

JOURNAL PROFILE:

Brenda Hall, founder and chief executive of Bridge360.

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CEO
Bridge360 Inc.



A rolling suitcase fittingly sits next to the office desk of Brenda Hall, CEO of Bridge360 Inc. Hall travels a lot, but the suitcase isn't for clothes — it's just for her electronic devices such as laptops, an iPad and electronic book readers. A voracious and enthusiastic reader, she owns three Kindles and an iPad to help feed her addiction.

Hall, a native New Yorker who started as an assistant stenographer for IBM Corp., founded Bridge360 in 2001. She sold her classic car collection of 1966 and 1967 Dodge Chargers to start a business that develops custom software for other companies. A photo of one of the cars remains in Hall's office.

The name of the company represents a metaphor for how it deals with customers, she said.

"We were thinking about bridges and spanning the globe," Hall said. "We didn't want it to be one way. It's a two-way bridge for us to do business with them and them to do business with us."

Before becoming an entrepreneur, she worked at several technology companies, including Compaq Computer, Cirrus Logic Inc. and BMC Software Inc., where Hall was globalization manager.

She's also secretary and treasurer to the U.S. District Export Council National Steering Committee and chairwoman of the NSC Technology & Communication Committee.

In her down time, she simply likes to read magazines and books of nearly every variety — except romance novels. Her favorite genre is crime.

"They're solving a problem and getting the bad guys," she said. "It's probably the old effect of good over evil" I enjoy.

What was the last book you read?

I'm reading "22 Britannia Road." It's about the survivors of Poland when Germans take over England.

What was the last movie you saw?

I just saw "Pirates of the Caribbean." I love Johnny Depp.

Growing up, what did you want to be?

I wanted to be a secretary. That sounds so bizarre. I think I liked the old movies with PBX operators answering the phone. I always enjoyed organizing things.

What's the hardest part about starting a

company?

Anybody can [start a company]. The hard part is learning what you don't know and to keep going. The hardest part is to build it.

What was your first job?

I was a stenographer trainee at IBM.

Where is your favorite place to eat?

I'm a Four Seasons Trio person. I really, really appreciate the quality of food and service there.

What's your favorite guilty pleasure?

It has to be a glass of wine in the evening.

Which words best describe you?

Impatient and fast. I still move here at a New York pace.

What makes you happy?

Getting up every day makes me

happy. At my age, it's a gift.

Where is your favorite place to get away?

The beaches — Cocoa Beach, Florida.

What's the first thing you do in the morning?

I'm married to a wonderful man who makes the coffee. I trudge down the hall to the kitchen and he gives me a cup of coffee. I feel like a princess.

What was your first car?

A 1962 Plymouth Valiant with white and red interior. I had to share it with my brother.

If you could have any celebrity for a next-door neighbor, who would it be?

Katherine Hepburn. I just love her Yankee spirit, her can-do attitude.

■ Interview by Christopher Calnan

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Brenda Hall is an effective leader who has continually built her leadership abilities on a foundation of humble beginnings near the Bronx, and skills and values she learned as a young professional at IBM. She has grown to be a successful business owner who continues to coach women and support issues important to women. Now, her reach and influence is worldwide."

Earl Maxwell
CEO
St. David's Foundation



Brenda is one of the most incredibly savvy, successful, international business women in Austin. She is as intent on the success of others in the community as she is on her own, and an inspiration to me personally to maintain the highest standards of personal and professional integrity.

Carolyn Purcell
Cisco Systems Inc.

