Letter from the Editor

By Tim Young

In this issue, as we examine the promise and reality of the seamless user experience, we are collectively approaching a seam of a different sort. This temporal seam is the divider between each rapidly fading old year and the new year just beyond. Amid a flurry of holiday activity (and, if you live someplace like Chicago, where most of our editorial team lives, you'll also see holiday flurry-activity), one year ends and another takes its place.

As is our wont as media chatterboxes, we generally spend our December and January issues discussing the new developments of the last year and our predictions for the new year. In last December's edition, for example, we declared that 2011 would, "see many more 4G deployments, hopefully mobile payments in the U.S., expansion into new industries, and far greater personalization." Most of that has happened, to one extent or another. Mobile payments didn't quite bloom in the US, but there has been headway made, with major handset providers embracing Isis in the fall.

But hey: If predictions are all they're cracked up to be, we've got lots more to worry about in 2012 than a few blown prognostications.

Nevertheless, we bring you, this month, a variety of stories on the future of communications; next year and beyond. Our own Jesse Cryderman explores the realities of the seamless user experience and the role of the cloud in making it all work the way it should. Becky Bracken checks out the "s" word in her exploration of silos and why they persist. Jim Dunlap from Cycle30 brings us an interesting take on partner convergence in the M2M space. Our team takes a look at what the winners know about unified communications, and we hear from CSG International on their recipe for success. In addition, we bring word from Amdocs on converged charging and policy management demands.

We bring you all that and more, plus the latest in OSS/BSS news analysis.

Enjoy, and we wish you the best this holiday season.

Tim Young, Editor-in-Chief