

Editorial Schedule

September 1996 issue
Deadline for submission:
June 15, 1996
Topic: M and the Internet

December 1996 issue
Deadline for submission:
September 15, 1996
Topic: Business & Finance

MTA is seeking articles on
M and the following areas:

Case histories
Communications
Comparison/benchmarking
COTS
Graphics
Hardware issues
Industry trends
Internationalization
Internet/web
Macintosh platform
Marketing issues
Open Systems
Personnel issues
Rapid prototyping
Relational systems
Transaction processing

Please submit your articles
or ideas to:

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COMMENTARY

A Newcomer's Viewpoint

by Pamela McIntyre

As one who is new to the M community but an old-timer in the systems and software industry, I was pleasantly surprised by what I saw at the MTA Annual Conference. The number of sessions and tutorials, and the scope of topics covered were impressive given that M is not as widely used as some of the more popular languages (i.e., C++, Visual BASIC). Yet, those "other" languages maintained a presence at the conference because the M community is determined to become mainstream. And being able to smoothly integrate with more mainstream technologies is one way to do it.

Another way to become mainstream is to be passionate about your work; to believe in it enough to work at it and pass it along to the next generation. I saw this passion in the discussion sessions. Not only were the sessions I attended full, but the ages of the other people attending spanned a generation. I also saw it on the exhibit hall floor where M vendors eagerly engaged the newly curious as well as the avid customer. In some cases I was unable to approach a booth due to the number of people in it. It was good to see business so brisk and to occasionally hear someone say, "Tell me about M." Telling the rest of the world about M is essential to its survival. And there is much to tell.

From the discussion sessions and tutorials it is obvious that the M community is keeping up with the rest of the technological world. Terms such as client/server, GUI, object-oriented, Internet, ODBC, SQL, Open M, Visual M, and Windows were only a few of the buzzwords flying around the conference hall. And indeed, from Rodney Anderson's sessions on M and object-oriented technology, it is obvious that not only can M be integrated with this technology, but that it can be done well. I have no doubt that had I been able to attend more discussion sessions, I would have come away with the same feeling, that M people have a great deal of pride in what they do and how well they do it. The attendance of a number of international MTA members strengthens this observation.

Being part of a larger, combined conference certainly did not seem to dampen the spirit of the M community or dilute its identity. The camaraderie so often referred to by MTA members was evident at the reception on Tuesday evening. It was great to finally tie names and faces together. For those of you I was able to speak with, I hope you will consider writing for future issues of M Computing. From where I stand, there is much worth writing about. **M**

Pamela McIntyre received a bachelor of science degree in biology from the University of Wisconsin and a master degree in business and information systems from the University of Maryland. She has worked in the information management field for over 13 years and is currently a freelance writer, editor, graphic artist, and the managing editor of *M Computing*.