

Darren Pleasance

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Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA)

President and CEO January 2025 -

- Beginning in January, 2025, assumed the leadership role of AOPA, including AOPA, Inc., the AOPA Foundation, IAOPA (82 international AOPA affiliates) and related entities.
- AOPA works to protect the freedom to fly while providing a range of member services and education and safety programs to enhance the vitality of general aviation overall

CISCO SYSTEMS, INC. 2018 - 2024

Senior Vice President, Cisco Acceleration Center 2021 - Present

- Lead global team of ~3,000 people focused on building core capabilities to enable Cisco's future business model (software, recurring revenue, customer success)
- Oversee development of new transactional and licensing systems, public sector market access certifications, new hardware-as-a-service offerings, and all customer/partner/seller operations
- Report to the COO and work on behalf of the CEO and executive leadership team to drive cross org decision making and ensure accountability for achieving quarterly and annual commitments
- Executive sponsor of the U.S. Navy
- Frequent external speaker

Senior Vice President, Global Strategy, Planning and Operations 2018 - 2021

- Led global team responsible for shaping Cisco's overall go-to-market (GTM) strategy and driving ongoing performance improvements
- Responsible for all supporting functions including GTM Strategy, Compensation, Field Enablement, Customer Briefing Centers, Systems and Tools, and Business Operations
- Member of the Sales and Marketing senior leadership team

GOOGLE, INC. 2012 - 2018

Managing Director, Global Customer Acquisitions

- Responsible for acquiring all new advertisers into Google and supporting their first 6 months as a customer; team covers 40+ markets from 22 locations around the world
- Defined overall acquisition strategy to meet revenue growth goals (>30% / year), including mix of Googler and vendor sales models, and mix of outbound and inbound sales teams as well as driving offshoring and outsourcing strategy
- Worked closely with Marketing and Engineering to drive awareness and source leads, while leveraging technology to drive steady productivity increases across all channels
- Spoke regularly at industry events on topics of Innovation, Digital Marketing, and Technology Trends

- Exceeded revenue goals in 20 of the 23 Quarters in the role while maintaining a growth rate >5ppts above the core ads business
- Total revenue responsibility of ~\$12B+ / year, with team of ~550 Googlers and ~1000 vendor reps

MCKINSEY & CO. 1998 - 2012

Partner; High Tech Sector, Sales and Marketing Practice

- Core leader in McKinsey's High Tech sector, with a focus on West-Coast high-tech clients as well as leading tech and telecom companies in Europe and Northern Asia
- Core leader in the Marketing and Sales Practice with focus on go-to-market strategy, sales operations and marketing ROI; developed deep expertise in 3rd party channel sales and inside sales
- Founded McKinsey's Small and Medium Business (SMB) practice, in which I worked with large companies to develop strategies for effectively serving the SMB segment
- Led McKinsey's work in 2011 for the White House to develop a plan for improving the small business contributions to U.S. job growth
- Regular faculty member in most of McKinsey leadership development programs

ARTHUR D. LITTLE 1995 - 1998

Engagement Manager; Customer Management Practice

- One of the founding members of ADL's Customer Management Practice; joined as an Associate directly out of business school
- Helped to build the practice with a focus on Customer Loyalty and Customer Lifecycle Management
- Worked across a broad range of industries including banking, utilities, chemicals, credit cards, healthcare, and industrial control systems

NANCO ENTERPRISES 1991 - 1995

Associate; Private Equity

- Supported the Managing Director and CFO in buy and sell-side deals
- Responsible for valuation modeling, contract reviews, and due diligence
- Oversaw commercial real estate portfolio, responsible for lease negotiations and property financing and maintenance
- Began this job as the corporate pilot flying the company's private jets, but quickly transitioned into Associate role over the ~4.5 years, finishing with ~20% pilot responsibilities and ~80% business responsibilities

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA JET. 1989 - 1991

President; Corporate Jet Management

- Joined the founder to help grow and operate this aircraft management business
- Served as aircraft captain as well as overseeing flight operations for Cessna Citation and Cessna Conquest II
- Responsible for client management, aircraft maintenance, and aircraft financing

FLIGHT SAFETY ALASKA 1988

Charter Pilot

- Worked as a Part 135 charter pilot flying a mix of aircraft through the state of Alaska
- Supported contracts with the Bureau of Land Management, Alascom, ARCO and others
- Flew a myriad of aircraft including C185, PA-18 (Super Cub), Piper Seneca, Cessna 402 and Dehavilland Beaver

ATLO CORPORATION 1988

- Contract pilot for John Travolta in Santa Barbara, CA
- Served as SIC on Hawker HS125, primarily for cross-country red-eye flights to NYC

MERCURY AIR CENTER 1984 - 1988

Flight Instructor / Charter Pilot

- Worked as Certified Flight Instructor (CFIIME) and Part 135 multi-engine charter pilot while going to college
- Provided tailwheel transition training, aerobatic training, instrument and multi-engine training as well as primary flight instruction
- Earned ATP certificate at 22 years old; it became valid upon turning the minimum age of 23

OTHER EXPERIENCE

- **AUTHOR - TRUE NORTH: A HANDBOOK FOR INSPIRED LIVING:** Wrote and published this Amazon best-selling book which shares learnings from multiple individuals from all walks of life who have navigated their lives to ones of inspiration and fulfillment
- **EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION 2010 - Present:** Board member for this non-profit, aviation association with >200,000 members and responsible for hosting the world's largest aviation event annually (AirVenture) in Oshkosh, Wisconsin; asked by the organization's CEO, Tom Poberezny, to join the Board to lend my experience in business, aviation, and membership organizations to help strengthen the organization
- **HILLER AVIATION MUSEUM 2011 - 2016:** Board member and frequent speaker at this Bay Area-based aviation museum
- **WESTERN REGIONAL FAA LIAISON: 2005 - 2020:** Designated point person for the Federal Aviation Administration to help individuals and organizations looking to shape airspace regulations; obtained this role after several years of working directly with the FAA on airspace and environmental topics across the Western U.S. in my role as President of the Northern California Aerobatic Club.
- **EXTERNAL SPEAKER: 2008 - Present:** Regular speaker to large audiences on a variety of topics including Innovation, Technology Trends, Small and Medium Business, and Building an Inspired Life
- **INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB (IAC) 2005-2010:** Board member for the national IAC organization, a division of the EAA. Board position was offered to me after successfully serving as President of the Northern California Aerobatic Club and growing it to become the largest IAC Chapter in the U.S.

EDUCATION

- **MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION UCLA: 1995** Graduated with honors from the Anderson School at UCLA; focus in finance and marketing
- **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING UCSB : 1987** Graduated with honors from the University of California, Santa Barbara with a BSME; worked summers with Sandia National Laboratory as well as in the UCSB Materials and Robotics labs. NOTE: I also completed ~50% of my Masters in Robotics and Material Science in 1988 but then left to pursue my dream of being an Alaska Bush Pilot; that led to multiple decades of inspiring aviation adventures - no regrets :-)

INTERESTS

- Flying, Skiing, Scuba Diving, Heavy Farm Equipment (there's a story here...)