



Tech Enhancing Lives

Summer is here and we are in the early stages of opening up the country after the pandemic. We are ready to embrace the warm weather and be outside with others, and companies also are looking to partner, collaborate to leverage disruptive change and form strategies to build on new technologies.

Unfortunately, we also are experiencing delays and shortages in the supply chain, particularly with the semiconductor chips that are used in many consumer technology applications including vehicles and PCs. Consumer spending behaviors fueled by remote work, virtual education and entertain-at-home trends during the pandemic had unpredictable consequences as well as factors like the pipeline hack that drove gas prices higher and other cyberattacks that include unforeseen effects. This situation has highlighted weaknesses in the U.S. tech ecosystem, specifically, dependence on overseas wafer and fab companies, and CTA predicts the chip shortages will last through the end of this year. Read CTA's findings in our policy section.

However, innovation continues to be the backbone of the economy as we look at new strategies automakers are using to extract more range than ever from EVs driving us closer to an electric future. We also take a look at the recent fascination with non-fungible tokens (NFTs) and how value is being embedded in the blockchain for digital art, music and entertainment at sometimes astronomical prices. In this issue we also sat down with Chief Diversity Officer and Director of People Strategy at Ford Motor Company Lori Costew for a conversation about the

company's focus on diversity, equity and inclusion strategies. She also is the author of several inspiring books for children. And Chief Digital Officer and Vice President at Caterpillar Inc., Ogi Redzic, shared how the company's autonomous technology has improved safety and increased productivity for its customers. We also look at how the deployment of self-driving vehicles will increase efficiency and productivity, reduce time spent in traffic, boost the economy and create millions of jobs — a compelling proposition going forward.

And finally we examine interfaces that one day could connect our laptops to our brains without a keyboard as well as augmented reality and virtual reality reenergized with new applications and CTA's latest research on the future of retail. In *i3*'s Market Beat column, see how digital payment systems, cashier-less stores and even AR may soon become a familiar component in retail strategy. We want to hear from you. Please send comments to: cstevens@CTA.tech.

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