

Affinity Insurance: Turning risk into brand value

What it takes to be successful as a woman in the insurance industry in Latin America and Caribbean

Interview with Luciana Amano, Marsh Affinity Leader – Latin America and Caribbean

Julia: Hello everyone and welcome to the Marsh International Affinity podcast. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Julia Falekkos and I work within Marsh's international affinity team based in London. This is Marsh's Affinity Insurance: Turning Risk into Brand Value podcast. So in today's episode, we're going to be looking into the topic of females within the financial services industry. So the finance sector is, of course, heavily male dominated. A report by Deloitte shows that the proportion of women in leadership roles within financial services firms was at 24% by the end of 2021. However, this is expected to grow to 28% by 2030. So we are heading in the right direction. We thought it would be interesting to catch up with some of our female leaders within Marsh Affinity to discuss their career paths and their professional experiences. Thank you for listening and we hope you find the interviews interesting.

Gabby: Hi, my name is Gabrielle Hopkins and I am a marketing analyst and project manager within the International Affinity team. Joining me today is Luciano Amano who is the affinity leader Latin America. Thank you so much for joining us on the podcast today.

Luciana: My pleasure, Gabby. Thanks for having me and inviting me to speak with the team.

Gabby: Without further ado, let's jump into the questions. First question, could you please provide us with an overview on your career path?

Luciana: Sure. Thanks, Gabby. Well, I have a different background from most people in the industry. I am very jealous when I hear "I have my 30 years, 25 years in the insurance industry", I actually have a different background. I come from the financial services from the payments industry. I spent 11 years in American Express - starting from financial planning and then going to products and managing the loyalty program of American Express. I happened to move to London for three years, but I had two roles. One was in the regional team in Europe and one global role which I found quite interesting as well. But personally, after 11 years in the career, it was time to go back to Brazil. So I decided to move back but American Express in Brazil was very small, so then I moved to MasterCard and I spent eight years from marketing to products. I had my two kids actually in this in this moment at master card. And then I received the opportunity to join March 3 year and a half years ago, which was quite interesting. It's a story that I always like to tell because when I got the offer to join Marsh. I was lucky to receive additional offers on the same time from other financials for other companies that were very similar from like direct competitions from master card. And when I was asking my male friends, what should I do and my female friends, what should I do? I found their answers completely different. So all my male friends were saying go for it change industry to something different, stretch yourself. And my female friends were saying no, stay in your comfort zone. You know, either, continue where you are, by the way or do a smoother transition to a new company in the same industry? I'm lucky that I heard my male

friends that time. And I'm here at Marsh, completely happy. Leading affinity for Latin America in the last 3 1/2 years.

Gabby: That's amazing, and it definitely sounds like you've had such a diverse career and I'm glad taking that risk has paid off. Moving on to the next question, what's the biggest achievement you've had in your working career so far?

Luciana: When asked we usually will put achievements related to deliverables, to goals, to targets right? So I think I can of course in this more than 20 years in my career I have a lot of things that I'm proud of, you know changing value proposition of credit cards based on consumer insights. Or signing deals globally. When I was leading, you know, part global partnerships in AMEX back in London, in my London years. But I think what I'm most proud of, and it's something more recently as well, because I think we are, we start changing what you value the most when you're getting to my age as well, that is about forming and putting together a team. I think I was very lucky to join the moment in affinity as well that we were, you know, forming this team. I think everyone, most of the people who are hearing this podcast probably has joined March in their last two years or so. So you were part of this transformation, right? And I had and I had this opportunity not only to bring the picture and the people together in Latin America, they are doing a great job, but also forming this new regional team and you know, hiring people very fast, very diverse backgrounds and one year that we have been on this journey. I'm very proud of everything we are doing together as a team, you know? And so it's about recognizing the skill sets from everyone. It's about, you know, connecting people. It's about creating this trust and this vision, common vision among each other. That I think it's extremely powerful sometimes we underestimate, not the power of people 'cause, I think. Of course. You know, this has been raised. And of course it's very important. The colleagues piecing at Marsh is something that is completely parable but just as a personal achievement, I think it's also something that I'm proud to be part of, which is something that is not just leading but be part of this transformation we are all being part of Affinity so I think that's something I'm very proud of.

Gabby: That is a really amazing achievement and I can definitely vouch and say that the LAC Affinity team are really great and I've had the pleasure of working with some of you guys. So -

Luciana: We are very fun, right, Gabby, I always like to touch on that because this is something that I love when I saw Phil's goals this year, pages and pages of you know things that we need to deliver. You know he's always stretching ourselves. But in the last sentence he said and have fun and enjoy doing it. And I think we do that every day at Marsh. So let's keep doing that 'cause that's what we like the most as well.

Gabby: Definitely. Moving on to the third question, what advice would you give to your younger self?

Luciana: Wow. To my younger self keep doing what you're doing, you know, enjoy the path. 'cause, I think I wasn't that really concerned. I never liked that "Where do you wanna be in five years, where'd you wanna be in 10 years" and I'm completely in the same mood and I think I'm even more now about that. So I think the advice would be more, so believe in yourself and keep moving. You know, I think, uh, it's about it's not never about the big risks, it's about the small risks, it's the things that you need to do every day to succeed. It's always to be proactive, to stand up, and to raise your hand. I think I would say raise your hand

more, you know, never shut down. Speak up. So I think it's about. This is small moments and you know every day taking that small risk and being raised.

Gabby: *So taking small risks and raising your hands, I will definitely take that on board. And then finally as a female leader in the financial services industry, what kinds of challenges or obstacles have you faced and how have you overcome these?*

Luciana: *So thanks Gab, I think I was very lucky to work in amazing hold companies, right. If you look at my background, American Express, MasterCard, Marsh, three big multinationals with high standards, companies that are very strong in diversity and inclusion. So I know my reference is not the normal reference that we see in the market, but I think for me, so being lucky first of all right, as I am actually. I think it's about my internal fears you know and the way that I'm too perfectionist and I think females are usually very perfectionist you know. So I think it's about letting it go, you know, and believe in yourself. So I think the first, the first thing is about that. Trust. Trust more in yourself, believe more in yourself. Don't bother about everyone else's opinion. You know, I think sometimes female we are so concerned about, you know, getting along and getting together and being a person that everybody likes. You know, and I think if you're doing the right thing for the right reasons. Sometimes you can have disagreements, but at the end of the day, it's not about you. So I think we need to change a little bit. You know, our internal fears and our standards to be able to succeed, you know. And I think there is something else. That for my career, it was something that when I was leaving it was something that was really concerning me was the maternity leave. So I know it's very catchy, I'm talking about that. I know the maternity leaves there differ per country, in Brazil, for example, it's six months, I think in London it's from 6 to 12 months, right. So I remember when I was pregnant, I said, Oh my God, what's going to happen? You know, I'm gonna be six months away. It's nothing. Six months. It's nothing. 12 months. It's nothing. You know, your career is much longer than that. And your personal life is what matters. So don't worry about that. Never is going to change. Actually, who is going to change is yourself for a better person, so don't let those things that is the most important ones. Those are the ones that matter and the career going to be there and you're gonna grow as a person which is more important.*

Gabby: *That's a really nice answer. And I love that you touched on believing in yourself and kind of just silencing that background noise. So I know that's something that I know I would definitely take on in my career and also interesting how you raise the maternity leave topic 'cause I do think some some females do worry about what is my career going to be like when I come back after taking six to a year off. So it is nice to hear from experience that you've gone and done that and you're still reaching a very high career. So thank you Luciana.*

Luciana: *Thank you Gabby.*

Gabby: *Thank you again for joining our podcast and for your interview. And it sounds like you've had such an interesting and diverse career, and I genuinely feel very inspired by all your stories and experiences you have told us about today.*

Luciana: *Thank you. Pleasure to join the team.*

Gabby: *Thank you.*

Julia: *And that concludes this Marsh International Affinity Podcast episode a big thanks to our key speakers, as well as all of our listeners, keep your eyes peeled for our next podcast, which will be coming your way soon. Thank you.*

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