

Data Strategy

An Interview with Michelle Boston,
Chief Information Officer for Data Management Technology & Enterprise Architecture, Bank of America

EDITORS' NOTE Michelle Boston is the Data Management Technology and Enterprise Architecture executive for Bank of America. In this role, she leads the team responsible for enterprise architecture strategy, data technology strategy, and the advancement of data management and data protection capabilities in adherence to Enterprise Data policies and standards. Previously, Boston led a team responsible for defining technology strategies and delivering solutions supporting Legal, Corporate Audit and Retail, Preferred, Small Business & Wealth Management. She has served in several technology leadership roles at the company. Prior to joining Bank of America in 2012, Boston served as Chief Information Officer for Partners Imaging, a privately held medical imaging services company in Dallas. She serves as the Global Technology co-lead for Women in Technology & Operations (WIT&O) and is the executive sponsor of WIT&O's North Texas chapter and Bank of America's Girls Who Code Summer Immersion Program. She also leads Global Technology's Hispanic & Latino Advisory Council (HLAC). She is also Executive Co-Chair of Hispanic Latino Executive Council (HLEC). In 2024, HITEC recognized Boston as one of the Top 100 Hispanic IT Executives. She was featured in Hispanic Executive magazine as a Leading Latina in 2020. Boston has a degree in Management Information Systems from Texas A&M University.



Michelle Boston

financial institutions, serving individual consumers, small and middle-market businesses and large corporations with a full range of banking, investing, asset management and other financial and risk management products and services. The company provides unmatched convenience in the United States, serving approximately 69 million consumer and small business clients with approximately 3,800 retail financial centers, approximately 15,000 ATMs (automated teller machines), and award-winning digital banking with approximately 58 million verified digital users. Bank of America is a global leader in wealth management, corporate and investment banking and trading across a broad range of asset classes, serving corporations, governments, institutions and individuals around the world. Bank of America offers industry-leading support to approximately 4 million small business households through a suite of innovative, easy-to-use online products and services. The company serves clients through operations across the United States, its territories and more than 35 countries. Bank of America Corporation stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Will you discuss your career journey?

My career journey began when I graduated with a degree in Management Information Systems from Texas A&M University and then spent a few years in IT consulting before making my way into industry roles in technology. From there my path was a pretty traditional one as I moved up the ladder from being a programmer/senior programmer

to development team lead, to project manager, IT director, and eventually chief information officer of data management technology.

I found my passion in data early in my career, building data intensive systems like manufacturing systems, pharmacy and medical outcomes databases, forecasting systems for international shipping, and enterprise data warehouse and business intelligence systems for global insurance companies. The bigger the company the more interesting the data problems were because of the sheer volume and velocity of data at scale, and solving those data challenges was very appealing to me.

I am truly proof that a career is a jungle gym and not a ladder as I went from the CIO of a startup company to a contractor at Bank of America because I was pursuing work I was passionate about in the field of data. Once employed by Bank of America and over the past decade, I continued to learn and grow, worked hard and arrived at where I am today – a CIO that leads the data strategy tied to exciting technologies to deliver great experiences to our clients and employees.

How do you describe Bank of America's culture and values?

Bank of America strives to be a bank for everyone. We've become a great place to work by building a diverse and inclusive culture where all employees are treated with respect, all differences and individual experiences are valued, and you're empowered to bring your whole self to work. The bank is committed to providing its employees with the tools and community to succeed professionally and personally, respectively. For example, the bank has employee networks, ongoing activities, and annual events to foster engagement within and across departments and to nurture friendships.

COMPANY BRIEF Bank of America (bankofamerica.com) is one of the world's leading

“One of the greatest measures of success is the degree to which clients engage with our digital solutions. Today, more than 57 million clients leverage our digital capabilities to help manage their financial lives.”

“The best way to increase representation within technology and STEM careers is by getting in front of the populations early and educating them about technology and allowing them to try their hand at coding, which is how I became interested in technology.”

I've benefited from engagement in many of the bank's networks and currently lead the Global Technology's Hispanic & Latino Advisory Council (HLAC), co-lead the Women in Technology & Operations (WIT&O) organization, and executive sponsor the WIT&O's North Texas chapter. Additionally, externally I am the executive sponsor of Bank of America's Girls Who Code Summer Immersion Program.

The bank recognizes the value of these connections and proudly facilitates opportunities for employees to grow, learn, and connect through shared interests as it is the personal connections our employees make with each other that help build our strong and inclusive Bank of America work culture.

What do you feel have been the keys to Bank of America's industry leadership?

While Bank of America is a large organization, it is focused on providing a personalized experience to both our clients and our employees. In addition to what I've shared related to how we support and engage our employees, the bank is committed to creating and delivering innovative digital experiences that drive client adoption and engagement by enabling clients to manage financial lives when and how they choose. Bank of America does that by continuing to invest in technology and innovation that supports and strengthens our company's high-tech, high-touch, client-focused strategy. We build and deploy client-focused technology at scale that provide personalized features and tools and capabilities to enhance our consumer and business clients' financial journeys across all eight lines of business.

One of the greatest measures of success is the degree to which clients engage with our digital solutions. Today, more than 57 million clients leverage our digital capabilities to help manage their financial lives.

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

Currently, I am Chief Information Officer for Data Management Technology & Enterprise Architecture at Bank of America, leading a team responsible for working with our company's eight lines of businesses and CIOs to plan and execute enterprise strategic data investments to ensure our data is well managed and is accurate, complete, timely for day-to-day operations use and to enable business strategies, which includes that our data is protected throughout all phases of the data lifecycle. To do this, we always work ahead on multi-generational

strategic planning and currently are focused on what 2027 – the end of the decade, and beyond might look like.

How important is it for Bank of America to build a diverse and inclusive workforce?

It is very important to Bank of America. Taking a step back, first we look for talented people that are fundamentally passionate, life-long learners. To feed that passion for learning, Bank of America has an internal academy that provides teammates across the company with education and training to equip them with what they need in their roles now and to be prepared to adapt and successfully execute the roles of the future.

We are also dedicated to ensuring that our workforce reflects the communities we serve. By bringing together a wider array of perspectives, we are better equipped to meet the needs of our stakeholders, ultimately enhancing the value we provide as a company.

Will you highlight your efforts to promote programs for women and minorities in technology?

I am passionate about encouraging more women, minorities, and everyone to consider a career in technology because I believe it is never too early to learn about technology careers and never too late to adjust your career trajectory to technology. I am involved with organizations that engage with high school aged students, like Girls Who Code, to young adults, for instance Grace Hopper/AnitaB.org, and those already in the working world, such as the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), and so many others. SHPE is celebrating their 50th anniversary this year as the nation's largest organization committed to fostering Hispanic leadership in the STEM field. Their programming includes mentorship, scholarships, and career services for a wide scope of the Hispanic-Latino population. Additionally, they provide student-led college chapters across the country dedicated to cultivating the next generation of Hispanic-Latino STEM leadership. I am inspired by this organization that started five decades ago focused on engineering as they adapted to the changing career landscapes, and they continue to make a positive impact.

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

There is so much opportunity within the technology profession. Continuing to grow that community of female technologists is very

important across all industries. While great progress has been made, there is more opportunity for progress. The best way to increase representation within technology and STEM careers is by getting in front of the populations early and educating them about technology and allowing them to try their hand at coding, which is how I became interested in technology. Organizations like Girls Who Code do just that by bringing in role models to speak about their experiences and careers and personally inviting the students to consider the technology field.

You have spent much of your career at Bank of America. What has made the experience so special for you?

I've had the opportunity to work on great projects and with smart and collaborative teammates. I've always advised people to figure out what they are passionate about and to pursue it, which for me is technology, and in particular data. However, that is just one piece of the career navigating puzzle. Individuals need to interview the company they are considering joining as much as that company representative is interviewing them to identify if the company and its culture is a good match.

For me, Bank of America's culture reflects many of my personal values – integrity, hard work, and service to others. The fact that we deliver industry-leading products and services to our clients in a personalized manner, at scale, is remarkable. And we are able to do that because the bank is dedicated to innovation with an annual technology budget of more than \$12 billion with almost \$4 billion allocated toward new technology to ensure that we support our clients' current and future banking needs.

What advice do you offer to young people beginning their careers?

First, if you like or are curious about technology, consider pursuing it as a career. It is an interesting, ever evolving profession. But no matter what area you choose:

- Work hard, lean into opportunities and be a continuous learner.
- Know moving up isn't the only way to advance one's career. Sometimes a lateral move is the best move to gain further skills and experience to position you for your next career step up.
- Consider giving back and inspiring the next generation. I was encouraged to code as a young girl, and it means a lot to me to support programs dedicated to supporting women and minorities in technology and STEM. ●