2016 Wrap Up and Thank You from Buddy Croft, IBTTA President

What a year! I never imagined how fast 2016 would fly by. The old saying certainly was true for me, “Time flies when you are having fun!”

Thank you for the honor and privilege to serve as President of IBTTA in 2016. The tolling industry, an important player in the transportation industry, is certainly on the move. Changes in how we conduct business, gather data, assess and implement new technologies and communicate with members and customers are happening so quickly, it is hard to keep up. Yet, over these past twelve months, I believe IBTTA as a team, has made real progress. Our progress has positioned our industry -- agencies/facilities/operators and businesses, to be better prepared for the future.

It truly has been a year of **People, Partnerships and Progress**. I want to personally thank:

- IBTTA’s Board of Directors
- IBTTA Foundation’s Board of Directors
- Past Presidents
- Platinum Sponsors

All the members who volunteered their intelligence and time serving on committees and meeting planning groups; especially the Executive, Finance, Membership and Interoperability - NIOP committees.

- Pat Jones and the IBTTA Staff
- RITBA staff

**People**

**Membership**

In 2016, IBTTA attracted 30 new members and retained 90% of its current members. Association industry standards show an average retention rate of 85%. These numbers serve as an important indicator that IBTTA is growing and providing value to members. We must do more to reach out to our international counterparts and I am confident that with Emanuela Stocchi from Rome, Italy, serving as our 2017 President, we will make significant gains.

**Partnerships**

**Transportation Visioning Summit**

On Wednesday, November 30, IBTTA and the IBTTA Foundation hosted a “Transportation Visioning Summit” in Washington, DC.

It was the culmination of a year-long project I envisioned in the beginning of my term, with a goal of building stronger relations with other transportation trade associations in Washington, DC. Early in the year, in March, April, and May, I made five trips to Washington, DC and together with Pat Jones, we visited with the CEOs of 17 transportation trade associations. We saw Bud Wright of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials; Pete Ruane of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association; Regina Hopper of ITS America; Tom Smith of the American Society of Civil Engineers; Steve Sandherr with the Associated General Contractors of America and many more.
In every meeting, our mission was simple: get to know one another better and explore areas of common interest on which to work together.

We had thoughtful and interesting conversations with everyone we saw. And to everyone, we extended this invitation: let’s get together and talk about the future of transportation. Everyone accepted our invitation.

In the months leading up to the event, IBTTA conducted telephone interviews with each of the participants to learn what they thought about some big questions.

- What will the transportation system look like in 10 years, 20 years, 30 years?
- What do you see as the key challenges and opportunities for the transportation system of the future?
- What data or information do we need today to better plan for the transportation system of tomorrow? Etc.

Everyone responded thoughtfully and generously. From those interviews, we prepared a summary so each CEO could see what the entire group of CEOs was most concerned about.

November 30 was the big day. We had 18 association CEOs or their surrogates sitting around a conference table at The Pew Charitable Trusts. President-Elect Emanuela Stocchi traveled from Rome, Italy to participate in the event with us. Pat facilitated the day’s conversation.

For four and a half hours, we talked about most of the issues that are on any transportation executive’s list of hot topics:

- Autonomous Vehicles & Other Innovations in Technology;
- The Role of Government in Technology and Standards;
- Climate, Energy, Sustainability, Smart Cities, and Smart Design;
- Congestion;
- Moving Freight;
- Safety;
- Access and Equity;
- Data Needs;
- Funding; and
- Making the Case for Infrastructure Investment.

The discussion was robust, thoughtful, and fascinating. We didn’t solve all of the world’s problems. But there was consensus on the inevitability of automation in the vehicles we use to move people and freight. Participants expressed a hunger for coherent political leadership on transportation investment – from Congress and the President. There was a suggestion that this group should attempt to coalesce around a unified response to the new presidential administration’s proposal on infrastructure investment. And everyone agreed that this summit was extremely useful and that we should continue the discussion at regular intervals.

IBTTA will deliver a more extensive report and present it to the Board of Directors at our first meeting in 2017, January 18-20. Special thanks to the IBTTA Foundation Board of Directors for agreeing to fund the Transportation Visioning Summit and the report being developed.
Progress

Interoperability
On Sept. 19th IBTTA reached agreement with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) which will provide funding of $1.5 million to support the National Interoperability (NIOP) testing process. Conformance testing of the three candidate protocols has been completed and laboratory testing of the protocols is proceeding with the construction of an indoor testing loop nearly complete and lining up a test track for physical testing of candidate protocols well underway.

IBTTA Foundation
I’d like to thank the following individuals who have revitalized the Foundation through fundraising and research.

- Christine Keville, Keville Enterprises, Chair
- Mike Heiligenstein, Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority
- Philip Miller, AECOM
- Lisa Thompson, HNTB
- Rene Moser, ASFINAG
- Rosa Clausell Rountree, Egis Projects, Inc.
- John McCuskey, formerly of E-470 Public Highway Authority
- P.J. Wilkins, E-ZPass Group
- Kary Witt, Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District
- Priya Jain, Atkins N.A
- Marcelle Jones, Jacobs Engineering Group
- Federico Di Gennaro, AISCAT

And, Maggie Wilkins with Faneuil, Inc., for taking on a leadership role with IBTTA’s Leadership Academy. The 2017 Leadership Academy will take place in Washington, DC, February 12-17, 2017. Each year, the interest and competition to attend grows. This year, 60 candidates applied with space for 33.

It has been a whirlwind of a year. I could not have done it without you! You are part of an outstanding team! Thank you.

My best wishes to you and your family this holiday season.

Buddy Croft
Executive Director, Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority and President, IBTTA