

MILWAUKEE
BUSINESS JOURNAL

2025

WISCONSIN **ORBIE**[®] AWARDS

The annual Wisconsin ORBIE[®] Awards honors chief information officers who have demonstrated excellence in technology leadership. Winners in Global, Large Enterprise, Enterprise, Large Corporate, Corporate & Nonprofit/Public Sector categories will be announced July 18 at Brookfield Conference Center.



 **WISCONSINCIO**



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FROM THE CHAIR

Great CIOs Understand How Connections Drive Transformation

Connections with others facing similar challenges transform ideas into impact, plans into progress, and vision into reality.

WisconsinCIO brings together preeminent Chief Information Officers from Wisconsin's largest organizations to strengthen leadership effectiveness, drive innovation, and create business value. Member-led, non-commercial programs foster meaningful professional relationships, enabling collaboration on shared challenges to gain leadership advantage.

Whether you're leading a large corporation or a nonprofit, there's no

textbook for how to be great in a role that changes as rapidly as technology. That's why relationships create superpowers, driving personal and organizational transformation.

The Inspire Leadership Network connects CIOs with over 1,700 lifelong learners across more than 40 chapters. From public and private companies to government, education, healthcare, and nonprofits, we exist to help members navigate and thrive in a uniquely challenging executive role.

The leadership principles that have served CIOs for over 25 years are now available to communities serving

CISOs as the Inspire Leadership Network expands in 2025.

The ORBIE® Awards recognize the great leadership of CIOs in Wisconsin. On behalf of WisconsinCIO, I congratulate the nominees and finalists for their remarkable achievements. A special thank you to the sponsors and underwriters for their foresight in making the Wisconsin ORBIE® Awards possible.

With the right connections and relationships, transformation is not only possible—it's happening today, as evidenced by the finalists you will meet throughout this special section.



Sincerely,

Allen Smith
2025 Chair, WisconsinCIO
CIO, Baker Tilly



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2025 LEADERSHIP RECIPIENT

Julie Ragland

Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer (retired)
International Motors LLC

Wisconsin ORBIE Leadership Award recipient Julie Ragland on the evolution of the CIO role, advice for future IT leaders

By The Business Journals Content Studio

Julie Ragland is a transformational executive and board member who is passionate about innovating at the intersection of technology and business to drive top-line and bottom-line results. With over 30 years of experience in manufacturing and information technology as well as her CPA certification, she combines an expert understanding of the influence technology has on business performance with a proven track record overseeing large, multiyear IT roadmaps. Ragland is a respected leader who excels at driving collaboration across highly matrixed, multicultural global organizations. She brings extensive international experience, having conducted business in over 20 countries and having lived overseas for eight years in London and Dubai.

Ragland most recently served as the senior vice president and chief information officer for Navistar (now International Motors LLC), where she partnered closely with the CEO and executive team to establish a five-year, \$1 billion digital transformation strategy using agile methods, ERP and cloud-based solutions, and new digital products to drive revenue opportunities and strong bottom-line improvements.

Prior to Navistar, Ragland spent nearly 15 years with Johnson Controls and Adient, the spinoff of Johnson Controls' Tier 1 automotive division. At Adient, she was a key member of the leadership team that established the company's first IT organization and orchestrated the IT spinoff of a \$16 billion organization. Her early career included roles at Ernst & Young and Cap Gemini as an IT

adviser to large multinational companies undergoing significant ERP and IT transformations.

In addition to her professional career, Ragland has held several leadership roles on nonprofit boards. She currently serves as a board curator for the Wisconsin Historical Society, an advisory board member for i.c.stars Milwaukee and an advisory board member for the United Way's Technology United council. She is a previous board chair for the Women's Fund of Greater Milwaukee and continues to serve as a board director and chair of the Board Governance Committee.

Ragland holds a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management and was licensed as a CPA by the state of Wisconsin. She is currently based in the Milwaukee area.

Ragland is the recipient of the Leadership Award as part of the 2025 Wisconsin ORBIE Awards. She provided insights below about the evolution of the CIO role and advice for future generations.

What does the Leadership Award honor mean to you?

I'm very honored to be selected and recognized for this award as it is a peer-based selection. To me, this award recognizes more than just one role or project but is a recognition of the totality of my career and investment in our profession. I'm so honored to be recognized by my friends and colleagues with the Wisconsin CIO Leadership Award.

How has the role of the CIO evolved in recent years?

Over the years, technology has evolved to become one of the most important investments and capabilities in an organization. We've seen the evolution of many business models to be reliant on technology strategies to further their ability to reach customers, to build high-tech solutions and to protect organizations from cyberattacks. As a result, the CIO role has transformed from that of a technologist into one that drives an organization's strategies and risks. Often, the CIO can be managing the largest investment portfolio in a company. But one of the biggest challenges with this evolution is that many traditional executive leaders don't fully understand technologies and the fundamental impact on their business model. As a result, CIOs are often in a role to educate, influence and challenge the thinking of their peers. These strategy-centric CIOs have become the gold standard for many companies as they become technology-driven organizations.

Do you have any advice for future generations of CIOs?

My biggest advice to future CIOs is to build a coalition of other leaders around you. CIOs lead very complex initiatives that are integrated across a multitude of functions in an organization. While a CIO can be a catalyst for change, they cannot bring about change without standing side by side with other leaders. Find other leaders who are technology-minded and work with them to build momentum and buy-in for change.



CONGRATULATIONS

to our Executive Vice President and CIO, Shailesh Jha,
on being named a Wisconsin CIO ORBIE Finalist!



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KYLE MCMILLAN

Chief Information
and Technology Officer

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Talal Butt

CIO
Generac Power Systems



Talal Butt has served as Generac Power Systems' Chief Information Officer since March 2024. Prior to joining Generac, he was Global Vice President – Enterprise Transformation and Architecture for Rockwell Automation. Before Rockwell, Mr. Butt was Vice President and IT Project Services Manager at Robert W. Baird & Co. and served in previous leadership roles at Covance (a subsidiary of LabCorp) and GE Healthcare. He is the recipient of two CIO 100 awards for digital transformation.

SUCCESS STORY

Senior global technology executive, focused on execution with 20+ years of experience in driving business aligned technology innovation and implementation through cost-effective, high-performance technology solutions in support of rapid business growth. Exceptional at building culturally diverse, team-centered operating units, with excellent business process and strategy development/ execution skills. Customer-centric with the ability to initiate profitable alliances with global vendors and suppliers. Passionate about driving data driven business transformations focused on digital product innovation, end to end customer experience powered through technology and process excellence. Cross functional leaderships of IT M&A initiatives.



Kyle McMillan

Chief Information &
Technology Officer
Plexus Corp



Kyle McMillan serves as the Chief Information and Technology Officer at Plexus Corp. He took on the CIO role in 2022 and expanded his responsibilities to include global technology in 2024. Since joining Plexus in 2013, Kyle has held positions in customer management, aftermarket services and global operations. He currently chairs the Global Technology, Technology and Innovation and Security Steering Committees. Kyle holds a B.Eng. in Electrical and Electronic Engineering from Strathclyde University.

SUCCESS STORY

One of my proudest accomplishments is watching my team lead the successful rollout of Google Workspace across 26 global facilities and 20,000 team members. They drove the integration, training, and adoption—transforming how we work together. Their leadership broke down silos, enabled real-time collaboration across time zones, and simplified communication. By embracing change, they built a more agile, connected culture and positioned our organization for scalable, AI-ready growth. Seeing them step out of their comfort zones to drive such a high-impact initiative has been a defining moment in our growth journey.



Mark Molitor

CIO
Milwaukee Tool



Mark Molitor joined Milwaukee Tool in 2017 and is the Chief Information Officer. Mark is responsible for overseeing Milwaukee's IT strategy and operations, including data & AI, enterprise security, infrastructure, and software engineering. Prior to Milwaukee Tool, Mark held leadership positions with GE, Mattel, and TruStage. Mark holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and an MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

SUCCESS STORY

The Milwaukee Tool IT team has contributed to the company's consistent double-digit year-over-year revenue growth by digitally transforming the business through delivery of scalable, secure, innovative, and cost-effective solutions and execution of a comprehensive IT strategy. By evolving into a strategic partner and innovator, the IT team has modernized work practices, expanded and developed talent, and achieved top-tier engagement and retention – positioning Milwaukee Tool as a destination for technology talent.



Kusum Verma

Former Executive Director,
Workforce Digital
Experience
GE HealthCare



Kusum Verma is CIO of Employee Experience at GE HealthCare, leading global digital strategy across HR, Legal, Real Estate, device lifecycle management, and workplace technologies. She is known for empowering teams and delivering complex transformations with empathy and purpose, including leading GE HealthCare's enterprise initiative on AI. Kusum serves on the boards of i.c.stars and the Waukesha County Business Alliance, and contributes to the UW E-Business Consortium. She champions servant leadership and community-driven impact.

SUCCESS STORY

Leading through transformation at GE HealthCare has been about more than systems, it's been about people. As we established our new digital identity, my team and I focused on reimagining how employees experience technology at work. We modernized core platforms, streamlined support, and made it easier for colleagues to access the tools they need every day. We also laid the foundation for innovation through responsible adoption of emerging technologies like AI. I'm proud to have led a team that delivered meaningful change with empathy, creativity, and purpose. It shaped a digital workplace that has no limits.



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Wisconsin CIO of the Year
Award Winners and Nominees

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OVER \$1.6 BILLION ANNUAL REVENUE



2025
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Maribeth Achterberg

CITO-EVP
The Boldt Group



Maribeth Achterberg is the Chief Information & Technology Officer - EVP at The Boldt Group, overseeing all IT services for all Boldt Group entities. She previously held roles at Molson Coors, Johnson Controls, Schneider National, and Verity Management Solutions. Maribeth holds a Master of Science in Engineering Management and certifications in Private Company Governance, Lean Practitioner, and Zachman Enterprise Architecture. She serves on various boards, is a published technology author, and enjoys golfing and family time.

SUCCESS STORY

Maribeth Achterberg led transformative IT initiatives at Boldt in 2024 - 2025, achieving significant improvements. Key accomplishments include adopting a cybersecurity framework and the IT risk registry, streamlining the Technology Request process, delivering new software capabilities on CRM, HRIS, ERP platforms and introducing Estimating, and developing the Data/Analytics strategy. The Boldt IT team also supported the development of operations-enabling and Boldt Management System software products, published business supporting analytics reports and dashboards, and launched the Change Advisory Board to manage new capabilities in production environments. These initiatives have enhanced Boldt's IT capabilities and delivered substantial business value.



Shailesh Jha

SVP & CIO
Menasha Corporation



I'm known for my strategic vision and leadership in driving technological innovation that are aligned with business strategic goals and initiatives. Collaborating closely with top professionals and my team, I excel in transforming IT infrastructures to enhance business performance. Reporting to CEO and working closely with my peers, I leverage my expertise to align technology with organizational goals, talent development, ensuring robust and scalable solutions that advances the company forward.

SUCCESS STORY

I have led transformative initiatives that have significantly enhanced the company's digital landscape. Under my leadership, Menasha Corporation transitioned from a decentralized IT organization model to a centralized, corporate-driven structure. Established a Cybersecurity and Project Management Office. Key projects include Enterprise Data and Analytics Transformation, SAP Rise enhancing customer experience and operational efficiency. Exhibited leadership in implementing advanced data analytics and automation has driven significant improvements in customer satisfaction. Additionally, my focus has been on talent development by creating an IT job architecture with clear career paths. These efforts have positioned Menasha Corporation as an industry leader.



Anil Tiwari

CIO
U. S. Venture Inc.



Anil Tiwari is the Chief Information Officer (CIO) of U.S. Venture, large multi-billion-dollar distribution and logistics company. He has over 25 years of leadership experience in automotive manufacturing, distribution, and logistics industry. Anil has led several business transformations by consistently leveraging technology to fuel growth, improve profitability, and optimize performance across manufacturing and supply chain domains. He has a Ph.D. from Virginia Tech and an MBA in Strategy from the University of Michigan.

SUCCESS STORY

Today's CIOs need to evolve into business leaders, leading digitally powered transformations. We partnered with business leaders to create a Digital Vision that utilizes disruptive technologies and data insights to drive value and growth. Our 3-year roadmap includes cloud journey, an enterprise data warehouse, AI initiatives and an automation center of excellence. Our Digital Vision serves as a compass – guiding us in capturing future value. Additionally, we established a bi-modal IT operating model to foster innovation and deliver IT products and services more quickly.



Tony Vaden

SVP & CIO
ABC Supply Co.



Tony Vaden is EVP and CIO of ABC Supply, a \$20B wholesale distributor. With over 25 years of experience, he has led IT in major companies, pioneering disruptive cloud technologies and advanced analytics. At ABC, Tony has driven over \$5B in acquisitions and developed a \$1.5B digital eCommerce. He thrives at the forefront of Data Privacy, Security, and Compliance. Tony holds numerous professional associations and has received multiple awards for his excellence as a CIO.

SUCCESS STORY

Under my leadership, ABC has achieved high-impact accomplishments, positioning us as a technology leader in our industry. Our strategy focused on scaling core capabilities and modernizations. Milestones include rationalizing platforms and implementing ERPs: DMSI Agility, Epicor, and Oracle Cloud. Enhanced analytics showcase advancements in AI and data science, optimizing truck routing, expansion, and inventory management. ABC leads in customer technology integrations, building a \$1.5B+ eCommerce ecosystem with an industry-first API self-service model. Prioritizing security, we exceed benchmarks with annual NIST 2.0 assessments. These achievements deliver measurable business value, supporting ABC's goal to be the biggest, best, and easiest service company.



Tracy Weber

Segment IT Director
ITW / Miller Electric



Tracy Weber is Segment IT Director at ITW Welding with 15+ years of IT and digital marketing experience in the manufacturing industry. She leads high-performing teams to drive digital transformation and align technology with business goals. Outside of work, Tracy enjoys time at her Northern WI lake cabin with her husband, caring for her multiple freshwater aquariums, and staying active through yoga and running.

SUCCESS STORY

While leading the ITW Welding IT team, our greatest accomplishment has been transforming from a support function into a trusted business partner. We've built trust by clearly communicating system updates and launching dashboards to increase transparency. Stronger stakeholder relationships now involve us earlier in high-value, business-driven initiatives. To drive accountability, we added leadership in IT Operations, Cybersecurity, Data Analytics, and Project Management, along with strategic technical roles that complement our skilled, tenured team. This restructuring, focused on service and value, has elevated IT's role—positioning us as a proactive, innovative partner in driving measurable business outcomes.

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FINALIST



CONGRATULATIONS
MARIBETH ACHTERBERG

Your commitment to excellence and exceptional leadership are what makes the innovative work of our project teams possible.

BOLDT

Congratulations,
Mike



We congratulate **Mike Troutman** on being recognized as one of Wisconsin's top CIO's. We value Mike's exceptional leadership, innovation, and dedication in driving our organization's technological advancements and digital transformation initiatives.

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WATER SOLUTIONS

Congratulations

to the 2025 Wisconsin CIO ORBIE Finalists!

We are proud to celebrate technology leadership across Wisconsin—especially ORBIE finalist **John Kreul**,
Chief Information & Digital Officer at Jewelers Mutual.

Your innovation and impact are transforming our organization, our customer experience, and the communities we serve.

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John Kreul, Chief Information & Digital Officer

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Yusuf Abu-Hatoum

Chief Information &
Technology Officer
Palermo's Pizza



Yusuf Abu-Hatoum is the Chief Information & Technology Officer at Palermo's Pizza, where he is leading digital transformation, Oracle Fusion ERP modernization, and data-driven innovation. He's spearheading enterprise data warehousing and AI initiatives. Previously, he modernized the IT platform at Sellars Absorbent Materials and led a complete digital transformation at Cleaver-Brooks. Known for turning IT into a proactive business partner, Yusuf builds high-performing teams and leverages data to drive operational excellence and strategic growth.

SUCCESS STORY

At Palermo's, I am leading the transformation of IT from a reactive support function to a proactive, responsive team, laying the groundwork for enterprise-level technology initiatives. I prioritized hiring, training, and retaining top talent to support our Oracle Fusion ERP rollout, with a strong focus on enhancing our data capabilities. To drive consistent, sustainable execution, I implemented a structured project management methodology. I also established two teams: focused on the Oracle implementation and on advancing AI and machine learning business cases. Both teams leverage data as a strategic asset to fuel innovation and drive data-driven decision-making throughout the enterprise.



Claudio D'Agostino

CIO
CentroMotion



Originally from Argentina, Claudio D'Agostino made Brookfield, Wisconsin his home 11 years ago with his wife and kids. With over 20 years of IT experience in health care, logistics, higher education, and manufacturing, Claudio served leadership roles in diverse, global, and culturally varied environments. He earned a bachelor's degree in software engineering from the University of Buenos Aires and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Technology of Buenos Aires.

SUCCESS STORY

In nine months, we built IT from the ground up, migrating 1200 users, 4 ERPs, and 200 servers across twenty global locations while hiring fifteen staff. I questioned if I was jumping off a cliff by taking this titanic task in November 2019. My wife said I'd regret not accepting it. Despite COVID, we celebrated CentroMotion running on its own enterprise platform. The success...our people—a collaborative, open, and high-energy environment where everyone was encouraged to share their thoughts and passion. Today, the same IT leadership team is working together to take the company into its next chapter.



Kim Lueck

SVP, Technology & CIO
Marcus Corporation



After five years with Western Publishing I moved to the Marcus Corporation and have been here for 28 years. During that time I held the positions of manager, director, vice president and was promoted to CIO in 2014. I am responsible for the technology strategic direction of the company and have an amazing team. I am also an avid volunteer and reside on multiple charitable boards.

SUCCESS STORY

My focus on the growth and inclusion of all technology associates while mentoring from the top down has been the key to our success. Every day the team provides best-in-class services for our guests by implementing innovative solutions with an ultimate user experience while solving our business's strategic goals and keeping Marcus an industry leader in technology. Our associates are made more efficient through our technology solutions. Our cyber security program is positioned as leading-edge due to a team of expert associates committed to protecting our company's data.



Mike Troutman

CIO
Zurn Elkay



Mike Troutman is the Chief Information Officer for Zurn Elkay Water Solutions and is responsible for the Information Technology function, digital transformation initiatives, and the connected products business. Mike has led both IT and business functions and initiatives, leveraging differentiated IT capabilities and services to modernize and digitalize businesses. Digital business transformations have led to demand generation, enhanced customer experiences, increased associate productivity, and the development and growth of the connected solutions business.

SUCCESS STORY

The Zurn Elkay merger created a water powerhouse. Zurn Elkay IT utilized this opportunity to elevate the combined business by standardizing on industry leading platforms and business practices. By leveraging the best of each platform, we established great common operational standards. In the same spirit, the Zurn connected products platform is accelerating Elkay's connected bottle fillers, ensuring safe drinking water for children and reducing single-use plastics. Technology-driven innovation, like AI-generated quote automation to provide better, faster quotes, is being deployed companywide to pull forward the combined enterprise. IT's innovative continuous improvement helps to power Zurn Elkay's leadership and sustained progress.

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Innovation Doesn't Announce Itself. But It Transforms Everything.

Tracy Weber named
as a finalist for the
2025 ORBIE awards!

WISCONSIN CIO OF THE YEAR
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Tracy Weber's leadership doesn't call attention to itself, but her innovative mindset shows the results! As Director of IT, her focus and direction have helped us shape stronger connections internally and externally, smarter connections between divisions, and by fostering a more resilient future for ITW Welding.

Congratulations, Tracy!

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LARGE CORPORATE FINALISTS

OVER \$300 MILLION ANNUAL REVENUE



2025
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Michael Barrett

CIO
Potawatomi Ventures



Accountable for the strategy for Technology across the company and subsidiaries, and the long-term growth plans for Potawatomi Ventures. Experience includes CTO at River Run, and Sr. Director of digital products at Northwestern Mutual. Michael serves on the Cedarburg Education Foundation & Ozaukee Central Fire Department as a firefighter/EMT & Ozaukee County's MABAS as President. Michael has a bachelor's degree in political science and public policy from the UW – Whitewater, and an Executive MBA from Marquette.

SUCCESS STORY

I have emphasized the importance of recognizing that our subsidiary businesses have a choice between shared IT services and seeking external vendors. Our businesses are the focus of our IT strategy, which includes linking strategic priorities to budget requests. We have published a strategic roadmap centered on smooth operations and customer experience (CX). Additionally, we have embraced new values and competencies, with IT leading the change. This has facilitated transparent conversations about how work is accomplished, while also innovating with the business on initiatives geared toward efficiency and business outcomes. We have stronger relationship with our businesses than ever before.



Daniel Bourquin

CIO
MEC - Mayville Engineering Corp



Daniel Bourquin is Chief Information Officer at Mayville Engineering Company (NYSE: MEC), a leading U.S. manufacturing partner with 20+ facilities across seven states. He previously served as CIO at Fathom Digital Manufacturing and PSSI, and as VP of Global IT at Generac. Dan also held senior IT roles at Generac Power Systems and has extensive experience in consulting and manufacturing. His leadership spans digital transformation and enterprise IT strategy across diverse industries.

SUCCESS STORY

ONE MEC, ONE Mission - The IT group at MEC is driving a renewed vision centered on leadership, automation, and innovation. Since I joined MEC in the CIO role, we have been continuously advancing transformations, such as HRIS and ERP modernization, acquisitions, cybersecurity, and the launch of our first Automation and AI programs. While the team has achieved remarkable success in our project portfolio, what I am most proud of is my team's commitment to embracing a new Operating Model. A new model that has IT taking the lead in digital transformation and partnering with the business on a strategic level.



Tim Brown

Former EVP & CIO
Johnson Financial Group



As CIO of Johnson Financial Group, Tim leads technology strategy to drive infrastructure resiliency, operational modernization, and client experience. With over 30 years in tech leadership, he delivers secure, adaptable, and integrated solutions aligned with corporate strategy. Tim fosters strong partnerships through accountability and transparency while empowering his team to make impactful decisions. His focus on innovation and reliability ensures technology serves both associates and clients with excellence.

SUCCESS STORY

Since 2019, Tim has led the transformation of JFG's IT function into a high performing organization. Under his leadership, the team partnered with the business to execute a \$50M digital transformation, modernizing infrastructure, cybersecurity, associate tools, and client-facing platforms. Key achievements include implementing ERP and iPaaS platforms, virtual DRaaS, a new mortgage system, data analytics modernization, and streamlining Wealth custodians from 50 to 7—all while maintaining 92% SLA performance and 97% associate satisfaction.



John Church

VP, Information Systems & Affiliation Transition Lead
Rural Mutual Insurance



Over twenty years of experience in the insurance industry with a background in technology, finance, acquisitions, and divestitures. I joined Rural Mutual in September of 2021 as the Vice President of Information Systems. In 2024 I took on the additional responsibility of leading the Badger Mutual affiliation integration. Prior to Rural I worked for Allstate, Group Health Cooperative, QBE Insurance, and NeuGen/WEA. At all these organizations I held leadership positions contributing to their success.

SUCCESS STORY

Many people ask me what's the hardest part of the job. Those same people think it's the technology. It's not. The hardest part is the people. What I mean by that is getting the Business to trust IT. Trust only comes from building relationships. My biggest success story is building relationships with the business. Change can't happen without strong business support. With strong business support you get a clear vision of where the technology needs to go. Once you have that, effective change will happen. That's what happening at Rural!



Eric Ensminger

CIO
City Brewing and Beverage



Eric Ensminger is Chief Information Officer at City Brewing and a key member of its executive leadership team and board of directors. With over 20 years of senior executive experience at United Airlines, GE, and Oracle, he has led enterprise digital transformation, operational modernization, and cross-functional growth initiatives. Recognized as a 2023 Top Ten CIO in Food & Beverage, Eric holds an MBA from the University of Wisconsin and a BS in Accounting.

SUCCESS STORY

Embracing Digital Transformation: Driving Success Through Innovative IT Strategies At City Brewing, we redefined the contract manufacturing model by integrating directly into our customers' supply chains—enabling real-time ERP and supply chain transparency. This innovative approach transforms City into a true extension of our partners' operations, improving collaboration, efficiency, and responsiveness. By embracing digital transformation and focusing on customer-centric solutions, we have elevated City from a transactional vendor to a strategic partner, driving mutual value and long-term success.



John Kreul

SVP & Chief Information and Digital Officer
Jewelers Mutual



John Kreul is the Chief Information and Digital Officer at Jewelers Mutual®, a leading jewelry insurance and business solutions provider based in Neenah, WI. With over 30 years of technology expertise and a strong digital mindset, he drives the vision, strategy, and operations of the company's technology group. Kreul is committed to delivering innovative, customer-centric solutions and plays a key role in cultivating a progressive culture that embraces curiosity, continuous improvement, and forward-thinking innovation.

SUCCESS STORY

At Jewelers Mutual, I've led transformative advances in digital innovation, cybersecurity, and tech strategy, positioning the company as a leader in Insurtech. With over 30 years of tech expertise, I've championed AI, automation, and data analytics to enhance underwriting, streamline operations, and personalizing customer experiences. Our cybersecurity strategy ensures innovation aligns with strong data protection. I've also prioritized developing tech talent and fostering a culture of curiosity and continuous learning. Together, my team and I are reimagining what's possible—embedding innovation into the company's DNA and ensuring we stay ahead in the evolving insurance landscape.

CORPORATE FINALISTS

UP TO \$300 MILLION ANNUAL REVENUE



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Ann Boland

CIO

J.F. Brennan Company, Inc.



Ann Boland is a dynamic technology executive with extensive experience leading IT initiatives and developing strategy and architecture. As CIO at J.F. Brennan Company, Inc., she directs infrastructure, applications, analytics and service management. Previously, she served as VP of IT Infrastructure at Trane Technologies. Ann holds an MBA from Viterbo University and has a proven track record of executing strategic direction, delivering operational excellence, and driving continuous improvement through relationship management and customer-focused thinking.

SUCCESS STORY

The Brennan IT team drives growth and operational efficiency by aligning technology with business strategy. They have built a resilient IT infrastructure using cloud hosting, networking, and mobile services, ensuring secure and reliable access for all employees. The team has matured their data strategy, implemented automation solutions, and strengthened cybersecurity protocols. IT has evolved into a strategic business enabler, optimizing digital workflows, providing self-service solutions, and fostering innovation to deliver sustainable competitive advantage for Brennan. By leveraging automation, integration and innovative technologies, they streamline processes and empower employees to focus on high-value tasks, enhancing overall productivity and efficiency.



William Caraher

CIO, Director of Operations
von Briesen & Roper, s.c.



Bill Caraher is the CIO and Director of Operations at von Briesen with over 20 years of technology and management experience. He is responsible for the firm's nine offices, including all IT functions, cybersecurity, billing & collections, conflicts & new business intake and back office operations. Bill has his MBA and B.S. degrees and a CISSP certification. He is an Adjunct at Marquette University and is the founding Advisory Board Chair for i.c. Stars, Milwaukee.

SUCCESS STORY

My success is measured by the success of my firm, our CEO and the teams in which I lead. As CIO, I have led the transformation of a traditional law firm into a dynamic platform for legal innovation. By leveraging technology and creative strategy, IT partners with attorneys for ultimate client success. The firm's agile infrastructure empowers us to deliver exceptional value, while our forward-thinking mindset and technology adoption continues to position us at the forefront of the industry. This is only possible by our amazing people and a great leadership team, of which I am a proud member.



Antony D'Cruz

CIO

HSA Bank



Antony D'Cruz is CIO of HSA Bank, where he is focused on delivering the digital transformation of HSA Bank's customer experience and internal operations. He joined the Bank in 2018, after spending over 20 years in various technology roles in manufacturing and industrial engineering in North America and Asia. In his leadership roles, Antony had led business and technology transformation programs and built teams to run IT at scale.

SUCCESS STORY

Our digital transformation journey has been truly impressive. We are building a completely new customer experience. Through the new products and features we've delivered we've achieved the lowest customer attrition rates and highest NPS in company history. We launched new platforms for content and contact center management, improving branding consistency and customer service efficiency. We are leveraging AI to improve security, service levels and customer experience. And building a data foundation to enable the use of AI/ML for personalized customer experiences. While delivering all this, we integrated a fintech start-up, seamlessly blending our teams and cultures. We're just beginning!



Bill Lundgren

CIO

Dental Associates



Bill Lundgren is the Chief Information Officer at Dental Associates, a leading dental service organization with 20 clinics across Wisconsin and Illinois. He leads IT strategy, infrastructure, cybersecurity, and clinical technology innovation. With a focus on digital transformation, Bill has modernized core systems, implemented SaaS-based platforms, and driven cloud adoption to improve performance, reduce costs, and support growth. His leadership empowers teams to deliver scalable, secure, and patient-centric technology solutions.

SUCCESS STORY

Over the past year, we've transitioned from legacy IBM iSeries systems and custom software to a fully SaaS-based architecture for Finance, Procurement, Practice Management, and Business Intelligence. Simultaneously, we began migrating from hosted data centers to a multi-cloud environment leveraging Azure and AWS. These efforts have reduced IT costs by nearly 30% while dramatically improving data access, system interoperability, and organizational agility—enabling faster decision-making and greater operational efficiency across all 20 clinics.



Jeff Marshall

Director of Technology
VJS Construction Services



Jeff Marshall is a seasoned IT executive with over two decades of experience spearheading digital transformation and operational excellence through strategic leadership. As Director of Technology at VJS Construction Services, he leads enterprise-wide IT initiatives that align with business objectives and optimize processes. His core strengths include leadership, application management, cybersecurity, and enterprise architecture. Jeff is a trusted advisor in navigating change and driving continuous improvement with a hands-on approach and never give up attitude.

SUCCESS STORY

In today's complex technical landscape, organizations thrive not just by reacting to challenges, but by anticipating them. At VJS, I've had the privilege of leading a team that has done exactly that—a team whose dedication, agility, and expertise have strengthened our organization's cybersecurity posture, elevated our use of data analytics, ensured system reliability, and driven meaningful process improvements across departments. We have embraced new technology such as second-generation firewalls, endpoint protection and MFA across the enterprise. The most important part of this is employee and leadership buy in that it will be done right and cost effective.



Robin McGuire

CIO

Reinders



With 25+ years of leadership in IT, digital transformation, ecommerce, and enterprise systems, I align technology with strategy to drive meaningful business outcomes. I've led ERP and systems cloud migrations, integrated acquisitions, and advanced customer experience through digital innovation. Passionate about simplifying complexity and mentoring talent, I foster empowered teams and scalable solutions. My collaborative style blends hands-on leadership with long-term vision to help our organization grow, adapt, and thrive in an ever-evolving landscape.

SUCCESS STORY

Under my leadership, our IT, ERP, marketing, and ecommerce teams have driven digital transformation by aligning technology with business strategy. We've migrated core systems to the cloud, improving scalability, security, and efficiency, while automating workflows and enabling real-time insights. Through seamless integration of acquired businesses and infrastructure, we ensured continuity and growth. E-commerce advancements have expanded digital sales, and new service systems improved operational tracking and customer support. By fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration, we've modernized operations and demonstrated that technology is a critical driver of business success and long-term competitive advantage.

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Jacqueline Bobo

CIO
Milwaukee County



Jacqueline Bobo is a technology executive with over 25-years' experience in delivering innovative solutions for complex business needs. Jaci is currently the CIO of Milwaukee County. Jaci worked her way up in Milwaukee County from IT Applications Manager in 2018, and then being promoted to IT Director Business Applications 2019. Jaci has extensive experience in strategic technology planning, design of software development lifecycle process, facilitating organizational change, and skillful relationship management with C-Level professionals.

SUCCESS STORY

Milwaukee County IT has aligned with the needs and direction of our business through a set of five strategic IT pillars that align our technology strategy and efforts with Milwaukee County's vision that by achieving racial equity, Milwaukee is the healthiest county in Wisconsin through the Strategic Focus Areas: Create Intentional Inclusion, Bridge the Gap and Invest in Equity. Our five strategic IT pillars that link directly to these Focus Areas are: 1) Customer Experience Management, 2) Inclusive and Diverse, 3) Maximize Value of Technology, 4) Data Driven Culture, and 5) Security Throughout.



Lynne Briggs

VP, Information Systems
& CIO
Versiti



Lynne holds an undergraduate degree in Information Systems & Economics from the University of Minnesota, an EMBA from the Lubar School, and completed graduate coursework at the University of Illinois Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations. Lynne is a community board member for Ascension Healthcare-Wisconsin and a supporter of the American Heart Association. Lynne serves on national and international committees for IT in blood/biotherapies. Her career includes the defense, retail, supply chain, transfusion medicine industries.

SUCCESS STORY

It is rare as a leader to be given the opportunity with your team to create the foundations of a new entity. From the router to major systems and differentiating technologies, the team has done that. With new service lines, being added or expanded, we are creating to future-facing biotherapies and research ecosystem roadmaps. I have been honored to work with an IS/IT team who take ownership with our service lines partners in contributing to bettering and saving patient lives. Even if we aren't directly serving a patient, we make sure those who do, have what they need.



Scott Genung

Associate Vice Chancellor,
IT & CIO
University of Wisconsin -
Milwaukee



Scott serves as the AVC for IT and CIO at UWM. In this role, he provides oversight for the strategic delivery of technology and data capabilities throughout the institution. Before UWM, Scott served as Deputy CIO and then Interim CIO during the pandemic at the University of Illinois. Prior, he served in an IT leadership role at the University of Chicago focused upon research support. Throughout, Scott has been active within numerous professional organizations.

SUCCESS STORY

In less than two years as CIO, I feel I've made a great deal of impact at UWM. Since my arrival, I've created a strategic focus for IT and data, established governance to promote innovation and investments, helped to manage risk with the pending implementation of Workday, promoted the safe and responsible adoption of AI technology, provided a pathway towards digital accessibility compliance, and began the work to infuse emerging technology and data capabilities to strengthen student success. All was made possible through the relationships I built, the trust that followed, the collaborations this enabled, and the partnerships that emerged.



Angela Johnson

Interim CIO & CISO
Children's Wisconsin



Angela Johnson is Interim CIO for Children's Wisconsin. A tireless advocate for the better health and wellness of children. With over 17 years of experience in information systems, she drives secure strategic innovation across the organization. Angela partners across teams to strengthen security, support compliance and implement resilient technologies that enable safe, uninterrupted care. Her work reflects a deep commitment in the belief that kids deserve the best.

SUCCESS STORY

Our goal was to make technology work better for our people and the patients and families we serve. I led our IS operations to improve how we deliver, govern and support technology. We built stronger business continuity plans and practiced them and upgraded cybersecurity layered, reliable defense. We improved teamwork, introduced governance and made decisions that aligned with our mission.



Ricki Koinig

CIO
Wisconsin Department of
Natural Resources



CIO with 25+ years' leadership experience developing IT organizations aligned with business objectives today and into the future. Committed to empower talent and provide productive, efficient services and solutions with customer service excellence. Dedicated to fostering trusted partnerships, transparent value-add information and data-based insights to drive improvements and innovations. Seasoned change agent versed in navigating challenging people-process-technology transitions for the good of the organization.

SUCCESS STORY

Understanding business as well as IT needs is critical to my CIO role as a trusted leadership partner. These relationships help uncover challenges, develop options and choose a path forward for the best IT organization possible. As a result, I have implemented impactful improvements. These include heightened security resiliency, landscape modernizations, enhanced data integrity and service excellence. Achievements have also been made regarding GIS maps, ADA and PII compliance, web presence, project management, governance, resource & capacity management, eGrants and eCommerce. I am proud to implement lasting improvements that strengthen IT, the WDNR mission and service excellence to Wisconsin constituents.



Lance Spranger

CIO
Waukesha County



Lance Spranger is the Chief Information Officer for Waukesha County, driving countywide strategic technology initiatives since 2020. He champions a culture of innovation and excellence through a positive and high-performing workplace. A leader in change management, Lance brings over 20 years of executive experience across multiple industries. Under his leadership, Waukesha County's IT team is recognized as a trusted partner, renowned for delivering transformative, technology-driven outcomes that advance public service and build community trust.

SUCCESS STORY

Aligning with Waukesha County's mission to promote health, safety, and quality of life while supporting economic vitality, our team has established a culture of being a trusted partner in enabling and delivering positive outcomes through technology innovation. Waukesha County is a leader in the cost-effective delivery of public services, with the strategic application of technology being a key factor in the County spending the least per capita of any county in the state while maintaining high customer service scores. Our commitment to excellence and innovation continues to shape Waukesha County's strategic direction and future success.

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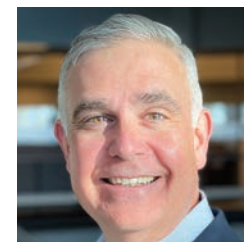
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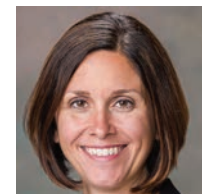
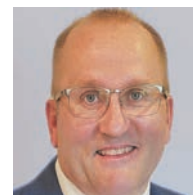
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