



Thank You *MD* Readers: A Great Six Years

This is the final monthly column I'll be writing for *Machine Design*. For 72 consecutive months, I've done my best to pen something of value for *MD* readers. *Machine Design's* readership spans many demographics and engineering cultures, from those starting-out their careers to those closing-them out, from big corporations to makers in their garages. What do we all have in common? We're engineers and scientists working hard to create the best possible designs. Each month, I tried hard to include several things that readers would say "I have to make a note of that."

I first became aware of *Machine Design* when I graduated college and started working at Texas Instruments in the 1970s. Looking back, hard to believe, but I had several hundred people reporting to me within six months and was chartered with the turnkey design and start-up of new manufacturing plants. My family business had prepared me well for standing-up new buildings, but starting-up new plant sites and debugging production was a whole different thing. And much of the production equipment had to be custom-designed for TI's many state-of-the-art products. This is where I first encountered *Machine Design*. Just about every product design and equipment engineer was reading it. Many had their own *MD* libraries. Design inspiration and courage continually flowed from its pages. I lost track of the number of times an issue was placed in front of me to make a point.

I wasn't thinking at the time how important *MD* really was in the big picture, but I knew how important it was to me. When I left Texas Instruments, 2D CAD was just beginning. Drafting boards and typewriters were being replaced by early computers and design stations. As years rolled by, I kept *MD* close and referred to it for design benchmarks and barometer readings to keep track of how fast things were changing. Between *Machine Design* and its sister publication *Electronic Design*, there was always a recent article or reference that could lead to solutions for some of engineering's thorniest problems or give one confidence that new technologies and processes had sufficiently matured such that it was time to convert.

How many institutions do you know that have lasted a century? Did you know *Machine Design's* first issue came

out in September 1929? So this year is effectively *MD's* 90th Anniversary. How did they do it? They adapted to change and progress as it occurred. Isn't that the challenge for us all? Otherwise, our careers languish! When *MD* started, information doubled every 15 years. *MD's* early editors had an easier time of it than do today's editors. Information now doubles every 1.2 years. One just finishes learning something and it becomes time to learn its replacement. Sure, there are new magazines and websites popping up all the time touting the latest knowledge. For my money, the institutions that have stood the test of time, over multitudes of changes and advances, offer the best barometer to back the decisions engineering managers and practitioners have to make every day. There are only a handful of these sources and *MD* is one of them.

We're all fortunate to have chosen engineering as a profession. Aside from the personal and professional satisfaction of knowing that much of the world's economy is generated by what product designers, design engineers, and manufacturing engineers create, we all make a good buck doing it—more than most professions. Therefore, it would seem that giving back is in order. For 30 years I volunteered in numerous engineering organizations: ASCE, ASME, SME, ASEM, PDMA, SOCE/SCPD, and others. Just as I had finished an SCPD role in 2013, my phone rang. The voice on the other end said, "You've written on and off for *MD* since the 1990s. How'd you like to write a dedicated monthly column for *MD*? There is no compensation, but we can provide you a good forum and a great readership." For the last six years, I've done my very best each month to continue to give back. Per word published, *MD's* readers made me its most read author. Perhaps that is because my sole goal was to give back. Thank you, *MD*. Thank you *MD* readers. Thank you, Lee Teschler and Steve Mraz, two absolutely brilliant editors and writers who taught me so much.

Stick with *MD*! It will help you to stand the test of time. **md**

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