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# **WOMEN AT THE TOP IN TECH.**

## AN INTERVIEW WITH VP'S ALEXANDRA FORSCH AND SARAH BEESKOW, AWIN US GROUP

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*Our article discusses the benefits of female leadership in tech, which include outperforming competitors and greater workplace collaboration.*

**Following a phenomenal year of double-digit growth in the US, global affiliate marketing network, Awin recently announced the dual promotions of Alexandra Forsch and Sarah Beeskow Blay to VP roles in their North American divisions, Awin US and ShareASale. "These appointments," Awin CEO Mark Walters said, "send a strong signal of our combined focus on the North American market."**

**B**ut that isn't the only strong signal Awin is sending. In appointing two highly-qualified women for senior management positions, Awin is putting the tech industry on notice. We sat down with the two newly appointed VPs to hear their take on the perceived benefits of female leadership in a predominantly male-industry.

**Q: What does a business have to gain from elevating women into leadership positions?**

**Alex:** To not appear biased, I will point to research, which indicates that companies who diversify management teams foster a culture of growth and collaboration, innovate more, produce better products, and ultimately, improve their revenue outcome. In a broader sense, a 2015 MSCI research study reports that organizations with more women on their boards experience higher rates of return on equity, sales, and invested capital, while women-operated, venture-backed companies achieve 12% higher revenue than those operated predominantly by men. So, the bottom line is that a diversified work force can positively affect your bottom line.

**Q. How can employees benefit?**

**Sarah:** Ultimately, employees benefit from strong and supportive leadership regardless of gender, but it is interesting to review the 2015 Gallup study that revealed higher engagement among female bosses with their employees. They were reported more likely to talk with employees about their progress, and more likely to encourage professional growth than men in the same management positions. Another Pew Research study suggests that people are five times more likely to perceive women as better mentors than men. With an increasingly millennial-saturated workforce, fostering a sense of professional mentorship is very important and perhaps this plays well to women's natural strengths and inclinations.



Alexandra Forsch

**Q: Alex, as part of a larger tech ecosystem with 1000+ employees in 15 offices globally, has your experience been more challenging?**

**Alex:** I am fortunate to be part of this specific tech ecosystem, because the benefits of diversifying leadership positions have long been recognized and honored on a global level at Awin. Across 15 offices our 15 locations, 39% of senior level roles are occupied by women, which is an increase from an industry average that consistently appears to be well under 20% for senior and executive level positions.

In my seven-year tenure with Awin, it has always felt that leadership positions were offered to the best person creating equal opportunities for all. I think the mix of different views, skills and experiences is what make us so successful which is determined by many aspects irrespective of gender.

**Q: Sarah, have you seen any notable reaction to the change in leadership since you moved into a role that was formerly male-occupied?**

**Sarah:** No, the team has really embraced the change and continue to focus on driving the business forward. And I think that is a good barometer of how they are responding to a major shift in leadership, not to mention an acquisition. We are having our best year on record at ShareASale despite our CEO and GM having exited and 64% of our staff being in new roles or new to the company. is an accomplishment I am incredibly proud of and share with our amazing team. **[FF]**



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