

Creating Connection

An Interview with Stacey A. Marx, President - National Business and Channels, AT&T

EDITORS' NOTE In her current position, Stacey Marx leads a team of thousands of business professionals who support 95 percent of AT&T's business customers nationwide. She is an accomplished senior executive with 22 years of diverse sales and business experience, ranging from small business call centers to the largest government, education and medical customers. Prior to her current role, Marx was Senior Vice President of AT&T Partner Solutions, Commercial



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DTV and Wholesale. She also served as Vice President of AT&T National Business Central Region. Her career highlights include her selection as the sales lead on the 2016 Presidential Conventions, where AT&T was named the Official Provider for Communications, Video and Technology for the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio and the Official Wireless Telecommunications and Technology Provider for the 2016 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. She also spearheaded the AT&T Fiber Solutions team which focused on growing share and penetration of fiber lit buildings and led AT&T's Midwest Business as the Regional Chief Financial Officer where she was a President's Award winner. Marx championed the AT&T National Business Diversity and Inclusion team from 2015 to 2016 and has also developed and led panel discussions at the annual AT&T Employee Resource Group Conference. She plays an active role in the Dallas Women of Tocqueville and supports her community through the Young Survival Coalition and the American Heart Association. During her career, she has garnered accolades for her

leadership, including a feature in the AT&T Women in Tech social media campaign. She received the 2021 CRN Channel Chief and 2021 CRN Women of the Channel Power 100 awards. Stacey was recognized on the CRN 2020 Women of the Channel and CRN 2020 Power 100 lists and was named a Stevie® Awards 2020 & 2021 Female Executive of the Year – Business Services (more than 2,500 employees). Marx earned a BS in business/commerce from Arizona State University, an accounting certificate from Northwestern University, and holds an MBA from Pepperdine University.

COMPANY BRIEF AT&T Inc. (att.com) is a diversified, global leader in telecommunications, media and entertainment, and technology. AT&T Communications provides more than 100 million U.S. consumers with entertainment and communications experiences across mobile and broadband. Plus, it serves high-speed, highly secure connectivity and smart solutions to nearly 3 million business customers. WarnerMedia is a leading media and entertainment company that creates and distributes premium and popular content to global audiences through its consumer brands, including: HBO, HBO Max, Warner Bros., TNT, TBS, truTV, CNN, DC Entertainment, New Line, Cartoon Network, Adult Swim and Turner Classic Movies. Xandr, now part of WarnerMedia, provides marketers with innovative and relevant advertising solutions for consumers around premium video content and digital advertising through its platform. AT&T Latin America provides wireless services to consumers and businesses in Mexico.

How do you define AT&T's purpose and how is being a purpose-driven company a part of AT&T's culture and values?

Our purpose is to create connection – with each other, and with what people and businesses need to thrive every day. Whether it's providing broadband, 5G or access to great entertainment, connectivity is at the heart of everything we do. Our company culture and values drive that purpose. We strive to pursue excellence in all we do. We encourage our employees to think big, innovate and inspire imagination. And most importantly, we're focused on being there for our customers.

Will you provide an overview of your role and key areas of focus?

I lead a team of thousands of AT&T sales professionals. We're focused on helping nearly 2.5 million small- and medium-sized businesses by providing solutions built around their business needs. Connectivity has never been more important for these businesses as their world becomes increasingly digital. For example, our business fiber helps SMB customers support e-commerce activities, sell more goods, reach more audiences, and work faster and smarter. Voice and collaboration tools allow employees to work and connect with their customers virtually anywhere from smartphones, tablets or desktop IP phones. Our software-defined wide area network (SD-WAN) solutions are cloud-based connectivity solutions that move network traffic management away from hardware and premises, allowing centralized management of devices. For example, using SD-WAN, a retailer with multiple locations can quickly and reliably track inventory and route critical sales which could help increase business productivity.

How did AT&T adapt its business to address the challenges caused by the pandemic in order to continue to support its customers during this unprecedented time?

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When the pandemic hit, our Global Supply Chain team worked with suppliers around the world to assess, communicate and help mitigate global COVID-19 impacts to AT&T. We shifted to 130,000 of our employees working from home, and in an 8-week period our team collected more than 5 million pounds of Personal Protective Equipment – enough to supply to AT&T employees as needed. COVID-19 has fundamentally changed how we support our customers. These events have highlighted the need for becoming more resilient in supporting our operations. For us, supply chain resiliency involves four key areas – increasing visibility into our upstream supply chain, supporting a redundant supplier base, investing in technology and automation, and building flexible delivery models.

Similarly, for our small business customers, the rise in remote work, mobility, and connectivity of employees, along with the need for communication and collaboration, has increased in importance. We provide the value-added resources and services small businesses need to stay connected.

How is AT&T revolutionizing the customer experience?

We’ve spent the last three years transforming our operations to serve customers faster and smarter. The significant investments we’ve made in our customer service and operations have resulted in:

- Automating and streamlining the ordering, delivery, and installation of solutions – 70 percent of site readiness provisioning work is handled by an AT&T Business virtual technician.

- Using predictive analytics that leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) to identify potential problems in advance – we now have an 80 percent on-time installation rate for business customers as of May 2021, up from 71 percent in January 2020.

- Integrating industry-leading platforms to offer more comprehensive solutions – we’ve achieved a 20 percent decrease in our overall end-to-end cycle time to deliver our solutions faster compared to 2019.

- Providing more ways than ever to connect with service and support – 30 percent of customer requests are now resolved by chatbots and never require interacting with a live agent.

We’re proud to say it’s all paying off. We were just ranked #1 in customer satisfaction with large enterprise and medium business wireless service in the J.D. Power 2021 Business Wireless Satisfaction Study. This comes on the heels of winning the J.D. Power 2021 Business Wireline Satisfaction Study for large enterprise and medium business in July.

Will you discuss the ways AT&T is helping its customers achieve growth with technology innovation?

We strive to help small and medium-sized business customers drive business growth, reduce costs, and improve their customer experience. Our connectivity solutions for SMBs, combined with our ongoing innovation and investments in our network, can help these customers modernize their technologies and achieve success. We don’t see ourselves as just a seller of products; we aim to be a business’ trusted advisor. We offer professional technology consulting services to help businesses make the right choices for their connectivity and technology solutions, which is key to growing their operations. It’s all part of our goal to make working with us easy and simple. That means designing products and services that are easy to use and can often be bundled together, making them more affordable. It also means providing multiple options for customer support from experts online, by phone and in stores.

How critical is it for AT&T to build a diverse and inclusive workforce in order to mirror the diversity of its customers and the communities it serves?

At AT&T, we believe diversity, equity and inclusion are business and moral imperatives. Inclusion is how we unleash the power of diversity, and equity is how we achieve equality for all. By bringing together diverse views, backgrounds, cultures and talents, we work to foster an inclusive environment where employees feel valued, respected and empowered to bring their ideas and help drive innovation.

We also strive to create relevant marketing for our customers and listen before engaging in our communities. Through internal and external programs, we’re focused on expanding access to educational and workforce readiness resources, as well as economic empowerment opportunities needed to succeed in our connected world.

What do you see as AT&T’s responsibility to the communities it serves and to being a force for good in society?

We have a long history of giving back to our communities, and the connectivity we provide is often part of the solution. Together with our employees, we’re tackling important economic, environmental and societal issues that impact our business and our communities, such as the digital divide, climate change, education and economic opportunity.

- We’ve committed \$2 billion over the next three years to help bridge the digital divide, bringing affordable internet and opportunity to more Americans. As part of the commitment, this year we are opening more than 20 AT&T Connected Centers with high-speed internet access and computing devices in traditionally under-served neighborhoods facing barriers to connectivity. This investment builds on approximately \$1 billion in contributions over the last three years to help the nation’s most vulnerable communities.

- Climate change impacts our operations, our people and our communities. We have committed to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035 across our entire global operations. We’re also one of the largest corporate purchasers of renewable energy in the U.S. and have set science-based targets that align with international consensus on limiting global temperature increases. And in late August, we announced our Connected Climate Initiative – an industry leading target to eliminate 1 billion metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions by 2035, working with businesses, universities and other alliances. This effort will contribute to a better, more sustainable world.

- To address the long-standing social inequities and higher unemployment Black and under-served communities face, we’ve committed \$10 million to create economic opportunities and foster upward mobility through national work readiness programs and local organizations across the U.S.

Do you feel that there are strong opportunities for women to grow and lead in the industry?

Without a doubt. I’m lucky to be surrounded by a team of strong and talented women who are helping lead our company and inspire other women to accomplish their dreams. Women are core to the foundation of AT&T. They help push our company forward and inspire others to do the same. In 2020, 36 percent of our technology development program hires were women. We just had 37 women from AT&T recognized for their stellar achievements and contributions to the company and to their fields at this year’s Women of Color STEM Conference. I’m proud my company puts its money where its mouth is. By 2020, AT&T and the AT&T Foundation had invested nearly \$202 million to support STEM initiatives over the past 30 years. From 2015-2020 we gave nearly \$38.9 million to support women in STEM. ●