

Sihem le Vern, a woman at the helm of Deny All's R&D team



Sihem le Vern, 38, was recently promoted to the strategic position of R&D Manager at Deny All, a French security software vendor. Heading a team of 20 male engineers and working remotely, Sihem le Vern is up to these challenges. Here's the portrait of an exceptional woman.

After obtaining a degree at ENSEA (a general engineering school specializing in electronics and computer systems) and several professional experiences, Sihem le Vern joined Deny All in 2002, as an R&D engineer. For a year, she worked in the company's premises, in the Paris region. Initially focusing on Java development, Sihem le Vern soon had to make a decision in relation to an opportunity that involves a personal move to the south of France. Her future at Deny All was uncertain. Initially, she resigned. Considered an excellent member of the R&D team, Deny All suggested she work from her new home located in Grasse (06). She accepted the challenge and embarked, in 2003, on the adventure of working remotely, a new experience for her, but also for her employer.

Sihem le Vern is appointed as R&D Manager, a strategic position, assumed remotely

Thus, for more than seven years, Sihem le Vern assumed varying responsibilities within the R&D department. In turn responsible for the company's various products, she manages to perform her duties remotely. In October 2011, Deny All promoted her to Head of R&D. This role, previously assumed directly by Renaud Bidou, Chief Technology Officer, has become strategic given the recent development of the company. "*Deny All has a real desire to keep its best people. Sihem has evolved over eight years within the R&D team, she knows its requirements, organization and goals perfectly well. Her legitimacy in such a function is based on a solid and lasting, mutual confidence*" says Nicolas Gagnez, President of Deny All.

Aware that her status as head of R&D is a true exception in the IT world, and even more so because of the fact that she is working remotely, Sihem points out: "My remote employee status never allowed me to imagine such a development. I really thought it would be a hindrance for my professional advancement. The support of my supervisor, has been key here."

An organized woman, at the head of a team composed solely of men

Besides the challenge of telework as such, Sihem le Vern is facing a new challenge: managing a team of twenty people, composed solely of men. This creates no particular discomfort because she is perceived as legitimate by the team, especially thanks to her own path within the company. Sensitive to the status of women in business, she regularly seeks to recruit women.

"Everything is organized so that I carry out my duties: I have daily telephone conversations with my team in Paris and meetings by videoconference with the team located in Vietnam. I spend several days in the office twice a month" said Mrs le Vern. She is constantly in contact with the R&D team but also with her superiors, whom she meets with regularly during management committees.

Her daily life is that of any employee working at Deny All: full working day with a break for lunch. Sihem le Vern has a natural work discipline and she finds it is easy to maintain a professional pace. *"I found a balance between my professional and personal lives, which suits me perfectly. I am very well suited to working remotely. Also, since I do not have any transportation constraints, I can take full care of my two daughters, which is a substantial personal benefit"* said Sihem le Vern.

Sihem Vern has everything she could possibly want, and admits to being very satisfied with her current responsibilities. She is considering resuming her studies, in parallel, to get a Master's degree, enabling her to further climb the ladder in Deny All. Nothing stops a fulfilled woman!

About Deny All

Deny All is the European leader in the Web Application Firewall (WAF) market. Our reverse proxy-based solutions secure and accelerate 30 000+ Web applications, XML/SOAP Web Services and FTP servers globally. Available as software or appliances, they provide a superior level of protection against known and unknown attacks, ensure application availability and simplify user authentication for customer-facing, transactional, extranet and intranet applications and Service Oriented Architectures. Deny All's flagship products are rWeb, a fully functional WAF, its XML Firewall option and sProxy, an entry-level solution. The offering also includes an application vulnerability scanning service, Edge, and a solution designed for securing FTP connections, rFTP.

Founded in 2001 and headquartered in Paris, France, the company has local teams in Germany, the Nordics and value-added partners across the globe. Deny All serves enterprises, SME's, outsourcers and cloud providers around the world, Our customers include large financial institutions, state and local governments, industry and services companies, media and e-commerce leaders.

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