



# Movin' Forward

► by **Bryce Schumann**, CEO, American Angus Association

## The long ride: Opportunities to shape the future

*One hundred and fifty years ago last month, a young man named Johnny Fry mounted up and spurred his horse down the streets of Saint Joseph, Mo. He carried with him the letters of hundreds of people — as well as the hopes of a nation.*

*Far to the west, bluffs marked the beginning of the frontier and the end of civilization. It would take 23 days and dozens of other Pony Express riders for the letters to reach Sacramento, Calif.*

### New frontier

Today, the frontier remains, but no longer is it geographical; it's technological.

And the economic opportunities are greater than they have ever been, although we live in a time of hyper-crisis and unprecedented public scrutiny.

A letter that once took three weeks to reach eager readers 1,500 miles away can now appear in a billion inboxes around the world in a matter of minutes.

A crisis, which once took days or even months to gain traction, can erupt at any place and at any given time and spread to every corner of the planet at the speed of light.

Like it or not, the tempo of our world is

dictated by things like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. And anti-agriculture organizations and activists now use social media as the centerpiece in their ongoing efforts to damage our interests.

During the last year, the American Angus Association has aggressively developed opportunities for our members to convey an ongoing positive message about agriculture.

Our YouTube channel has reached nearly 200,000 viewers so far. Many of the 170 videos are available by visiting [www.angus.org](http://www.angus.org), and all of them can be used at no charge on your own web sites.

Our social media presence on Facebook has increased substantially during the last six

months with fan pages for the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) and the American Angus Auxiliary. (Learn more by contacting the Association or by searching for the NJAA or Auxiliary on Facebook.)

Many of our staff and Board members are now graduates of the Masters of Beef Advocacy (MBA) program, a checkoff-funded program available through the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). This program — which anyone can take — arms individual producers with information and techniques to communicate the positive contributions of beef production. You can enroll in the program by visiting [www.beefusa.org](http://www.beefusa.org).

These opportunities are all available free of charge and equip individual farmers and ranchers with the tools needed to educate their communities, schools and customers about the positive aspects of cattle production.

Most importantly, they provide cattle producers with powerful tools to bridge the gaps between our farms and ranches and the people who purchase our products.

The world has changed greatly since Fry first loped across the continent. The lesson of his historic ride is that it will continue to change, and that our greatest opportunity is to help shape it.

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