



Paula Tompkins

Tech Company Founder, Entrepreneur, and Inventor

Paula built her company into an industry leader over 40 years and successfully exited to a strategic acquirer in March of 2023.

Paula Tompkins founded her company, The SoftAd Group in 1985, (rebranded ChannelNet in 2004) when women tech company founders were rare. She singlehandedly steered her **bootstrapped** company over 4 decades that included 4 major economic downturns. Ms. Tompkins is a driven leader, persistent, hard charging, an agent of change, and a survivor. She is skilled at spotting trends, quickly assessing problems and finding innovative solutions to ensure a company is on track to meet its goals.

Leadership Philosophy

Paula is a driven visionary leader, persistent, hard charging, focused, change agent and survivor. She is skilled at spotting trends, quickly assessing problems, and finding innovative solutions to ensure a company is on track to meet its goals.

Achievements and Milestones

Paula oversaw the company's creation of thousands of digital marketing, sales, and service solutions for large global enterprises on 6 continents, 36 countries, and 24 languages impacting hundreds of millions of B2B and B2C customers. She holds two U.S. patents.

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Industry Experience

Automotive, Financial Services, Retail, Medical Supplies and Equipment, Computer Hardware and Software, Package Goods, Transportation, Publishing, Home Improvement, Heavy Equipment, Telecommunication, Consumer Package Goods, Office Equipment, Manufacturing

Select Client Experience

JP Morgan Chase, Toyota, IBM, Hunter Douglas, Harley Davidson, John Deere, Siemens, Pepsi, Mercedes Benz, T. Rowe Price, Pacific Bell, Goodyear, Motorola, Steelcase, Abbott Laboratories, Ally, Saks Fifth Avenue, Knight-Ridder, Benjamin Moore

Innovation Milestones

- **1981:** Launched an early “luggable” personal computer, one of the world’s first portable computers.
- **1983:** Created Skytray, an interactive electronic marketing platform targeted to airline passengers.
- **1986:** Launched the first digital marketing campaigns in the world for BMW, General Motors, Chemical Bank, Chase Manhattan Bank and Ford Motor Company.
- **1993:** Launched the first enterprise-class, client server based, interactive selling software platform, SalesExcelerator, for manufacturing and publishing industries
- **1995:** Launched Ford.com and in subsequent years all Ford brands and divisions including the world’s first dealer websites for 5000 Ford dealers in the US, Mexico, Canada, and the Middle East.
- **1999:** Launched ChannelNet SiteBuilder – an internet based modular data driven personalization platform for global enterprises
- **2005:** Moved SiteBuilder platform to the cloud and adopted a SaaS model

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- **2006:** Launched the world's first data driven personal digital experiences online for BMW Financial Service
- **2007:** Initiated the company's cyber security practice
- **2010:** Received patent for modifiable sales and marketing software platform
- **2012:** Received patent for data driven software personalization technologies
- **2017:** Launched OneClick Loyalty – a customer engagement platform for automotive dealers
- **2018:** Launched OneClick Financial – a customer engagement platform for financial services

Commitment to Diversity and Mentorship

Paula has experienced the unique challenges women face in business her entire career from her first job on Wall Street to the owner and operator of a high-tech company. As the only woman in the room her experience includes numerous failed fund-raising efforts in the male dominated VC and PE community - to being informed in all male client meeting that a proposed digital transformation project would never be awarded to a woman owned company. In 2004 Paula obtained formal certification as a Women Business Enterprise (WBE), with the support and assistance of the supplier diversity team at Ford Motor Company. Paula is totally committed to mentoring and coaching women business owners and entrepreneurs to ensure they are prepared to tackle the same or similar challenges woman still face in business today.

Board of Director and Executive Advisory

Paula wants to provide her guidance and leverage her extensive experience by serving as a Board Member and Executive Advisor to high-tech VC and PE backed start-ups, bootstrapped companies, and turnarounds. Having survived and thrived as a Founder and CEO over 4 decades she brings real world experience to advise younger and less experienced high-tech CEO's on how to weather the storms and prepare for the future.

Paula brings to boards and executive advisory experience that organizations of all sizes struggle with today. She desires to put her learnings to work to drive positive change in the organizations with which she affiliates.

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Digital Transformation, AI Technologies, Cyber-security and PII, Data Science and Analytics, System Integrations, Lead Management, UX/UI, Omnichannel Go-To Market Strategies, Business Models – SaaS and Professional Services, The Cloud, Product Development, Packaging, and Pricing, Agile Methodologies and Practices, International Expansion, Market Growth and Contraction

Successful Board Appointments and Achievements

- Chairman SoftAd Investments, LLC
 - As the majority owner of SoftAd Investments, Paula directed corporate investments in companies and technologies
- Chairman and CEO SoftAd Group, LLC, dba ChannelNet
 - For 40 years Paula, along with the company's leadership team, oversaw all aspects of the company's activities including sales, marketing, development, quality, legal, financial, positioning and in market execution
- Member of Marshall University Foundation Board
 - Paula served on the Marshall Foundation Board for over 15 years. During that time, she was an outspoken member of the Board driving change including a complete rebranding of the Foundation
 - 2015 Paula was named to the university's College of Business Hall of Fame
 - Paula delivered the commencement address for Marshall University's 2015 graduating class
- Member of Yeager Scholars Board
 - Paula initiated an intern program to ensure that Yeager Scholar students got real world work experience before graduation
 - 2014, Marshall University's Yeager Leadership Institute presented Paula with the second annual William E. Willis Leadership Award for her exemplary leadership in three areas: learning, guidance, and honor

Professional Speaker

Paula is an active speaker on the topic of digital transformation. Speaking engagements include, Windows World, CUNA Marketing and Business Development Conference, Financial Brand Forum, NCUMA, Australian Automotive Dealer Association, CUlytics, to name a few. She has also authored countless white papers on this topic.

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Tompkins has lectured at Columbia University's School of Business, the University of California at Berkeley's Haas School of Business, Stanford University and Marshall University.

Featured in Online and Print Publication

Paula has been featured in numerous online and print publications including the American Banker, Automotive News, Auto Finance News, F&I Showroom, The Wall Street Journal, Fortune, Time, The Washington Post, Business Week, The New York Post, CIO, Advertising Age, Detroit News, Detroit Free Press, Crain's Business Detroit, J.D. Power and Associates, San Francisco Business Times, San Francisco Chronicle, and Esquire.

She has also been the focus of articles in numerous international periodicals, including La Tribune, Australian Ad News, ComputerSweden, Markedsføring, and Japanese Newsweek.

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