In the IT world, what place do we reserve for women?

JÉROMINE MIETTE – CHO AT ARCAD SOFTWARE

The usual cliché of the computer developer is a rather young man, a bit of a geek at heart and wearing the proverbial hoodie... And yet, women were pioneers in this sector in the 1950s. In the early days of computer design, many programmers were actually women, and at that time women made up almost half the workforce.

For the past five years, numerous articles and reports have warned of the lack of interest among female students in the IT sector (less than 10%). But above all, contrary to the 1950s, this world has become predominantly male, since women now represent only 18% of the workforce according to the DESI 2020 report.

As the CHO of ARCAD Software (a French IT company that will soon be celebrating its 30th anniversary!), I was struck by these figures, which did not correspond to my daily life, as I am surrounded by many female IT professionals! I decided to carry out my own investigation, interviewing my colleagues to find out their motivations and their career paths!

To put this in context, ARCAD Software is a software vendor that specializes in application lifecycle management in all business and technology sectors, both open and legacy.

Today, it is the only vendor on the market to combine application modernization and DevOps through a fully integrated product line developed in-house.

ARCAD Software is a modern, innovative company that likes to be ahead of the curve in everything it does. In terms of HR, we are also ahead of the curve, since contrary to the DESI report, we are fortunate to have a good mix of men and women in our team. In fact, 33% of our IT staff are women! Even 40% of our Research and Development department are women.

Magali, a Software Engineer in the company, can testify to this:

"Since I have been at Arcad (almost 15 years!) there have always been women in R&D. And the trend has become even more pronounced recently .... For the better! The company considers that the plurality and diversity of profiles is an asset and parity is not a concept for us but a natural reality. As I write these lines, there are 4 men and 4 women in the R&D open space! And the ratio is the same for people working remotely.
Moreover, our R&D has always allowed us to organise ourselves with great flexibility and autonomy, in a relationship based on mutual trust. And this is a real asset in the organisation of personal and professional life. In this respect, I find Arcad to be a resolutely modern company."

Magali - Software Engineer

"After my engineering studies in Computer Networks and Telecommunications, I worked for a telecoms company. Data was omnipresent in my daily life, hence my desire to learn more... I then went to a school in Paris to do an MBA in Big Data where I learned about the data business with a marketing and sales perspective.

Today I am a consultant at ARCAD Software, working on the implementation of the "DOT-Anonymizer" data anonymisation product for several clients in different sectors (insurance, retail, health, etc.) but also of different nationalities.

My days are never the same. This variety of missions allows me to work on different technical environments, very varied data, ways of doing things that change from one company to another.

I find that working in the IT field allows me to evolve and learn every day both professionally and personally.

Asma - Consultant

Magali is right to point this out! ARCAD Software has had women on its team for many years. Our R&D Director, Marc Dallas, has a lot to be proud of. I believe it's also thanks to him because he has always paid particular attention to gender diversity in his team. Often in the minority in other companies, I noticed that new employees were often surprised when they arrived to see so many women in the team.

Asma, Expert Consultant on the DOT product, arrived in May 2021:

Bouchra, Technical Editor, arrived in July 2021:

"As a young technical writer, I noticed that the majority of professionals in France were women, yet they work in predominantly male environments; the IT sector is a good example. In my previous professional experience, all the developers, without exception, were men. Parity in IT is still a long way off for many companies and computer science studies are unfortunately not the most popular with women.

However, at ARCAD, a good proportion of the R&D staff are women, passionate and each an expert in their field."

Bouchra - Technical Editor

Like Bouchra, when I joined Arcad Software in 2015, I was impressed by these fulfilled, invested women who are specialists in their field and passionate about what they do. It is also very rewarding for me and the other employees outside of the IT department to be in such good company. They set an example by perfectly representing the company's values: Passion, Ambition, Audacity, Agility, Optimism and Diversity. In fact, in addition to the diversity of men and women, the company is also culturally diverse, with more than 16 nationalities, particularly among the women in the IT team.

Nayane, Software Engineer, Brazilian nationality:

Monica, Expert Consultant for Arcad products, Romanian nationality:

"Unfortunately, the IT field is still a very male domain. I saw this at my University and also in my last professional experiences. When I joined the Arcad Software R&D team in September 2021, I saw that this cliché was not present in the company. The team is predominantly made up of women and that is incredible! The potential of women in IT is huge, needs to be exploited and I'm glad that Arcad is aware of this and is contributing to the deconstruction of gender stereotypes."
Nayane - Software Engineer

"Girls of my generation were often told to behave and keep quiet and told not to be disruptive or react. The result is that as adults we sometimes find ourselves unable to muster the confidence to express our ideas. I graduated in computer science at high school. There were 26 boys and 5 girls in my class. I encourage girls to choose to continue in this path, as it is an environment where you can improve and grow. Arcad is the kind of place where you are encouraged to express youtself and know that you will always be heard."
Monica - Consultant

ARCAD Software is also not afraid to entrust positions of responsibility to young women. For example, Aude Barbe who was recently promoted to Proximity Manager R&D:

"I chose so-called male environments quite early on in my studies. As early as the first year of secondary school, when I went to the SI option: 31 students, 29 boys! It was always my mother who suggested this type of course of study to me, even computer science was her idea. And what a good idea!
Prejudices are hard to overcome and I met people who were more or less kind to me. In my previous experiences, I was always encouraged to go for less technical jobs, without taking into account what I really wanted to do.
I finally found an open and welcoming team at Arcad where it is obvious to everyone that women have their place in the IT world.
Aude - Proximity Manager R&D

ARCAD Software is aware that it has a team of women with real potential and added value to help the company grow. In their own way, each of them plays an important role and is part of the ARCAD DNA.

They are Managers, Developers, Consultants or Technical Writers, and they testified about their life within ARCAD Software by sharing their different experiences.

I wanted to highlight the profile and career path of each of these "Arcadian" women. I hope that these various testimonies show the younger generation that there are French IT companies with an international outlook that have expert women on their staff who are fulfilled in their work and in the world of IT. I also invite all these young female students to believe in themselves and to continue along this path.

Thanks to @Magali, @Asma, @Bouchra, @Nayane, @Monica and @Aude for taking the time to testify and participate in this project.

#ExpectITForArcad
#WomenArcad
#MentorArcad
#NewGenerationIT

If you would like to join us, do not hesitate to consult our offers.

Jéromine MIETTE
CHO at ARCAD Software

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