Written by Jane Alexander, Editor-In-Chief
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You know how it is when you can't get a song out of your head? Often, it's just a tune and pieces of lyrics that loop through your subconscious, over and over and over again.

Something causes them to get stuck inside your brain and you find yourself singing along in spite of yourself.

That's what's been happening to me lately. I've not been able to remove bits of Dwight Yoakim's *Wild Ride* * from my internal audio system for quite a while: ...*"you ready for the wild ride...can you make it on the wild ride...don't go shakin' on the wild ride...things start breakin' on the wild ride..."*

To be perfectly clear, the suggestive nature of the actual song has nothing to do with the fact that a truncated version of it has been on continuous replay in my mind for way too long. As I recall, the problem first emerged in my head several weeks ago, shortly after we finished formulating the questions around which this year's "Industry Outlook" section is focused. In late May, those questions had seemed entirely reasonable to ask of executives with leading suppliers to our industry. (Last year, in the midst of the recession, we had wanted to know what suppliers were doing to help end-user companies survive the downturn.) This year, we asked the following:

"With the economy apparently improving for many sectors, what are providers of products and services to our industry doing to help their customers return to normalcy/stability/growth? How is that helping end-users address their reliability, safety and sustainability concerns?"

Invitations to participate in this special section (by answering our questions in 550 words or less) started going out to a select group of company executives in early June. Rancor and gridlock in
Washington, aside, until that time, the stock market and various business reports had been looking up/sounding pretty good. The economy was mending. Confidence was building. Enthusiasm was growing. Who could have thunk that by early July the stock market would have

taken the hair-raising plunge that it did (carrying the relevancy of this year's Industry Outlook focus down with it)?

Today, as I finish up this column, it's early August. The stock market, despite a few dips and wobbles, seems to be slowly cranking back up (hauling a lot of hope along with it). My take on things is that whether or not we intended to buy tickets, everybody—*end-users, suppliers and others* —are going to be passengers on a doozy of a wild ride for a long, long time. When it stops, nobody knows.

Having managed to catch my breath for a minute, though, I'm relieved to report that this year's "Industry Outlook" question is still relevant. As most of our executive participants note, the economy hasn't yet recovered completely, but we're making progress. To learn more about what their organizations are doing to help make the wild ride easier for *your organization*, please take a look at the links below.
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Our Thought Leaders

- Jay A. Burnette , *Vice President, Sales & Engineering, Waukesha Bearings Corporation*
- Terry Buzbee , *President, Emerson Process Management, Fisher Division*
- Brian Gleason , *President, Des-Case Corporation*
- Mike Hawkins , *Global Brand Manager, Mobil SHC Brand, ExxonMobil Lubricants & Specialties*
- Barbara Hulit, *President, Fluke Corporation*
- Poul Jeppesen , *President and CEO, SKF USA Inc.*
- Tony Martell , *Vice President and General Manager, Aftermarket Business Unit, NSK*
- Brian O'Donnell, *President & CEO, A. W. Chesterton*
- Brian Palmer , CEO, *Measurement and Control Solutions, GE Energy*
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- Enrique Santacana , *President and CEO, ABB Inc.*
- Steven J. Smidler, *President, Kaman Industrial Technologies Corporation*
- Andrew Teich , *President, Commercial Systems, FLIR Systems, Inc.*

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Dwight Yoakim, "Wild Ride," This Time, 1993, Reprise.

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