

TRANSFORMATIONAL WOMEN LEADERS OF THE YEAR

EXELEON MAGAZINE FEATURES
ANTONIA HOCK ON THE COVER OF ITS LATEST
ISSUE OF THE MOST TRANSFORMATIONAL
WOMEN LEADERS OF THE YEAR.



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CREATING THE FUTURE
OF EXPERIENCE

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WOMEN LEADERS
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Antonia

CREATING THE FUTURE OF EXPERIENCE

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FOUNDER OF ANTONIA J.A. HOCK
& ASSOCIATES, INC.

In this era

of fast-paced advancements and increasing complexities, the role of futurists and visionaries is to create a roadmap that drives innovation. The best and brightest companies tap these futurists to transform the way they go to market, and Antonia is leading this charge in the arena of Customer and Employee Experience. She has been heralded as a ground-breaking Luxury Futurist and credited with transforming the way companies serve customers and employees.

Transformation starts with leadership, and the qualities needed to lead now have changed dramatically. By nurturing relationships, articulating a compelling vision, and championing the growth of their team members, transformational leaders create an environment where extraordinary achievements are not just possible but inevitable.

Antonia Hock is an example of one such transformational leader who believes in the power of action.

A world-renowned expert in customer and employee experience, Antonia has held executive roles at major tech companies like Microsoft, HP, and Siemens. Leveraging her years of experience working in the corporate space, she began Antonia J.A. Hock & Associates, a global consulting firm

that delivers employee, customer, and luxury experience design for companies that want to win on experience in their market.

Antonia's focus on action enables her as well as her team to not only envision but also actualize a future where exceptional customer and employee experiences are the norm, not the exception.

Fittingly, Antonia Hock features on the Cover of Exeleon Magazine's 2023 Edition of The Most Transformational Women Leaders of the Year. We recently sat down with Antonia to discuss her firm, the lessons she learned along the way, and the power of innovation to transform.

Q. What does being transformational mean to you? How do you integrate the same thought into your leadership?

Transformation is about thinking ahead, looking around the corners, and not accepting the status quo just because it is the status quo. I am naturally curious, so I focus on asking questions that lead me to new ideas and exploring what would be possible if we thought freely and authentically. I believe that transformation must be rooted in action, so for me, being transformational is the intersection of bold ideas and execution that creates tangible



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results. I pull this through my leadership style by encouraging authenticity - which often gives people the permission to tap into their best ideas - and then understanding that testing ideas means that sometimes failure will happen, but that is part of driving innovation.

Q Talk to us about your growing up years. What is your earliest memory as a leader / entrepreneur that you can remember?

My early years were spent in Athens, Greece, and like many Greek families, the local market was a big part of our lives. During Greek Easter, the market always had baby chicks for sale, and, as an animal lover, I desperately wanted a baby chick. My parents were against having a chick in our apartment for obvious reasons, but my godmother delighted me by purchasing the biggest desire of my 6-year-old heart. I knew from the beginning that my new baby chicken and my other prized pet, a lizard, were going to be best friends. I fashioned little leashes from string, so I could walk them together on the pavement outside our building. My first lessons in leadership and life came from what happened on our walk. I was certain that we were going to have a beautiful family walk until my baby chicken grabbed my lizard by the tail, whacked him on the pavement a few times, and swallowed him whole. One friend just ate the other one. That day, I learned that things aren't always what they appear on the surface, everyone has their own agenda that might not be obvious, and just because you wish for the best team environment doesn't mean it will happen.

Q From working with some of the leading tech companies to starting a global consulting firm to being globally recognized as an expert in customer and employee experience, what has the journey

been like for Antonia Hock?

I would characterize this all as a journey of self-discovery. I am an "experience collector" by nature, and my time working across big technology companies, consulting firms, and multi-national hospitality firms taught me so much about process, capability, and taking calculated risk. This was all very valuable, but I was always thinking bigger, innovating in ways that made the establishment uncomfortable, and having to stop short of implementing the programs that I knew would have a big material impact. I decided finally that it was time to take my vision and ideas out to the market by founding my own firm, and I discovered that there were companies across the globe that are excited and ready to transform in innovative ways, rejecting the status-quo, and seeking new ways to lead their markets. Many have become my clients. I have never looked back.

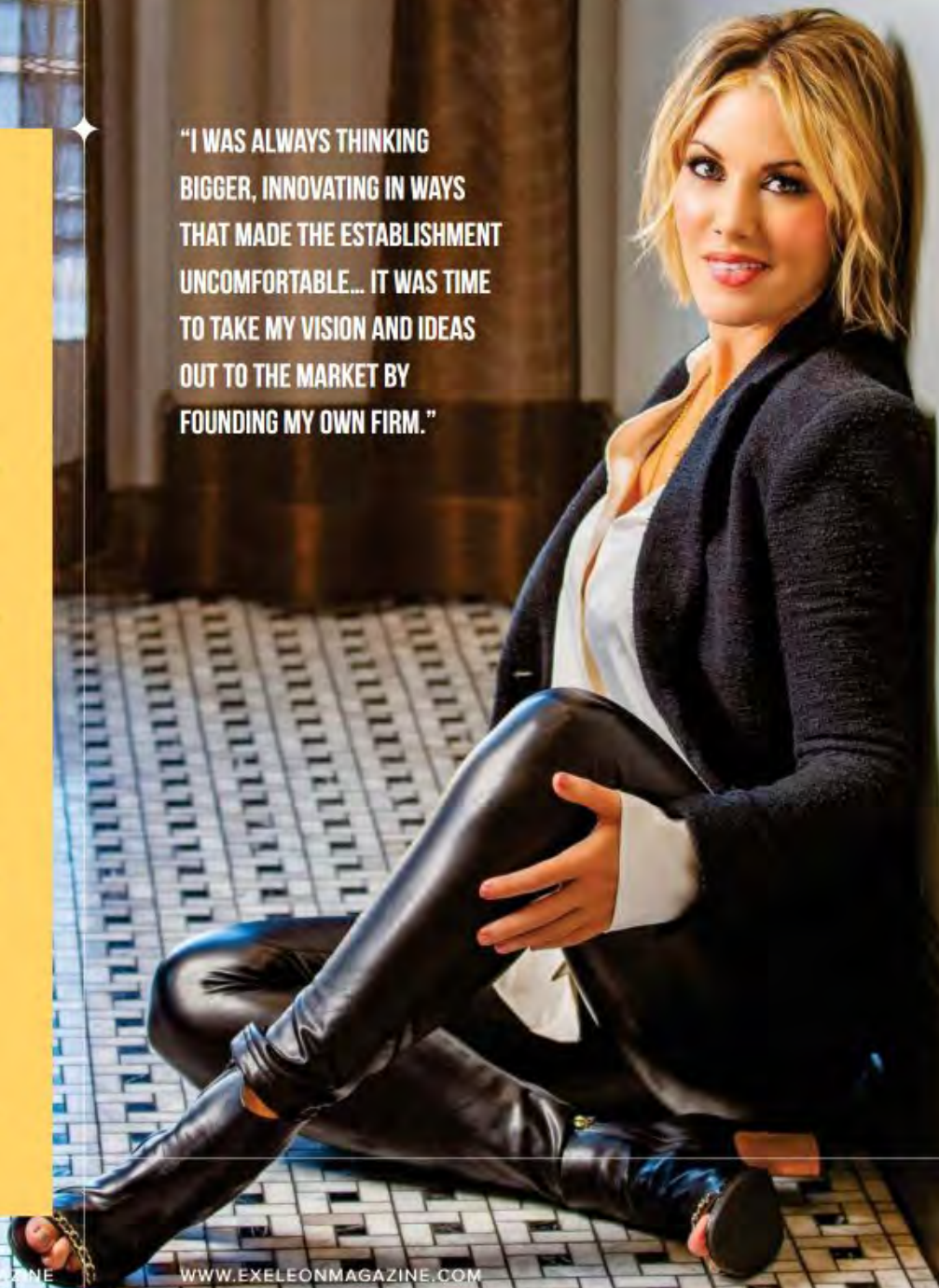
Q Looking back at this journey, what would you do differently if you were to start again?

I bought into the traditional career model for too long, and I waited too long to leave. As I reflect, I had too many advisors and mentors who were whispering in my ear that I had a great career and leaving corporate America to found my own business was too risky. I let their agendas influence my choices, until I decided one day that my passion, relentless drive, and vision deserved a chance to thrive.

Q As the CEO Antonia J.A. Hock & Associates, what role do you play in the day-to-day proceedings of the company? How do you ensure work-life balance?

I have an incredibly talented and trusted team that runs the day-to-day function of our firm,

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and I have always made hiring for culture, talent, and drive a core feature of growing our company. This global team gives me the latitude to spend time creating new intellectual property and working with our most strategic clients to design and implement transformational projects. I don't operate on a model of work/life balance. For me it is one big life, and everything is interconnected. For example, I take 2 hours most mornings to trail run in the desert, explore mountains, or rock climb, and during that time, I dream, create, and let my mind free-form design new concepts. I also take the occasional conference call, and my teams and clients know that we might be talking from 12,000 ft. That is part of living and working on a continuum.

Q. How do you balance or align strategies that target both customer experience and employee experience enhancement?

Everything starts with engaged employees and a strong culture of empowerment and trust. When employees know that their creativity, authenticity, and talent are valued and appreciated, that is reflected in the experiences that they design and deliver to customers. It is a virtuous cycle that allows innovation to thrive while ensuring that pride in execution and results are core to the business.

Q. How do you want Antonia J.A. Hock & Associates to be remembered in the consultancy arena? What are you most excited about in the coming years?

Our firm is on the cutting edge of innovating luxury, designing experiences, and creating exceptional environments where employees, leaders, and customers all feel valued and thrive. We want to stay at the tip of the spear in these disciplines, so that our clients are always ahead of the market. Our goal is to work alongside our clients to create their future by implementing strategies that are at the forefront of both art and the science of our practices. We are thought leaders and futurists that also understand how to implement practical, structured tactics that drive sustainable results. As we move forward, I am excited to bring our groundbreaking work on the future of customer experiences from our consulting clients out to more entrepreneurs and broader industry.

Photography - Marley Domeck

Exeleon Shorts

One Book Entrepreneurs must read - Faith, Hope, and Carnage from Nick Cave & Sean O'Hagan. The human condition is such a complex and powerful experience, and I believe in being inspired by authentic conversations.

One Productivity Tool / App that you use - TikTok is one of the most used apps on my phone. It's the number one search engine for GenZ for a reason, and I love the creativity, global accessibility, and insights. It's a controversial platform, but the sociologist, anthropologist, and technologist in me finds it fascinating on several levels.

One Quote that Motivates you the most - "You will never reach your destination if you stop and throw stones at every dog that barks." Winston Churchill

One Marketing Advice that you Follow - Be authentic. There is only one you.

One Experience that you're Grateful for - Being alone on the side of a mountain in a snowstorm at 14,000ft of altitude. The sense of fragility, being acutely alive, and empowered to use your own wisdom and knowledge for survival was a tremendous spiritual experience.



ANTONIA J.A. HOCK & ASSOCIATES



"WHEN EMPLOYEES KNOW THAT THEIR CREATIVITY, AUTHENTICITY, AND TALENT ARE VALUED AND APPRECIATED, THAT IS REFLECTED IN THE EXPERIENCES THAT THEY DESIGN AND DELIVER TO CUSTOMERS."