

“The Urge to Converge”
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Can you cause change? Yes. People, not things, cause change. People invent technology, technology advances thought, thought provokes ideas, ideas affect change. And change is for good. It's for *your* good. So cause change yourself. Don't just let change affect you—proactively affect change.

Now, even change has changed.

It's more rapid than ever before. In many cases, more difficult to predict than ever before. It's obvious: technology is better than ever, technology causes change, change causes technology, and so on.

In our company, United Sales Associates, we formally address change a minimum of three times a year, at our regularly scheduled company sales meetings. Each of us is prepared to openly discuss changes that have taken place since we last got together (usually three or four months ago).

We address change from different perspectives—from inside and outside our channel. From inside we ask end users: What changes are taking place? How are you planning for change? How do these changes affect your other channel partners? Then we ask our other channel partners (manufacturers, distributors, and other manufacturers' agents) the same questions to get different points of view.

We ask about technological advances. About other leading indicators of change such as trade associations, trade journals, and many other sources.

Outside of our channel we observe what's going on with others, such as Wal-Mart and its effect on 'Power Buyers'.

Be proactive with change. Technology will continue to dramatically evolve. To wait is to not be a part of the advances. Even some technology is better than no technology. For instance, all analog is better than no analog or digital. A 486 is better than no computing power. A phone is better than waiting for the cell technology. Remember, the shortest distance between two points is no longer a straight line, thanks to cyberspace technology.

One of the biggest changes now, over all, could be convergence—the concept of coming together.

Convergence in technology.

Monetary convergence—think of the European Monetary Unit the 'euro.'

Convergence in the trade channels.

Convergence in the trade associations in the safety channel – such as Safety Equipment Association, or SEA.

And the 'ultimate mouse'—Global convergence.

Convergence, like change, is good. Convergence in global safety is inevitable, and those in a position to affect this most important change must begin to converge, to come together - now!

Think about it.

George J. Hayward