EE Times' Top 10 women in microelectronics

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Anne-Francoise Pele November 4, 2009

PARIS 🗣 *EE Times* has compiled an international list that celebrates women who are business and technology leaders in microelectronics.

There is no better time than a global economic recession to examine the keys to successful corporate governance, and *EE Times* is honored that the ten selected women called a brief halt to their frantic business schedules to share in their diverse experiences.

The discussions below paint a vibrant picture of the ecosystem and are an assessment of conventional business wisdom. They also deliver a powerful message of hope that could awaken scientific vocations in the coming years.

Editor's note : Each executive was asked the same questions, and names are listed in alphabetical order.

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Reynette Au, vice president of corporate strategy and alliances at Atheros Communications, Inc. (Santa Clara, Calif.)

A conversation with *EE Times*

EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment, pride in your career?

Reynette Au
VP strategy and alliances, Atheros Communications

Reynette Au: Every job I have held has brought certain challenges, situations of great fulfillment, and times when I felt I had made a major mistake. Every step has given me something to learn. But, in terms of singling out just one achievement that brought me singular pride, I'd have to say it was leading a marketing campaign at ARM to evangelize the semiconductor IP licensing business model, and create and promote a brand for semiconductor intellectual property (IP). This was accomplished while I was vice president of worldwide marketing at ARM.

Prior to our achievements, the IP-licensing model was not well-respected and unfeasibly implemented by others. Why? It is because in the semiconductor business, the destinies of commoditization and price erosion are considered inviolate. Casting this rule of thumb aside, we created a brand of such notable value that we were able to set a new standard for a sustainable, growth-oriented licensing model that continues to lead the market today.

During this time, we created the “Architecture for the Digital World” tagline. This work integrally established the ARM Instruction Set Architecture (ISA) as the *de facto* standard for low power embedded applications. Underlying this achievement was the premise that good business models enable and accelerate adoption of technology; without appropriate and sensible models, and technology 🗣even great technology🗣 can disappear.

Our work to promote and reinforce the viability of the semiconductor IP licensing model stimulated broad industry support for the ARM technology. But to me, the more significant impact was how this model influenced related industries such as fabless semiconductors, EDA, semiconductor foundries, library suppliers, ASICs, application providers and system OEMs. Semiconductor IP licensing is now a well established and thriving business model that fuels a phenomenal amount of innovation and addresses a multitude of market segments. When you think of the paths that have been opened for other technologies to proliferate with this business model, you can start to appreciate the necessity of the “vision” to understand the close ties between business models and technology adoption.

EE Times : You are what we call a “Woman of Vision”. Can you describe the “vision” that has motivated your professional decisions and choices? Are you still implementing it or have you changed direction?

Au : I insist on viewing technology from a practical and user-focused perspective. This is both an intellectual strategy as well as an emotional sticking point. If I cannot convince myself of the usage, application, or benefit that a technology brings to people, I cannot put my strategic or tactical momentum behind it. This “formula” drives my vision, as well as my decisions. Technology is great when it enables people to be creative and productive at the same time, when it makes them more fulfilled, more functional, and happier. People pay a lot of money for things that bring them happiness, so if even the most mundane product can tap into those values, there is greater likelihood of financial success for that product. It sounds obvious, but it’s not always that way in the technology industry, nor is it an easy goal to achieve. I continue to reference this view in all of my endeavors and it influences how I perform my work, my career, and how I balance my personal life with my business life.

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in technological fields has been improving, albeit slowly?

Au: Yes, over the past 25 years I have seen an improvement in the visibility of women in technology. The number of women leading business meetings has been one indicator. However, it has been slow 🗣too slow🗣 and the number of women in leadership positions still does not correlate to the societal gender balance in university technical fields. More change is needed. Change starts with how we raise our daughters. It also is influenced strongly by how we raise our sons. I could go on about this topic for days, but to try to distill the concepts down to a few comments: Parents need to refrain from inadvertently erecting barriers to their children in what they can accomplish; they need to release their children from the shackles of convention and tradition. Then as kids grow up, they can see that the possibilities are limitless that they are not defined by their gender, but by their dreams, abilities, and hard work. Their natural curiosities can be explored. It is possible

that men and women see things differently, but this is a good thing. Becoming a math whiz, a great builder or an inquisitive discoverer may have been traditionally ascribed to “male” propensities, but this was only because people valued perspectives in math, building, and discovery from the male perspective. Change the perspective, alter the approach, impact the value, and, voila, different personalities and a greater variety of skill sets come to bear on solving problems. Already, we have seen how women have changed and impacted “male” dominions with unique and complementary value-adds. If you change the rules of the game, different players can play, and more often than not, better things can happen.

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in tech in general?

Au: I certainly believe that applying a broad and multi-faceted perspective to how technology is developed and deployed spawns new avenues for innovation and growth. Technology gets “bigger” with every passing generation. By bigger, I mean more complex, more variables and unknowns, more functionality, higher performance. This reality means technologists and their leaders have to be more collaborative, more interdependent, and even more trusting as their work becomes part of an unimaginably variegated whole they may never fully understand. Just look at what it takes to put out an animated short film these days! So, to the extent that new ideas, resiliency against failure and adversity, incisive analytical abilities and intuition, collaborative tendencies, alternative capabilities to see bigger pictures and farther out in the future, well, these skills become immensely valuable. I think women throughout history have shown these abilities to a great degree. Not that men don’t embody these traits, but on anthropological and societal scales, we sure miss out on a lot of talent if we ignore the abilities on the distaff side of our species. Women should be valued for their ability to bring different perspectives to this process. Leaders of technology companies should also proactively encourage, support, and acquire talent in this vein.

Au’s biography
Reynette Au has served as Atheros’ vice president of corporate marketing and alliances since November 2008.

Prior to joining Atheros, she served as vice president and general manager of the Portable Navigation Products group at Nvidia Corp. from 2006, and as vice president of the company’s Business Licensing program from 2005.

Late 2002, Au was named president and CEO of Triscend Corp., a fabless semiconductor company developing field-configurable System-on-Chip (CSoC) devices and customizable microcontrollers.

Au joined Triscend from ARM where as president of ARM Inc. she helped build its network of licensees for the company’s core processor technology and established ARM’s market position as ‘The Architecture for the Digital World’. Prior to joining ARM, Au held engineering and management positions at Advanced Micro Devices, AT&T Microelectronics, Arrow Electronics and IBM.

Au earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from University of Denver.

Elke Eckstein
Executive Vice President, COO, Osram

Elke Eckstein, executive vice president and COO of Osram Opto Semiconductors GmbH (Munich, Germany)

A conversation with *EE Times*

EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment in your career?

Elke Eckstein: There is not only one accomplishment I am most proud of when I look at my career so far. It is the whole career path and all the different experiences I was able to make that give me a feeling of pride. The semiconductor industry offered me lots of challenges in many different areas, cultures and continents. With those experiences and the constant challenges and learnings I was able to extend my knowledge, to develop my personality and management capabilities. And I am looking forward to many more challenges to come in the years ahead in this exciting, fast-moving industry.

EE Times : You are what we call a “Woman of Vision”. Can you describe the “vision” that has motivated your professional decisions and choices? Are you still implementing it or have you changed direction?

Eckstein: The idea of breaking new ground or setting foot on new areas is still fascinating to me. The semiconductor industry today is the driver for almost all other industries. It stands for innovation, progress and also movement and speed. Though we are basically at the end of the food chain we are determining the performance of the others.

My extensive semiconductor experience, especially in manufacturing, was a good basis to step into the LED business at Osram, one of the market leaders with the most advanced technologies and production lines – an area with lots of potential and a bright future. Making light is exciting and there is still a good piece of that pioneering spirit left in the industry and within me that I had experienced in the beginning of the semiconductor industry back in the 80ies. And that’s why my vision is to see LED and OLED lighting up the future.

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in technological fields has been improving, albeit slowly?

Eckstein: When I started working in microelectronics in the early 80ies, women were an exotic experience in that industry. Over the years this has changed, as more and more women are entering technological professions. Also the understanding among men that women can deliver excellent performance has deeply changed. Especially in the US and in Asia women in top management positions are common today. Germany is lagging a bit behind; we have a lot to catch up when it comes to giving women power and visibility.

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in tech in general?

Eckstein: It all starts with politics creating a social environment that is encouraging women to step into technology. This starts in education at schools and universities. But it also includes greater efforts to allow women to combine career and family through integration programs, daycare institutions and many more.

Companies themselves can foster this by giving women equal opportunities. As a technology company we support newcomers and women in the organization with diversity or mentoring programs and help as role models in the organizations. We also offer daycare facilities on our Regensburg site.

At “Girls Day” we introduce schoolgirls to products, technologies and a technological working environment to transport the fascination of our industry at a very early stage in their professional career. Another example is a company-wide program for young women who combine university education with first working experiences.

Eckstein’s biography
Elke Eckstein was named chief operating officer at Osram Opto Semiconductors GmbH in August 2008. Previously, she was vice president, Manufacturing, at AMD in Dresden, Germany, where she was responsible for day-to-day operations at the F30/38 semiconductor factory.

Elke Eckstein, a native of Franconia, began her career with Siemens’ semiconductor division, which later became Infineon. From 1996 to 1998, she was in charge of the R&D department for Siemens’ fab in Dresden. Eckstein was vice president of the product and technologies group at ProMos Technologies Inc., a joint venture between Infineon and Mosel Vitelic in Taiwan, before returning to Europe to become CEO of Altis Semiconductor, a joint venture between IBM and Infineon.

Judith Estrin, CEO of JLABS, LLC (Menlo Park, Calif.)

Judy Estrin
CEO, JLABS, LLC

A conversation with *EE Times*
EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment, pride in your career?

Judy Estrin : I have been fortunate to have a career full of interesting endeavors including co-founding multiple companies, being CTO at Cisco during the height of the growth of the Internet, sitting on the board of directors of several large corporations and writing a book about innovation. I would have to say that the two highlights were starting our first company, Bridge Communications and writing my book, *Closing the Innovation Gap* .

EE Times : You are what we call a “Woman of Vision”. Can you describe the “vision” that has motivated your professional decisions and choices? Are you still implementing it or have you changed direction?

Estrin : I would not say that I have been driven by a single vision, but that each company was motivated by a passion. In each case we had a vision, seeing the potential to help people or companies to improve the way they operated through use of new technology. Writing the book was driven by a similar passion – the desire to communicate challenges we face and how they can be addressed.

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in technological fields has been improving, albeit slowly?

Estrin : I do think it is improving slowly, but partly because of a shift of emphasis to life sciences and consumer technology, both of which are fields that have attracted more woman that traditional IT.

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in tech in general?

Estrin : I believe that it starts with changing our education system, keeping girls engaged and excited about science and technology. We need to make sure that we communicate how important science and technology is to our quality of life – that it really makes a difference.

Estrin's biography
Judy Estrin is CEO of JLABS, LLC, formerly known as Packet Design Management Company, LLC. She is the author of *Closing the Innovation Gap* , published in September, 2008.

Prior to co-founding Packet Design, in May 2000, Estrin was chief technology officer for Cisco Systems. Beginning in 1981 Estrin co-founded three other successful technology companies: Bridge Communications, Network Computing Devices, and Precept Software. In 1998 Cisco Systems acquired Precept, and she became Cisco's chief technology officer until April 2000.

Estrin has been named three times to Fortune Magazine's list of the 50 most powerful women in American business. She sits on the boards of directors of The Walt Disney Company and FedEx Corporation as well as the privately held Packet Design, Inc. She also sits on the advisory councils of Stanford's School of Engineering and Stanford's Bio-X initiative.

She holds a B.S. degree in math and computer science from UCLA, and an M.S. in electrical engineering from Stanford University.

Harriet Green, president and CEO, Premier Farnell plc (London, UK), non-executive director, Emerson Electric Co. (St. Louis, Missouri)

A conversation with *EE Times*

Harriet Green
President and CEO, Premier Farnell plc

EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment, pride in your career?

Harriet Green : That's a hard one as I tend to be my own toughest critic. Life for me is a journey with milestones so not sure any one achievement stands out above others and I still regard it as a 'work in progress'!

I guess in my own career to date it has been running businesses effectively in 4 continents and learning to love different cultures, and drive high performance through a very different approach to life and work. I've certainly learned that despite cultural differences we all respond well to encouragement, being treated with respect and the chance to make a difference in whatever we do.

I am passionate about people development and take real pride in seeing people I have supported or encouraged achieve things that they never thought they were capable of. I am also humbled when people I have worked with previously choose to come and work with me again.

In this rapidly changing world where technology plays an increasingly important role seeing the transformation that we are leading at Premier Farnell is another source of excitement for me. Internally, we've created a meaningful program called eLife for all of Premier Farnell's 4100 employees globally to empower and inspire them 🗣everything from cyber cafes to something we sometimes call 'Our tube'… watching the love of technology grow in all parts of the business is inspiring. I use technology to communicate internally 🗣video blogs, written blogs, instant messenger, micro-blogging (greets not tweets!)… and I'm learning about new tools everyday.

On a personal level, I'd have to say encouraging my teenage step-daughter and godson to believe in themselves and seeing them achieving academically what I knew they were capable of but they had doubted. It brought renewed confidence and they're now both at university tackling technology and science degrees!

EE Times : You are what we call a "Woman of Vision". Can you describe the "vision" that has motivated your professional decisions and choices? Are you still implementing it or have you changed direction?

Green : I think those who work for me might call me a woman of action more! I try not to be constrained by the way things have always been done and have a natural impatience to 'get on with it'. My mother would tell you I was an impatient and independent teenager and I was certainly very influenced by losing my father (a huge influence on my life) as a teenager 🗣it left me with a sense of never wanting to delay or put things off until tomorrow, in case tomorrow never comes… so seizing opportunity has perhaps been my

greatest guiding principle. I've certainly seized opportunities that were offered even when the advantage wasn't immediately obvious and without doubt these have been some of the times in my career when I have perhaps grown the most

I love the Gandhi quote: "Be the change you want to see in the world". I use this every day, in every business and in every part of my life.

In terms of business direction I think listening to the voice of our customers and responding and being prepared to innovate and take the tough decisions is important too. Follow your instinct and be your own person. I have a very clear vision for Premier Farnell but vision is nothing without execution 🗣flawlessly executing the detail day in and day out🗣 delivering the service, tools and technology our customers want. Without the basics the vision is meaningless as it will never become a reality.

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in technological fields has been improving, albeit slowly?

Green : Yes, I do. I am working with the ELC and last year I became involved with the IET Young Women Engineer Awards, as well as Premier Farnell's sponsorship of 12 university scholarships globally in electronics to encourage young people, not just women, into science and technology careers. This is where the challenge starts. I don't believe that women are blocked from these positions by virtue of their sex but more because of their education and early choices. It's a responsibility of educators and parents to ensure that choices are offered and encouraged at an early age. That these subjects are taught in a way to appeal to both sexes 🗣it's no longer all about engines!

There are some very high profile women in technology fields now and these will be superb role models for the next generation 🗣it's incumbent on all of us to spread the message. The media can, and is, helping and in this technology literate age women are no longer technology-phobic… That's great progress in itself.

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in tech in general?

Green : I think that early choices shape later career direction. So many opportunities 🗣I also think that men no longer think of these fields as needing to be male dominated and that's generational. Educating boys and girls to think more widely and believe in equal opportunity is important. Years ago the term engineer conjured up technical drawing offices and heavy equipment, dirty oily environments 🗣now with computer-aided design and micro-technology it's as accessible as any other career.

In many ways, technology will help as flexible working opportunities, mobile connectivity create more opportunity for less traditional ways of working 🗣these certainly help to ensure that women trying to combine family life with a meaningful career are no longer constrained to traditional office environments and hours but able to adapt their work to meet their life choices allowing women to stay on the career path to the more senior roles.

These are exciting times for this industry and the changing world in which we all live.

Green's biography
Harriet Green has been CEO of Premier Farnell since 2006 and was appointed non-executive director of Emerson in 2008.

Green previously held senior international positions with Arrow Electronics Inc. She served as its President of Asia Pacific, based in Hong Kong, and before that she had responsibility for global strategy, worldwide marketing, supplier management and operating businesses in the USA, Europe and Africa.

Before joining Arrow in 1994, Green was managing director of the Macro Group, part of Diploma plc.

She graduated with a degree in medieval history from London University, and in 2007 was recognized by the Stevie "Women in Business" Awards as the Best Executive in Europe, Africa, and Middle East (EMEA).

Penny Herscher, president and CEO, FirstRain, Inc. (San Mateo, Calif.)

Penny Herscher
President and CEO, FirstRain, Inc.

A conversation with *EE Times*
EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment in your career?

Penny Herscher : So far my greatest accomplishment has been building Simplex into a very successful, profitable company which went public in 2001 and was sold at a premium in 2002. But what makes that accomplishment so meaningful is not just the business success (which was considerable) but the customer base, the team and the culture that I built. The Simplex team still gets together, 7 years later; I am still friends with customers from that era because we solved some very hard problems for them. Simplex' success grew people's careers, put kids through school, made down payments on houses – we were able to make meaningful changes in people's lives and careers. I am well on my way to doing this again at FirstRain.

EE Times : You are what we call a "Woman of Vision". Can you describe the "vision" that has motivated your professional decisions and choices? Are you still implementing it or have you changed direction?

Herscher : My vision is about growth – how to build a team/product/company that creates growth – financial/technology/career growth – because growth creates energy and opportunity – and joy. I have made my professional choices based on near term and long term growth, and not always at the same time. I chose to move from R&D to marketing to general management through a series of challenges over 20 years and I think my focus on growing my own skills broadly helped me survive as a growth company CEO.

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in technological fields has been improving, albeit slowly?

Herscher : Yes, definitely. Women are moving up the ranks and getting more visibility – it is certainly great to see Carol Bartz running Yahoo. I serve on the board of the Anita Borg Institute for Women in Technology and we see that the employment culture is definitely improving for women in engineering and technological fields. I find young women coming up the technical ranks now are finding a great deal less prejudice and discrimination than I experienced 25 years ago.

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in tech in general?

Herscher : Keep girls in sciences and math in middle school and high school, encourage them to study technology as undergraduates and then support them as they enter the workplace. Women drop out of technical jobs at an alarming rate because they do not find the support needed to stay in – the peer group and the mentors – so organizations like ABI and WITI are very important to keep women connected with their community in technology.

Herscher's biography
As CEO of FirstRain since 2005, Penny Herscher has transformed FirstRain into the leading provider of search-driven research – search, analytics and reporting for business professionals solving the web information challenge facing institutional investors, marketing and sales professionals.

Prior to FirstRain, Ms. Herscher was CEO of Simplex Solutions, an electronic design automation company serving the global semiconductor industry. As CEO, she grew Simplex from a few engineers in 1996 to a high-growth, profitable software company. She led the company to successful IPO in 2001 and through to the sale of the company to Cadence Design Systems in 2002. She then worked at Cadence as chief marketing officer and General Manager of a major division of the company. From 1988 to 1996, she was an early employee and senior executive at Synopsys.

Ms. Herscher started her career in 1982 as an R&D engineer with Texas Instruments and then Daisy Systems and she holds a BA with Honors in Mathematics from Cambridge University.

Ms. Herscher serves on the boards of JDSU and Rambus. She is also active in the non-profit world serving on the boards of the Anita Borg Institute and Planned Parenthood Mar Monte; she volunteers teaching business classes at Stanford Business School, Berkeley Haas School of Business and Santa Clara University as well as speaking on leadership and career growth at various industry organizations.

Mar Hershenson
VP Product Development, Custom Design Business Unit, Magma Design Automation, Inc.

Mar Hershenson, Vice President, Product Development, Custom Design Business Unit, Magma Design Automation, Inc. (San Jose, Calif.)

A conversation with *EE Times*
EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment, pride in your career?

Mar Hershenson : My greatest pride is not having given up after failing on my first start-up. I am fortunate to be in Silicon Valley where entrepreneurs can learn from mistakes and try again.

EE Times : You are what we call a “Woman of Vision.” Can you describe the “vision” that has motivated your professional decisions and choices? Are you still implementing it or have you changed direction?

Dr. Hershenson : My vision has been “to change the way we do analog design.” Analog design is still more of an art than a science. That is, we have been using basically the same design flow for the last 30 years. I have some background in both analog design and optimization so marrying the two just seemed the natural thing to do. I have been working on this for almost 10 years now. The main vision remains, although, of course, there have been many paths to achieving that vision and I continue to discover new ones almost every day!

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in technological fields has been improving, albeit slowly?

Dr. Hershenson : Of course, it is improving — just this year we have five women Nobel Laureates! Unfortunately, the past is very slow. The EDA industry is still dominated by men; in the top four EDA companies, there is only one woman in the top executive team, not counting HR. That’s still a scary statistic for us!

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in tech in general?

Dr. Hershenson : Unfortunately, there aren’t that many women graduating with a CS or EE graduate degree. This is very different in other fields, such as law or medicine. So, we don’t have a large pool of women among the new graduates. We lose girls much earlier.

The encouragement has to start at home with our daughters. The same way we teach them to read, we need to teach them to fix broken appliances, to build structures, to solve math problems. As an anecdote, I can tell you that just this past weekend I was at a Stanford Math Circle weekly event for high school, middle school and elementary school kids. There were about 35 kids, only two girls. The amazing thing is that the team with the girls did the best, so it is not a matter of whether girls can do it. It is a matter of encouraging them to do it.

Hershenson's biography
Mar Hershenson joined Magma through the acquisition of Sabio Labs, where she was the CEO and a co-founder. Sabio Labs offered an equation-based design environment for mixed-signal ICs.

Prior to Sabio Labs, she was CTO and co-founder of Barcelona Design, where she commercialized her graduate research in the application of convex optimization to analog circuit design. She also worked at leading Silicon Valley companies such as Linear Technology Corporation and Apple Computer.

Dr. Hershenson has been awarded eight patents and has several other patents pending. She is also a Consulting Professor at Stanford University, teaching analog circuit design courses. In 2002, she received the prestigious award TR100 Young Investigator from MIT. She served on the executive committee at ICAAD in 2007 and 2008.

Dr. Mar Hershenson graduated with honors with a B.S. in electrical engineering from the Universidad Pontificia de Comillas in Madrid, Spain, and received her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from Stanford University.

Christine King, president and CEO of SMSC (Hauppauge, New York)

Chris King
President and CEO, SMSC

A conversation with *EE Times*
EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment, pride in your career?

Christine King: My greatest accomplishment was becoming the first woman CEO in the semiconductor business. All the things in my career were leading to that accomplishment. This was in 2001 when I became CEO of AMI Semiconductor.

I always wanted to be a leader, for sure. And, I was always excited about leading a company and building a company. Building a company is the most fun thing I have been able to do in my career. And, before I got to be the CEO of AMIS, I built several businesses at IBM. It is always building a company, building a team and being successful with customers.

EE Times : You are what we call a "Woman of Vision". Can you describe the "vision" that has motivated your professional decisions and choices?

King : I would say that my vision is always winning and being the best that we can be. That has always been my vision, which usually leads to winning.

I always say persistence pay and never give up. If you cannot go through, go around.

EE Times : Are you still implementing it or have you changed direction?

King : My vision has always been the same but how much time and energy I have put in my career has changed over time. I would say that when my children were younger, I did not put quite as much time and passion into my career so I think something has changed over time depending on circumstances but I think being the best you can and winning has always been there.

In my hobbies, I have the same philosophy. For about fifteen years, I bread some prize-winning cows and now I ride horses the best I can.

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in technological fields has been improving, albeit slowly?

King : It has been definitely improving but women can do a lot more in technology. We are only getting a very small fraction of the potential.

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in tech in general?

King : We have to get more involved in education and talk to younger women and young girls about the opportunities of going in technology and that technology can be a lot of fun. We need to expose women to it because it is something women are very good at.

EE Times : Is it difficult to be a woman CEO?

King : It definitely has its challenges and throughout my career it has always been challenging but hopefully it will get easier for women as time goes by.

More women being successful and more women being successful in technology, and everyone sees that women can be successful in technology.

King's biography
Christine King joined SMSC in October 2008 in the role of president and CEO. Most recently, Ms. King served as CEO of AMI Semiconductor (AMIS) for six years prior to the company's merger with ON Semiconductor Corporation.

Earlier, King served as vice president of Semiconductor Products for IBM Microelectronics and vice president of the Networking Technology Business Unit. King also served as vice president of marketing and field engineering and manager of ASIC Products at IBM earlier in her tenure with the company. She serves on the boards of Atheros Communications, Inc., Open-Silicon, Inc. and Idaho Power Company.

King earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Kathryn Kranen
President and CEO, Jasper Design Automation

Kathryn Kranen, president and CEO of Jasper Design Automation" (Mountain View, Calif.)

A conversation with *EE Times*

EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment, pride in your career?

Kathryn Kranen : I always feel that my greatest accomplishment is what I am currently involved in, now leading Jasper Design Automation.

Of course, I remember the formative moments in my past at Quickturn, sales pioneering, and partnering with Intel to open a new market for MPU emulation. Being courageous enough to take the Verisity opportunity when it was 6 guys, in an unfunded company, in Israel.

But I am most proud of the current team and track record at Jasper. Our innovation of state-of-the-art technology, business models, products, and customer relationships.

EE Times : You are what we call a “Woman of Vision.” Can you describe the “vision” that has motivated your professional decisions and choices? Are you still implementing it or have you changed direction?

Kranen : My vision is to lead by recognizing, and solving, important unsolved problems for customers. For success, you need the awareness that this is a moving target that evolves rapidly. You always need to be out there talking to the semiconductor community and customers. Sometimes you need to be an agent for change, to help customers scope their problem with a large enough vision, suspending disbelief. You need a team with creativity and intelligence to provide solutions.

Personally, I never had a 1, 2, 3 or 5 year plan. I recommend, and have achieved success, by being opportunistic but determined, with a great deal of perseverance. Opportunities present themselves all the time, so just decide on the more important one, jump on it and don’t let go until you are successful.

My approach is to make the most of what you have got… plans are only fictions!

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in EDA and in other technological fields has been improving, albeit slowly?

Kranen : Yes, I believe it is. Now, at Jasper, for example, we have more technical women in the company than in any company I have been involved with. In engineering, in applications, in technical sales, etc. Why? Because there are more qualified women

candidates now than ever before. Also, there is a nucleus here which I am sure women gravitate to organically. At Jasper, it is egalitarian. Not a dominance of, or bias toward, women, but fair to women.

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in EDA and tech in general?

Kranen : As a mother of both a very smart daughter and son, I do recognize some bias. My son Kyle has such a strong focus on technology, chess, and computers.

My daughter Kayla is also interested in chess and computers, but her interests are more diffuse and group oriented like cooking and choir. The peer groups are very influential for both boys and girls.

We must be mindful to make math and science more interesting, and to recognize and reward talent. When I speak with groups of girls, and they ask how they can eventually become a CEO, I stress math, math, and math. Almost all professional fields that could land you as CEO require this. It is true for girl or boy; math is the ticket to ride. And toward that end, math education is more interesting when applied! Today's new applied math education orientation is much more exciting than the rote way we adults learned.

My advice for women and for men, on top of the technology basic focus, is to follow your gut, speak your mind, and don't be afraid to take risks!

Kranen's biography
As president and CEO of Jasper Design Automation, Kathryn Kranen is responsible for leading Jasper's team in successfully bringing the company's pioneering technology to the mainstream design verification market.

She has 20 years EDA industry experience and a proven management track record. While serving as president and CEO of Verisity Design, Inc., US headquarters of Verisity Ltd., Kranen and the team she built created an entirely new market in design verification. (Verisity later became a public company, and was the top-performing IPO of 2001.)

Prior to Verisity, Kranen was vice president of North American sales at Quickturn Systems. She started her career as a design engineer at Rockwell International, and later joined Daisy Systems, an early EDA company. Kranen graduated Summa cum Laude from Texas A&M University with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering. Kranen is serving her fifth term on the EDA Consortium board of directors, and was elected its vice chairperson. In 2005, Kathryn was recipient of the prestigious Marie R. Pistilli Women in Electronic Design Automation (EDA) Achievement Award.

Kranen is on the EDAC board of directors as Vice Chairman. She is also on Chip Design Magazine Editorial Board.

Maria Marced, president Europe, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. Ltd (Hsin-Chu, Taiwan)

A conversation with *EE Times*

Maria Marced
President Europe, TSMC Co. Ltd

EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment, pride in your career?

Maria Marced : I have reached the top of several organizations — General Manager of Intel Europe, Middle East and Africa, General Manager of Philips Semiconductors Sales & Marketing, and President of TSMC Europe 🗣and this has meant great pride to me. However, in my heart what I consider my greatest accomplishment is the partnership I have built with different business people, organizations and companies, partnership that has helped me to grow the business 🗣both of mine and of my partners, and grow with the business.

EE Times : You are what we call a “Woman of Vision”. Can you describe the “Vision” that has motivated your professional decisions and choices? Are you still implementing it or have you changed directions?

Marced : I have always wanted to make a difference!!

When I was a teenager, I always wondered why to be a “complete” person one had to plant a tree, write a book and have a child. However, the women I knew mostly focused on the latter. To make a difference I decided to take the difficult path and became an engineer. I also thought that being an engineer in a “new/modern” area would offer me more chances so I went for electronics, and consequently semiconductors, the heart of electronics today.

I was not very wrong. We are in the digital revolution where silicon is key, much as steel was key for the Industrial Revolution.

If I look in my handbag, it is full of silicon: My passport, driver license, credit cards, transport card, cellular phone, MP3 player most of it produced by TSMC and our partners.

I keep striving to make a difference, and I humbly believe that I contribute to the progress of all of us, with better tools that allow us to quickly communicate among ourselves, be more productive and enjoy life almost without limits.

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in technological fields have been improving, albeit slowly?

Marced : When I studied in the “PolyTechnique” of Madrid, the number of women students were about 2 per 1000… Now it’s about 30 percent . I did feel quite lonely at the beginning but it has changed substantially, especially in the new segments of the industry, computing, communications, etc

At TSMC, there are three women in the executive management 🗣certainly a great improvement as compared with more traditional companies.

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in tech in general?

Marced : Frankly, I believe that the old barriers are down and now it's really up to us, women, to decide whether we want to go for it.

If anything, I would keep reinforcing the idea that innovation is crucial for success and DIVERSITY boosts innovation in all kind of areas.

Companies that are mastering diversity have proven to be "more" successful.

Marced's biography
Maria Marced was appointed president of TSMC Europe in November 2007 and has been responsible for driving the development, strategy and management of TSMC Europe.

In 2005, Marced became senior vice president and general manager of sales and marketing at NXP Semiconductors/Philips Semiconductors.

Marced joined Philips Semiconductor in September 2003 as senior vice-president and general manager of the Connected Multimedia Solutions Business Unit overseeing Philips' semiconductor solutions for Connected Consumer applications.

Marced joined Philips from Intel where she developed her professional career over 19 years, reaching the top position in the Europe, Middle East and Africa region as Vice President and General Manager- a position that she occupied for three years.

Prior to Intel, Marced worked in Spain for AT&T Microelectronica, Telefonica, Secoinsa, Electrooptica Juan de La Cierva e Hispano Radio Maritima.

Marced holds a Ph.D. in Telecommunications Engineering from Universidad Politecnica de Madrid, Spain. She was born in Valencia-Spain and she is married with one daughter.

Gabriele Saucier, CEO of Design & Reuse SA (Grenoble, France)

Gabriele Saucier
CEO, Design and Reuse SA

A conversation with *EE Times*
EE Times : What is the greatest accomplishment, pride in your career?

Gabriele Saucier : I liked my research and my vision on the hypercube and Boolean Logic and was excited to see that it is applied for real in technical industrial programs (synthesis, mapping).

EE Times : You are what we call a "Woman of Vision". Can you describe the "vision" that has motivated your professional decisions and choices? Are you still implementing it or have you changed direction?

Saucier : I was born at a difficult time and place. I knew that I had to earn my life and was convinced that I should work in a male domain where there are jobs and stick to the real technical world. I was unbelievably curious to discover school, education and absorb knowledge.

Then, I discovered that the IEEE society was open, attractive and much less macho than the French technical society. I took benefit from it and followed the Valley spirit where you can even create your startup.

I kept my curiosity following the technical evolution 🗣from EDA and design in various fields to Web collaboration🗣 and was naturally happy to participate and create meetings events such as conferences and forums. I have obviously been standing in the same track.

EE Times : Would you say that the visibility of women in technological fields has been improving, albeit slowly?

Saucier : It is still the same. Very few women emerge and, of course, due to the crisis it is certainly not easier.

EE Times : What should be done to encourage more women to become masters of technology and science and take on greater roles in tech in general?

Saucier : It is a school and family orientation issue and, above all, a cultural issue. It is difficult to complain when you realize that in Europe or in the United States women have some chances compared to other countries. France is a country of tradition and privileges. When you are a good engineer from a Grande Ecole 🗣finally and late open to women🗣 the success track is to become a politician or a very high-level manager right away… So change the world!

Saucier's biography
Gabriele Saucier received her PhD from the University of Grenoble, where she was a professor and headed a research lab on Integrated System Design. She has published more than 350 papers in the design and EDA fields. Saucier is an IEEE fellow for her contributions in synthesis, test generation and fault tolerance.

Leaving her university career, in the 1990s Saucier founded a synthesis company, IST (Innovative Synthesis Technologies), mainly dedicated to FPGA synthesis, and in 1997 Design and Reuse, dedicated to IP-based design. She has launched two successful conferences ” Euroasic and IP/SoC.

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