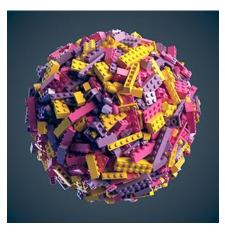# Letter from the Editor - May 2022

By: Scott St. John

It's just getting too damn complicated. And if you don't have technology on your side, you're going to get hurt.

Work from home; come into the office. Wear a mask; don't wear a mask. The vaccines work; they don't work. It's safe to go outside; another COVID wave or variant is on the rise. And that's just daily life. Technology is a whole, other animal. Fixed line, fiber, cloud and wireless. Each comes with their own complexity creating a wicked web of connectivity. Not to mention 5G, AI, blockchain, network slicing, IoT, any of the other emerging technologies, or the numerous new use cases they are incessantly spawning. It's borderline chaos.

Managing all that, while balancing a seemingly insatiable customer demand and expectations is a daunting task, to say the least. Which is why many businesses are perplexed when they see profit margins shrink while the demand (and revenues) for their products and services has never been stronger. Fortunately, some companies have figured it out.

Automation has become a business imperative. A fiduciary responsibility to your company, its employees and shareholders. It comes at a cost – both literally and perhaps figuratively as well. On one hand, you have to fork out the investment, and on the other, things like the "personal touch" may be lost (perhaps forever). I say perhaps forever, as there may be no choice to automate CX too and the option to replace humans with AI, RPA, and literally robots is on the table. But, that's another matter (and issue of *Pipeline*).

That being said, the cost of failing to transform operations is much, much higher. Just this year, Facebook lost $232 billion, Amazon lost $210 billion, Apple lost $182 billion, and Netflix *only* lost $54 billion in market capitalization – in a single day. You might argue that lack of automation wasn't the only reason, and you might be right. However, when you look at the multitude or reasons provided by the company's management; I'd say you're more wrong than right.

Wage or labor pressures? Automation can help. Inflation or supply chain issues? Automation. Subscriber loss and poor customer experience? Uh-huh, automation. Lack of scalability? Yep, you guessed it: automation can help there too. The simple fact of the matter may be, you can't survive with it. Which is why this issue of *Pipeline* is so important.

In this issue of *Pipeline*, we explore the many facets of automation. Work-Relay shows us how to streamline operations to [thrive amid chaos and complexity](). CloudSmartz explores how AI and ML are being used to [digitize operations for a digital world](). FNT Software looks at optimizing [hybrid infrastructure management]() to capitalize on new use cases such as 5G and IoT. CHR Solutions tells us how [geospatial data]() is being used to drive operational efficiency from broadband deployments. Consolidated Communications illustrates how [unified communications (UC) is transforming workplace communications](). Intraway demonstrates how to [empower next-gen networks]() with no-code orchestration and automation to combat dynamic competitive pressures. Mark Mortenson from Audrine Research shows us how [network slicing]() is transforming OSS; MATRIXX Software spotlights the need for dynamic BSS to unleash the [Telco Value Machine](); and Rosenberger explores emerging [data center trends]() and how they are leveraging AI, 5G, cybersecurity, edge, ESG, and fiber to contend with the exploding volume of data. All this plus the latest industry [news]() and [more]().

We hope you enjoy this and every issue of *Pipeline*,

Scott St. John
Managing Editor
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