

# Working Together for Greatness

**Kimberly Maki**  
Executive Director

*“Associations are the hidden glue of our society and economy. Like the mortar that holds the bricks of a building in place, associations go largely unnoticed, yet they do much to hold the entire structure together. As such, associations cannot settle for being only good; they must work toward greatness.”*

—Jim Collins, best-selling author of *Good to Great* and *Built to Last*



I believe this! I believe in association work; its value; its potential for greatness for the members it serves.

I also believe in SMPTE's potential for greatness. That may be at least one of the reasons why I am here as your new Executive Director. A very key observation here, by the way, is that SMPTE is a very good, very solid association, so we are not talking about a failing association. Membership is strong. Volunteer leadership is strong. Our core mission of standards development and technical content is strong. The key here is to remember that our goal is to make a good thing even better—becoming exceptional and great! Together, I am confident, we will accomplish this challenge.

As most of you may know, my very first day on the job at SMPTE was at the Fall Technical Conference and Exhibition in Hollywood, CA. I had the true pleasure of meeting many of you there. I was in listen and observe mode. So, I had volumes of anecdotal information stored in my head as I left California to head East. But for here and now, please allow me to share just a few of the recurring themes:

- You are proud of the work you do and have done in this ever-evolving industry.
- You have a true connection with the peer group you have in SMPTE.
- You have given a great deal of time and energy to this organization in the way of volunteer leadership.
- You want to engage new members.
- You want SMPTE to remain relevant in this ever-changing world.
- You want to be a part of making all this happen.

I heard loud and clear that you want to be a part of the action! You're not a lot that sits quietly on the sidelines. You've been making things happen your entire careers. So, please allow me to tell you what I think. It's going to happen. Why? Because of the mere fact that in more than 100 individual conversations I had in Hollywood with you, not once did I hear you complain about the new generation of media—who it is, what it is, the problems with it...no, what you said was, “we need to attract them to our organization. And, let me tell you why they could learn from us”...and so on.

Earlier this year, I was fortunate enough to hear Jim Collins speak first-hand about his work with ASAE & The Center for Association Leadership. In 2002, ASAE assembled a team to undertake a matched-pair study of associations to find out the answers to such questions as: What separates exceptional associations from good ones? What does it take to run an association from good to great, and how can excellence be sustained?

The result is a recently published book called *7 Measures of Success*. The success begins with data-driven action, and, that is where we are going to start our progression to greatness as well. I started this process anecdotally in Hollywood, however, hard data is necessary. Quoting again from Collins, “What matters is being data-driven, combined with the creativity and discipline to act on that data in ways that meet your members' needs better than any other organization.”

Executing a new era of greatness in SMPTE history will only happen if you, our members, want it to happen and are instrumental in making it happen.

So, on that note, I look forward to your feedback—from the perspective of both individual members and the Sections. Please look for a formal membership survey in the early months of 2007. Also, look to the *SMPTE Journal* for my next article, as we set the stage for 2007—and the bar is high!



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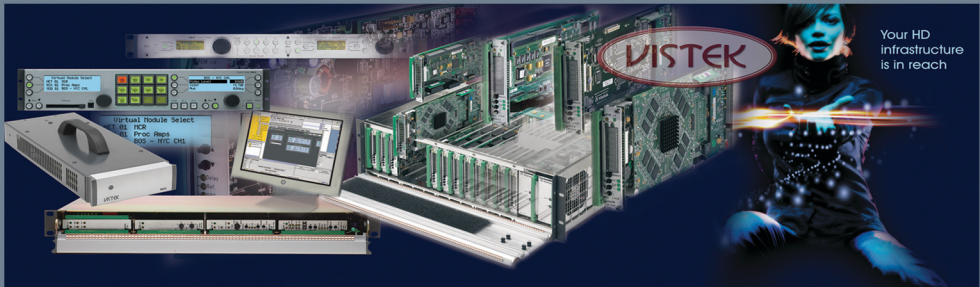
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