gtb GLOBAL TELECOMS BUSINESS

|50

WOMEN TO WATCH

We asked our readers to nominate the women to watch in our industry. Picking just 50 of them was always going to be a challenge, but this year's list includes CEOs, CTOs, CMOs, research chiefs, regulators, politicians and others leading the telecoms business

non-executive director and audit chair at UK retailer Greggs, and a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants.

Heather Kirksey
Executive director, *OPNFV*

As executive director of Open Platform for NFV, Kirksey seeks to increase adoption and implementation of open source NFV platform. She manages the entire project, from technology to community and marketing. She previously led strategic technology alliances for MongoDB and has held various leadership positions at Alcatel-Lucent, Broadband Forum, BroadbandHome, Small Cell Forum, UPnP Forum and Home Gateway Initiative.

Mari-Noëlle Jégo-Laveissière
EVP, innovation, market and technologies, *Orange*

Jégo-Laveissière has held various management positions within Orange, such as head of Consumer Marketing France, director of research and development and director of international networks. She was appointed to the executive committee of the Orange Group in March 2014 as executive director of innovation, marketing and technologies.

Honore Labourdette
VP global market development, telco business group, *VMWare*

Labourdette heads up VMWares projects in the telco space, leading the software firm's launch of an NFV offering based on it virtual machine platform.

Her experience covers 25 years of working with diverse sectors such as healthcare, finance, retail and telcos; the latter being her core current focus area.

Dominique Leroy
CEO, *Proximus*

Leroy stepped in to take the helm of Proximus – formerly Belgacom – in 2014 for a six-year term. She joined the company in 2012 as executive vice president of its consumer business unit after over two decades at Unilever. Proximus increased its net profit by 3.8 percent by the end of the year, growing its TV and mobile customers. Leroy is chairwoman of the boards of BICS and Be-Mobile.

Brooks McCorcle
President, *AT&T Partner Solutions*

McCorcle leads the majority of AT&T's indirect distribution channels. She runs a business unit with $6 billion in annualised revenues and is tasked with growing the company's products and services through service providers globally. Last year, McCorcle led her team to launch AT&T Control Center, a cloud-based platform that enables providers to deploy, manage and scale IoT devices, connecting them to the AT&T 4G LTE network.

Catherine Michel
CTO, *Sigma Systems*

Michel is responsible for the company's entire product portfolio and strategy. Previously, she was Sigma's Chief Strategy Officer (CSO) and VP of Products, following the acquisition of Tribold in 2013. Michel was founder and CTO of Tribold, and principle architect of the company's products and solutions portfolio. Prior to co-founding Tribold, She was a senior executive in Accenture's Communications & High Tech practice, devising and delivering business strategy and large-scale BSS / OSS solutions globally.

Michel also sits on the TM Forum Executive Committee. Michel regularly advises service provider CxO's and industry analysts on how to transform into digital savvy businesses for the digital economy, frequently appearing on stage and in written publications.

Maxine Moreau
EVP, consumer, *CenturyLink*

Moreau is responsible for CenturyLink's sales, marketing, and service delivery for local market consumer operations in 37 states. She also oversees the overall profit and loss and the customer experience. Prior to her current role, Moreau served as executive vice president of Global Operations, responsible for the end-to-end planning, engineering, construction, operation and maintenance of CenturyLink's US fibre network and international transport network.

Jeni Mundy
Group enterprise product management director *Vodafone*

Mundy leads Vodafone's strategy, delivery and lifecycle management of the product portfolio worldwide. She has been with Vodafone since 1998. Her roles include five years as CTO in Vodafone New Zealand managing IT and the mobile network, five years as the Vodafone UK CTO and a year leading the Northern Europe Sales team for multi-national customers.

Kate McKenzie
CEO, *Chorus*

The former Telstra COO replaced Mark Ratcliffe as CEO of the New Zealand company from February 2017. She is in charge of the the rollout of its ultrafast broadband and will focus on customer experience. McKenzie announced her resignation from Telstra in July 2016 following a series of network outages.

Claudia Nemat
Chief technology and innovation officer, *Deutsche Telekom*

Nemat has led the new board area technology and innovation since January 2017. The appointment is part of a move by Deutsche Telekom to create a innovation and technology area within the board, tasked with focusing on software-defined networks, virtualisation and cloud services. Nemat was responsible for the board area Europe and Technology until the end of 2016.

The clearest path to digital transformation is catalogue-driven

Communications service providers must adopt a catalogue-driven, agile approach in their digital evolution, says Sigma Systems CTO **Catherine Michel**

Service providers must implement a catalogue-driven, agile B/OSS architecture in order to fully benefit from the latest network technology and digital service innovations, such as NFV/SDN, 5G and IoT/E, says Catherine Michel, CTO of global software company Sigma Systems.

Operators are lagging in their ability to operationalise – and monetise – the innovations across the industry, observes Michel. "The complexity across their current systems is almost crippling."

CATALOGUE-FIRST APPROACH

"First and foremost, you have to take control over your portfolio," Michel says.

Michel co-founded Tribold in 2004, a UK-based software firm focused on the development of its product and service catalogue platform. "We recognised back in the early 2000s that the BSS and OSS will never be nimble or efficient enough if you do not properly drive the definition of product data across that landscape."

Service providers, Michel says, were not encapsulating into a business function what they do daily. "They were missing the ability to holistically establish what a product comprises to enable rapid sales and delivery – commercially, functionally, technically, physically. They were missing the agility to drive operations from a product-centric perspective, with the customer at the core."

Sigma Systems acquired Tribold in 2013, a move that combined the former's service fulfilment products with the latter's catalogue and CPQ software, to create a portfolio of catalogue-driven create-sell-deliver capabilities.

AGILE LEGACY OVERLAY

At Sigma, any talk of transformation begins with the catalogue, says Michel. "That is the level of maturity that took way too long for the industry to get to, but service providers have now arrived." But the only way providers can truly dominate in the digital innovation landscape is "to embrace the essence of being catalogue-driven" in the "layer of capability that the customer cares most about in their interactions with the provider" namely sales and delivery.

Still, challenges surrounding architecture and infrastructure exist. "They're saying: I understand the common sense and wisdom behind that, but I have billions of dollars and several years invested into what is now a legacy architecture. It still takes custom development to launch any new innovation. The only way to monetise it is if I can operationalise it in the

Catherine Michel, CTO, Sigma Systems

infrastructure," Michel relays.

Michel observes that operators have a tendency to adopt the conventional route of replacing or consolidating the capabilities they already have, "instead of adding the capabilities that are going to drive the most value" and "create greater ARPU."

Which is why Michel advocates for catalogue-driven, agile B/OSS as an overlay to legacy systems. "You need to create a layer between the mature, commoditised legacy architecture that still serves a critical back office purpose, and overlay that with a much more DevOps-oriented, agile architecture," she says.

That agile architecture should have three specific objectives, says Michel. Firstly, it should focus on establishing new innovations into sellable products. Secondly, it should possess a cross-channel-friendly, automated sales capability that customers want to interact with, regardless of the channel. Lastly, it should enable automated delivery of services to the networks and devices upon creation of an order.

Ultimately, Michel believes Sigma's key differentiator is that its software products are developed with a DevOps objective in mind. "What we sell to our customers are products that they configure, rather than customise. That's why our customers are able to achieve a tangible solution so quickly. We develop our software products to allow for rapid productisation of new capabilities and rapid implementation. Our most important objective is helping our customers achieve value quickly."

For Sigma's customers, that means shorter delivery cycles, the flexibility to fail fast and re-configure, and the ability to prioritise certain integration points, product lines and business units in order to help them achieve a greater return in the shortest time possible. [•]