President’s Letter

It is a big deal to reach this milestone of 40 years! And it’s a time to honor our founder, William J. Hannon, and all those early founding members, who had the foresight to know that such an organization was needed—one that would serve as a support system for design managers, but would also advocate for the field of design management as a whole, globally. Bill Hannon’s life and career mirrors a time of significant advancement and impact for design management. Consider that in 2010, an IBM Global CEO study highlighted creative leadership as a critical capability for success. There has been an explosion of companies seeking to bring design thinking and innovation into their culture, and, as the DMI Design Value Index attests, there are now several companies that have embedded design into their corporate cultures and are benefiting from doing so. For all that has been realized, we thank Bill and hope that he feels very proud.

I have had the opportunity to become acquainted with Charlie Conn, a former student of Bill and one of his most ardent fans. DMI is helping Charlie and several other former students in their effort to raise funds toward naming the new media center at MassArt in Bill’s honor. (Donations and pledges to donate can be made to the MassArt Foundation. For details, visit dmi.org/billhannon.) As I listen to them speak fondly of their professor and mentor, I can certainly relate, because of the feeling of respect and gratitude I have for my own former professor, Allen Samuels (retired ID professor and dean, University of Michigan School of Art & Design).

I wish to thank all the loyal members of DMI over the years, the board of directors under the leadership of Jerry Kathman, and the board of advisors, for their support and commitment. I am grateful for the many ideas and support I have received over these past five months. I’d also like to offer recognition and thanks to Thomas Walton as DMI’s first editor, and

From the President

In 1989, I was offered a free-lance proofreading job: looking over the very first issue of a quarterly magazine on a topic I knew absolutely nothing about. I had heard of Tom Peters, whose work was featured in that inaugural issue—but I had never thought of “design” as a subject, let alone how to manage it.

Twenty-five years later (give or take a few months), and five presidents later, I find I can discuss design and the management of it in a reasonably creditable way. I have edited so many of your papers, and on occasion I have even met some of you. I hope to meet more of you in September at DMI’s fortieth-anniversary conference.

For this special issue of the Review, we are reprinting a selection of articles in an attempt to suggest the breadth of subject matter we’ve tackled over the past quarter-century, and also to indicate how
to Sue Bencuya, our current editor, for her 25 years of work on the DMI Review, the DMI Journal, and DMI’s case study program.

On September 27 to 29, 2015, DMI will host a special celebration of this fortieth anniversary at our Leadership Conference in Boston. Please save the date, as we have many events and activities planned. On Monday, September 28, we will have an evening gala to honor and celebrate all that’s good about DMI and design management in the community—past, present, and future. To learn more, visit dmi.org/40.

Thank you for the honor of serving the Design Management Institute.

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far design management has come since the early days. We’ve tried to address some of the more major topics: design education, design and business strategy, branding, experiential marketing, and design thinking. To put it all in context, we have called on some of the best design writers around to write thoughtful introductions.

We really hope you enjoy this trip down memory lane.