

Big pivot: Latina-owned tech company went into 'startup mode' to survive



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Webhead CEO Janie Gonzalez had to pivot twice in recent years for her longstanding tech company to survive.

By [Jeannette E. Garcia](#) – Reporter, San Antonio Business Journal an hour ago

Despite her long experience, [Janie Gonzalez](#) recently saw a need to shift into "startup mode" for her business to survive.

The CEO and founder of Webhead, the more than 27-year-old local information technology provider, brought her company back from the brink by creating the first Latina-owned, full-service software factory in San Antonio, which she founded earlier this year.

Gonzalez's new business line recently gained three clients — including one large government contractor — and she's on track to hire 15 employees for the new division, with the potential of hiring 10 more employees, she told the Business Journal.

Software factories are "a place that bring development, operations and cybersecurity professionals together as a unified team in the software development process. The focus is the client's goal, not the process," Gonzalez said.

The federal government, particularly, has recently taken the develop, secure, deploy and operate — or DevSecOps — technology route that such factories follow to help streamline the speed and updating of its legacy systems, she said.

"Patches, upgrades and integrations to legacy systems simply create more cybersecurity vulnerabilities and are costly to maintain," she said. "The software factory creates new software faster, and it's much more secure, reliable and efficient."

While Webhead already had many of these offerings in place separately, the software factory mode of operation enables Gonzalez's company to combine them in one, she said.

The software factory was a creative solution that Gonzalez and her team came up with to get the company back on track after hitting a couple bumps on the road starting in 2018.

Government prime and subcontracts are where the company makes a large part of its revenue, and around that time, the federal government began changing its contracting focus, which hit her bottom line.

"I saw a drastic reduction in revenue, even though I had the same amount of employees," she said.

By late 2019, Gonzalez thought she had surpassed the hurdles. Then, the world changed.

"I lost nearly a million dollars within six months," Gonzalez said, describing the damage done at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The loss, however, spurred her to be creative again, she said.

"We went into emergency business continuity, developing a plan, doing what we needed to do," Gonzalez said.

To maintain focus on her business and surviving the downturn her business was facing, Gonzalez resigned from her board positions except for her seat on the CPS Energy board, she said.

Gonzalez went "old school" and started calling her contacts to develop business, she said.

"It really worked out," she said adding that by the end of 2020, she had garnered her first two clients for her software factory division.