

{ ACT EVENTS }

PETER MATZA

The speakers' chair for the ACT on how treasurers continue to add value to organisations

What is it I need to know? It's a question many of us in our busy, day-to-day professional lives don't take much time to stop and consider. From keeping up to date with the latest technologies to taking a step back and re-evaluating how treasury is adding value to our businesses, we are all often guilty of not reflecting on where we stand as a profession and what we could do differently to be more efficient or value-creative.

Answering these questions is made even more difficult by the prevalence of uncertainty: geopolitical events, the variability of economic growth and market volatility all muddy the waters. Concurrently, the pace of technological advancement, social trends and ways of working are providing numerous opportunities and challenges to how treasury operates.

In short, there's a duopoly at play, which is redefining the treasurer's role. We'll get some measure of the extent of this when we publish findings of this year's *Contemporary Treasurer* – the ACT's comprehensive annual survey tracking treasurers' views on their role in corporate financial strategy and business growth; how they are spending their time compared with five years ago; and how far they have come in strategic engagement terms.



SHUTTERSTOCK

Of course, change is inevitable in the treasury world – some might argue it's just all part of the day job – but with new risks and challenges, and also opportunities around every corner, when do we get to stop and take a moment to debate these questions?

The ACT Smart Cash Conference in February provided an opportunity for delegates to share their best practice approach to treasury structures, such as cross-currency notional pooling and in-house banking. The programme also covered supply chain issues, shifts in the regulatory environment and a fascinating debate around the role of corporate treasury in relation to cybercrime. Don't miss your copy of the full conference report available with this issue.

On 16-17 May in Manchester, the ACT Annual

Conference will bring the treasury community together on a much larger scale to hear about the issues affecting it and impacting business – and what the treasury world is thinking and doing in response. Justifying time out of the office is becoming increasingly difficult, so this year we've developed a new, time-efficient, concentrated two-day format that's full of practical takeaways. The conference will also provide thought-provoking external perspectives on international business and trade, UK plc post-Article 50, and ethical hacking – a live demonstration that will offer a fascinating insight into the sophistication of the cybercriminal and the measures you need to take to prevent an attack. Be sure to check out the brochure included with this issue, featuring the latest content updates.

Certain themes appear year after year – diversity, sustainability, regulation. This year, the ACT's new chief executive, Caroline Stockmann, will lead a session on embracing diversity for

real business benefit, a cause she has been committed to throughout her career, as she discusses in our profile of her on page 18.

In regulatory terms, treasurers often find themselves between a rock and a hard place, with business objectives pitted against the practicalities of regulation. The regulation feature on page 22 of this issue, 'Piecing together the regulatory puzzle,' will go some way to helping make sense of the latest developments. Delegates at the conference will have further opportunity to hear about regulatory change, such as money market fund reforms – particularly the low volatility net asset value fund, as well as to hear from representatives from the Bank of England on Financial Markets Codes of Practice, their relevance for corporates and what is expected of all market participants.

With so much going on, it's a good job we've got the conference app again this year to help us all keep track! I look forward to welcoming you to Manchester, and to engaging with as many of you as possible, professionally and socially, throughout the conference. ♡



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