ELECTRONICS REUSE CONFERENCE

The 16th annual Electronics Reuse Conference was held in Austin, Texas on November 10th – 13th, 2019. Nearly 400 attendees gathered in downtown Austin for another record-breaking year, including an exhibition of nearly 40 of the industry's leading vendors and 10 different networking meals, breaks and receptions.

ERC's 2019 agenda included nearly 40 individual educational panel discussions, talks, courses and workshops on a variety of industry topics. The Conference organizers at E-Reuse Services (ERS) claim that the Agenda is very much at the heart of what the conference is all about. "The individuals who make up our industry are the most qualified to determine what an educational agenda should be." said Mike Cheslock, Co-Founder of ERS. Throughout the year, the public can make topic suggestions through the ERC website, which the conference team aggregates and makes available for voting. "Then it's our job to track down qualified speakers with the expertise needed to do justice to those topics." he added. Topics like *Growth Strategies in the Device Repair Industry*, *Entrepreneurship: Working ON the Business vs. IN the Business,* and *Developing a Business Plan for Starting a Device Repair Service or Company* were a few of the popular sessions in the expansive, peer-selected agenda. Suggestions for ERC's 2020 agenda can be made here.

ERC 2018 in Nashville saw the introduction of several new initiatives, and 2019's event raised the bar even further. For example, the Official ERC App returned for a second straight year, with a few significant enhancements. Available well before the start of the conference, registered attendees had the option of using the App to connect with other App users, and even chatting through the app and setting up one-on-one meetings before they even touched down in Austin. Users' connections remain persistent over multiple events, and the App is live all year, so networking can continue well after the close of the conference. "By shifting to an all-digital program guide with the Conference App, not only are we able to provide a more interactive conference experience for our attendees and partners, but we are able to eliminate more than 20,000 pages of single-use printed material." said Sarah Kim, ERS Co-Founder.

That's just the beginning of ERC's waste-reducing initiatives. "By partnering with NSF International for the 2nd straight year to make ERC a Waste-Free Event, we were able to divert or eliminate virtually all waste that that would normally be associated with an event of ERC's footprint and duration. " Sarah said. A separate press-release from NSF with more details is expected shortly.

ERC 2019 took place over Veterans' Day (US) and Remembrance Day (CAN), and the conference organizers made sure to honor current and former members of the armed services, as well as raise money for the Wounded Warrior Project to benefit service-disabled veterans and their families with the help of Schupan Recycling.

The ERS team recognizes that providing value, year after year, is the only way that ERC can continue to grow as it has. "We spend a tremendous amount of time working to find the perfect balance between prepared, structured content, and impromptu networking and camaraderie. Organized networking receptions and meals and an awesome agenda are critical, but we always want to leave room for the random high-intensity Jenga game, or pop-up poker night because people remember and get value from these moments" Mike said. "Deals are done, and partnerships developed whenever you get like-minded professionals together in the right setting. Our job is to be the best at providing that setting." Sarah added. That setting is getting noticed. ERC was joined by 175 first-time attendees in 2019, largely due to word-of-mouth marketing.

Once again, ERC honored three exceptional E-Reuse Industry professionals during the Tuesday night Reception & Awards Ceremony, each of whom were nominated by industry professionals and voted in by former ERC Awards Recipients. Matt Zieminski, formerly of Puls and iFixit, was awarded ERC's "Rising Star" award for his work in the Right to Repair movement. Shay Kripalani of Injured Gadgets was selected to receive the "Innovation Award" for his people-first, integrity-based approach to supplying the device repair industry with parts and accessories. Neil Peters-Michaud of Cascade Asset Management received the "Jim Lynch (Hall of Fame) Award", and Jim himself sited Neil's work setting up a de-manufacturing facility in Ethiopia, efforts to funnel refurbished computers through logical digital equity programs, and commitment to social justice through digital inclusion.

ERC 2020 will be held in Nashville, TN, November 15th – 18th at the Hilton Nashville Downtown. Interested parties can sign up for ERC updates by subscribing at eResuseConference.com.

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