

Manchester, 6 July 2017

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A message from your HBAA Chairs

"It was great to see nearly 300 of you at our recent Annual Forum, 2020 Vision which was held at the Mercure Manchester Piccadilly on the 6th July. We wanted to change the format of our main showcase event so we cut it down to just one day. This did not mean that the content would be any lighter and we hope the new format worked for you.



It is important to bring people together, to exchange ideas and to learn from each other. The industry possesses some exceptional talent and there is an opportunity to innovate in processes to support the development of people and the HBAA Annual Forum is the place to accomplish this.

At the outset of our year as Chairs we wanted to ensure that HBAA continued to keep the topics that affect our industry at the top of our agenda, therefore the content was formed around these.

Rohit Talwar delivered the first key note session of the day to get you all thinking what 2020 could look like, but the key message was that we work in a service industry and this needs to remain at the forefront.

Nick de Bois' interview was insightful and brought attention to the work the BVEP and the Events Industry Board carry out on our behalf – the Government is listening to us!

We tackled the talent gap and how to address this. Our great panelists agreed that we all need to take responsibility for this, from our universities and recruitment specialists to the industry employers. Flexibility is key.

The Great Debate discussed the sustainability of the commission model and the conclusion is that whilst we need to look at incorporating other commercial models into our business for the benefit of the end client, the commission model is here to stay.

Our Campfire sessions and Leadership Workshop were a huge success and the interactivity between you all was great to see.

Our grand finale was delivered by Mandy Hickson and the messages of team work, empowerment, trust and loyalty were presented to us in the most uplifting way. Mandy received a standing ovation which I have never seen at one of our events.

A special thank you to Matthew Wall for facilitating the day, the Mercure Manchester Piccadilly and our very own Events Committee. A great day and evening all round!



Whether you made it to Manchester or not, we hope this supplement provides an insight to the day, and we hope to see you all at our Members Meeting on 2nd November in London."

Louise Goalen, HBAA Chair and Louisa Watson, Venue Chair

Rohit Talwar – CEO Fast Future: How the world has changed

Are we forward thinking enough? Technology is evolving at a rapid pace and clients do everything individually. Businesses need to demonstrate innovation and creativity to outdo competitors and understand new concepts and disruptors e.g. Airbnb.



Future proofed organisations work on three horizons in parallel:

- **1-12 months** - operational excellence
- **1-3 years** - search forward
- **4-10 years** - understand future drivers

Emotional and analytical/rational skills are necessary. Our lifestyle is changing so buying behaviour and lifestyle choices are changing. We're hearing about one emergency after another and we need to be flexible and creative where fast solutions are needed.

Innovation and growth are rapid. Every sector will transform by 2020, but how will our DNA change? Will we play by the rules of the game, or create a new game? Now's the time to innovate; make time to think, cut the noise that adds no value to the organisation

There's a new mindset, looking at what the marketplace needs and what data you need to achieve it. Getting obsessed with technology is fine, but we need to understand it. Machines are smarter than humans; every asset on the planet could be owning itself, i.e. smart cars, flying cars, who knows what your car is doing right now.

What can we do to take the stress out of an organisation to encourage people to develop? Help people in the business understand the different mindsets of others and see what they're experiencing.

With a world of perfect knowledge there's a need to create opportunities and challenges. We need to allow time and space for creative people to get thinking. Understanding and empowering employees who can come up with flexible solutions will differentiate us from digital companies who only deal with data.

Engage with millennials - capture their best ideas, encourage them to work on issues and pressure them to take control over their future. Their findings and learnings impact how they come into the business, and their motivation.

Whilst taking all this into consideration, remember - customer engagement, and then plan your strategy.

The Event Industry Board: An interview with Nick de Bois

Until a few years ago, UK Government didn't consider there to be an industry behind an event, it was completely unrecognised.

The **BVEP** (Business Visits and Events Partnership) is an unfunded organisation which represents all the industry associations and lobbies government representing events and business tourism, and it helps in creating a business visits and events strategy.

The **EIB** (Event Industry Board) is an organisation which acts as a sounding board and point of dialogue between Ministers and the industry. It looks for ways to improve and promote the UK events sector such as supporting with bidding for major international events.

83% think we will do more business next year- are we being too optimistic? (*C&IT report*).



We need to take advantage of Brexit and focus on bringing more business into the UK and not let the government create or leave barriers. We are in a political testosterone moment - After the German elections, things will calm down. The EIB will move from being an advisory body to becoming a delivery body, with political support to deliver on strategies.

Tackling The Talent Gap



(appearance left to right) **Jenny Royall** - Royall. **Emma Abson** - Sheffield Hallam University. **Nick Scott** - arrangeMy. **Lisa Redding** - QHotels. Moderator: **Samme Allen** - Sequoia Partnership.

What are the existing challenges?

Redding said the main challenge for QHotels is the engagement with colleges and universities in order to win best talent and graduates may not have a clear understanding of the events industry when they first join. *Scott* added there's high turnover in the industry, when the company cannot match people's career paths and expectations.

Abson responded that on a local level the universities and businesses engage well, however this is not done on a macro level. Lecturers are there to help students expand their minds but employers need to support in finding the right place for them within the industry. *Royall* went on to say that millennials need to be educated about where the economy stands so their expectations are managed.

Scott shared how there needs to be an incentive to bring parents back to work in our industry by saying that home working and flexible working hours can help people be more productive and combine their personal and professional lives.

Royall supported this message by suggesting we re-brand 'working at home' as 'smart working'. This will create an ethos of not 'going' to work - you're 'already' at work - though attitudes and behaviours may need to change to reflect the culture that it's one environment, just a different place. If there's a work/life balance, it's an opportunity. If there's no balance, it's a challenge

70% of the audience currently offer flexible working.



In most cases, the industry promotes that a degree is necessary for employment however *Abson* says that the fragmentation of the industry makes a university job more challenging.

Educators and employers need to have an open dialogue to share what's relevant because within the industry we all do different jobs, and in different ways. Lecturers can open their students' eyes to what's out there and give them the insight into what roles and opportunities are available.

Abson goes on to say that employers are looking for experienced employees and students are hungry to get jobs, however very few companies offer work experience opportunities and we as an industry need to address this.

Is it the universities responsibility to build relationships with the industry? Yes – universities' do always try to do this but as there are so many businesses, particularly the SMEs should also proactively get in touch. *Scott* added to this to say that he has previously gone into his local college to talk to students about the opportunities available in the agency sector, but they're not interested and not engaged and asked the question of what we can do to change that.

Training is another highlighted challenge and it's thought that it needs to be personalised to individual needs and requirements. *Scott* supported this message by saying

that everyone at ArrangeMY has their own training programme and they're investing in their people and currently hold the ISO2001.

Are millennials fast tracked? *Redding* suggested that now people will do what it takes to ensure they get where they want to be and progress quicker than ever before.

Development in technology is key to allow us to be more flexible in creating an environment millennials want to work in. However, *Abson* finished with saying that you need to hand hold millennials to help them through. Her advice is that they're confident and bring value, but don't change everything to meet their needs as they need to adapt to your working environment.

Key takeaways:

- Identify talent gaps in all areas and at all levels of the business and value employees and clients as human beings.
- Change your rhetoric: this is a great industry to work in.
- Communicate with staff to retain them - it's not all about the money.
- Encourage more entry level employees to join the industry.
- Let's stop saying the talent gap is a problem and let's start doing something about it.

The Great Debate

'The house believes that the commission based business model has a future beyond 2020.'

FOR

- Boutique agencies have fewer contracted clients, they try to avoid involving procurement and work with clients who book off policy, so their main income comes through commission.
- Commissions allow full flexibility.
- More clients are happy to work with the commissionable model as it is simple.



(appearance left to right) Against: **Samme Allen** - Sequoia Partnership. **Richard John** - Realise. Moderator: **Matthew Wall** - MSW Consults. For: **Chris Peacock** - Conference Care. **Lauren Goodwin** - Jupiter Hotels. **Guy Mason** - Brief2Event.

AGAINST

- Commission levels influence what venues are put forward.
- Agents based on commission don't try to negotiate the best price.
- Event services should be paid based on a fixed fee.

Following the spirited positioning of their views from our debaters, the audience voted FOR - 74% to 26%.

Feedback from Campfire sessions

There were some fantastic discussions during our campfire sessions. Here are just some of the key outputs:

Alternative Accommodation

- Need more members to provide increased distribution and access to drive understanding on both sides.
- Standardisation – HBAA to share guidance, eg from ASAP, and also share knowledge of the available options and choices.
- We should encourage virtual tours, accreditation and further guidance.



PR

- Survey research work well for external use.
- Identified issue – difficult to get approval from clients for case studies but work well when you do.

HBAA 2020 Vision

- Get experiential agencies and TMCs involved.
- Speed networking events.
- Include more event agencies as part of the association.
- Set up HBAA youth group.

Personal Brand

- Align personal and corporate brand. Trust, reputation, authenticity – underpins your personal brand.

Safety/security

- So many issues around data and privacy, how does this affect guest security?
- How are we addressing this?

Social

- Measure engagement, not the size of your following.
- Dedicated resource to social marketing.
- Instagram is the channel to watch.

Small meetings technology

- Instant bookings create efficiencies saving time and money.
- Increased revenue.
- Challenge – integrating technology for real time availability.



Dream team

- Make sure every voice is heard, build trust and mutual respect.
- Failure is allowed.
- Encourage direct conversation and open speaking.

Stress management

- Need a paradigm shift in realising there are mental health issues in our industry.
- Doing more: e.g. offer yoga in the workplace to relieve stress.
- High pressure industry has an impact on our wellbeing.

Creativity

- Unleash the talent you have to provide authentic experiences.
- There are very many ways of being creative.
- Even the smallest of creative touches can lead to a truly engaging experience for clients.

Guest speaker - Mandy Hickson

Dream it.
Believe it.
Do it!



Key take away of the day!

Collaboration and knowledge sharing is key! Although we're competitors we're allies in what we do and can make a difference, and together we can make a change!

View full gallery of the day and our dinner on our [website](#) or visit our [Facebook](#) page.

A huge thank you to everyone who supported on our fundraising on the night, we've successfully raised a further £1000 for Beyond Food through your generous donations.

SAVE THE DATES

 01 Nov 2017

Agent Engagement Meeting
London

 02 Nov 2017

Members Meeting
London

 12 Jan 2018

AGM / Kick-Off / Dinner
London

We'd love to hear your thoughts on this or any of our events, so please share via any of the below channels:

 @The_HBAA

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HBAA

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and hospitality sector