Sometimes I wake up and hope that it was just a bad dream and she or he will call and ask how things are going with the next issue of the magazine. But I know that such a call will never come.

Maybe you are wondering why I am talking about Rainer and Sharen. Here are the answers: I first met them at the Texas A&M protection conference in 1994. He had come to the United States to introduce to the North American market his revolutionary test set. She had volunteered to help, based on her deep knowledge of the US business world.

I was really impressed by their energy and great personality, as well as their professional achievements. Not many women in the world are pilots, have traveled the globe and are responsible for the cleanup of the Exxon-Valdes oil spill in Alaska. But this is what Sharen did. Moreover, there are not that many successful entrepreneurs in our industry that have started with a dream twenty-five years ago and built a successful global company.

The funny thing is that I knew them for many years before I learned that they were actually married the year after I first met them.

Since then we had a chance to talk throughout the years about anything and everything at different conferences around the world. We would jump from engineering to philosophy, music and fun things to do. Or just discuss life in general, the challenges it puts in front of us and the ways that we could solve them. These conversations were typically happening during the hours before and after midnight, at the Omicron hospitality suite hosted by Sharen. We were not alone. Eric Udren, Mark Adamiak and many others were part of these wonderful late night conversations.

In January 2006 I met again Rainer and Sharen – this time at the DistribuTech Conference and Exhibition in Tampa, Florida, USA. He reminded me about one of these late night conversations when we talked about the fact that the protection, automation and control industry does not have a specialized magazine and that he had decided that the time had come to change this.

I was very surprised, and at the same time not. This was typical Rainer. He had heard something and put it somewhere in his sub-conscious. And at a certain moment an event occurred that brought it back and triggered an idea – in this case to start a magazine. The event was that Rainer met the Managing Editor of a Swiss publishing house with a lot of experience in magazine publishing.

After almost nine months of discussions of the magazine concept as an independent and open forum for the protection, automation and control industry – in September 2006 we started work on the first issue. Rainer assembled a team of experts in their fields that worked on the design of the magazine, with the first issue published in the summer of 2007. Sharen gave us her advice based on her many years of experience advertising in publications, and keeping us on the ground with her strong sense of what is right. The rest is history.

The reason I am telling this story today is that Rainer would never let me tell it before. He was a person that would have an idea; figure out who the best players are that he needs in the team to make it happen; put the team together - and let it happen. Then he would just enjoy the result and never even take credit for it.

What I admired in both of them was the fact that they were two of the most special human beings that cared more about other people than about themselves. Rainer has never been a show-off. He will always be just with a tee-shirt and jeans. He built an award winning office building where all employees have exactly the same offices and an unlimited supply of anything they need, so they can unleash their creative energy while having fun.

That was one part of Rainer’s mantra: Have fun. The other part was: Make the world a better place than you found it.

This is what we will keep doing, and we invite everyone in the PAC World community to join us.

“Have fun while making the world a better place than you found it.”

Rainer Aberer
1955 - 2009