry after joining from different professions. “It was ‘CPU’, ‘GPU’, ‘rack and stack’... and I was thinking, ‘what’s going on?’,” said former PE teacher Lavender.

“I’ve seen a huge increase in ESG questionnaires coming my way.”

In episode 2, NTT Data Business’ UK&I ESG Lead Shola Sullivan argued that it is becoming increasingly important for IT providers to have a robust ESG strategy.



“I keep in touch with everyone I’ve mentored.”

In episode 3, Highgate Operations Director Jenny Latimer opened up on her efforts to bring free mentoring to the channel via The Channel Community.

“Grow your own is the best way to solve the skills shortage, by a mile.”

Episode 4 saw Softcat’s Rebecca Monk reveal the reseller’s secret sauce when it comes to attracting and retaining staff.

“It’s not a pond, it’s a puddle.”

Episode 4 also saw Coachere Founder Yvonne Matzk urge listeners to think differently when it comes to talent acquisition by hiring from other professions and walks of life.

“I’ve changed my view – we now have a line in the sand moment.”

In episode 5, 18-year Computacenter exec Colin Williams admitted recent developments in AI meant he’d had to update his views about the dawn of x86 being tech’s most exciting era.

What’s your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? ‘Strategy is great but execution is everything’. And if you can do both with a smile and a spreadsheet, even better.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? By showing that this isn’t just about selling technology, it’s about shaping the future. The channel is where innovation meets impact, and that’s a story worth telling.

What’s your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? If you’re curious, adaptable, and want a career where change is the norm, this is the place for you. The IT channel offers endless opportunities to learn, grow, and make a real difference

Do you have any hidden talents? I can pack a suitcase like a Tetris champion; years of business travel will do that to you. It’s a strangely satisfying skill!

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? I’d choose the ability to clone myself. Not for world domination, but to finally solve the eternal tug-of-war between work and family. One version of me could be fully present with my loved ones, while the other dives into the work I love. That way, I could truly have it all.

What animal most embodies your personality? A border collie – strategic, energetic, and always herding people toward the next big idea.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? A former mentor who taught me that leadership isn’t about being the loudest voice in the room – it’s about creating space for others to shine.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. I’d like to nominate Helen Changela, who’s a strong advocate for diversity in tech and excellence in general. Her work often happens behind the scenes, but it’s making a real difference in shaping the future of the channel.

NICOLA TIFFIN
SENIOR MANAGER
ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL
& GOVERNANCE, INSIGHT

INFLUENCER IMPACT
An “instrumental” ESG leader

You’ve been “instrumental” in driving Insight’s ESG strategy across EMEA, according to one leader who nominated you. What’s been your high point in these efforts? I think my high point has been taking what we were already doing and elevating it. Getting creative and curious with the art of the possible and creating more impact along the way. I am so excited by the initiatives and partnerships that I have created this year.

What’s been your most daring career decision to date? Taking on the role of Chief of Staff to the Insight EMEA President. It was a daring decision for me as it was a leap from being Senior Project Manager. It meant stepping into a newly created role and joining the EMEA SLT. This experience expanded my leadership skills and reinforced my belief in the importance of embracing new opportunities for growth.

What’s the best advice you’ve ever been given in your career? The best advice I’ve ever received is to stay authentic and trust my instincts. This has helped me navigate complex decisions and build genuine relationships throughout my career.

What’s your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? ‘Growth doesn’t come from a comfortable place.’

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? I would say, don’t be afraid to employ someone who hasn’t worked in the industry. The Skills Academy has been incredible for attracting new talent at Insight. Everyone has something valuable to contribute – I hadn’t worked in IT before Insight and here I am 18 years later.

What’s your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? Embrace the opportunity! It is dynamic and ever evolving, offering endless possibilities. Your unique perspectives and skills are valuable, and the industry is always in need of fresh talent. Lead with curiosity, don’t be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and explore the exciting opportunities that await. You’ll never be bored!

Do you have any hidden talents? I’ve been told that I have a unique talent for connecting with people in a deep and meaningful way – is that

hidden?! I played a trumpet solo at the Royal Albert Hall when I was 9, which not a lot of people know.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? I would pick teleportation, allowing me to minimise travel time and reduce environmental impact while staying connected with loved ones, and immerse myself in cultures around the globe.

What animal most embodies your personality? An excitable puppy – loyal, caring, full of energy, a little annoying as I am quite persistent – I rarely stop!

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? I have had the pleasure of working with incredible humans throughout my career, and it would be disingenuous and unfair to pick only one. The power of my diverse and wonderful network has been the most positive influence on me, providing me with invaluable insights, support, and many opportunities.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. I am not sure I could pick only

“Your unique perspectives and skills are valuable, and the industry is always in need of fresh talent.”

Nicola Tiffin, Insight



one, as the industry is so vast and there are incredible people doing extraordinary things. At Insight, Sim Aulakh, Peter Rising, Rachael Lomax, Sinead Coughlan, Aday Nur, and Ashley West all come to mind when I think about who should be on a list like this, honestly there are so many amazing individuals, I am incredibly humbled to be included.

ANNA WEBB
HEAD OF GLOBAL SECURITY
OPERATIONS, KOCHO

INFLUENCER IMPACT
Known as a 'Security
Changemaker'

You won the 'Security Changemaker' award at the 2024 Microsoft Intelligent Security Association Awards. What did that mean to you? Winning the Security Changemaker award was a defining moment. It showed me that inspiring and championing the next generation of security leaders really matters, and that our industry recognises the value of that work. It gave me an enormous sense of pride and purpose.

What's been your most daring career decision to date? Walking away from 11 years in the same company to jump into cyber security in 2016 was my bravest career move. It was a leap into the unknown for so many reasons, but it turned out to be the best and most defining decision of my career.

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? It was way back when I first started – take the job, learn everything you can, then move on. Keep growing until you find the work you truly love and can build a career around.

What's your favourite work-related philosophy, saying or quote? There's a few but I guess my two main ones are – 'A manager is only ever as good as their team', and

"Don't think you have to be highly technical to succeed in IT."

Anna Webb, Kocho

'If you can't beat them, teach them a thing or two'.

How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? We need to attract the next generation by showing that tech isn't a one-size-fits-all career. There are so many exciting and diverse roles, from security to operations, strategy, analytics and customer success. The variety lets people find their calling and allows them to make an impact beyond just the heavy technical side of IT.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? Don't think you have to be highly technical to succeed in IT. There are so many roles where your skills and hidden talents can make a real impact. The key is to take opportunities, embrace challenges, and find a path with someone to support and guide you along the way.

Do you have any hidden talents? I speak Welsh fluently, I've taught myself payroll, VAT, and basic accounting, and I can tie a cherry stalk in a knot with my tongue!

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? The ability to time travel, so that I could go back and tell my university tutor how wrong he was about the fact that I would never make it in IT.

What animal most embodies your personality? Like a barn owl, I value patience and observation. I also believe in decisive action, so when I commit to something, I make it succeed.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? There have been a few people who've influenced my career, but when it comes to where I am now, I'd say Jay Crampton, who I worked for at Alert Logic. His advice on 'managing up' was invaluable in helping me progress and handle situations that felt out of my control. He was a supportive manager who gave positive feedback and helped steer career goals. That built real trust and created a team environment with a healthy balance between work and home, something I've carried forward and aspire to replicate as a leader.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. One person I'd highlight is Dr. Clare Johnson. She's had a huge impact on the industry, particularly through her work championing women in cyber. As the founder of Women in Cyber Wales, she's created a platform that inspires, connects, and supports the current and next generation of talent. She absolutely deserves recognition on a list like this.

STEPH WIWSIANYJ
MANAGER, PROTIVITI UK

INFLUENCER IMPACT
Juggling promotions with
voluntary work

You were put forward for your work with the Technology Community for Racial Equality (TC4RE), as well as your credentials as a young and up-and-coming leader that has been promoted several times in quick succession. How challenging is it to juggle the two things? Balancing both has been challenging, but the support from my teams at TC4RE and Protiviti has been invaluable. Being part of a collaborative team that helps each other has made all the difference.

And I think I can probably speak on behalf of everyone at TC4RE when I say that it's worth the extra effort and time!

What's been your most daring career decision to date? I don't think there's one decision I can look back on and call daring. I think what's made a difference for me is always trying new things – I think this is where I've learnt (and grown the most).

What's the best advice you've ever been given in your career? Clear is kind, particularly when it comes to feedback.



How can the IT channel make itself more attractive to the next generation of talent? That's a great question. What we've been doing as part See it, Be it in TC4RE is providing clarity on what a role in tech actually looks like. From my experience, the tech careers can feel quite daunting and unknown, so the transparency can help us all know what's out there and if it's right for us.

What's your message to education leavers or those outside the industry contemplating a career in the IT channel? A technology career can be a rewarding one – I know I'm biased on this but I've found I'm always learning new things, often not technology oriented. I'd always recommend looking at a career in tech – and remember, most of us have squiggly careers too so it's ok if you don't want to spend your entire career in tech too.

What superpower, if any, would you choose to have, and why? I'd like to be able to fly.

What animal most embodies your personality? This is definitely the hardest question so far – probably a cat I think.

Which professional colleague has had the most positive influence on your career and why? I can't choose just one person here, so here are my top three: Polly Jacob – for always being my partner in all things TC4RE. I've learnt a lot from working with Polly. Lauren Gomersall – for always being a sounding board and providing advice throughout my career. Roland Carandang – for overall career direction and leadership.

Name one other person who deserves recognition in a list like this. Without a doubt, Polly Jacob. Polly is the driving force behind See it, be it – we couldn't do it without you!

WHAT THEY DID NEXT

Last year's Oxygen Influencers are continuing to drive positive change in the industry. Here are two prime examples.



YVONNE MATZK
Featured last year on the back of her work getting free mentoring network The Channel Community off the ground, Matzk has gone on to launch her 'Smash the Class Ceiling' podcast. It aims to showcase channel pros who have come from a low socio-economic background, but have gone on to build successful careers.



DR COLIN WILLIAMS
The Computacenter exec made last year's 25 partly in recognition of his schools outreach work. Since then, Williams has gone on to co-found Care Packs, a charity which aims to support families facing financial hardship by delivering essential resources for their babies and young children.

25 BECOMES 50

The Oxygen Influencers project does not stop at just this PDF report.

Last year's crop of 25 joined us for a VIP lunch and debate at Ivy Asia St Pauls (see more on p20), with ten of them going on to feature in our series of Influencer podcasts.

What do we have planned for this year's Influencers? Stay tuned...

Taking the two years together, the pantheon of Oxygen Influencers now extends to 50.

Meet last year's protagonists below.



Nebula's **Net Heroes** unite to share their ESG insights.

Download Nebula's latest **ESG Unwrapped Report** to see how our sustainable tech activists are driving profitability through social impact.



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OXYGEN INFLUENCERS 2025

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