From the Director
A Word from Our Executive Director

Tracking UniForum '97

No matter where you stand in the IT industry, if you stand still you'll get run over. The UniForum Association recognizes that this applies to the annual UniForum Conference, and our UniForum '97 conference planning committee is working hard to make sure we stay ahead of the traffic. Knowing that we have to provide more value every year, we have devised several strategies to deliver on this promise.

First, we have sharpened our focus by grouping the conference sessions into four critical areas, each with two parallel tracks, for a total of eight tracks, as you see below.

The Internet
Internet Technologies
Electronic Commerce

The Intranet
Intranets and Middleware
Deploying Applications on Intranets

Networking
Network Technologies
Network and Distributed Systems Management

Enterprise Computing
Mission-Critical Systems
Integrating Unix and Microsoft Technologies

We believe that these tracks, each including eight to 10 individual sessions, will serve the most common, rapidly emerging needs of our audience as they strive to make their organizations more successful. The challenges in evaluating, deploying, maintaining and managing the IT of today and tomorrow never stop, and the UniForum '97 Conference will provide practical information for how to keep on top of them.

Two supplemental ideas will add even more value to conference attendance. As one, we will offer for each of the four main areas a *certificate* program. It will certify that the bearer has completed an intensive course in Internet, Intranet, Networking or Enterprise Computing. A mechanism will be put in place to verify that the bearer truly has earned the certificate. It is sure to be a valuable addition to any IS professional's qualifications.

To give further continuity to our tracks, we will designate a series of *threads* that extend horizontally across tracks. They will allow attendees to follow particular interests no matter where they are addressed. There will be three of these threads, each composed of eight sessions.

Security will include sessions on everything from cryptography to firewalls to securing the data center.

Advanced Technologies will guide you to the latest and coolest stuff that is likely to affect your job in the near future.

Heroes of IT will offer a new wrinkle: case studies of how open systems professionals have made a difference in their company's information systems—and their business viability as a result.

In short, the threads will provide a cross-referenced guide through the vertical matrix of tracks and sessions, which any attendee may choose to follow for a customized view of these rich sources of information.

UniForum '97 is dedicated not only to presenting the full range of the many options that clamor for your attention. With our conference certificates and threads, it also will provide several clear paths through the maze. I look forward to seeing you in San Francisco next Mar. 12-16. **IT**

Richard H. Jaross is the executive director of the UniForum Association. He can be reached at rich@uniforum.org.