

# INNOVATION THROUGH DIVERSITY

**Dava Baumann**, vice president of global marketing for **Rajant Corporation**, discusses kinetic wireless mesh networks, implications and uses of this technology, why diversity can help businesses innovate, and more.

**D**ava Baumann knows a thing or two about innovation – and explaining innovations to business customers and the general public. After all, she’s the vice president of global marketing for Rajant Corporation – a company which sells kinetic wireless mesh networks to clients around the world, including to telcos.

“Kinetic wireless mesh networks” may sound like a mouthful, but the technology – fully mobile private wireless networks – has quite a number of applications, particularly for the “Industrial Internet of Things” (IIoT) and telcos wanting to make sure their wireless networks don’t break down at all during signal handoffs. That, Baumann says, means applications can continue running no matter what.

“Kinetic mesh wireless technology is Rajant’s unique wireless networking technology which consists of wireless nodes – BreadCrumbs – and InstaMesh intelligent routing software,” she explains. “The technology is uniquely designed for environments and applications where the network and all the client devices, equipment and vehicles on that network are in a state of constant and change and motion. Kinetic mesh networks can support secure mobility, which is why they are so integral to industrial IIoT networks. IIoT networks require mission-critical reliability in order to collect and transmit voice, video and data reliably in real-time. This is what kinetic mesh networks bring to the table.”

Naturally, Baumann says there are quite a lot of implications of this technology for telcos. “There are a lot of misconceptions in the wireless industry, and many people tend to assume that all wireless is WiFi,” she says. “I have put a lot of

energy and focus in helping industrial markets understand when a WiFi network would be acceptable and when it is going to fall significantly short of meeting expectations – for example, when mobility and support for autonomous applications are high priorities.”

Baumann also has ideas how to encourage more women not only to go into tech careers, but to remain in tech careers – because, as study after study has shown, the more diverse a company is, the more money it usually makes. “Although I do believe there are growing numbers of women entering the tech arena, there needs to be more women advancing into senior and executive level positions within the industry,” she explains. “I believe more women need to go into sales and engineering positions because those positions offer upward mobility and often lead to executive positions down the road.

“Too often, women enter the technology industry in administrative, accounting and human resource positions which do not typically provide a concrete path for future growth. Management and others in position of hiring authority need to mentor and support women to enter into the tech field, and then help them explore opportunities of interest once they are in the field. Also, those

that are in media and public relations fields can do more to solicit feedback and conduct interviews with women in the tech field highlighting their inputs and contributions. Men tend to get the lion’s share of coverage in the media, but that may be directly tied to the fact that there are more men in the industry than women, and in more positions of authority and subject matter experts – so they are more likely to be contacted by media for their inputs.”

So what can businesses do to increase the diversity of their workforce? “Businesses need to ensure that their hiring and recruitment processes are helping to attract and retain both men and women, as well as employees that represent diverse cultures,” Baumann says.

And advice for young women thinking of a career in tech? “Young women, especially those in college and whom have an interest in going into technology, should make direct contact with technology companies, as many have active summer internship programmes available.”

Baumann adds that such internships are hugely beneficial to businesses, too – as it allows them to incubate the top telco talent of tomorrow. “Our company has set an excellent example of utilising undergrad and graduate school interns from academic institutions that support specific fields of excellence,” she explains.

“For example, we hired over a dozen students at Morehead State in Kentucky (in the US). Almost all of those early interns are now full time employees at Rajant, and several of them are young women.”

And with innovations like kinetic mesh networks, it would seem that diversity in the workforce is paying big dividends. ◻

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