Auld Lang Syne

Alix Paultre, Editor-in-Chief

As we head into the New Year, looking towards the future, our minds are always drawn to the past. “Auld Lang Syne” means roughly ‘long times past”. Our ruminations on the past vary from individual to individual; one may look back nostalgic, another regretful, and the third satisfied. The most important thing to remember is that the past is past, and we must embrace the future or face the consequences. This is especially important to remember in times of change and disruption.

We face many challenges in the New Year. Not only are our markets under financial turmoil, our industries are in flux, and the very fabric of commerce, communications, and community is being redefined. From Solid-State Lighting to MEMS and Exotic Semiconductors, disruptive technologies are challenging us while at the very same time financial markets make it ever more difficult to finance the research needed to stay ahead (or at least abreast) of the game.

We in the publishing field are facing very similar stresses and pressures. Costs of energy and resources are challenging us in the production of a magazine, while the web challenges us all to define what exactly you want from us as a resource and provide it to you. Many publications that have served this industry for many years are now facing oblivion due to rapid changes in the way people get information.

We here at ECN are addressing the challenges on both sides of the page with our new community-oriented systems-level editorial approach. We feel that if you provide a forum for designers to discuss issues and ideas, that information will be timely, appropriate, and interesting to our readership. New sections like the Brainstorm [1] bring together multiple viewpoints on a single issue, while those like Design Talk provide a forum for engineers to present ideas and tips to one another.

By giving you more opportunities to interact with one another in both our print publication and our Website, we hope to provide you with more information from

more sources on the pressing issues and technologies we have to deal with in this new reality.

We have had a tremendous positive response to these and the other new content initiatives in ECN: Jason Lomberg's "Efficiency Zone [2]", our "green" column, Alfred Poor's "On the Light Side" with the latest in Optoelectronics, as well as content like our expanded interviews and new European Electronic Edition.

All we ask of you is to tell us what you'd like to see, give us story ideas, write something for us, and let us know how we're doing. During the year, we will be sending out surveys to help us create the next generation of ECN online, and we want you to tell us what you'd like to see (you don't even have to wait for the survey, just tell us). If there's something you want to see more of, let us know. You can also send me an email directly at alix.paultre@advantagemedia.com [3], we'd love to hear from you.

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