

Rich in Milan. Rich is in the beautiful city of Milan, Italy with a beautiful classic European building in the background and his beautiful significant other with him. Milan is still there, so is the building. In fact, so is his supposedly significant other.



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It was my birthday last month and I started thinking. The first thing I realized was that I am getting old. I don't feel it, don't think I look it, and I sure don't act it. But truth is, I am. Then I started thinking this is my 19th year with this business and we continue to grow. I started wondering how is this happening? I am very fortunate when it comes to this little business. Geneva has been with me almost since the beginning and pretty much runs the business. Kris has been with us five years now and does the stuff that nobody ever gets to and always writes our reviews of both our summits (www.vendorsummit.com, www.theciosummit.com). We recently added Dean who is one month out of college and she really makes me feel old. Then there is Lisa D'Angelo who is heading up our newest initiative that I will tell you about next issue. Bob Bennett has been involved with this initiative since its beginning. Charlotte has been with me 10 years now and makes sure both our conferences are successful and helps with other projects along the way. Some are older, some are very young and some are in between. It is an interesting mix.

As you look through this issue you will see we are one of the few print magazines in the world continues to grow in readership and with advertisers. Those who advertise with us do so because our focus has always been on the reader and not the advertiser (read Geneva's teasers on page 6). We give up some short-term gains doing this, but when you realize that our magazine readership is up to 32,000 in 110 countries, you see our formula is working. Where are you sitting right now reading this? Along with our printed magazine our digital edition is approaching 10,000 subscribers reaching many parts of the globe. So, our readership continues to grow. Our advertising support continues to grow. In this world where there is so much talk about the demise of print I started wondering why we are experiencing this. Yes, we package things for advertisers so they get more for their marketing dollars spent with us, but still: what is going on here?

Kate has been with us for two years now. She is young and from what I would call the "what generation." She has been great helping us reach new advertisers, as well as brings new insights to other projects. If you want to get a feel for how the "what generation" thinks, then I strongly recommend you read Kate's column on page 157. Maybe this age thing is a bit overblown.

One of the great things about publishing for so long is we get to revisit issues that we covered many years ago. When Jon Inge took on the challenge this issue of revisiting the world of revenue management everybody in our office smiled. Posted on my bulletin board is the only cover we ever did and then pulled it when we were at the printer. The price one pays for working with a team of women? Who knows. We also had some fun this issue as we let LodgeNet and SuiteLinq duke it out about in the cloud or not in cloud for our Point/Counterpoint on page 24. I loved Ashok Kumar's article on Wireless Going Through the Roof. It made me think back to my days in New York City when the Novotel bought the air rights to build its hotel on top of an existing building. Here we are doing it again with technology. Then Trevor Warner takes one of the biggest complaints travelers have and makes it worse. We should be selling Internet usage to the guest. From CCTV to mobile technology to distribution, we seemed to cover it all. We really don't, but as you read through our magazine including the latest and greatest in the Pipeline and all the normal features that we have become known for (don't you just love Ask the Guest) it really does seem that way. Yes, we are proud. I encourage you to read through the whole magazine because Dean, our newest team member did a great job with our first crossword puzzle on page 158. Get it completed and who knows, maybe there will be a prize, you never can be sure with us.

Our next issue will coincide with HITEC in Austin, Texas. At HITEC, I am putting together a session entitled, What Keeps You Up at Night? I know what keeps me up at night, but not sure the HITEC audience would appreciate it. Then again, the crowd at HITEC has evolved outside just the technology professionals since technology touches everybody in all aspects of the business. If you have any great ideas for this session, drop a note to me. HITEC should never let me do a session with such a broad topic, who knows where it might end up. HITEC in Austin, here is hoping for a cool front to hit the city during the conference. It is too cool a city to be as hot as last time.

Wow, has it been 19 years? It is still challenging, but fun. I think of all the great people I have met along the way and realize that the best thing about the industry is the people. Thankfully, there are still many who are older than me.

Rich

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