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VIEWPOINT

M Around the World? Maybe Not

by Pamela G. McIntyre

Recently, MTA-Europe announced that it will no longer be publishing *M Professional*, the European counterpart of *M Computing*. While I do not know the details behind this decision, I find it reason for concern. Publications usually fold for only a very few reasons, none of which is positive.

The first reason on the list is usually lack of funds. For an association this means a drop in membership and the consequent loss of membership dues. A second reason is lack of readership indicating a lack of interest. In some respects this may be worse than the first reason. It indicates that nothing new and exciting is happening in the industry. Without readership, of course, there is a loss of advertising and the associated revenues. Does this mean that *M* is disappearing from Europe? Not necessarily. I suspect that the industry is evolving, just as it is here in the U.S.

What does concern me is the loss of communication and information flow across the ocean. MTA Europe is maintaining a Web site, certainly a valuable resource. But it is passive in nature. One must make an effort to sign-on to the site and retrieve information. Most people are not inclined to make such an effort. A publication, on the other hand, brings information to you. You can toss it into your briefcase and take it with you with very little effort.

To keep you, the reader, informed of what is happening with *M* around the world, *M Computing* will be adding an international section to each issue. It is imperative, of course, that international members contribute relevant information. The biggest demand is for feature articles, although regular columns, industry news, employment opportunities and conference information are also desirable.

The important point here is to keep lines of communication open by providing an avenue for information exchange. If we lived in a vacuum, it wouldn't matter. But not even *M* operates in a vacuum. The business environment is dynamic, and the world is getting smaller. Those who obtain relevant business information first and act on it will come out ahead. This is no less true for *M* than it is for other industries. So let's all make an effort to keep in touch with our international friends. It's good for us and good for the industry.

Welcome to Viewpoint. The opinions expressed in this column are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of MTA. Guest writers and responses to columns are welcome and will be printed at the discretion of MTA. Email: MTA@mtechnology.org

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