

Two days that shape the world



PETER MATZA EXPLAINS WHY ACTAC IS THE YEAR'S MUST-ATTEND EVENT FOR TREASURY PROFESSIONALS.

There are a lot of ways for treasurers and other finance professionals to stay up to date, and reading *The Treasurer*, attending an ACT training course or following the CPD updates on the ACT website must all rate fairly highly on the value scale. But if there is one absolutely sure-fire way for treasury professionals to ensure that they are at the cutting edge of their profession it is this: attend the ACT Annual Conference, to be held once again in Manchester, on 27 and 28 April.

What sets the ACT Annual Conference programme apart is its attention to the detail of treasury management allied with a focus on the critical issues facing treasurers in business and the wider economy. In addition, recognising the increasing demands on the time of busy finance professionals, the restyled conference packs a powerful punch in just two days of intensive activity.

Whether it's practical presentations, formal debate or informal networking, there is no other conference anywhere in Europe that

Box 1: Out in force

The ACT events team will be highly visible during the conference helping delegates to manage their time effectively for both active working and networking sessions. The ACT executive, education, communications, publishing and policy and technical staff will also be available throughout the conference. They welcome all interaction with members, students (current and prospective!) and all our exhibitors, sponsors and other supporters at the conference.

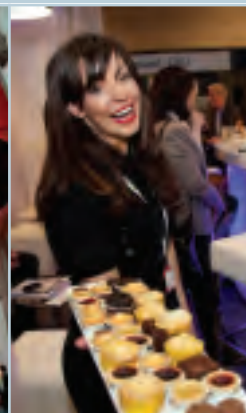
Box 2: Show, tell and get stuck in

The exhibition is an integral part of the whole conference. It is designed to offer an easily accessible interactive experience rather than just a "show and tell" arcade. The exhibitors welcome delegates visiting their individual displays and will be well prepared for the competition and challenge of ideas developing as the conference progresses and delegates assimilate the ideas, suggestions and solutions presented by plenary speakers and the track sessions and debates.

Whether it's transmission banking, asset management, team recruitment (or personal career advancement!), systems solutions or even education and training from the ACT itself, the exhibition brings together the entire treasury industry in one concentrated hub. The exhibition hall is also the refreshment area to ensure the most effective use of networking and relaxation space.

allows treasurers to come together on such a scale and really understand what their peers are doing to confront today's challenges. No other forum in Europe exists in which so many treasurers are willing to share their experiences to help their peers in (in the words of this year's conference theme) "shaping the future". In addition, to support a conference of this stature, a comprehensive exhibition offers an environment in which treasurers can learn and experience what banks, systems providers, asset managers and others are able to offer to help them meet the challenges and opportunities.

What is important, of course, is for treasury management to be recognised within the context of the wider business and commercial imperatives. The keynote conference speakers such as the well-known economist and author, professor Tim Congdon CBE, the CBI director general, Richard Lambert, and leisure and entertainment specialist, Pierre Yves Gerbeau of Millennium Dome repete, will





provide vision, depth and balance to the business debate.

Market practitioners such as David Bloom, global head of FX strategy at HSBC and Paul Ward, head of corporate coverage, EMEA, RBS, will provide focused and practical treasury comment. The keynote addresses – on funding, risk management, pensions and regulation – will give delegates food for thought to take into the working heart of the conference.

The Track sessions – scheduled over both days to maximise variety and choice – have as their *raison d'être* the distillation of qualitative treasury management expertise from treasurers with many years of hard-won experience. Each session will allow time for the audience to consider, analyse and challenge the collective wisdom and approach of the market providers, treasurers and other practitioners. That they

Box 3: Wine, dine and rumba

The Gala Dinner will be held close to the conference venue at Manchester's Palace Hotel. This year's speaker, John Sergeant, journalist and broadcaster, needs little introduction although it is unlikely there will be a masterclass in Latin dancing – except perhaps for the night owls at the after-dinner bar!

have been hugely successful over past years is no accident: content is deliberately prepared, expertise carefully selected and debate perfectly marshalled.

Topics covered range across the entire field of treasury, finance and risk management. It is always instructive to understand the session choices made by delegates: does the need for ratings information mean that M&A has to be out to one side? Is the focus on cash management distinct from getting to grips with working capital controls? Is the demand to understand less familiar markets such as Latin America part and parcel of the new techniques for foreign exchange risk management? Whatever the final outcome, each session promises up-to-the-minute content, corporate case studies and the opportunity for all delegates to engage the experts in getting to the meat of each topic.

A feature of recent conferences that has become a firm favourite of delegates is the Question Time debate that will close the conference on Wednesday afternoon. This year it will be facilitated by journalist and broadcaster Mishal Hussein, and as usual there will be lively debate from the panellists on topics contributed by the audience.

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