Backstage:
News from the PSA
August/September/October 2020

President's Letter:

Hello! It's hard to know where to begin with this edition's letter as so much has happened in the three months since the last edition of Backstage, both within the PSA and in the wider world.

If one thing has become clear among the uncertainty and confusion that has permeated so many areas of our personal and professional lives over the last few months, it is that we need to embrace change. Not just the things that have already changed either, but the fact that things are going to continue to change and that change itself will become the norm.

I've seen a number of people online talking about waiting for things to change back to 'normal', i.e. how things used to be. I think you could be in for a long wait. Our industry has changed and while 'in the room' events will undoubtably restart, hybrid and virtual events will now be a much bigger part of our lives and our businesses and we ignore that change at our peril.

We all enjoy the buzz of standing in front of an adoring audience (if you don't, you really are in the wrong business) and while online events don't necessarily deliver that in the same way for us as speakers, perhaps we should focus more on the value and content we provide than the applause and accolades we receive. Any presentation, whether online or onstage, needs to be all about the audience, not about our egos, and we need to change how we measure our success. Making a difference to our audience's lives and businesses is more important than the length of the standing ovation and our customers are going to be asking us to make that difference to an audience on a screen just as much as on a stage from now on.

Probably the biggest 'in-house' change is the announcement that this year's PSA Speaking Business Summit will now be a virtual convention. We're in the process of reworking the programme to ensure we include as much content and as many social and networking opportunities as possible, without overwhelming everyone and leaving us all with eye-strain from staring at a screen for too long.

It's going to be different, that's for sure, and parts of it might be a bit of an experiment, but I'm keen we all see this as an opportunity to experience the new and emerging formats of virtual conferences as well as learning, sharing and enjoying our annual convention just as much as ever. Programme and ticket details coming soon but keep 9th & 10th October clear in your diary.

Have a good Summer and see you in the Autumn!

Regards,

Steve Bustin
PSA National President

The following was sent out to all members on 12 June. We reproduce it here for anyone who has not seen it.

From the board

Dear All,

The news agenda over the last couple of weeks has been led by the anger and revulsion felt over the death of George Floyd in the US and the ensuing discussion and protests over the ongoing issue of racism not just in America but around the world. Racism is a blight on our society and we condemn it and the inequalities it causes, and we should all be looking to ensure we don't further it, consciously or unconsciously. We know that the events of the last fortnight have caused great hurt to many of our members and we want to acknowledge that and let them know that we stand with them.

The Board have been discussing and reflecting on what has been said and done over the last few days and wanted to restate our commitment to ensuring the PSA is an organisation that celebrates diversity and inclusion in all its forms. We want to make sure everyone is welcome in the PSA and at PSA events, everyone is listened to (as an individual member, as well as from the stage) and that everyone is celebrated for who they are.

Our diversity makes us stronger as an organisation and we can all learn from each other about our different life experiences – and by doing so understand the different backgrounds and life experiences present in our audiences and reflect those in our content. Many of our members talk about their lives and backgrounds from the stage whereas for others it is incidental to what they speak about and the way they run their business – but is still an important part of who they are as an individual and should be celebrated as such.

While the PSA is a diverse organisation, our membership and their voices do not – yet – represent the diversity of our society here in the UK and we have work to do to rectify that. Our Finance Director, Shaz Nawaz, has been

PSA Foundation

In life and work, we all need help occasionally and the coronavirus crisis has only made support more vital. In response to the crisis the PSA Foundation and office team have put together a page of weblinks and phone numbers for when you may need support. See what the PSA does to keep us connected and the external organisations that can help us too, please do visit the webpage and tell other members about it: **www.thepsa.co.uk/support**

heading a working group over the last few months, looking at all forms of diversity and inclusion within the PSA. The group is made up of representatives from a cross section of our diverse community – and those who do not identify as belonging to any of those communities but who have an interest or experience in the issues under discussion. The group are currently looking at a range of issues from our recruitment of members to the language and imagery we use and the speakers who appear on our stages and screens.

We feel diversity is an important part of who we are an organisation. We want to assure you we will do everything we can, with your support, to ensure our organisation represents and reflects our diverse community.

The group will be making recommendations to the Board and at that point we will come back to the membership with positive and affirmative actions we can all take as individuals and as an organisation to ensure that diversity, inclusion and celebrating difference is at the heart of what we all do. Stay safe, stay well and if you're struggling, please do reach out to your PSA family – we really are stronger together. Regards,

Steve Bustin, PSA National President
Shaz Nawaz, Finance Director and Board lead on Diversity and Inclusion
On behalf of the PSA Board

Forthcoming Events

A number of events have been subject to change – particularly the Speaking Business Summit which will of course be virtual. Please do check with PSA regional presidents to verify that these events are continuing – and for the Zoom info so you can attend!

August			
5th	PSA North West	**18th**	PSA Staffordshire
11th	PSA South West	**20th**	PSA Thames Valley
12th	PSA North East		
September			
2nd	PSA East Midlands	**12th**	PSA London
3rd	PSA Home Counties North	**16th**	PSA North West
8th	PSA South West	**17th**	PSA Thames Valley
8th	PSA South East	**19th**	PSA Ireland
9th	PSA North East	**22nd**	PSA Staffordshire
October			
14th	PSA North East	**20th**	PSA Staffordshire
15th	PSA Thames Valley	**24th**	PSA Yorkshire
17th	PSA Ireland		

Speaking Business Summit

October - planning in process, to be confirmed!

New board members

We are delighted to announce two new appointments to your PSA Board of Directors.

Michelle Mills-Porter joins the board in the previously vacant role of Membership Director:

"The PSA has been the most supportive and inspirational association for me and I have been involved and committed since day one, serving as Regional Director, gaining Fellowship, and always getting involved at our conferences.

"5 years to the day of joining PSA I received the phone call inviting me to the board. I am honoured and thrilled to take up the role as Membership Director and very much look forward to serving you."

Guy Clapperton joins the board and is set to take the role of Regional Director when Lynda Shaw becomes National President:

"I'm really looking forward to continuing Lynda's excellent work and above all finding out what in the world a region actually is while we've all gone virtual anyway! This is a heck of a time to be joining the board and I'm both excited and slightly daunted by the challenge of making a worthwhile contribution."

We are excited about the contributions they can make to the PSA and we're sure you'll join us in wishing them the best of luck in their roles.

You can find a list of the Board of Directors on the PSA website, as well as a summary of what your Board does.

Guy is also editor of Backstage and being an idle whatsit has filched the above from the PSA Facebook page – in case any readers think they've seen it before!

Member Benefits

Being a member of The PSA brings with it a wide range of practical benefits:

- Discount rates on Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance tailored specially for professional speakers, via thepsa.co.uk/membership/benefits/insurance/
- Access to the PSA Members Only Facebook Group for advice, discussion and news pertinent to you and your speaking business.
- A free profile on the PSA Member Directory on the PSA website - be visible to speaker bookers and increase your web presence. Sign up via **espeakers.com/welcome-psauk/** (Professional Members and Fellows only)
- Benefit from the Member referral scheme: Remember that if you are named as a referrer of a new member who joins the PSA (at any membership level) then you get a thank you of a voucher entitling you to attend one PSA regional meeting for free.
- Access to our fantastic new video platform, the Speakers' Hub, packed with insights and wisdom on essential topics for all professional speakers. Access via **thepsa.co.uk/membership/benefits/the-speakers-hub/**
- 10% discount on office space for office or meeting purposes from the Citibase network. Visit **www.citibase.com/locations** and when making the booking quote **CITIBASEMEETINGSPSAOFFER**.

For membership and subscription queries contact **admin@thepsa.co.uk** or call **0333 444 8910**. To contact the President email **president@thepsa.co.uk** or to contact the Chair of the Board email **chair@thepsa.co.uk.** More information can be found on **www.thepsa.co.uk**