

Executive Inc.: Londoner Morag Lucey brings tech, marketing experience to Televerde (Video)



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Morag Lucey is the CEO of Televerde

JIM POULIN | PHOENIX BUSINESS JOURNAL



By [Hayley Ringle](#) – Reporter, Phoenix Business Journal
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Growing up outside London with Scottish parents, [Morag Lucey](#) wanted to be a fashion designer. Then she learned there's not much money in designing clothes, unless you're "top of the top," and discovered that designers don't actually get free clothes.

Instead, Lucey's first job was an exhibitor, or what Londoners call a "demonstrator," at a conference. That's how she got involved in technology.

"Computers were new. It was a fun time before everybody had computers," Lucey said.

Although she didn't earn a college degree, Lucey moved up the ranks with various technology companies as a consultant, product manager, product marketer and strategic marketer.

She started her career as a product marketing manager at MicroPro and a marketing manager at Microsoft Corp. (Nasdaq: MSFT), before serving as a chief marketing officer at Avaya and BAE Systems. She also served as CEO for VirtualCMO Ltd. in Seattle and ran her own publishing company for 16 years.

Lucey joined Televerde in January as the company's first female CEO, replacing [Jim Hooker](#), who is retiring after leading the business for the past 24 years. She is moving from Seattle after recently buying a home in Carefree.

Phoenix-based Televerde uses women trained in correctional facilities as call center employees for Televerde customers, ranging from technology companies to manufacturers and health care businesses.

What brought you to the U.S.? I had visited before with family on the East Coast and for business. I moved to San Francisco in 1986 after getting an opportunity to work as the marketing manager at Microsoft in Seattle. I had planned to move back to London but I had many new opportunities here and then met my husband in San Francisco. Then we had two kids. I love the U.S. Everyone is so open and engaging here. Everyone is so standoffish in England.

What did you learn from starting your own publishing company? I learned everything about running a company, operations and inventory as the managing director of Affinity Publishing. At first we published catalogs of third-party vendors that went into the boxes of software applications. Then, when that moved online, we moved into more of a pure publishing and advertising company. Affinity sold to Pennwell Publishing in 2000 for over \$1 million.

What did you like about working in marketing? I liked the strategy of marketing. It's all about how we're selling. It's the essence of business. With my product management background, that became more of my focus in marketing and branding. My passion is still the strategic side of marketing.

How did you hear of Televerde? Avaya became a customer of Televerde in 2017. I came to Arizona to play golf and get some sunshine. The Televerde cause was so compelling. After taking a year off because of a non-compete clause I met up with Hooker. He needed a successor.

What are your plans as the new leader of Televerde? There is so much opportunity to grow the company. Within 10 years, my goal is to help 10,000 disadvantaged people. So far we've helped 3,000. I also want to move beyond incarcerated women to help other disadvantaged groups, like migrants, Native Americans and African Americans. Although our goal is to do this by 2028, I want to do it sooner. Ever since I was a kid raising money for the elderly I always wanted to help people in need.



Morag Lucey

Title: CEO

Company: Televerde

Age: 58

Family: Husband Mike Kirby, managing director of Telefonix Voice & Data; Daughter, Rebecca, 31; and son, Carl, 27.

Two cats: Cleo and Squeak

On your bucket list: Walk the Great Wall of China, climb K2 and have a gold handicap of single digits in golf.

Three things always in your refrigerator: Yogurt, hummus and grapefruit

Favorite band: Coldplay

Hobbies: Mountain climbing, biking, golfing, sailing and hiking.