

Ellie Byrd, CEO, MachPoint International

"Taking the complex and making it simple" is a philosophy Ellie Byrd, president and CEO of MachPoint International, has practiced since age 12, when she began teaching piano. Today, instead of facilitating learning through music, she does so through technology.

MachPoint International, founded by Byrd in 1983 as Computer Education and Design, develops customized training solutions, including web-based training, for Fortune 1,000 companies, government agencies and universities. Speed and focus, the two words from which MachPoint gets its name, typify the company's approach of rapidly assessing each client's situation and delivering laser-focused training solutions.

Byrd, whose leadership style "is all about communication," attributes her company's success to its people and to its dedication to customer service, both of which she is personally vested in. "We're completely dedicated to quality," she says. "It sounds like a canned statement, but it's much more than that for us. Many of our customers have been with us for more than 10 years...their loyalty speaks to our commitment to customer service."

While software training continues to comprise the largest portion of MachPoint's business, Byrd is excited about expanding its leadership training and consulting services. Beyond this growth, however, Byrd is quite happy with the company's size and adds, "I don't want to lose that personal touch. I know everybody in my company personally and I like that."

Since joining the Young Entrepreneurs Organization in 1995, when privately held MachPoint International hit the \$1 million mark in revenues, she has held several leadership positions for YEO and for its sister organization, the World Entrepreneurs' Organization. Her experience in Forum, a group of eight to 12 entrepreneurs who meet monthly to share challenges and issues, has been one of her richest. "I respect every person in my forum 100 percent. I listen to them and love learning from them." — Rachel Franco

