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Two Valuable Days at ARF AxS 2026

Dear Rachael,

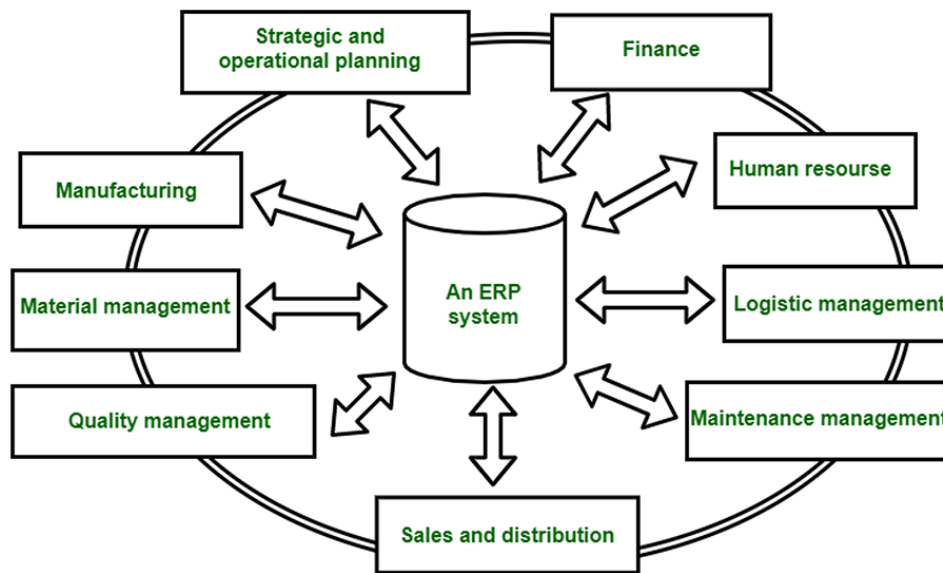


Howard Shimmel received the Erwin Ephron Demystification Award at ARF AxS 2026

Two mind-altering keynotes. Another installment of the ARF Attention Validation study and many well-chosen breakout sessions upholding the importance of context effects and how attention fits into a more complex picture of attention, emotion, motivation, and behavior. A visionary new product from Nielsen. How AI is changing everything, according to everybody, and most usefully by Shelly Palmer. A look back at ARF's accomplishments on its 90th birthday. Honoring the late Radha Subramanyam. Awarding Howard Shimmel the Erwin Ephron Demystification Award. On the measurement front, a twice-recurring

theme of industry pitching in to create great things together.

It was the Advertising Research Foundation's annual AUDIENCExSCIENCE conference hosted by People, Inc. in their stylish New York City quarters. Bob Lord, President of Horizon, was the Day One Keynote speaker. He predicted that some agencies would arise again as the trusted growth partners of advertisers in sharp contrast to their current status as vendors. These would be agencies with unified and open technology systems. He described these both as operating systems and as learning systems. He proposed that marketing become integrated into the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.



By "open" he meant collaborative and able to accept new technologies they themselves had not invented. He advised us all that explainability is almost as important as results. Without explainability there is no guarantee that good results can be repeated. And that results must be the universally accepted results of the CEO, CFO, Wall Street, i.e., growth as measured by money, not by vague proxies.

On Day Two, the opening Keynote address was given by the inimitable Laura Martin, Senior Internet & Media Analyst at Needham & Company, on Wall Street's View of the Ad Industry. Laura has spoken before at these ARF conferences, and once again, she shook up the minds of the audience. She painted a picture of how four American technology companies are rising to world dominance: Google, Meta, Amazon, and Microsoft. They are all betting on AI, and Wall Street, she reported, is betting on them to be right.

[Read the entire article](#)

Building Your



*Building High-Performing Teams: Our **latest podcast** explores the topic of Being in the In-between Phase, a liminal stage of growth when we can feel disoriented, lonely, or frustrated, and why it's also a powerful indicator that real growth is happening. Rather than rushing to "fix" the discomfort, this episode invites listeners to slow down, listen more deeply to themselves, and learn how to navigate uncertainty with trust, patience, and self-awareness.*

This month's podcast is ~46 minutes. [Watch the Video](#)

All my best,

Bill

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