LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

CTOs and their teams play vital roles in making Los Angeles businesses, institutions and nonprofit groups successful. Their decisions often impact all aspects of a business, including their company’s growth, profitability, functionality and competitiveness in the marketplace.

This is our sixth year of celebrating the cream of the proverbial crop among Los Angeles’ finest IT leadership minds with an awards event for those who have their hands on the steering wheels of new technology. Our annual Los Angeles Business Journal CTO Awards, held Wednesday, March 22nd at Casa del Mar in Santa Monica, give us the opportunity to stop for a moment and applaud the IT inventiveness and technological achievements of the corporate space’s hi-tech men and women – the often unsung architects and enablers of our companies’ operational successes.

Indeed, it’s the CTOs who are often charged with providing the operational tools required to match a CEO’s vision for a company. So for all the great CTOs celebrated by our awards this year, we say thank you and congratulations! Your tireless contributions to the companies you serve and ultimately, our business community as a whole, are appreciated.

Also, many thanks to the support provided by our Diamond Sponsor, Robert Half Technology.

This year’s list of superb finalists -- each an example of excellence in the field of corporate technology stewardship -- made it even more difficult to arrive at the honorees. We are particularly excited to shine a light on nine particularly outstanding award honorees. We applaud each honoree and all the terrific finalists who are also profiled in these pages.

Matthew A. Toledo
President and Publisher
Technology doesn’t change the world. People do.

Behind every smart piece of software, powerful processor or clever line of code is an even more brilliant person. Innovation starts with people, and people start with us. That’s why our clients call us looking for top talent—and why we can help you find the best tech jobs in the business.

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**CIO OF THE YEAR – CORPORATE AWARD (100-500 EMPLOYEES)**

**DEREK PETERSON, PHD**

CTO

Boingo Wireless

Derek Peterson, PhD, is chief technology officer at Boing Wireless, the global leader in Wi-Fi. At Boingo, he is responsible for the company’s technical vision and strategy. Under his leadership, Boingo is pioneering the adoption and deployment of the latest IT and wireless network technologies including Passpoint, network virtualization, and convergence. He is directly responsible for building and operating Boingo’s core technologies and systems, including web applications, client software, networks, authentication, billing, advertising, IPTV, business intelligence and IT infrastructure. Dr. Peterson is an exceptional leader with the outstanding ability of bringing out the best in people. His passion, vision, experience, knowledge in all aspects of IT and making it happen, attitude makes him an absolute valuable asset at Boingo Wireless.

As Boingo CTO, Dr. Peterson is Boingo’s lead technical strategist, and his vision for connecting the physical and digital worlds through the best wireless technologies available has driven standards adoption across the wireless landscape. A Wireless Broadband Alliance board member, Dr. Peterson has been a key contributor to the development of next generation technology and deployments, and a catalyst for industry change. Among his many innovations and successes, Dr. Peterson led Boingo’s effort to take on the challenge of launching Next Generation Hotspot technology, Hotspot 2.0, and take it from industry labs to real life with the introduction of the first commercial Passpoint hotspots at Chicago’s O’Hare airport, followed a few months later by an additional 20 high-traffic airports. These groundbreaking Passpoint deployments introduced consumers to the automatic, fast and secure Wi-Fi experience, and encouraged major wireless providers such as Charter Spectrum to follow suit.

**CIO OF THE YEAR – ENTERPRISE AWARD (500+ EMPLOYEES)**

**JASON RICHARD**

CTO, CIO & Senior VP, Information Technology

Lucky Brand Jeans

Many successful CTOs have the benefit of trial and error to learn how to grow a business. When Jason Richard arrived at Lucky Brand, there wasn’t time for mistakes. Only 15 months existed for the team to flawlessly execute the equity carve-out of Lucky Brand from Kate Spade. As it wasn’t challenging enough, there wasn’t just one thing missing, there was what would become a 45 person team missing, not a single one had been hired yet, not a single member of the team existed.

Richard made the bold move to take Lucky Brand into the cloud. This can be a multi-year experience to establish organizations upgrading versions, let alone one in its inceptions without a framework. The move gave Lucky Brand and Richard the opportunity to revolutionize how IT was built. By moving to the cloud, the game had changed, and the team Richard was quickly assembling could spend its efforts building something that was relationship-focused, in a cloud-based system, instead of the trials and tribulations of hardware management.

Richard’s innovative spirit continues to show itself throughout the organization. In 2016, he launched a new project called Lucky Direct. Early in Q3, as the retail industry slowed, Richard identified a maneuver to become Omnichannel. It would require agility, but in 100 days, Lucky Brand began a Ship from Store program, where ecommerce orders can be sourced against store inventory and fulfilled from retail locations, greatly expanding the assortment and selection to the customer. This was a substantial profit point in Q4 of 2016, and was just one of the ‘best in class’ moves that Richard led.

**CIO OF THE YEAR – EMERGING BUSINESS AWARD (<100 EMPLOYEES)**

**PATRICK KIRBY**

CTO

MomentFeed

Patrick Kirby, MomentFeed’s Chief Technology Officer, has been a member of the MomentFeed team since the company first launched in April 2010. With over 25 years of experience in computing, designing and implementing software solutions on a variety of platforms, including personal computers, embedded systems, networking devices, mobile and cloud computing, Kirby has played a huge role in fueling MomentFeed’s overall company growth, and technology portfolio.

Kirby, along with the MomentFeed team, has created a platform that is gaining strong customer and market traction across retailers, restaurant chains, banks, auto dealers, insurance companies and other franchised and corporate-owned multi-located businesses. This includes Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf (headquartered in LA), Jamba Juice, Starbucks, Avis, Cricket and Pizza Hut, to name a few.

Throughout his tenure at MomentFeed, Kirby’s greatest accomplishments include building, and developing MomentFeed’s best-of-breed social marketing platform that has attracted hundreds of leading brand customers and millions of dollars in VC investment. MomentFeed software helps multi-location brands engage consumers 10X more effectively on mobile, directly leveraging the most important mobile networks like Facebook, Google, Apple, Instagram and Yelp. Kirby has helped build the back-end API integrations for all of these networks to connect seamlessly with MomentFeed’s platform as well as integrating other leading platforms such as loyalty for Snapchop.

Kirby is also proud of his role and responsibility in nurturing and growing MomentFeed’s engineering and developer teams, turning a small, but driven, agile, and elite team of engineers into the company’s biggest asset. Indeed, he has leveraged his team’s collective agility and skills to beat the competition.
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A Chief Information Security Officer for AirMap, Jared Ablon is responsible for securing the leading network for real-time information exchange related to unmanned aircraft systems. His purview also includes the development of future-thinking protocols for authenticating UAS and their operators, filing secure flight plan trajectories, and detecting and defending against intrusions from bad actors.

Among the successes and achievements at AirMap, Jared Ablon has pioneered and promoted security at AirMap and throughout the entire drone industry – an industry whose typical focus had been only on safety – through a number of efforts. Chief among them: spearheading a leading-edge effort, DroneBox, a publicly-trusted SSL/TLS certificate, which seamlessly and effectively facilitates instant verification of an unmanned aircraft’s identity via a digital certificate, enabling authentication and encryption for drones, speaking both locally and internationally at security-focused and aviation/ drone-focused events and conferences highlighting that security and safety are highly correlated; and creating and advocating security standards to ensure the drone industry is both safe and secure.

Previously, Ablon worked at MITRE Corporation, where he led efforts to ensure security of next generation GPS navigation systems and other communications technologies for multiple U.S. Air Force programs. He began his career at the U.S. Department of Defense leading large teams of security experts and developing cutting-edge cryptanalysis, network exploitation and vulnerability analysis security technologies.

KIMBERLY PEASE
Co-founder & Vice President
Citadel Information Group

Kimberly Pease is a dynamic, self-motivated, adaptable, technology influencer and businesswoman. She has navigated many successful projects and careers, and among her achievements is her role as a former CFO for a privately held manufacturing company. Because of her training in finance and her “roll-up your sleeves” attitude, she was asked to be an interim CFO for a period of time to help transition a company through a tumultuous time. Further, Pease revamped internal processes and weeded out internal procedures, which previously had led to a leak of company information.

Also, being known as the “Queen of Ethics” by some of her clients and peers, she goes the extra mile to ensure the highest level of integrity and “always doing the right thing” with those she interacts with, especially her clients. Pease is someone who takes full responsibility and extreme ownership for all she’s involved in. Pease has an entrepreneurial spirit and in addition to previously working for herself as an independent consultant, she co-founded Citadel Information Group in 2002. In a time before daily occurrences of cybercrime and incidents, Pease was blazing the trail and speaking with small- to medium-sized business to encourage them to get ahead of managing business and cyber risk and focus on managing the security of information, which extends well-beyond technology.

PHILLIP WALKER
Customer Advocate Chief Technology Officer
Network Solutions Provider

Phillip Walker is CTO of Network Solutions Provider (NSP). He has helped the company grow from a value-added reseller to a leader in technology-enabled business solutions. Walker also leads the Virtual CTO role for several companies supported by Network Solutions as a provider. He has helped grow the company over 70% since he joined.

Having spent 15 years working in the telecommunications and information technology industry prior to his arrival at NSP, he demonstrates a strong leadership focus and cultivates that skill throughout his team.

NSP asks all of its people to be the best in order to give its customers – both internal and external – the best. That concept is what drives Walker and how he leads. His leadership style is open and supportive, inspired by the motto, “do your best and the rest will follow.” He pushes the growth and learning of new skills and keeping up with the cutting edge. He embraces the fact that IT is always changing and evolving, so good IT professionals need to be versed in whatever is the “next new thing.” As a result, NSP has won two Channel Business Value Awards back to back – both for projects led by Walker. Creating ROI and business value for clients external and internal. Showing that he practices what he preaches when it comes to education, he is currently enrolled in the ACE program at MIT Sloan.

Walker also fosters and promotes creative thinking within the organization, which has positively impacted business efficiencies, created generation of revenue, and helps the company establish a competitive advantage.

LEADER REPLACEMENT SYSTEM (LRS)
Project Team
Department of Public Social Services

Under the direction of Project Team Leads, Michael Sylvester, Howard Gee, Vot Om, Laura Chavez, and Dorothy Avila, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) launched its new case management system known as the LRS. LRS is a leading edge system that modernizes health and human services delivery using web-based technologies, open standard, and scalable enterprise architecture. The project commenced in November 2012 and completed countywide implementation in October of last year. LRS, the largest system of its kind in the nation, provides a modern, web-based tool for public assistance caseworkers to improve service delivery and enhance customer experience.

The LRS replaces, integrates, and modernizes the functionality of 17 antiquated legacy systems. The system automates the enrollment, eligibility determination, benefit calculations, and benefit distributions of multiple health and human services programs, including nutrition assistance in the form of CalFresh benefits, employment services and supportive services via our work-to-work programs, financial and homeless assistance for families through the CalWORKs program, Medi-Cal and access to other healthcare plans offered under the Affordable Care Act, financial and homeless assistance for qualifying individuals through the General Relief program, and child welfare programs such as foster care and adoption assistance programs.

The LRS project delivered a scalable, modular, and extendable solution with Service Oriented Architecture (SOA). It leverages the latest advances in technology, to provide an integrated eligibility system that streamlines multidisciplinary business processes. LRS currently supports over 20,000 users with a caseload of over 2.5 million active cases and distributes more than $4 billion in benefits annually.
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD HONOREE

RON GUERRIER
CIO
Farmers Insurance Group of Co.

Ron Guerrier is the chief information officer for Farmers Insurance Group. He has over 22 years of experience and leadership within IT and a proven track record of driving innovation and building partnerships with both functional and line leadership, as well as creating leadership teams that focus on driving business growth and process excellence.

A complete change to Farmers’ IT department was the basis of the challenge Guerrier saw before him when he joined the company in late Q4 of 2015. Tackling it head-on required a large-scale shift, so he began setting the groundwork for the Ecosystem of Innovation. Officially launched in Q1 of 2016, the Ecosystem of Innovation encourages and empowers employees to seek out new and better ways to support the business and improve the customer experience by bringing technology-driven spaces designed to foster innovation in-house and seeking out partnerships and collaborations that support that goal.

Since joining Farmers, Guerrier has worked to define and implement a technology-focused, strategic vision aligned with the organization’s growth and performance goals across all lines of business. He has also pushed for anticipating future business opportunities with an emphasis on using technology to better reach and interact with users and the marketplace at large.

Prior to joining Farmers, Guerrier spent 20 years with Toyota; the last 3 years of which serving as the Chief Information Officer for Toyota Financial Services (TFS). He championed the creation of the much-lauded and publicized TFS Innovation Lab in 2011, and was even featured in Jill Dyche’s book published in 2014 titled “The New IT,” highlighting the evolution of the CIO role.

John Adams is the CTO at Bringhub, a leading contextual commerce platform that monetizes digital content for publishers and drives brand engagement for marketers. Currently, Adams manages all technological development for Bringhub, providing e-commerce solutions to publishers and advertisers including AGL, Bonnier Corporation, Forbes, Time Inc., and SheKnows Media. With over a decade of professional experience in various software stacks, Adams’ professional experience has reached multiple business domains, from trading systems and mortgage processing to business intelligence and e-commerce. Adams contributed to Bringhub’s pre-seed proof of concept before joining Bringhub full-time. Adams and his team have produced multiple e-commerce products for Bringhub, including the SmartCart, SmartAd, and Storefront – all designed to add a shopping experience to editorial content and digital advertisements. In 2016, Adams was promoted to CTO. He has taken Bringhub’s technology to the next level, leading the charge in casting vision for the entire tech team, developing new products, and ensuring Bringhub continues to be a leader in the e-commerce space.

Shawn Aminian is the Chief Information Officer for the Children’s Institute Inc. (CII) five years ago at a time of explosive growth for the agency. The agency’s budget was $25 million with seven sites and 350 staff. The annual budget is currently $70 million with forty sites throughout greater Los Angeles area and 850 staff. The agency had far outgrown the capacity of the existing IT infrastructure. Aminian came to understand the agency’s mission and how the staff in various programs and positions within the organization brings it to life. In the short term he made significant changes in the IT department, in its relationship to the broader staff and to the IT staff’s productivity. Then using a combination of the needs of the senior management team and his own knowledge of the tech world, he developed a plan to create the IT team and infrastructure that can support the agency’s work at the time and into the future.

ISACA Los Angeles would like to thank our own Cheryl Santor and all of the other finalists in the 2017 Los Angeles Business Journal CTO Awards!

Please visit the conference site at: http://isacala.org/conference or contact us at conference@isacala.org. #ISACALASC17
CARLOS ANCHIA
DISTILLERY
By the time Carlos Anchia joined Distillery as the VP of Engineering, he’d already assembled a formidable track record, not only as an innovator and creative thinker, but also as someone dedicated to helping others while being a thought leader in the “Internet of Things” space.

As a development partner for entrepreneurs in a wide variety of verticals, Distillery sometimes juggles five or more projects simultaneously, from social media to messaging to finance. As VP of Engineering, Anchia has to stay on top of the myriad of technologies involved, and ensure that all teams are working smoothly. It’s a role that requires tremendous agility and flexible thinking, and Anchia has brought plenty of both. In a way he serves almost as a coach to Distillery’s talented developers, serving as a sounding board and technical resource for implementation details, while providing a high-level overview that keeps development efforts aligned with product vision.

MARK ANGELO
AEROJET ROCKETDYNE HOLDINGS
Mark Angelo showed exceptional leadership, guidance, and experience during his short but effective tenure with Aerojet Rocketdyne. He has had a profound impact on the organization as a whole, through his wealth of industry experience and talent as a compassionate and visionary leader. Angelo has been a key executive, managing the difficult, and massive scale of Information Technology (IT) integration and transformation following the $550 million dollar acquisition of Pratt Whitney Rocketdyne (PWR) in July of 2012. He spearheaded the consolidation of local and contractor IT resources in order to produce significant advances in cost predictability, advance of IT resources, and a realistic roadmap to government IT compliance requirements at the end of 2017.

Angelo’s leadership, calmness under pressure, and dedication to those around him, even in light of his short tenure, kept the organization’s IT function stable and improving in quality, all through the acquisition and assimilation process – all the way until plans were finalized for consolidation and outsourcing, due to be finalized this year.

BOINGO IT TEAM
BOINGO WIRELESS
Back in 2001 (when Wi-Fi was still called “802.11”) Boingo dreamed of a world where people could connect to the wireless Internet anywhere, with any device. Today that dream is reality. Our laptops, tablets, phones, wearables, cars, even our refrigerators – all wirelessly connect to the web. We have connectivity in our homes, our offices, our cities, our planes – even our National Parks.

Over the past 16 years Boingo has grown from start-up to the leading Wi-Fi company in the world, and the largest indoor DAS (cellular) provider in the United States. And the Boingo IT team is behind the company’s storied successes, and they’re just getting started.

The Boingo IT team is made up of more than 80 engineer experts. A “no hierarchy” mentality ensures everyone contributes equally. The Boingo IT team’s most recent major accomplishments include the Passpoint launch, which brought seamless Wi-Fi to millions.

SCOTT BURTON
HYFN
It’s difficult to overstate Scott Burton’s positive impact on HYFN; he is beloved by all within the organization for not only his sheer technical mastery, but more importantly for his collaborative spirit, work ethic, can-do attitude, and sense of humor. He demonstrates immense technical management strengths in simultaneously growing two distinct technical organizations at HYFN: Building innovative interactive solutions for clients, and developing a world-class product that is constantly leading the industry, keeping up with the engineering teams of the world’s top five social media networks.

Burton is also a major cultural leader at HYFN: He leads sessions for continuing education, serves as a thought leader in the field of technological ethics, encourages the health and well-being of all at HYFN via his passion for yoga, and also hires and retains some of the industry’s best talent. At every point on the spectrum of scale, budget, and timeline, his achievements are significant.

PAUL CONOCENTI
VERITY HEALTH SYSTEM
As a diverse IT leader, Paul Conocenti has experience orchestrating IT architecture improvements that bridge technology and business. Recently, he took on the challenging role of CTO at Verity Health System. Formerly known as the Daughters of Charity Health System, Verity Health has come under new management and is embarking on a complete IT infrastructure transformation. This transformation includes consolidating data centers for six hospitals into two colocation facilities; virtualizing and consolidating all servers and storage; remodeling and upgrading many applications; refreshing all the networking equipment and workstations in all facilities; and establishing new processes across the system.

While acting as the CTO, Conocenti is managing an experienced team of technology architects/engineers, working under a tight budget and time constraints, and delivering results without any interruptions to operations or production. The strategy under way has achieved nearly $5 million in savings within the first six months, with some savings from a clinical engineering services transition.

GABE CORTINA
BUNIM / MURRAY PRODUCTIONS
Gabe Cortina is a pioneer of the “new” breed of IT executives in the entertainment industry who can manage a complex balance of facilities, post-production and IT. His skills evolved out of necessity as the entertainment industry’s rampant evolution into quick-release content characterized in the reality TV industry was flooding the networks. His success is characterized by his innate ability to read and motivate people, leading to partnering with the right vendors and working closely with his finance executive to maintain budgets through the toughest projects.

Cortina worked with a lean team and several vendors to transform Bunim/Murray Production’s infrastructure, setting up a platform for innovation. Due to an increasing run of successful series, the company’s growth outpaced its facilities and IT infrastructure. Cortina delivered an amazing number of projects overreaching traditional IT infrastructure, post production infrastructure, helping to overcome all the operational issues that come with consolidating three locations into a brand new, high-tech campus in Glendale.

JASON BOSCO
DOLLAR SHAVE CLUB
As Vice President of Engineering, Jason Bosco played a key role in shaping and building Dollar Shave Club’s highly scalable technology platform that was key to the company’s success. He joined the company as the 2nd engineer and 15th employee in October 2012. He pioneered the company’s custom-built e-commerce platform and successfully migrated the company away from a stock, unscalable and unreliable e-commerce solution that was causing the business a lot of distraction and operational overhead. Today, with millions of customers, the proprietary platform that Bosco and his team built continues to thrive and support Dollar Shave Club’s ever-growing customer base and internal company operations.

Throughout his career at Dollar Shave Club, Bosco has also played a key role in hiring, growing and retaining the Engineering team, including the recent hire of Dollar Shave Club’s first CTO. Bosco believes in hiring self-motivated entrepreneurial engineers and giving them the time and latitude to innovate.

PAULO DA SILVA
NEW HORIZONS LEARNING GROUP
Pablo da Silva has worked hard to create an environment where his employees are comfortable, happy and most importantly, growing personally and professionally. As a technology training company, da Silva strongly believes in being on the cutting edge of technology. Recognizing that financial success is driven more by focusing on employees (and their development and happiness) than by numbers or metrics, da Silva strives to keep his team motivated. He is not afraid to make changes to keep the company moving forward, even if it means adjusting and improving a previous plan of action.

For example, da Silva made the decision in conjunction with his team to switch New Horizons from traditional phone systems to the Microsoft Lync environment. By upgrading the system and contributing to the mobile workforce, the sales force and remote workers gained excellent connectivity, giving them the tools they need to succeed in their career.

SGS 100% 100%
FINALISTS

SEAN DANIELS, WILDKOOD SCHOOL

Every fall in Wildwood’s Digital Learning Studio, Sean Daniels hosts a series of lunch-and-learn sessions for Wildwood faculty. Teachers drop by, ask questions, and trade ideas about technology integration, the latest applications, upgrades, and user interfaces. For this tech guru and video pro, the lunches offer a sneak preview of the year ahead in this community of technology enthusiasts.

Daniels is a leader that works closely with his team to establish the necessary tasks and goals for his department. He is always looking for ways to help his team succeed and encourages his team to work together on completing each task. He is in touch with the admissions of the school and wants to ensure all students are able to use technology efficiently and effectively during their time at Wildwood and beyond. Daniels also invites, and participates with, partners and vendors to grow his team’s industry knowledge.

TAS DIENES, PH.D., SMARTACTION

Dr. Tas Dienes has been one of the driving forces behind SmartAction’s innovative artificial intelligence technology since before the company was incorporated. 2016 was no different, as he led a number of breakthrough initiatives that greatly impacted the company’s product performance. In November, SmartAction was recognized by Deloitte as a Fastest Growing Tech Company in North America, an accomplishment made possible by the dedicated work of Dienes as CTO.

He led the design and engineering efforts to significantly expand SmartAction’s AI product breadth. Under Dienes’ guidance, SmartAction extended its leadership position to be the first company in the world to deliver a single AI platform that combines voice and digital media, such as SMS text, online chat, and Facebook Messenger. These new capabilities have opened up expanded market opportunities at both new and existing clients, as well as given the company a sizable competitive edge over others in the industry.

DAVID GALASSI, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

David Galassi took on the strategic challenge to make USC’s data network as world class a network as the University is a World Class Research institution. His vision was to create a foundational platform to build the infrastructure and services that will keep USC a leader in research, attracting the top researchers from around the world. He empowers his staff to find and/or develop the modern tools and technologies to meet the ever-growing needs of each department and the dynamic, ever changing demands the students bring to campus daily.

Over the past six months alone, he has led his team to make this vision a reality. His team has started by installing a new Campus Backbone and Data Center Spine, with bandwidth and capacities that rival the biggest cloud providers of today. Critical applications and services are being moved to this private cloud, a new foundation, while maintaining their mission critical nature and access required.

MARK GOVATOS, CROSSROADS SCHOOL

Mark Govatos is a dedicated IT Director who truly cares about his staff. He believes in open collaboration and works closely with his team, providing necessary support on their daily and long-term challenges. He is organized and leads his team by example. He encourages everyone to face new challenges and is always there to lend a helping hand. He budgets for professional development and requires his staff to utilize and spend that budget.

At Crossroads School, Govatos has a unique perspective of how an IT organization should deliver for its user base as he has been with the organization for close to 30 years, starting as a Mathematics Instructor, moving to Mathematics Department Chair, and heading the Computer Science division before moving into IT administration. From those roles, he brings a unique understanding of the complexities of how a school operates and the role that IT plays in the educational process.

Congratulations to David Galassi of USC and all of the Los Angeles Business Journal’s 2017 CTO finalists and award winners.

Learn more at arista.com
RICHARD GREENBERG  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  

Richard Greenberg is the Information Security Officer for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. He brings over 25 years of management experience and has been a strategic and thought leader in IT and Information Security for both the private and public sectors. His Project Management, Security Management and Operations, and Policy and Compliance experience has helped shape his broad perspective on creating and implementing Information Security Programs in organizations.  
Greenberg was recently honored as an Honor Roll recipient by ISSA International. He has been selected as a finalist for both the ISACA Americas Information Security Leadership Award in the Senior Information Security Professional category. He also serves as the Chair of the Annual Healthcare Privacy and Security Forum in LA. In short, he has worked diligently to bring together the various Southern California InfoSec organizations to enhance their collaboration efforts, to help outreach efforts for the entire Southern California region.

LUCA JACOBELUS  
CAL NET TECHNOLOGY GROUP  

As the first employee of Cal Net, Luca Jacobellis quickly moved up through the ranks. He held nearly every position there is to hold within the company, administrative, engineering, management, and more and is now Cal Net’s President and Chief Operating Officer. With this depth and breadth of experience, he is able to relate to his employees in most any position, from various departments. Having this background equips him with a unique perspective and empowers him with a heightened ability to breakdown silos, bridge gaps, and unify groups with conflicting priorities and agendas.  
As a leader, Jacobellis always strives to provide his team with clear direction. He creates consistency and predictability by setting expectations for each position within the company and defining a clear path for advancement for any on his team. He is always looking for opportunities for his staff to grow personally and professionally, putting high emphasis on employee training, development, and creating opportunities for career advancement.

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JAY HATHO  
SCS ENGINEERS  

The business sectors that SCS Engineers works in are highly regulated. Local, state and federal agencies have set strict thresholds that owners, operators, and developers must comply with to ensure the environmental health and safety of their facilities and the surrounding communities. This process can be costly, difficult to fine tune and alert facility and field technicians to the potential for unsafe conditions.  
Jay Hatho, Chief Technology Officer for SCS Engineers, knew there had to be a better way. Using his background in modern hardware, software, and web-based technologies, he set out to develop a suite of new tools to collect, monitor and control landfill and landfill gas systems in the field. The suite of tools, SCSeTools, leverages wireless technology to streamline operations, maintenance and monitoring tasks at landfills and provides real-time data to ensure regulatory compliance. These tools reduce the amount of gas that escapes into the atmosphere and help technicians locate leaks in systems. SCSeTools helps facilities operate more safely and efficiently.

SHAHAN KHAN  
POLYMAIL  

Shahin Khan founded Polymail, where he is currently the CTO. Polymail is one of the fastest-growing technology companies in LA, having raised hundreds of thousands of users around the world. Khan has been responsible for architecting and developing nearly all of the software at Polymail, and in less than 1.5 years has built a complete email synchronization engine, desktop app, and mobile app from the ground up.  
At Polymail, Khan has been creating the messaging experience and sync architecture supporting hundreds of thousands of email accounts. He’s been personally sitting by the side of every engineer at Polymail, ensuring the growth and success of every engineer, and the company as a whole. He has around the clock dedication to maintaining the servers, investing into the success of every individual of the company. He works endlessly to make sure that everyone inside and outside the company can gain a strong understanding of the underlying technology of Polymail.

JODY MULKEY  
TICKETMASTER  

Jody Mulkey is Chief Technology Officer at Ticketmaster. An accomplished technology and inspirational engineering leader, Mulkey is known for building high performance systems and teams. As CTO, Mulkey leads Ticketmaster’s overall product and technology transformation efforts. The excitement and excellence that permeates Mulkey’s teams are fueled by his passionate leadership and ability to connect the enthusiasm to the mission.  
Mulkey has been a key leader in defining the technology and engineering-driven cultural transformation at Ticketmaster since he was named CTO in 2014. In just three short years as CTO, Mulkey has enabled Ticketmaster’s software engineering and operations teams to build and deploy new products that have evolved the company’s system, serving more than 10,000 Ticketmaster clients, over 100 million live event fans and supporting more than 510 million transaction transactions. Mulkey’s team most recently launched a new beta product that uses a proprietary algorithm to help Ticketmaster and its clients ensure that real tickets get into the hands of real fans.

PETER HUH  
QUEST NUTRITION  

Peter Huh brings over 25 years of technology and business management experience for companies he has helped grow from start-ups to up-starts and eventually market leaders. Currently Huh is the CTO at Quest Nutrition.  
When he started at Quest just over a year ago, the company had gone through explosive growth and had outgrown its talent level on the IT side of things. Since his arrival he has saved over $500K annually by streamlining and centralizing technology platforms and putting in place a team that is highly proficient and has experience with such high growth environments. His team has grown from five full-time employees to over 25 employees, which includes systems, network, application development as well as ERP Systems analysts. Huh has turned the tech team at Quest into one of the most important teams as they provide data analysis and business intelligence and continue to improve processes and increasing efficiencies company wide.

RANDY NIEVES  
CAL NET TECHNOLOGY GROUP  

As Chief Technology Officer of Cal Net Technology Group, Randy Nieves is responsible for solutions strategy, helping to identify and launch Cal Net’s next set of products and services, using ITIL guidelines from service strategy, design, transition, operations through continual service improvement. He also oversees the design of cloud services and other new managed service offerings as well as managing related vendor partnerships. He is also responsible for Cal Net’s NOC and Technical Operations departments.  
Nieves’ experience in technology is very deep, vast and wide, with over 25 years of experience in the industry (10 with Cal Net), he possesses a broad base of technical, operational and consulting skills for a variety of vertical industries. One of the biggest, most recent challenges that Randy took on as Chief Technology Officer of Cal Net, was finding a way to simplify Cal Net’s very complex product and service offerings both on the back end and how we present and bundle these offerings for the customer.
MARCH 27, 2017

Lior Ofir is driven by a deep passion and insatiable curiosity for engineering and technology. Over his 25-year career he successfully harnessed this passion to assemble and lead exceptional teams and achieve tremendous business results. In 2009, Ofir joined a small group of mortgage industry veterans to start a new financial services venture. In the first two years of operations, PennyMac raised and invested $3 billion and helped thousands of homeowners keep their homes. Over nine short years, PennyMac grew to become a significant player in the mortgage lending and servicing industry. With over 3,200 employees across 15 locations nationwide (five of which in the LA area) and $390 million in net revenue for 2016, PennyMac achieved distinction as the 4th largest producer, 2nd largest servicer and 11th largest service of home loans in the United States. Since inception, Ofir has been leading the creation and evolution of PennyMac’s technology platforms and services, enabling the company’s rapid growth.

HENRY PARK
3GC GROUP

Henry Park brings a unique background in investment banking and technology, with vast experience in industry trending and analysis, as well as sales and marketing. With a B.S. in Economics from UC Irvine, Park has aided in several mergers and acquisitions in the plastics and rubber industry to create competitive brands against behemoths such as Goodyear, Proctor and Gamble. Prior to 3GC Group, he held several mid and upper management, sales and marketing positions within the CLEC and IT Consulting industries. Under Park’s leadership, 3GC has focused on the convergences that are occurring in bringing networking infrastructure, wireless, security, and virtualization together in increasingly more efficient management. Over 3GC’s 14 years of history, it has found that the core of all its solutions is its network design and engineering services. 3GC’s clients are seeing 25-50% efficiencies in their network performance and management while 3GC as an organization has grown and evolved into new technological advances with very little upper management.

JOE PASCUAL
DOTSTUDIOPRO

As the CEO/CTO of dotstudioPRO, Joe Pascual has spearheaded the vision and innovation behind the company’s product, dotstudioPRO. Over six years at the company, Pascual has mastered the art of product and company iteration taking the company and its product through Video Innovation Awards to angel funding, all the while working with technical teams around the world. Pascual also has a vast working knowledge of Production and Post-Production tools and technologies. He has spent the last 6+ years developing not only a SaaS solution for the entertainment industry but also groundbreaking post-production workflows with his first company, Deep Sky Digital. Pascual’s credits include being lead project manager on multi-media campaigns for the likes of NetZero and serving as supervising editor and post-production supervisor with clients ranging from MTV, Academy Award-winning Drac Studios, Style Networks and Screen Gems. His strengths in keeping up with the latest trends in video delivery, social media and multi-platform give dotstudioPRO an advantage that will continue to propel the company forward.

PAUL RYAN
ZOWDOW.COM

Paul Ryan is an entrepreneurial technologist who still codes. Over the past 30 years he has architected and built many systems of types and platforms, from high volume search engines, to complex SaaS solutions for advertising and lead management, leading teams both large (500+) and small in both technology and product roles. He is currently CTO and Founder of Zowdow – a venture-funded innovative platform for mobile search. Part of Ryan’s core capabilities include transforming millenial technology and product organizations into world class product development machine -- pioneering and successfully rolling out modern approaches to product and software development within larger organizations, as well as re-architecting complex legacy platforms focusing on immediate benefits while creating a longer-term roadmap for change. His investigative direction of people’s habits has yielded a goldmine of insights to make Zowdow’s recommendations more effective. He realizes that subtle changes to the information feed chain can produce profound effects - and the machinery will continue to improve and build on itself.

CHERYL SANTOR
METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Cheryl Santor has been a remarkable driving force in the cybersecurity arena. Her work and efforts locally, as well as nationally, has helped to shape the evolution of cybersecurity. Her background in the financial realm has heavily influenced the cyber risks that her company has been able to mitigate. Her diligence in the last year has allowed her organization to stand as a model of a water utility that takes its mission seriously, to provide its service area with adequate and reliable supplies of high-quality water to meet present and future needs in an environmentally and economically responsible way.

ERIC SCHUSSEL
GEEKTEK

Eric Schusssel is the President and CEO of GeekTek Services. His career really started the day he switched his major from computer science to anthropology. His passion quickly grew for investigating how computers affect people, not in writing software. While still a student at Stony Brook University in New York, he began his technology consulting practice. Throughout his career, he has sought to bridge the gap between people and technology, the foundation on which GeekTek’s unique approach to client services is built.

SAMEER SHAMSUDDIN
REALTY MOGUL

Sameer Shamsuddin is the Chief Technology Officer at Realty Mogul, focused on leading and growing the technology and product organization. Prior to joining RealtyMogul.com, Sameer provided strategic consulting where he was retained by CEOs, CTOs and Private Equity companies to assess technology organizations, perform due diligence on mergers and acquisitions and evaluate technology roadmaps.

NAVDEEP REDDY
ENFLUG

At Enplug, Navdeep Reddy communicates his technology plans and business value through the organization by constant education. Every member of the company is expected to have a high level understanding of the technology used. Individual project managers are encouraged to perform their own research on technology solutions and suggest superior choices to the incumbent solutions. The process made in making technology decisions is always clearly laid out by Reddy and his team and critiques are not only allowed, but also expected.

Creative thinking is promoted and fostered by Reddy via extremely high levels of cross company communication. A high level of understanding of the core product companywide produces a fertile environment for innovation. Processes are improved, new features are developed, and issues are resolved by this persistent collaborative interchange – directly impacting business efficiency positively for increased revenue generation and high levels of agility that is a significant competitive advantage in an industry, which adheres to ‘traditional paradigms.’
LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL – CUSTOM CONTENT

ADVATI SHINDE
GOGUARDIAN

Advaith Shinde is a leader who loves to code. This creates an interesting dynamic. When he’s buried in code, he’s in total bliss impacting the future of GoGuardian and its entire engineering department. As co-founder, Shinde is fully invested in developing the company’s business plan, pricing models, and future product roadmap. The company has grown from 2 to 80 employees in less than three years.

Shinde develops his team by allowing them unprecedented levels of responsibility and authority. He shows immediate trust in team members, whether seasoned veterans or new hires, knowing that the more ownership someone has of a project, the more likely they are to “sweat the details.” He looks for independent spirit, collaboration, enthusiasm, and technical prowess in new hires and because he is a coding prodigy, there is a very high bar that must be met by all new employees in engineering.

HERSHEL SHOUMER
LA NETWORKS

After working at large enterprise corporations for 16 years and achieving the highly regarded Cisco CCIE certification in 1997, Hershel Shoumer formed LA Networks, an IT consulting and networking company. LA Networks’ mission has always been to become its clients’ trusted advisor by delivering best of breed solutions. Since its humble beginnings, LA Networks was built as an engineering and consulting firm with extensive expertise in the areas of Unified Communications, Wireless, Data Center Architectures, Wide Area Networks, and Local Area Networks. The LA Networks differentiator is a passion to deliver excellent value and service to its customers and partners.

Since he launched, Shoumer has demanded excellence from his partners and employees by the following core principles: Honesty and Integrity, Leadership, Family values, Open Communication, and Passion in Technology. LA Networks has grown to become one of the best-known privately held and highly technical IT solution providers in Southern California.

MARWAN SOGHAIER
STEELHOUSE

Marwan Soghaier drives the next generation of SteelHouse’s products. He works closely with the product teams to inspire and develop pivotal, game-changing product visions, while also directing the company’s overall product roadmap. He has developed marketing technology and innovative, accessible product interfaces and platforms for numerous companies.

The past year has been a time of great accomplishment for Soghaier. Not satisfied with creating just another piece of software, he and the team members of SteelHouse created a new category of creative software altogether, called the SteelHouse Creative Suite. The Creative Suite gives anyone—from big brands to small businesses—the ability to use the content from the world around them to build engaging ads for their digital campaigns. As Soghaier loves to point out, it gives the average Jane and Joe the power to leverage any source of creativity they find to help tell their brand’s story.

STAN STAHL, PH.D.
SECURETHEVILLAGE; CITADEL INFORMATION GROUP

Dr. Stan Stahl is noted for his years of public service, providing leadership, innovation and creativity, assisting the Los Angeles community meet the ongoing challenges of cybersecurity, cyber privacy and information security. A pioneer in the field of information security, Dr. Stahl entered the field in 1980. He has been committed during his entire career to information security and process improvement. Whether as a pioneer in the development of the first firewalls, or as a current trusted advisor to small and medium businesses, he works tirelessly to make sure that business understands the risk of not properly securing their computers and understands how to work towards the goal of fulfilling both legal and ethical obligations to secure information. He is highly respected within the community and by his own team. He is presently the President of Citadel Information Group and is also founder and President of Secure The Village, a nonprofit whose mission is to develop and integrate information security learning communities.

JILL STRIFF
LINER LLP

Since joining the firm, Striff has updated the infrastructure, replacing inefficient hardware with new hardware with a virtualized environment. She automated several systems that had been manual; moved away from a legacy document management system; added an electronic records management system; implemented cutting edge security systems and established a disaster preparedness plan.

On a day-to-day basis, Striff keeps 150 employees up and running in a secure environment. Under her watch, the firm completely redesigned and deployed a backup solution for its sites in Westwood, downtown Los Angeles and the Datacenter and went through a major change in managed service providers, which required weeks of planning and execution. She has taken on a role well beyond CFO by not only dealing with IT, but also with Records, Docketing, and Intake and all their related systems. The result of her effort is increased efficiency in the infrastructure which results in more efficient attorneys and staff, safer and more resilient systems, and most significant, a culture more accepting of technology and change.

MATTHIAS TORNYI
WEBBUSH SECURITIES

Matthias Tornyi is Senior Vice President and Head of Information Technology at Webbush Securities. He has been with Webbush Securities since 2003 and oversees the information technology operations, infrastructure, information security, and software development initiatives for the firm. In his tenure with Webbush, Tornyi has improved processes and efficiency, and continues to make advancements for the firm. Among his key accomplishments has been his selection and deployment of a new e-mail archiving solution resulting in significant efficiency improvements in system administration, email surveillance, and e-discovery. He also implemented a “self-serve” model for in-house eDiscovery activities eliminating dependency on IT resulting in a fully compliant solution for regulatory record retention rules.

Tornyi also designed and led the implementation of several in-house systems to automate manual and labor intensive processes such as trade & activity reporting, IT requisitions, and corporate employee directory. He also designed and developed a new corporate Intranet using Drupal and Open Atium. Significantly improved the user experience through a modern UI and re-organization of company content.

ROBERT VANDUSEN
THE HONEST COMPANY

Head of Information Technology for The Honest Company, Inc., Robert VanDusen is responsible for all of the company’s information technology operations. This includes information systems for all of Honest's offices, data security, DevOps, ERP and PCI compliance. A senior leader, IT operational expert and technology decision-maker for the company, VanDusen serves as a leader of the corporate IT operations for all of Honest’s product lines.

VanDusen brings to the Honest Company his experience as a noted information technologies executive with experience in leading IT organizations for diverse sectors including online retail, entertainment/video games, financial, and electrical engineering industries. He is particularly accomplished at motivating individuals and teams to tremendous results and has a strong record of promoting the overall business strategy by developing and executing technology strategies in line with business objectives.

DAVE WATTS
NETFUSION, INC.

Dave Watts began his career managing networks for a Fortune 100 company in the late 1980’s. He was there for the implementation of their first local area network in Los Angeles. In 1995, he started NetFusion to bring enterprise best practices and expertise to boutique and medium sized businesses. Today, his team at NetFusion designs, implements and manages scalable and secure IT networks for professional services firms and businesses.

Under Watts’ technical guidance, NetFusion now manages and supports over 50 firms and 1500 users in the Los Angeles area. In addition to proactively managing its clients’ networks and providing day to day support, NetFusion audits each client quarterly against its own best practices gleaned from 22 years of experience plus the Center for Internet Security’s Top 20 Critical Controls. Educating each client and advising them on how they can align themselves with these best practices eliminates blind spots for clients and maximizes their productivity and security.
KEN WEINER
GUMGUM

Ken Weiner joined GumGum as its first employee in 2007 and in the nine years since then has grown his engineering team from zero to 30. During this time, he groomed five people for management roles and successfully elevated them to leadership positions within the organization. Before GumGum, Weiner developed his leadership skills as an engineering manager at LowerMyBills, where he helped lead his team in re-architecting their entire lead generation and A/B testing platform to be based on more modern web development frameworks. Though his leadership, the engineering team was able to scale the platform and adapt to different product verticals, leading to the company being acquired by Experian for $330 million.

At GumGum, Weiner has enabled the engineering team to consistently demonstrate its position as an industry leader around several software engineering disciplines. He frequently encourages team members to author papers and present at various technology conferences and meet-ups.

IAN WHITMAN
ROSANO PARTNERS

Leading the day-to-day operations of the firm, Ian Whitman is the Chief Operating Officer at Rosano Partners. He is responsible for the strategic growth and execution of the Rosano vision and led the company’s rebranding initiative in 2014. In addition, he is spearheading the 15-year growth plan, recruitment strategy and corporate responsibility plan at Rosano Partners.

With over 20 years of experience and success in driving operational growth, leading start-up and turnaround efforts and maximizing new business opportunities, he has been recognized as a company-wide leader with documented ability to restructure operations and fulfill strategic objectives. He has championed early technology adoption and innovation at Rosano Partners. As commercial real estate begins to digest and apply new high tech solutions, Rosano Partners has been implementing these revolutionary new systems to stay relevant and competitive in the marketplace. Whitman continuously develops new strategies while onboarding a multitude of talented minds who serve as internal motivators at Rosano Partners to remain a transformative, tech-savvy firm.

JONATHAN WONG
PLAYBOY ENTERPRISES, INC

Jonathan Wong has been a strategically minded, technically strong and financially literate IT executive over the course of his 17-year career in leading Information Technology. Serving as Chief Information Officer, Wong concurrently operates several different major companies across a private equity portfolio. In addition to overseeing a greatly expanded portfolio of assets at Playboy Enterprises, Inc., he also leads Information Technology for RealD, the world’s largest 3D cinema platform with 26,500 screens in 72 countries, as well as an additional reacquired Licensee in the broadcasting and digital media space.

Originally recruited by Playboy Enterprises in 2011, Wong has most recently taken on the role of leading Information Technology for assets recently reacquired by Playboy Enterprises from a former Licensee in the broadcast and digital media space. For this new role, he provides both strategic direction and engages in a hands-on operational redesign of the new division. He is currently in the process of implementing new network infrastructure and applications architecture to enhance and build operational and broadcast capabilities.

CULLEN ZANDSTRA
FLOQAST

As the co-founder of FloQast, Cullen Zandstra was the sole creator of the first prototype as well as the next few iterations of the product that FloQast brought to market. Zandstra spent the first year of development holding multiple roles of designer, programmer and strategist. Successfully producing a complete product with limited development resources, FloQast remains one of only a few enterprise SaaS companies that have graduated from the well-known startup accelerator, Amplify LA.

Today, as Zandstra leads a large team of developers, he continues to stay true to a focus on people above technology. All product developments are built directly from end user feedback. A large percentage of the FloQast team consists of former accountants with hands-on experience with financial close challenges. For Zandstra, it is crucial that the DNA of his company reflects that of its customers in order to effectively solve their business challenges.

Cheers to Dr. Derek Peterson
for being named CTO of the Year.

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Los Angeles Business Journal

AWARDS EVENT

1. Honoree Kimberly Pease (Citadel Information Group); 2. Desiree Galassi, David Galassi, Lucy, and Leyla Ezdinlin (LGC); 3. Honoree Phillip Walker (Network Solutions Provider); 4. Honoree Jared Ablon (AirMap) and Lillian Ablon (RAND Corporation); 5. Sponsor Lincoln Ramirez (The Auto Gallery); Austin Palek and Cameron Jones (Alfa Romeo); 6. Honoree Michael Sylvester representing the LEADER Replacement System Project Team (Department of Public Social Services); 7. Speakers Russ Giles (Arista Networks) and Dr. Dan Manson (Cal Poly Pomona) with Moderator Paul Flaharty (Robert Half Technology); 8. Matt Toledo (Los Angeles Business Journal) with Honoree Steven Garske, PhD (Children’s Hospital Los Angeles) and Sponsor Paul Fisharty (Robert Half Technology); 9. Sponsor Chris Kim, Claire Davidson, Damian Perez, Jon Swift, Paul Fisharty, Tyler Federink, Catherine Hamilton, Mary Devine, Jerome Osa, and Cary Wiesmer (Robert Half Technology); 10. Shiva Ron Dvon (Sirus) and Robert Ron Dvon (The Honest Company); 11. Honoree Ron Guerrier and team (Farmers Insurance Group of Co.); 12. Honoree Derek Peterson, PhD (Smanda Windom); 13. Honoree Jean Richard and team (Cable Brand Journal); 14. Laura Jeckel and Jeff Gerlich (Cal Net Technology Group); 15. Sponsor ISACA Los Angeles Chapter team.