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# Staying in the Race



It's hard to be the path-maker, the trendsetter, the one who forges ahead to try something

new and different while others hang back, eager to hear the results but unwilling to learn them firsthand. Being the first to do anything can be intimidating, and this can be especially true when trying out a product that will have a significant impact on the functionality and productivity of your business or utility.

I recently attended the 2014 Chicago Water Summit, and a phrase mentioned in passing by a water district manager stuck out to me as an interesting way to sum up this fear of the unknown: "the race to be second"—in other words, utilities or businesses wait for their peers to try new solutions or products, and everyone jumps on the bandwagon only after they see the frontrunner's success. Some might consider this a method of risk aversion; why be the

first to try out something new and unproven, when there are old, safe ways? The technology, however, may not be unproven—just unfamiliar.

With this in mind, *SWS* presents its third annual Case Book, an issue entirely devoted to case studies that present problems and their subsequent solutions. This issue is meant to inspire you to find creative ways to solve new and old problems, and to realize that this industry is full of innovation, if only one knows where to look.

Trying out new technologies or products can be daunting, but *SWS*'s case studies can show you the success others have had with challenges just like yours. Adopting new methods is the way to stay current and prepare for the future; sometimes the race isn't about who wins, but who stays in the running. **SWS**

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