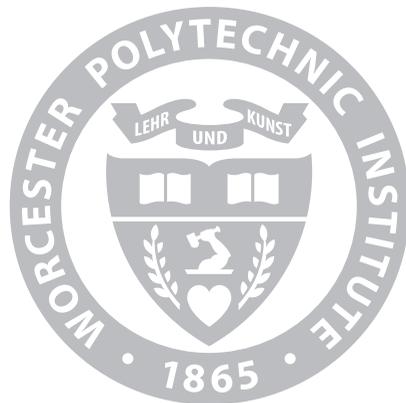



I WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
INNOVATOR
OF THE YEAR

Mark F. O'Neil '80



Innovation starts with thinking outside the box—looking beyond the boundaries of conventional frameworks, patterns, beliefs, and values—and ends with a new product, process, service, or business model that changes the game.

Mark O'Neil, chairman of the board, president, and chief executive officer of Dealertrack Technologies, has changed the game in the automotive retailing industry.

The seeds of innovation were planted early. Growing up, his family followed his father on executive assignments around the world. Mark, who always seemed to be part of a minority group wherever he lived, learned early on to appreciate cultural and geographic differences, and to find the positive in new situations. He learned to be flexible and to adapt, qualities that have served him well as an entrepreneur.

When Mark came to WPI he lived in the same place for four consecutive years for the first time in his life, and he added teamwork, the ability to meet deadlines, problem solving, an appreciation of applied learning, and a depth of knowledge in management engineering to his growing skill set. Several companies recognized Mark's talent and offered him positions when he graduated from WPI. He began his career at Intel Corporation, and subsequently worked for McKinsey & Co. before moving to the automotive industry in the late 1980s. He served as president of Ertley MotorWorld, based in Pennsylvania; from this traditional retail dealer group, he went on to co-found and lead the development and rollout of CarMax, a publicly held retailer of used automobiles.

Through his experience with CarMax, Mark saw a way to change the game: to make auto financing an efficient and seamless process for the dealer and consumer. With Mark's vision and leadership, Dealertrack built a network that today connects approximately 94 percent of all new car franchise dealers in the United States to more than 1,400 lenders across the country.

Mark, like any great entrepreneur, sees beyond the horizon to what comes next. Dealertrack now offers software that helps dealerships run more efficiently—handling accounting and payroll, repair orders and parts inventory, and stocking and pricing of auto inventory. By tracing consumer behavior, Dealertrack is helping the auto retailing industry become data driven, giving dealerships the ability to predict what will sell in the future and stock accordingly.

But, Mark isn't finished yet. His vision is to transform the auto retail industry by enabling the purchase of a vehicle via a seamless, click-to-buy transaction that takes place in a matter of minutes, all online.

In his own words, innovation "is about creativity," it's about "the opportunity to shape, to put your thumbprint on something to make a difference, to make something better." His tireless work ethic, drive and ambition, and his singular focus on vastly improving auto retailing have benefitted the industry, consumers, and our global economy.

The entire WPI community is proud to honor Mark O'Neil as the 2014 WPI Innovator of the Year. We thank him for having the creativity, drive, and focus to make a difference in the world.

Vice Provost for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

President, WPI

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