The first of August will mark my seventh anniversary as editor-in-chief of this magazine. That landmark and a recent high school class reunion have combined to put me in a nostalgic mood. So, despite the fact that I can hear the voice of a faithful reader (and outspoken critic) demanding that I use this space only for Matters of Import and Substance, I’m giving in to my impulse to reminisce about the changes I’ve seen—in the industry and in this magazine.

To begin with the obvious, let’s look at the way e-mail and Web browsers have changed the way we do business. Time zones are no longer barriers to communication, leaving us free to address more basic issues—like differences in language and culture, which can still cause misunderstanding and confusion.

In 1994, the two-year-old magazine was heavily focused on helping sponsors and service providers create relationships that worked. Those issues are still on the table, but problems tend to be more subtle and less agonizing.

When we launched our Human Subjects column in June of 1995, it was in response to my surprise that although the magazine lavished attention on data management and contracting issues, it had largely ignored the contributions of the human volunteers that made the whole enterprise possible. No one is ignoring human subjects these days.

When we first began covering the uses of the Web in clinical research, we discovered that most readers had little familiarity with the medium. Our award-winning series of articles to bring readers up to speed began with the basics (“How to be a Savvy Internet User,” May 1998). That paved the way for our coverage of increasingly sophisticated IT topics.

When I first joined this publishing company in 1984, I told the editor who was interviewing me, “I have an attention span of about three years.” But that was before I became engaged in a topic that challenges me with changes about every three months.

Our mission is to keep you informed of those changes—in technology, in regulations and guidelines, in project management methods—and to give you a forum for discussing them with your peers. To help us do that, I’ll borrow an invitation I’ve often seen in retail stores:

“If you don’t see what you need, please ask.”

Jane Ganter Editor-in-Chief
Fax: (541) 344-3514
E-mail: jganter@advanstar.com