

Column Title: **As The Saws Turn**

Article Title: **New Year, Same Old Business?**

It is that time of year (I'm writing this in mid-December) when many of us are closing out our year, evaluating our accomplishments and setting goals and objectives (dare we say...resolutions?) for next year.

I find myself either trying to complete a task right away, so I can say I finished it this year, or putting projects off...I'll do them next year. There seems to be an urgency in getting things done by December 31st and starting with a clean slate on January 1st.

If it does nothing else, this practice of "changing over" to a new year should give us all an opportunity to ponder our future, and the changes that will inevitably come. I'm not sure why we don't do it more often, but this seems to be the time when we spend more time than usual thinking of the future. I guess the calendar presents a natural break in time; a point of consideration of past events and future goals.

As an industry, we have seen many changes in the past year. Most have been very positive; some have not. I'm sure each of you could list changes in your personal lives as well. Change? Better get used to it.

Change is part of life. Positive change improves our lives. If you are prepared for change, and can accept change, this business can be a lot of fun. If you are not willing to accept that our businesses, our industry and our market are changing, it could be a long rough ride. I'm reminded of something I found a while back that helps to smooth that ride out.

I ran into an industry friend recently, and we got on the subject of change in our careers over time. He recommended a book that I had read several years ago.

He said it was a “quick read”. He said it really helped him work through some of the issues he was facing as his career was changing.

That night I dug through the stack of books on the floor of my study and found the book: “Who Moved My Cheese?” by Spencer Johnson, M.D. (G.P. Putnam’s Sons, New York). I picked it up, sat down in a big, soft, comfy chair, and read the entire book again! It took me 90 minutes (and I’m a slow reader...).

It really is a good, quick lesson in dealing with change. In the period since reading it the first time, I have reflected on the lessons in the book. I have also read it again several times. Some of the lessons are so basic, you wonder how you forgot that stuff!

But I’m not going to review it here...you need to buy and read it yourself! It works better that way.

One of the things I did learn is that if you make one resolution for the New Year, resolve to be a positive force when change comes. Resolve to use the opportunity to better your situation, and improve yourself and your company along the way.

New year, same old business? I don’t think so.

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