

{ ACT ANNUAL CONFERENCE }

COLIN TYLER

Treasurers like to debate the issues keeping them awake at night



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I am writing this in the aftermath of our hugely successful Annual Conference in Liverpool at the beginning of May. I hope you were able to follow us on Twitter @actupdate #actac13 and via www.treasurers.org/blogs/petermatza. You will also be able to read about some of the highlights in this edition of *The Treasurer* (see page 18) and I have a few observations of my own that I would like to share.

The overwhelming message of this event – and everything else that we do – is that treasurers want to share their knowledge and experience with other treasurers. As speakers, corporate treasurers from the UK, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Russia and the United Arab Emirates went the extra mile and gave up valuable time to debate and discuss the issues that are keeping them awake at night. Delegates from more than 32 countries in total – including representatives from national treasury associations in Germany, the US, Russia, Poland, China/Hong Kong and Ireland – engaged during the presentations and in the networking opportunities, proving that the language of treasury is global. The conference was a further demonstration that professional bodies are setting the agenda for the treasury



ACT president Jono Slade welcomed conference delegates

profession and we at the ACT are thrilled to be able to play a leading part.

On a strategic level, the conference confirmed that treasurers are being asked to do more thinking about their organisations and their own roles. Treasurers talked about their broad perspective of their organisation and the environment in which it operates. They argued that they are ideally positioned to facilitate the integrated thinking that will help their organisations to achieve sustainable value creation. At the conference, the ACT released its survey, *The Contemporary Treasurer 2013* (see www.treasurers.org/node/9030), which gives background depth and perspective to this position.

What is beyond doubt is that treasurers are now expected to bring treasury management into their businesses rather than run their function independently. Treasurers must show that they can overcome the inbuilt barriers to working together with their operational colleagues and demonstrate that the organisation will be better off with the application of the treasurer's deep knowledge of financial risk into those operations.

Of course, a conference such as ours depends on sponsors and exhibitors to play their part in bringing the treasury community together and we are very appreciative of their support. In addition, competition between services, ideas and capability is vital to

a healthy financial services sector. Although the financial crisis may have held some corporates back from making much-needed investment in treasury management and support systems, technology is playing its part in helping the modern treasurer. A recent ACT/Kyriba survey, *Using Technology to Drive Strategic Treasury* (see page 56 and www.treasurers.org/kyriba), suggested that more than 50% of all new treasury management platform implementations will be cloud-based in the near future.

The most pleasing aspect of the conference for me was the interaction between senior treasurers and tomorrow's treasurers, epitomised by our *Ones to Watch* publication (see www.treasurers.org/node/9031). We think that a successful treasurer in the 21st century needs to be skilled, artful, agile, proactive and, most of all, ACT qualified (forgive the boast).

I am pleased to say that Richard Raeburn, chairman of the European Association of Corporate Treasurers, will be writing this column next month. To find out more about the EACT, visit www.eact.eu, and you can follow Richard on Twitter @RichardRaeburn. I feel sure he will entertain you with his hindsight, insight and foresight. Hmm... I wonder where I might have heard that phrase before... ♥

What are your thoughts on the June issue of *The Treasurer*? Email me at ctyler@treasurers.org or tweet @ColinTyl

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