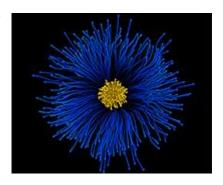# Letter from the Editor

By: Scott St. John

Human connections have always been vital to our survival. Our connections—to our friends, family, and community—was the catalyst of civilization, ensuring we were kept fed, warm, and safe. Today the human connection is the lifeblood of society, though the way we connect has evolved as we navigated dramatic shifts in how we work, live, play and communicate as a globally connected society. Our vital human connections today, and largely our ability to flourish or wither, rely upon digital connectivity.

Those on the other side of the digital divide are living different lives than their connected counterparts who have better access to healthcare, education, banking, services, and so much more. Digital connectivity has become a discriminating factor between the haves, and have-nots. This connectivity is underpinned by broadband, and we can sense the urgency for connectivity in the network overbuilds and expansions being driven by rural broadband funding initiatives in the United States and elsewhere. In the US alone, these funding initiatives add up to billions of dollars in available funding, underscoring that connectivity is such a critical part of equality and our lives.

The critical nature of digital connectivity is also being reflected by how communications service providers are now being increasingly categorized by government agencies as critical infrastructure providers, who must adhere to rapidly evolving regulations. In a panel discussion hosted by *Pipeline* at the SCTE Cable-Tec Expo, we heard first hand from representatives from the NCTA and other industry thought leaders discuss the stakes and the consequences if you are critical infrastructure, and by extension, your customers are compromised.

The pandemic era in which we now live, has also forced digital connectivity into the spotlight. Access to connectivity determined how well we navigated life during lockdown. Connectivity protected many livelihoods, enabling a rapid shift to work from home for millions; gave children

access to online learning during school closures; provided access to telehealth; and ensured our vital human connections were sustained through video chats, messaging, social media and more. Those with connectivity could have food – or toilet paper – delivered to their doorstep, eliminating the risk of going out in public.

Behind these shifts and strides is the innovation required to provide this essential digital connectivity, and to ensure our continued connection to each other and as a global society. This innovation is being led by some of the brightest people in the world. But to continue to innovate and deliver essential connectivity, it's imperative that we protect our networks—and by extension, our supply chains, and economies.

Beyond this, we must ensure that connectivity is high-quality, reliable, and resilient, that it performs when we need it, and that users actually enjoy the experience—because our jobs, lives, and future depend on it. The next challenges and threats are ahead of us. From a global recession to supply chain security to future COVID variants, we are going to be tested again and again. Connectivity, though, will continue to be vital, which is what makes this issue of *Pipeline* so very important.

In this issue of *Pipeline*, we explore the many facets of network transformation and connectivity. Inseego's CEO shares his perspective on the top 2023 network trends, *Pipeline's* Patti Reali discusses the present and future of cable network transformation, and Rakuten Symphony shares predictions that economic pain will accelerate change in mobile networks. Arelion reveals its global insights on network and service quality and delivering top-tier CX, and ServiceNow explains how automation and delivering a superior DX are key to delivering better network experiences. Radisys illustrates how automation and O-RAN can simplify network management and Element Critical discusses how to simplify network operations to meet the demand for next-gen network access. TCG underscores the importance of securing connectivity in critical supply chains, Fiber Sense demonstrates how to protect fiber infrastructure in an increasingly digital world, and EPB and Qubitekk offer a tantalizing glimpse of the future of quantum networks. All this plus the latest enterprise and communications technology news and more.

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

Scott St. John
Managing Editor
Pipeline

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