

Intel Names New CEO and New President

Written by Bob Snyder
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Intel names the successor to retiring Paul Otellini: the new CEO will be, as anticipated, former COO **Brian Krzanich**. After all the fuss, conservative Intel played it safe and chose from inside. And it chose an engineer. Otellini often took criticism for not having an engineering background while leading a company that depends heavily on its engineering-base.



Every Intel CEO since Andy Grove has first been COO so the real news is the surprising choice as President...**Renée James**.

James once served as a technical assistant to Andy Grove and she has led Intel software operations, including acquisitions of McAfee and Wind River Systems.

How did Renée James get the President's job at age 48? She was part of "a package deal." Krzanich and James pitched Intel's board as a team with a unified position on how Intel should shape its future.

It's a highly unusual move that makes James the first hire of the new CEO. Hired before Krzanich even got his job. Intel has much at stake on James and the new strategy.

"That is absolutely what won them the job," Andy Bryant, the Intel chairman and former financial director. "They delivered a strategy for Intel that is pretty dramatic."

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The board was convinced by a new strategy devised by the newly-appointed management-combo to take Intel chips into new devices. But boards of high tech conglomerates are not customers, are not Wall Street and are often not right.



Dramatic in Intel style is not real drama. Dramatic is when a Japanese company like Sony appoints its first *geijin* CEO. Intel's a very conservative company and this is only dramatic because it confirms Intel's need to confront a post-PC future.

Wall Street is unclear yet whether this business-as-usual will be what Intel needs as pressures build up. More and more consumers shift their spending from PCs to smaller mobile devices that use different chip designs.

"Only the paranoid survive," was the classic management advice from Andy Grove, Intel founder. Would ARM have been able to become a feared rival with Grove on watch? Intel apparently was not paranoid enough to see a threat from smartphones as a form factor.

The new strategy, according to Intel spokespeople, is to identify future product needs and quickly target those, rather than aiming at existing smartphones and tablets.

The horse is out of the barn and now Intel will wait outside the barn, waiting saddle-in-hand for other horses to come out. That doesn't sound like a race to some industry observers.

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Krzanich doesn't expect the "full strategy" to become visible until later this year, but he says it would help move Intel chips beyond computers and mobile devices into more novel fields, including wearable technology.

The strategy "went from the very low end of computing to the very top end of computing," notes Bryant.

It's to his credit that decades later we still compare any and every Intel CEO to Andy Grove. Most humans come up decidedly short.

For Krzanich to keep his new job, he doesn't have to be Grove but he'd better hope he can catch a new horse soon enough and that ARM and others don't saddle-up as well and ride faster and farther.

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