

— 2024 —

**HOUSTON CIO
ORBIE
AWARDS**

The annual HoustonCIO ORBIE® Awards honors chief information officers who have demonstrated excellence in technology leadership. Winners in the Global, Large Enterprise, Enterprise, Large Corporate & Corporate categories will be announced April 19 at Marriot Marquis Houston.



CHAIR

HoustonCIO Chair, Kim Hales, explains how connected leaders move faster



LEADERSHIP RECIPIENT

Archie Deskus on how boldness fosters experimentation and innovation

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FROM THE CHAIR

Connected Leaders Move Faster

Great CIOs know technology moves fast, and connected leaders move faster.

HoustonCIO brings together the preeminent CIOs from Houston's largest organizations to enhance leadership effectiveness, create value, mitigate risks, and share successes. Member-led, non-commercial programs foster meaningful professional relationships, enabling collaboration on shared challenges to gain leadership advantage.

There is no textbook for how to be a great CIO. Leaders sharpen professional acumen through peer collaboration with others facing similar challenges. While industries and organizations vary in HoustonCIO, successful leadership approaches are universal.

Members understand the "superpower" of trusted relationships. In any gathering of CIOs, the answer is in the room. Through regular member-led events and interactions, the collective power of executives working together generates immense value. Everyone

wins when ideas, experiences, and best practices are shared in a collaborative and secure group.

HoustonCIO connects CIOs to 1,400 lifelong learners across 30 chapters in the Inspire Leadership Network. From public and private companies to government, education, healthcare, and nonprofits, we exist to help members succeed in one of the most demanding C-suite executive roles.

The principles serving CIOs for over 25 years are now available to CISOs as the Inspire Leadership Network expands, with six chapters exclusively for CISOs launching in 2024.

The leadership of CIOs transforming organizations in Houston is recognized through the ORBIE® Awards. On behalf of HoustonCIO, I congratulate all the nominees and finalists for their remarkable achievements. A special thank you to the sponsors, underwriters, and staff for making the Houston ORBIE® Awards possible.



Sincerely

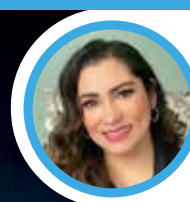
Kim Hales

2024 Chair, HoustonCIO
SVP, Information Technology, NRG Energy

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2024 KEYNOTE & LEADERSHIP RECIPIENT

Archie Deskus

Executive Vice President & Chief Technology Officer (CTO) | PayPal

HoustonCIO ORBIE Awards Leadership recipient Archie Deskus on how boldness fosters experimentation and innovation

By The Business Journals Content Studio

This year's HoustonCIO ORBIE Awards Leadership recipient and keynote speaker believes that to succeed, "it's important to be bold and encourage boldness in others."

Archana (Archie) Deskus is executive vice president and chief technology officer (CTO) of PayPal. In this role, she oversees global technology, engineering, information and global data science and advanced analytics organizations.

In addition to enabling PayPal's technology strategy, priorities and data-driven operating model, Deskus leads global information technology operations, including the planning, management, delivery and transformation of the company's technology stacks, systems support and infrastructure.

She previously held top technology roles at Intel Corp. and Hewlett Packard Enterprise. Deskus serves on the board of directors of East West Bank, Datastax and multinational information technology services and consulting company Cognizant.

Accelerating business transformation

As PayPal's CTO, Deskus ensures the company is deploying technology impactfully and delivering innovative products, solutions and experiences to customers.

"When I first joined the company (in 2022), we were grappling with technology reliability challenges," she said. "While the team had ideas for improvement, we needed greater alignment, accountability and more

clarity on defining a meaningful future vision and path forward."

Under her leadership, she and her team defined bold goals, created a shared vision across PayPal, focused on data-led actions and made many people, process and technology changes.

"Through these efforts, we improved reliability, achieved record availability and significantly reduced the number of technology incidents while simultaneously expanding our scope and keeping costs flat," Deskus said. "This focus enabled our actions to contribute directly to the company's bottom line. At the same time, we scaled our artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities in ways that are accelerating the transformation of the business and unlocking new value for the over 420 million customers we serve through personalized consumer and checkout experiences."

Top traits of technology leaders

Technology leaders should be laser-focused on the needs of their customers and business, according to Deskus. Deploying more technology is not always better if it is not adding value to your business in ways that ultimately benefit customers. Through this lens, technology leaders must articulate a specific vision for their teams and make strategic choices with a strong focus on execution that drives a high return on investments, she said.

"By operating with a 'be bold' mindset, you can help create a space and dynamic that fosters experimentation and innovation, while viewing mistakes as opportunities for growth," Deskus said. This has

helped me energize and motivate my team, enabling strategic alignment that fuels measurable outcomes."

Meeting evolving expectations

Almost every business today has transformed into a technology company in some form or another, Deskus said. With this shift, the role of IT leaders has grown as the pace of innovation has accelerated, and consumer demand for simple, fast and easy-to-use technology experiences persists.

Layer on the AI revolution, and it becomes clear there's an unprecedented opportunity for IT leaders to help transform business through AI, automation, and streamlined processes, which can unlock productivity, efficiency and value, she said.

"At the same time, with this opportunity IT leaders have an equally important responsibility to ensure technology is deployed responsibly and thoughtfully," Deskus said. "Consumer safety and trust must remain your highest priorities."

Opportunities on the horizon

Technologies like AI and the cloud make it possible for companies like PayPal to offer next-gen personalized experiences for consumers, and trusted commerce platforms with seamless checkout and payment solutions for merchants and businesses, Deskus said.

"Today, data is the new gold, as they say, and by leveraging data responsibly together with the power of AI, it will enable businesses to cater to the unique needs of customers in ways we are only just beginning to imagine," she said.



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Converge is the Inspire Leadership Network annual member conference, bringing together officers and members from every chapter for three days of leadership strategies, opportunities to build relationships and collaborate with C-level technology executives from public and private businesses, government, education, healthcare and nonprofit organizations.

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All prior ORBIE Winners.



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**Akash
Khurana**



**EVP & Chief Information
and Digital Officer,
Wesco**

Akash became Executive Vice President, Chief Information and Digital Officer for Wesco in 2020, leading the IT and Digital organizations, and spearheading Wesco's digital transformation journey. Akash previously served as CIO and CDO at McDermott, and had roles at Baker Hughes, GE Energy, and GE Healthcare.

Akash is an active community leader across global philanthropic organizations. He holds an Engineering degree from the University of Pune, India, and a MBA from the University of Wisconsin.

SUCCESS STORY

Wesco's IT/Digital team is leading the way within our industry and delivering transformative and innovative experiences for our customers, suppliers, and employees. Our initiatives transformed end-to-end processes and leveraged a modern enterprise systems landscape. Our team created an Inventory Command Center, reducing inventory by 20% and improving cash flow. We built a portfolio of platform-enabled commercial offerings and created significant competitive differentiation by securing 30+ patents. The team expanded by 200 people and established partnerships with 12 universities. We achieved ISO 27001 and ISO 20000 certifications, reduced obsolescence to below 5%, and matured our agile, Cloud operations, and DevSecOps practices.



**Melanie
Kirkwood Ruiz**



**Chief Information &
Technology Officer,
ABM Industries**

As ABM's CIO, Melanie Kirkwood Ruiz is responsible for IT infrastructure optimization to enable greater innovation; service delivery enhancement through client-facing technology and data-driven insights; and development and execution of technology strategy that supports enterprise and line-of-business transformation.

Melanie is a progressive leader with 20 years of experience across the commercial real estate, manufacturing, healthcare and aviation industries. She has an MBA from Northwestern University and a Master's and Bachelor's in Engineering from Cornell University.

SUCCESS STORY

Under my leadership, the Technology Team is a strategic partner to our business units and functions across the organization. ABM's ELEVATE transformation is powered by technology, as seen by the smart parking solution enabled at LAX, a first of its kind in the U.S. We created our first innovation program, ABM Next, that differentiates ABM against its competitors, drives an exciting culture and advances our capabilities as a services company. Our revenue has grown 30% with tech solutions that my team has created. We have also integrated new products and over \$1.5B sized company acquisitions into our new modern ecosystem.



**Jay
Kouns**



**CIO - Enterprise Solutions,
NOV**

Jay Kouns is the CIO at NOV Inc., a leading engineering and equipment manufacturer for the oil and gas industry. He oversees the strategic direction, development, and implementation of IT systems and services across the organization. With over 20 years of experience in IT management and consulting, he has successfully led several business transformation projects and initiatives that enhanced operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and revenue growth. He holds a finance degree from Idaho State University.

SUCCESS STORY

Beginning my tech journey, I ascended to CIO at NOV, blending business acumen with tech expertise. Aligning IT initiatives strategically with business priorities, I helped fuel revenue growth and optimized costs. Leading transformative initiatives, I've enhanced efficiency and positioned the organization to scale. Innovating with emerging technologies, I crafted solutions meeting immediate needs and setting the stage for future success. As CIO, I cultivated a collaborative IT culture, empowering teams to make strategic decisions aligned with company priorities. In a dynamic tech-business landscape, my CIO journey underscores excellence, innovation, and strategic tech utilization for organizational advancement.



**Pragati
Mathur**



**Chief Digital
& Information Officer,
ConocoPhillips**

Pragati Mathur is CDIO for ConocoPhillips. Mathur has 27 years of IT leadership and digital transformation experience. Prior to joining ConocoPhillips, she served as CTO at Staples, where she led all aspects of technology, including digital. Earlier in her career, she served as SVP of Technology Solutions for Biogen, as chief enterprise architect at Boeing, and in various roles at General Motors. Mathur earned a Master of Science in Information Technology from Carnegie Mellon University.

SUCCESS STORY

It is an honor to lead the organization driving ConocoPhillips's digital transformation. Providing the parameters for this ambition, our digital strategy is helping achieve our company's goals of lowering cost of supply, improving emissions detection and reduction, and creating operational efficiencies. Aligned around Lean-Agile principles, our team partners with the business to scale secure-by-design digital solutions like drones, digital twins, automation, artificial intelligence and machine learning across our operations. Data modernization and a next-gen Enterprise Resource Planning system implementation are enabling data-driven insights and decision-making. With a digital-first mindset, our employees are proactively upskilling and enhancing their work through innovation.



**John
Thomson**



**VP & CIO,
KBR**

John Thomson, VP and CIO at KBR since December 2015, has over 30 years of experience in Information Technology, particularly in the Government, offshore, and hydrocarbons industry.

His collaborative leadership style has simplified complex business processes, positively impacting the bottom line. Before KBR, he held senior roles at Worley and gained global experience in several countries. Thomson's international exposure enhances his ability to drive innovation and deliver strategic solutions.

SUCCESS STORY

As a leader, we focused on four key areas: Cybersecurity, Sustainability, AI, and a People-Centric Approach. We bolstered cybersecurity with an advanced platform and global certifications. Our commitment to sustainability was evident in our adoption of renewable energy, waste reduction, and eco-friendly sourcing. We integrated AI, using predictive analytics and chatbots to enhance efficiency and customer experience. Our people-centric approach fostered empathy and workforce development. These initiatives underscore our commitment to progress, innovation, and responsible leadership, positioning us as a forward-thinking, socially responsible organization ready for future challenges.



INSPIRE LEADERSHIP NETWORK is the preeminent executive peer leadership network of chief information officers and chief information security officers. The heart of Inspire is the value of membership in a local chapter, with access to thought-leaders across the United States.



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**Mike
Gemza**



**CTO,
Cornerstone Building
Brands**

Mike Gemza, CTO at Cornerstone Building Brands, has been pivotal in steering digital transformation, enhancing cybersecurity, and modernizing infrastructure to drive growth. With a rich background in technology leadership at General Electric and Baker Hughes, and over 20 years of experience, his strategic vision focuses on delivering superior customer experiences. Gemza's academic foundation includes a BS and MS in Computer Science from Sacred Heart University, supplemented by executive education from GE Crotonville and Wharton.

SUCCESS STORY

In my role as CTO at Cornerstone Building Brands, I've spearheaded critical initiatives to fortify and advance our technology landscape. Key accomplishments include a swift, effective response to a major ransomware attack, ensuring no data loss; transforming our infrastructure approach to prioritize infrastructure services as opposed to point solutions, enhancing agility and efficiency; elevating our cybersecurity measures from industry laggards to leaders; and driving strategic technology consolidation for streamlined operations.



**Dennis
Hernandez**



**VP IT,
Quirch Foods, LLC**

Dennis leverages 30 years of experience creating new digital capabilities and transforming IT organizations. Dennis has a deep understanding of the food industry working for consumer-packaged goods, grocery retail, and distribution companies. He is recognized as an accomplished people leader who focuses on collaboration, mentoring, and transparency. Dennis has a BA in Economics from Harvard University and an MBA in MIS/Finance from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He loves to read, watch tennis, and cook.

SUCCESS STORY

I joined Quirch in February 2022 with a mandate for Year One: rescue a stalled ERP implementation, repair the relationships with stakeholders, and rebuild a demoralized IT team that was losing talent.

Within 12 months we delivered. We implemented our ERP in our largest warehouse. We developed close relationships with stakeholders by listening and acting on feedback. We brought back those who had left, attracted outside talent, and improved morale.

These accomplishments have strengthened leadership's belief in technology and our ability to deliver. We have continued the ERP rollout and launched e-commerce, warehouse automation, BI modernization, and AI/ML initiatives.



**Ryan
Kelley**



**CIO,
Par Pacific**

Ryan serves as the CIO & SVP of Technology & Enterprise Services at Par Pacific Holdings Inc. (NYSE: PARR). He oversees IT, Operational Technology, Process Excellence, and Procurement. An experienced leader, Ryan excels in driving transformation and reducing costs, with a diverse background in Energy, Retail, and Telecommunications. His expertise lies in leading change and fostering innovation across organizational structures.

SUCCESS STORY

In forging a unified technology organization at Par Pacific, we've transcended traditional boundaries to drive pivotal business decisions. Integrating traditionally disparate IT and OT domains was a challenging yet rewarding endeavor, leading to the elimination of silos and fostering a culture of collaborative innovation. This strategic alignment has catalyzed the development of new, impactful solutions, significantly elevating our technology division's profile and influence within the organization. Our success lies in not just bridging gaps but in transforming these connections into avenues for organizational growth.



**Sindhu
Menon**



**Executive Director & CIO,
Harris County**

With passion for public service and innovation, Sindhu Menon provides leadership to the Universal Services Department at Harris County. Sindhu is the trusted advisor to the Commissioner's Court and departments on technology. She is leading the digital transformation efforts for the County with various high impact projects. In her leadership, the County has stood up a formal cybersecurity program, Enterprise Project Management and Governance and transforming the digital landscape for the County and its residents.

SUCCESS STORY

Teamwork, Public Service, Perseverance and Commitment to my work has been four factors that I have on my forefront throughout my career. The path was not an easy one and my commitment as well as perseverance was tested many times sometimes as a woman in leadership role and many times as a woman of color in leadership track, however I have been blessed with great mentors who advised and guided me through my journey. I have always left the organization and teams that I led in a better place than when I inherited them as my legacy to the organization.



**Craig
Owen**



**VP & CIO,
UT MD Anderson
Cancer Center**

Craig Owen is vice president for Information Services and chief information officer at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. He and his team support the organization's bold mission to end cancer across Texas, the nation and the world. In his role, Craig oversees the operations and effective use and adoption of information technology used by almost 25,000 employees, as well as the people and communities MD Anderson serves throughout Texas and beyond.

SUCCESS STORY

In 2017, our employee engagement survey scores were the lowest across the Institution. We listened to our front-line employees to understand what was important to them and implemented changes to focus on trust, accountability, work-life balance, communication, and professional development. Our 2019 engagement survey showed an increase in our scores. We continued to focus on the employee experience and in both 2021 and 2023 our engagement scores were the highest across the Institution. The impact of engaged and satisfied IS professionals helps to drive an outstanding digital experience for our customers and the patients we serve.



**Don
Reny**



**VP of Technology,
Gulf States Toyota**

Don is a senior executive with over 30 years of technology, leadership, and operations experience. Currently serves as Vice President of Technology at Gulf States Toyota. Prior positions include CIO at Exterran, Vice President IT at El Paso Corporation, Vice President IT at Caprock Communications and various positions at Lockheed Martin, GE and GTE supporting NASA and Defense Industry. His experience covers Automotive, Telecommunications, Manufacturing, Supply Chain, Energy, Aerospace and Defense both domestic and international.

SUCCESS STORY

I joined Gulf States Toyota to facilitate a digital transformation, from mainframe to a modern technology platform based on SAP(ERP). Design began immediately and when Covid hit, we completed design and build fully remote. We moved to in-person for testing. Go-live needed to be short as dealers could not receive vehicles or parts while we were down. By week three, production was back at normal levels for vehicles and we then focused on keeping parts flowing. The success of this transformation was due to focus on change management and keeping the best business resources on the project through the end.

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**Rob
Franch**



**CIO,
Carriage Services**

Chief Information Officer with over 25 years IT experience, focused on leading high performing global teams across multiple technology verticals. Specializing in global leadership, strategy and solution development & delivery for Fortune 500 enterprises. Proven results managing large teams, budgets and portfolios across complex, diverse environments. Joined Carriage Services in April '22 as CIO with the mission to provide best in class IT services & lead digital transformation within the deathcare space.

SUCCESS STORY

Focus has been in three areas. Assessing and implementing a security framework to protect the firm against cyber-attacks. Build a foundational infrastructure across financial systems, ERP and CRM. Capitalize on automation to drive down operating costs, create unique digital experiences for families and increase digital commerce opportunities.

Focusing on improved financial analysis we implemented OneStream financial consolidation and Microsoft Dynamics Business Central reducing time to close and providing robust analytic toolset to finance teams. To improve digital lead conversion, an AI solution providing lead analysis and AGI driven automation to our sales teams resulting in 15% increased conversion rate YoY.



**Ryan
Hartzog**



**VP Information Services,
David Weekley Homes**

Ryan Hartzog, Vice President of Information Services at David Weekley Homes, has significantly enhanced the company's information systems since joining in 2010. A former U.S. Marine Corps member, his leadership is marked by innovation and servant leadership, leading to the development of cutting-edge technologies and strong teams. His career, starting as an Application Developer and evolving into a pivotal leadership role, showcases his dedication to improvement, creative problem-solving, and empowering colleagues.

SUCCESS STORY

I began as a software developer at David Weekley Homes, contributing significantly to our custom systems. Later, as Director of Business Services, I spearheaded the creation of a back-office support company in India, now celebrating its 8th year. Promoted to VP of IS, I expanded our services to include QA, UX, and Data Analytics, driving innovation and growth. My journey from developer to VP illustrates the power of dedication, innovation, and strategic expansion in achieving professional success.



**Calvin
Leong**



**VP IT,
DNow**

Calvin Leong is the VP of Information Technology for DNow Inc. A strategic global IT Executive with P&L experience in strategic planning, digital technology deployment, process optimization, and cross-department transformation to drive business growth through enterprise leadership and change management ability, Calvin has a track record of bringing customer-focus and innovative solutions to C-level executives, establishing IT and digital strategies by leveraging emerging technologies such as cloud, AI and data analytics to deliver transformative outcomes.

SUCCESS STORY

I was proud to have been able to work with incredible IT teams pushing the boundaries of combining multiple technologies such as ERPs, AI, IoT, data analysis, and cybersecurity to deliver better customer services, improved employee engagement, and better-integrated partner solutions. Through servant leadership with a growth mindset, I transform how IT teams partner with other business functions to see technology's tangible impact on driving business outcomes. I also strongly focus on developing our talent and ensuring our global IT organization can grow personally and professionally, and contribute back to the technologies communities.



**Scott
Turner**



**CIO,
Expro**

Scott Turner is the CIO of Expro's global information technology group. He has over 30 years' experience in Information Technology with over 25 years of experience managing teams in the Oil & Gas industry. Adept at aligning technologies with strategic business goals, leading strong teams to deliver results, and offers a consistent record of improving efficiencies and reducing costs. He holds a bachelor's degree in computer science from Washington University in St. Louis.

SUCCESS STORY

The team successfully delivered several projects including our SAP S/4HANA upgrade, SAP SuccessFactors enhancements, and replacing bespoke applications with core SAP functionality. Our global on-premises datacenters were migrated to the cloud and new cybersecurity tools were implemented to better secure our environment. A suite of analytical dashboards has enabled us to drive better, more informed, and faster decision making. Our new supplier portal has streamlined and automated interactions with our global suppliers. These projects have led to meaningful savings in both licensing, reduced personnel costs and improved efficiency throughout the organization.

Another busy but extremely successful year for the team!



**Dave
Upton**



**Sr. Director, IT,
Lowe's Pro Supply**

Since 2020, Dave has held the role of Division CIO for Lowe's Pro Supply. He has specialized in developing best-in-class solutions for the manufacturing and distribution industries throughout his more than 20 years in the field. With a genuine passion for understanding the business and the customer, Dave helps organizations build winning cultures, leverage technology to break through to competitive advantage, delight and retain customers, and propel corporate growth and profitability.

SUCCESS STORY

The technology organization at Lowe's Pro Supply has engaged in a multi year modernization journey spanning almost every aspect of the business, from ERP and Financials, to Supply Chain Execution and Digital. This modernization effort has enabled the business to more than double in size in just 3 years, unlocking new revenue streams that account for over 50% of growth, and are only possible because of technology innovation.



**Rob
Zelinka**



**VP & CIO,
Jack Henry**

Rob Zelinka is VP&CIO for Jack Henry and member of Jack Henry's Corporate leadership team. Zelinka is responsible for technology strategy, operations, processes, and leading a team of technology professionals at one of Forbes best places to work. He is responsible for overseeing cloud operations, maintaining internal systems, data management strategy across the company, and supporting the growth of Jack Henry's business by partnering with other business units on technology and revenue generating programs.

SUCCESS STORY

Through the efforts of our passionate and dedicated associates, our business units are leading the effort to provide modernized frameworks and platforms that will serve the company and our clients for years to come. These efforts have resulted in improved operational efficiencies, operational resiliency, improved customer/ user experiences, and reduced risk. Through the deployment of our ServiceNow- based service and asset management platform (jhNow), we have real-time data on the services and products we deliver externally and consume internally. We're now managing technology in real time versus point in time.

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**Keefe
Andrews**



VP IT,
SpawGlass

Keefe has been fascinated with technology and computing since his high school days. He honed his customer service skills as a in home tech while working through college. After college, he progressed through several IT roles while working in the construction industry. Today he provides technology leadership for SpawGlass, seeking to help everyone access the power of technology to make daily work efficient and enjoyable.

SUCCESS STORY

The construction industry has heavily relied on paper processes, and a large part still does so today. While working with business leaders, Keefe and his technology team were able to eliminate several manual, paper-based processes at SpawGlass related to: time keeping, productivity tracking, safety reporting, and expense management, resulting in hours of productivity savings each week. Team members are providing positive feedback and are excited as they see initiatives that result in less manual work, so they can focus on the company mission of: Providing the Absolute Best Construction Experience.



**Dan
Bodnar**



Chief Information
& Technology Officer,
Skyward Specialty
Insurance

Dan Bodnar has been Skyward Specialty's Chief Information and Technology Officer since May 2018. Dan has extensive insurance technology experience having worked 25+ years in the industry. Previously Dan was at Argo Insurance and HCC Insurance Holdings.

In his spare time you can find Dan playing with his adorable grandchildren, irritating his grown daughters or building custom computers. Dan is Hawaiian and grew up on Oahu and Maui. He travels there as often as possible.

SUCCESS STORY

Skyward Specialty has integrated technology as a core strategic element to "Rule Our Niche," developing a skilled tech and insurance team that fosters a culture of innovation. Key achievements include the launch of SkyBI, a decision support tool which also realized significant savings, and SkyVUE, a bespoke underwriting platform that led to a notable revenue increase and earned an industry award. The company's ongoing automation efforts have resulted in substantial cost savings and efficiency gains. I take pride in the team's contribution to the organization's success, highlighting the effective blend of technology and industry expertise.



**David
Domine**



CIO,
Christian Brothers
Automotive

David Domine is proud to lead the technology teams at Christian Brothers Automotive as CIO. His career began 20 years ago in Operations, preparing over 100 new CBA franchisees to launch and run their businesses. As an advocate for leveraging technology, David took an opportunity in 2018 and shifted roles into technology leadership leading the company through exponential growth since then. David also serves on the board of Hope Impacts, a nearby homeless ministry.

SUCCESS STORY

Our company has been honored to win the JD Power award for excellence 4 straight times including last year. Seeing the trust our customers have in us is truly humbling and only drives us further to be worthy of retaining it. We continue to be named among the top brands in franchising across America and credit the tireless efforts of our automotive technicians, advisors and franchisees who serve customers on the front lines every day. Our technology teams are a small, but integral part of the fabric that is the CBA Family.



**Craig
Gehrke**



CIO,
Jacuzzi Group

With over 20 years of global leadership experience spanning diverse industries, Craig excels in cultivating high-performing teams and driving innovation. Currently leading critical initiatives at Jacuzzi, he is committed to delivering significant technology improvements that drive efficiency and business value. His track record demonstrates his ability to navigate complex challenges, grow great partnerships internal as well as external and deliver results that propel organizations forward. He contributes to the industry through multiple advisory board positions.

SUCCESS STORY

Leading global initiatives, we have demonstrated the ability to drive broad strategies delivering incredible value, innovation, and partnership. We are driving a corporate application rationalization strategy that includes a new ERP solution, deprecating 145+ out of 164 applications and implementation of a data mastering solution consolidating data from 20+ sources to provide global business intelligence dashboards. Spearheading AI/ML initiatives, we automated manual tasks and utilized AI for self-service IT Service Desk queries. Amid the pandemic, we drove significant cost savings through lean optimizations. Collaborating with strategic partners, we implemented a compliant remote work environment virtual desktop solution in days.



**Timothy
Jackson**



CIO,
Diamond Offshore, LLC

Tim Laudell Jackson holds the position of Chief Information Officer at Diamond Offshore. With 30 years of IT experience, He has spent the last 18 years in various leadership roles, including Director of Enterprise Systems, Director of Global Infrastructure, and Six Sigma Black Belt. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Science in Computer Information Processing from Southern Illinois University and earned a Certificate of Management in Energy from Rice University's Jones Graduate School of Business.

SUCCESS STORY

Over the past two years, IT leaders have faced numerous challenges, from supporting remote workers and defending against potential cyber-attacks to making tough personnel decisions while still implementing new technologies and systems. Despite these challenges, my team to help Diamond successfully emerge from Chapter 11, assisted our Operations team by supporting new technology, and ensured the continuity of our services. However, the mentorship opportunities I engaged in during 2023 are what I hold in the highest regard. As Marshall Goldsmith aptly put it, "The #1 key to success is creating lasting positive change in yourself and others".



**Kara
Pelecky**



SVP & CIO,
American Bureau
of Shipping

Bringing creative leadership, innovative thinking, and game-changing solutions for complex challenges, Kara Pelecky is an expert in translating sophisticated strategy into operational blueprints that deliver. The cornerstone of her multi-industry career is positively impacting enterprise performance in an environment of increasing risk, ambiguity, & opportunity. Kara has been instrumental in setting internal corporate direction as a member of boards and committees. With her global experience, she is a sought-after speaker and commentator on numerous topics.

SUCCESS STORY

Kara Pelecky has pioneered game-changing transformations across multiple industries. Blending creativity, strategic vision, and operational expertise, she excels at revolutionizing enterprise performance amidst global challenges. From launching nuclear power plants to reshaping manufacturing divisions, her influence is profound. In the face of adversity, like the COVID-19 pandemic, she charted divestiture pathways and streamlined operations for enhanced efficiency and sustainability. As CIO of the America Bureau of Shipping, she is accelerating digital adoption, redefining norms and advancing industry standards. Through visionary leadership, she simplifies complexities, delivering actionable solutions that drive opportunity.

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**Jeff
Green**



**CIO,
Strike Construction**

Over Jeff's 25 years in IT management, he has led various teams across multiple IT disciplines and projects. He is a hands-on leader with excellent customer service and a servant leader to his employees. He prides himself on drawing from his experience and expertise along with his strong core values. All of these have led to his adeptness at creating and growing teams so they can bring business value and positively impact the business strategy.

SUCCESS STORY

I think the greatest success story that I have as a CIO has been my team and their willingness to stick with me through the company's difficult times. We went through some hard times as a company in 2022, but by making my team feel like we were a family, we did not lose a single employee during that time. Everyone chose to stay with Strike and "ride out" the storm, and we have accomplished some great things in two years. When you show your employees that they are family, they will stay with you through the hard times.



**Antonio
Marin**



**CIO,
US Med-Equip, LLC.**

Antonio Marin is the CIO of USMED-Equip and has been a leader in IT for over 25 years across several industries. His teams received many awards and recognitions for their achievements. He is also a president emeritus of the Houston SIM Chapter, a member of the Executive Association of Houston, and a HoustonCIO chapter founding member, and, along with his wife, co-founded an endowment for computer science students, among other philanthropic causes.

SUCCESS STORY

USME is an innovative company that provides hospitals with movable medical equipment and beds. It uses USME Connect, a system that links the hospitals' EMR systems with GoUSME, a platform that simplifies ordering and delivery of equipment. USME Connect uses advanced technologies like RPA, AI, and ML to create a seamless and secure process that saves time and money for hospitals and patients. A nurse manager from Prisma Health Upstate praised USME Connect for its efficiency and partnership in delivering healthcare. USME Connect is the "complexity of simplicity."



**Beau
McBeth**



**VP of IT & Ministry,
Jake's Finer Foods**

Beau McBeth serves as Vice President of IT and Ministry at Jake's Finer Foods, a broad-line foodservice distribution, storage, and logistics solution provider for restaurants and retail grocers in Texas. With degrees in Management Information Systems, Marketing, and Engineering; he's led technology solutions and services teams throughout his career in organizations including Verizon, Telstra, and Hewlett Packard. Beau is the co-author of "Boss Like God" and stewards LIFE for high impact as a marketplace missionary.

SUCCESS STORY

It's by God's grace through Jesus Christ my savior, I've received the ORBIE Award nomination by my peers. I was once lost and misusing His gifts with selfish ambition. But now, through the power of the Holy Spirit, I'm following Jesus' example of servant-leadership on my journey from job, career, to calling. I'm grateful for my wife, family, mentors, and house church's encouragement along the way. This is a testament of Jake's leadership team, expertise of the IT team, loyal customers, and vendor partnerships. The transformation from exploitative business practices to redemptive entrepreneurship continues to be an adventure, humbling, and beautiful.



**Tony
Moore**



**CIO,
PVAMU**

As CIO, Tony Moore provides the overall vision and leadership in implementing innovative solutions and programs that support PVAMU's mission and strategic goals. He has over two decades of experience in forging change and organizational transformation in various business environments, including the past 15 years in higher education technology. Throughout his career, Tony has consistently proven to be an effective leader in planning and implementing enterprise information systems to support both distributed and centralized business operations.

SUCCESS STORY

Our team crafted a digital transformation strategy, ushering our organization into the era of emerging technologies while optimizing business operations. This initiative achieved a 30% boost in operational efficiency and a 20% reduction in costs, laying the groundwork for improved customer experiences and future expansion. Through meticulous planning, we implemented a state-of-the-art network infrastructure, elevating data transfer speeds and minimizing latency by 40%. This advancement ensures our organization stays technologically forefront, meeting the escalating demands of faculty, staff, and students.



**Ralph E
Owens II**



**CIO,
Members Choice
Credit Union**

Ralph has been in the IT industry for over 24 years. During this time, he has worked for financial institutions such as Bank of America, Capital One, Mastercard, and Texas Dow Employee Credit Union. Ralph is passionate about supporting members and the credit union movement. He has committed his career to using his IT knowledge and experiences to improve the members' experience and enable Member's Choice Credit Union to increase revenue through innovative technology solutions.

SUCCESS STORY

As CIO of a Member's Choice credit union, I have implemented a multifaceted strategy that has stabilized the IT department, enhanced operational oversight, and fostered robust partnerships with business stakeholders. I stabilized the IT department by adopting a proactive infrastructure management and service delivery approach. I implemented cybersecurity measures to ensure reliability and trust, which led to reduced downtime and improved member satisfaction. Building stronger relationships with business partners was achieved through regular communication, understanding their needs, and delivering on IT projects that directly supported their objectives which transformed the IT department into a strategic asset for the organization.



**Fheryl
Prestage**



**CIO,
Houston Community
College**

Fheryl Prestage has established an impressive information technology career as an innovative, solutions-oriented IT leader. She has extensive executive level IT management experience, including over 21 years with HCC and 20 years prior in Corporate America. She earned an MBA degree from Texas Woman's University, and BS degree from Southern University and A&M College. She is actively involved with HoustonCIO, TACC-CIO, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Southern University Alumni, and Houston Chapter of CHUMS, Inc.

SUCCESS STORY

One of my team's greatest successes was the full transition of technology needs for 6K plus employees and 70K plus students for an entire predominantly on-premises college for instruction and work to a fully remote institution within a matter of weeks, and then later transitioned back to a pre-pandemic work support structure in a matter of days. One hugely successful initiative was our Silver Eagles (students age 55+) program, where we implemented a laptop and software giveaway and established a direct 24/7 direct contact support center for this student population – which allowed these students to successfully complete their studies.


CONGRATULATIONS



Melanie Kirkwood Ruiz
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER
HOUSTONCIO ORBIE AWARDS
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ABM Chief Information Officer Melanie Kirkwood Ruiz has been critical to the success of our multi-year strategy which focuses on how we ELEVATE our team member and client experience through the use of technology and data.

Under her leadership, the Technology Team's talent, culture and focus has transformed over the last four years as they drive efficiencies with new technologies, modernize our digital ecosystem and drive value and revenue for clients.



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Congratulations Ralph!

You are a visionary technology leader who is empowering success for our credit union members and the community.




Ralph Owens
Chief Information Officer
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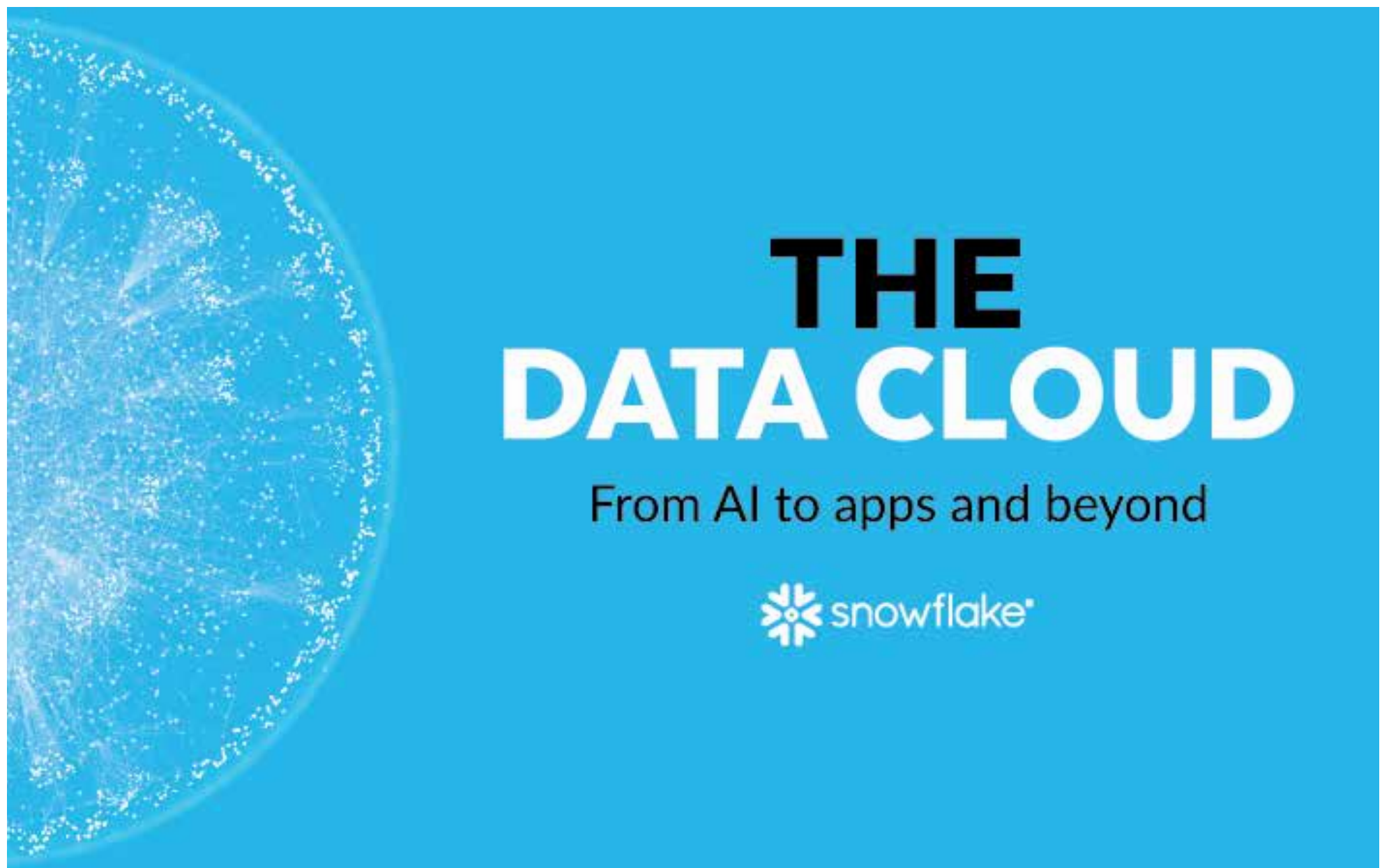
A large iceberg floats in the ocean, with its reflection visible in the water. The sky is a pale blue, and the water is a deep blue. The iceberg is the central focus, with its jagged, translucent top and a much larger, submerged base.

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