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EDITORIAL letter

Face-to-Face

In today's technologically advanced world of e-mail, text messages and the Web—not to mention the overuse of cellular phones—it is easy to forget that face-to-face meetings still matter.

While new social networking websites spur overnight, there is nothing quite like a good old fashioned face-to-face meeting.

The recent WEFTEC.07 Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference that took place from Oct. 14 to 17 in San Diego is the perfect example.

This one-of-a-kind show brought together a record 19,929 attendees and 1,017 exhibiting companies under one roof and provided water and wastewater professionals an opportunity to learn firsthand about the newest technology, research and legislation in the industry.

But what's more, WEFTEC.07 offered me, along with the thousands of water and wastewater industry professionals, the opportunity to mingle and connect with other like-minded industry enthusiasts.

It is common for people within our industry to use these types of events to catch up with colleagues, many of whom over the years have become good friends.

What I like the most, however, about shows such as WEFTEC is that they give us the chance to step out of our comfort zones and make connections that can lead to new business endeavors and opportunities.

The reason why I bring this up is because all of our daily commitments make it very tempting to place a lower priority on meeting and talking to new people. I suspect many of you are probably guilty of dedicating no time at all to business networking except for a few trade shows and the occasional technical seminar.

While I agree that, in today's busy business world, face-to-face meetings are not easy to arrange and carry out, I strongly recommend you don't fall back on your PDA or the next big trade show you'll attend. Making an effort to meet with industry peers and exchange ideas is an excellent resource for education.

So whether it is a large industry gathering such as WEFTEC, a small regional show taking place in a nearby city or state, an educational session, or simply an article you read among the pages of *Water & Wastes Digest* that offered you insight into the day-to-day experience of other industry professionals, be sure to make an effort and set up some face-to-face time with professionals in your field to discuss relevant issues.

Because my last intentions are to lecture you on the benefits of keeping in touch with other industry professionals, I would like to share with you that I follow my advice.

Although my schedule appears to be overbooked, I am currently making an effort to meet with *Water & Wastes Digest* readers in person to get their feedback regarding the state of the water and wastewater industry.

I encourage you to contact me and share your experience and expertise, as well as offer suggestions that may help us better serve you as an industry publication.

Remember, it is putting a face with a name that most often makes a difference.



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COMING UP NEXT MONTH...

- 2008 Reference Guide
- Industry Outlook for 2008
- Case Studies
- Top 20 Products from 2007
- 2008 Calendar Insert