

Where is Everybody?

Gary Newton, Brüel & Kjær North America, Canton, Michigan

I have been a reader of *Sound and Vibration* magazine for more than a third of its published life. My collected archive of back issues dates from 1993, and I find this amassed library a personal and business asset. That's natural; I work for the company that spawned S&V. Brüel & Kjær holds this magazine and its Publisher in high accord and has supported every year with technical content contributions and every issue with advertising.

However, I note a trend that screams for reversal. As I read through recent issues, I find myself asking, "Where is everybody?" It seems to me that fewer authors are currently contributing to S&V than did a decade ago. My suspicion is that the most-frequent contributors were all weaned on slide rules, dial phones and paper 'bingo' cards. I feel this is unfortunate, as older writers are less sensitive to the needs of younger readers. I think the 'graying' of S&V's authors plays badly to the information needs of younger Engineers and Technicians. This is something you can help with.

I want to put out the call to everyone who ever picked up a sound level meter, mounted an accelerometer or had an experience with noise and vibration to contribute to *Sound and Vibration* – and I mean make a written contribution. Whether it is something unique you worked on, some new concept you developed or just a matter of craft in solving an old problem – write about it and share it with the rest of us through S&V. Get your young blood in ink!

Yes, I'm asking you to do some work! I am asking you to make a contribution to your professional community. I understand the time, energy and resources that go into

writing a technical paper. As an organizer of technical sessions and events for SAE International, I have developed a newfound respect for the process. I can also tell you that the effort is worthwhile. Having your name in ink is good for your career – it sets you apart from the crowd and sets the stage for your advancement. Polishing your writing skills early is smart; you will find your need to communicate increases with professional growth.

Now you may never be able to take complex topics and explain them clearly like Pete Avitabile, Ray Prouty or Peter Baade do. Your work life may lack the rich diversity of problem topics shared by Richard Pappa or Tom Carne. You probably don't know how to passionately mix a little wit with a lot of mathematical wisdom like Howard Gaberson. No one expects you to write months of poetry about sound, vibration and related topics as Eric Ungar did. Still, you do have something to say, something to teach, something to champion. The sooner you try to do this, the more likely you are to develop strong tools of explanation and persuasion.

You have a ready and willing audience at S&V. I feel this magazine is not only special, I see it is as critical to our little world. But S&V also needs us. The old magazine needs some variety and you are its best source. I'd like to see interesting features and short stories about things people are doing in the world of noise and vibration. Not that reading six pages on the structural bending modes of this widget or sorting through Bayesian statistical formulas to understand x are not interesting, I just feel that there is a lot more going on out there that people

would find interesting. Then again, maybe you're the guy who can make these topics come alive for me. Please, take the time to share something from your work experience with the rest of us.

So if you are a student doing something for a grad project, a consultant who just finished an interesting job or an engineer who is doing a ground breaking test, take a moment, write down some notes, then take the time to flesh out an interesting article complete with high-quality graphics and photographs.

We all know a person doing something that could be shared with everyone else, pick-up the phone, send them an e-mail, perhaps offer to help them write it. It is our responsibility to keep S&V useful. Bring new excitement to the next issue you receive – be part of it. Now lets get to work!

I think about all the calls I get in the course of a week from a student, researcher or consultant who is working on something fascinating. No matter how simple or complex their project may be, you can feel their passion for what they are doing! You can hear it in their voice on the phone or sense it in their e-mail reply when you tell them you can help. These are things that I think many people would be interested in. I would like to see this publication include more of these types of stories. They don't have to be long, they do not have to contain complex formulas, they can share an idea, promote a concept, or just plain ask a question to create a dialog. I guess I'd better get to work!



The author can be reached at: gary.newton@bksv.com.