

PERSONALITY PROFILE



Esther Dyson President, EDventure Holdings

Esther Dyson is known to almost everyone who understands the business of the Internet. She's the President of EDventures Holdings, an influential VC firm with investments in Russia and Eastern Europe. "In many ways Russia is another world," she says. "But experiences there can tell us a lot about how the fundamentals of the old economics keep working under different conditions—both in the strange world of Russia and the supposedly new-economics world of the Internet."

Dyson is at the top of a profession dominated by men, but feels that women have unique advantages in the Internet world. "The Net gives the underappreciated, underheard, underwhatever more access, so to that extent it helps women."

Dyson also has a distinct opinion about privacy on the Net. "Individuals will have to learn how to manage their data for themselves. But they will have to get used to the fact that what they say to friends will probably be archived somewhere. If you want to keep something private, don't tell anyone!"

Education: Harvard 1972, B.A. in economics. "I didn't study much in college, to be honest, but the analytical thinking I learned in economics has proved useful."

Current projects: President of EDventure Holdings; Interim Chairperson, Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers; Publisher of *Release 1.0*, Internet newsletter

How she got there: reporter for *Forbes* magazine, 1974-77; Securities analyst with New Court Securities (1977-80) and Oppenheimer (1980-82)

Recognition: Ranked 23rd in Russia's Who's Who in the Computer Market; one of *Fortune* magazine's "most powerful women in American business" (1998). •

For the complete interview with Esther Dyson, log on to steamtunnels.net and search for keyword "Esther Dyson."



Gina Smith CEO, NIC Corporation

When 36-year-old reporter Gina Smith was named CEO of the New Internet Computer Company (thinknic.com) earlier this year, jaws dropped and tongues wagged. NIC is Oracle CEO Larry Ellison's latest venture, another step in his dream to bring Internet access to the masses.

NIC is a cheap (\$199), "thin-application" computer. It doesn't store applications on a hard drive, it makes them available online. Thousands of NICs are being given away to promote the new company. If

it works, the NIC will join a flood of devices that people use to access the Internet—cell phones, PDAs, pagers.

Smith may never have run a company before, but she's one of the country's best known tech journalists. In 1991 she began a popular column in the *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle* called "Inside Silicon Valley." Her syndicated tech advice column, "Ask Gina," reached 10 million readers. She's done various radio shows on the ABC Radio network, and hosted the Discovery Channel's "Cyberlife."

College: Florida State, majored in Chemistry and English. "What was truly relevant from college was my work at FSU's daily paper, the *Florida Flambeau*."

About women in business: "Women are excellent communicators who collaborate well. That helps get things done more quickly. Speed is everything in the Internet business."

On being a writer turned CEO: "The advantage is the huge Rolodex. I know all the top dogs—and when I need to talk to them, I'm not afraid to call."

Internet future: "Anything requiring broadband will flourish. Live video. Online first-person action games, video conferencing, the beginnings of copying movies. What will fail? The PC-only approach to the Internet." •

For the complete interview with Gina Smith, go to steamtunnels.net and search for keywords "Gina Smith."



Jennifer Floren Founder/CEO, experience Inc.

You may owe your future job to Jennifer Floren. Her company, experience Inc., is an online and print resource aimed at graduating college students entering the job market. The company is one of the leaders in online student and alumni recruiting.

Floren is a role model for anyone wanting to skip "working for the man" and start up a business. Floren went straight from Dartmouth to Bain and Company, a top Boston consulting firm. She ditched the

corporate role quickly however, and soon founded Ivy Productions, an online and offline provider of job information for college students. She then merged with Crimson Partners to form a new company, experience.com, in 1996. With over 140 college subscribers and deep-pockets venture capital, experience.com plays a leading role in getting graduating students in touch with the best jobs.

College: Dartmouth College in 1993 with a B.A. in psychology: "I studied Organizational Behavior, and I use it every day. Study what you love; there's plenty of time for training later on."

The startup: Founder of Ivy Productions in 1996; launched experience network in

1996; currently CEO of merged experience.com. "I realized the need for credible, objective career advice."

Finances: Received \$20 million in second round VC financing from Polaris partners in August 2000. "Women stand out in the business world, and that's an advantage. But the VC world is male dominated, and a woman has to learn different rules."

Hiring students: "I look at what they want to do, not what they've done. I don't expect them to answer questions, but to know what to ask." •

For the complete interview with Jennifer Floren, go to steamtunnels.net and search for keywords "Jennifer Floren."