heating up

The Quest for Content

Working in the business-to-business magazine industry for more than a decade, I have a lot of colleagues in the world of publishing. Invariably in any conversation we have, the topic of content development comes up. The reason for that is simple: in our world, content is king. Creating unique information and programs and delivering it to our audience is what drives us to develop more, and (hopefully) is what keeps you coming back as readers.

In today's complex technological environment, that content appears to be seeping into our lives in every way imaginable—PDAs, cell phones, e-mails, podcasts, blogs, Webinars...the list seems endless. The inundation of information that the average person faces when they wake up in the morning is scary, to say the least.

Much like the HVACR professional who faces constant change in the industry as they strive to stay on top of their craft, one of the biggest challenges I face as the Director of Publishing is finding out exactly what kind of content our readers—and the industry at large—need, and how they want to receive it. It's something that our entire publishing team spends a lot of time thinking about. (You should hear some of our editorial planning meetings!) That's because what we're researching and writing ultimately need to benefit you. If it doesn't, well, we don't want you all running to watch Survivor or the last five seasons of Lost. We want to keep you engaged!

So in this era of constantly evolving technology, and with an increasingly overworked HVACR workforce (because I know that many of you out there in the field are working more than 40-hour weeks), the biggest issue we face is finding the right kind of content for you; and getting it to you in a way that's useful.

During a recent RSES E&E Board meeting, the topic of Service Application Manual (SAM) chapters came up, and some Members asked what topics should be covered in the next year or two. So now, I'll turn around and pose that question to all of you: What do you want to see covered in these great resources? And just as important, how do you access that information? Do you keep your copy distributed with RSES Journal? Do you go to www.rses.org and print a copy? Do you even know what SAM chapters are and where to go online to access this RSES Membership benefit? Understanding both the “what” and the “how” will help us get you what you need in the format you prefer so you can do your job better.

We keep looking at new ways to get content created and in your hands—e-Newsletters, Web-site resources, RSES Journal, Training Authority Seminars, etc.—but knowing what you want to see and how it can best be utilized by you is vital to success in content delivery.

Send me a note at jiwanski@rses.org to tell me what you want to see and how you want to see it. Content may be king, but readers rule the kingdom.

John Iwanski
Director of Publishing