
Since its historic announcement by His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince and Chairman of the NEOM Company Board of Directors, in October 2017, NEOM is being built from the ground up as an accelerator of human progress. A new vision of what the future could be. The world's first cognitive region, where transformation is driven by world-class, applied technology and data-derived insights, in harmony with the environment and the needs of its population.

The work of Technology & Digital – NEOM's first sector to become a standalone subsidiary – has been vital to realizing this **new vision**. These last two words hold a special place in my heart and take on a particularly poignant meaning when I think about my own journey, leading up to being appointed CEO of NEOM Tech & Digital Company.

A native of Silicon Valley, I was born and raised a few miles from the iconic Apple garage in Los Altos. NEOM is indeed a long way from home, and even more importantly, from the built-in hierarchies and systemic inequalities that still pervade the Valley. Upon my arrival at NEOM, I recognized what could be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to move beyond 'diversity' and toward real inclusivity. For me, *this* was the promise of a new vision for the future. The ability to nurture freedom and flexibility, and bring it all to life in a way that you truly believe in.

In steering the strategic direction of what has often been referred to as the heart of NEOM, I have been passionate about seeking out the best talent and integrating them into roles where they can thrive. Free from any limits imposed by virtual or physical presence, we create our own, new realities. And rather than clutching outdated conceptions of 'industry best practices', we focus not merely on what we're producing, but *how* we're producing it. For me, that is where the magic is, and where the real story of NEOM Tech & Digital Company is told.

Together, we are building the world's leading portfolio of cognitive technologies. An ecosystem of predictive, personalized and autonomous solutions founded upon the principles of trust and transparency. A monumental leap beyond the concept of smart cities that revolutionizes the use and means of deriving data, to better understand and predict human behavior and enhance quality of life. And the core of that ambitious project is what I see as our biggest strength, and what drives us forward as an organization with a diverse, and more importantly, inclusive environment, that helps maximize our greatest asset – our people.

For context, the average percentage of female executive officers at top 150 Silicon Valley firms in 2020 was only 14.9%¹. By contrast, over 50% of the executive leadership at NEOM Tech & Digital Company are women. I have a fundamental belief in giving a voice to underrepresented groups and ensuring full participation. It is an example for others to follow – one that demonstrates the true power of equality.

The results speak for themselves. In less than 12 months, we have achieved a level of execution unlike anything I have witnessed throughout my three decades in the tech industry. We have signed a US\$ 200m joint venture with OneWeb to develop a constellation of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites that will help address the digital divide by providing rapid and reliable connectivity that will allow businesses and rural communities to not only access opportunity but also vital services such as education and healthcare. There is also our half-billion-dollar collaboration with digital infrastructure developer EzdiTek to build the region's first next-generation hyperscale data center at NEOM, which has already confirmed Oracle as its first tenant. We signed a Fortune 500

¹ <https://assets.fenwick.com/documents/Fenwick-Gender-Diversity-Survey-2020.pdf>

company, Oracle, as the first customer in our cloud park. We completed the initial deployment of Digital Air, have installed over 200 5G cell-sites and over 250 km of fiber connectivity and commercialized NEOM Connect with a fully operational telco park.

These milestones serve to power up our suite of cognitive software technologies and products at various stages of development – two of which we have just launched. XVRs is the world's first cognitive metaverse omni-platform where virtual reality truly merges with physical reality to create seamless immersive experiences that bridge both worlds. True to a vision of the future that will be defined not by megacities, but by cognitive meta cities, XVRs is a 3D augmented 'dynamic digital twin' platform envisioned to enable a groundbreaking 'mixed-reality' urban living model that allows users to live a 'digital daily life' in the metaverse. One of its most unique features is allowing users to portal between NEOM's own metaverse and other existing metaverses today, creating a consistent cross-metaverse customer experience, known as the multiverse, and de-risking/future-proofing investments in metaverses for users of the XVRs platform.

M3LD, meanwhile, is our innovative consent management platform, designed to restore trust in the data economy by placing ownership back in hands of users and even incentivizing them for the use of their personal data. The secret sauce behind a cognitive city is its ability to leverage 95% of the data produced to create proactive, predictive insights. Trust is fundamental to this success – without trust, we will not get access to citizens' and enterprise data, and without data, there is no value. Both XVRs and M3LD are part of a US\$ 1bn investment by NEOM Tech & Digital Company in AI-driven products and hyperconnected, autonomous solutions.

Everything we have achieved in record time is a testament to our commitment to inclusivity. And it's not just about doing the right thing; it's the profitable thing to do. A culture founded upon true diversity not only inspires talent, but sets a solid foundation that our new vision of the future can always find itself confidently rooted in.

Joseph Bradley - CEO NEOM Tech&Digital Company
<https://cognitive.neom.com/>