

## Innovation

A number of us are currently reading Walter Isaacson's book, *The Innovators*, in which he chronicles the many collaborative success stories from the world of digital technology. The collaboration theme highlighted in the life stories of Steve Jobs, Bill Gates and others is absolutely key to the business of innovation. Happily, it is a spirit and style I see every day here at Glenair.

I love this quote from Jack Kilby of TI, who consistently shared credit for creating the microchip and the digital evolution it spawned, even as the pundits endeavored to label him as the invention's godfather. He said, "When I hear that kind of thing, it reminds me of what the beaver told the rabbit as they stood at the base of Hoover Dam: 'No, I didn't build it myself, but it's based on an idea of mine'". The same thing happens constantly at Glenair. And I am always pleased to hear the members of our team work overtime to give each other due credit and recognition for their role.

This issue of *QwikConnect* highlights what we believe is a unique approach to R and D and subsequent new product development. In a nutshell, we tackle this work with an excitement and willingness to listen to our customers, combined with a business model that eliminates constraints. As we detail in the cover story, our experience has been that the key to maintaining velocity, flexibility and control in our business is not to ground our R and D projects on budgets, rigid timelines, or demands for immediate return on investment dollars—our model is to empower our organization with the right tools of the trade and cut them loose to address the real problems and challenges faced by our customers.

There are plenty of examples I could cite to demonstrate the fruits of this approach, but I would like to highlight one in particular: Our new Photonics unit is the absolute poster child of the Glenair model. In just a few short years we have embraced this new opportunity with a passion that is truly remarkable. Not only have we brought a complete range of viable new products to market—from fiber-to-copper media converters, photonic transceiver/receiver contacts and connectors and more—but in the process we have built out an impressive engineering and production operation that I am sure rivals any in the business. And talk about listening to the customer, our Photonics team has become a hub for a wide range of innovative work that spans far beyond the opto-electronic technology that was their original brief. Bravo!

One final note, we speak often at Glenair about "looking outside the bubble." Whenever you look outside our world to the scientific discoveries of other industries and disciplines, or simply open your eyes to the wonders of nature, you engage in the wise practice of pursuing knowledge wherever it may be found. Ingenuity and the drive to innovate have become hallmarks at Glenair. I would like to encourage everyone at Glenair to continue to reach beyond the boundaries of our interconnect world to appreciate the many miracles of discovery that are waiting to be found in disciplines beside our own.

*Chris Toomey*

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