

Congratulations to the AIDC 100 on its 20th Anniversary. I'm sure everyone agrees that it is hard to believe it has been twenty years.

I remember when George Goldberg called me and talk about the idea of forming a group of individuals from the industry. He wanted to know if I thought this group would be a competitor of AIM. The answer was easy and the response was quick. No, it would not be a competitor with AIM and I thought it was a great idea to form a group of key, committed individuals in the industry.

I was honored to be asked to be a Charter Member and was pleased to help get the group started. Even though AIM had the knowledge and the experts within the Association sphere, we had to be very careful when suggesting any company or individual be contacted as experts on a particular subject. AIM could refer people to "groups" that could offer expertise. That's why it was logical to form the AIDC 100.

For the Anniversary I was asked to share thoughts from 20 years ago with respect to the State of the Industry and any insight I have today. It is always fascinating to reflect back. To keep it short, the key discussions 20 years ago revolved around whether the AIDC industry was really an "industry" or just a part of the larger IT industry. The technologies certainly fell into the IT arena but many wanted AIDC to be recognized as a separate industry. I can't even remember how many times I was asked to look into getting a separate SIC code for the "industry".

The other thing that always stuck in my mind back then was comments that the bar code segment of the industry was saturated. As someone that came to AIM from outside the sphere of AIDC technologies I had to challenge that view. My crash course on AIM and the industry included a review of SCAN-TECH educational session attendance. Can you guess what session was the most well attended year in and year out? Bar Code Basics.

So, what is the State of the Industry today. Clearly it is significantly larger, and I credit AIM with their work on standards and education in helping the markets grow. I also credit the devoted individuals within the AIDC 100 for their continued commitment to helping the education process. No matter how small a contribution one thinks they are making every contribution counts. The future of the industry continues to be bright with continued growth opportunity.

With respect to "basics", I attended a meeting a few months and one of the speakers mentioned that in many parts of the world companies are just now getting around to implementing bar codes. I produced a little smile and thought some things really do stay the same.

Congratulations again to the AIDC 100.

Larry Roberts