



Russell Grossman ABC,FRSA, International Chair

*“Meaningful dialogue, tangible takeaways, great location, food inspiration and knowledge”*



Yes, it's the **World Conference**, presented in San Francisco by IABC, from 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> June.

Conference Chair, Preston Lewis, and his group of 25 have spent the past eleven months making sure this signature event stays relevant and valuable in 2015 for both communicators and businesspeople.

For the blurb in one page, go to <http://wc.iabc.com/about/> but in a sentence, this is the world's largest gathering of comms practitioners, speakers and thoughts in one place.

“We reviewed over 250 proposals this year and selected those we felt would inspire, enlighten and offer the next-level thinking that demonstrates the real value of communication” said Preston.

We're on track to expect over 1,200 communication professionals and local business people at the Conference.

With five focused tracks, sixty sessions at four career levels and five formats, make sure you're there! To book: <http://wc.iabc.com/registration/>

## What's cooking?

From IABC International Chair,  
Russell Grossman ABC, FRSA

Here's the second Quarterly Update for 2015 – a roundup of IABC achievements and plans at the International level.

Earlier in April I was in London at our Europe, Middle East & N Africa region conference. One of the topics, by incoming EMENA Region Chair **Klavs Valskov**, AB's **Katie Macaulay** and HSBC's **Ulrike Felber**, was especially good : on the value of listening and the power of 'employee voice'.

“No-one is as smart as everyone” said Katie, adding that social media is a behaviour, not a tool.

Through my year as International Chair I've tried to incorporate this kind of philosophy as much as possible, listening hard to others, and inviting challenge as part of developing ideas for the future.

Thus it was that we recently held a focus group at Pfizer's World HQ in New York of senior communicators, gathered for us by NY IABC Chapter Chair Bob Libbey and Past International Chair, Mark Schumann ABC, IABC Fellow.

The group, mostly non-, or lapsed members, were united in the potential of IABC to make a global difference for and by communicators and to be a stronger voice for the profession in the business and wider world.

“But at the moment, IABC is just talking to itself” one retorted. “Unless you sort your external communications out, no-one will hear you” (an ironic moment, because until it was dropped last year, IABC was using the infamous tagline “Be Heard”).

It's often said that to the outside world IABC is just a well-kept secret. Some of our chapters are very happily introspective, yet the quality of members and their work (just look at the brilliance of this year's Gold Quill entries, with over 300 Award winners) means this is a hugely untapped resource. The Association, business and society at large are all losing out.

So we've created a new international standing committee devoted to improving our external communications and to putting IABC more on the map much more effectively among three distinct audiences.

Those audiences are: (1) **communicators, globally**, who are not traditional members of IABC but who will nevertheless attend events and speak well of us; (2) **industry media and stakeholders**, with whom we can also present a campaigning platform for the profession and (3) the **wider business** community, so it comes to recognise the value which effective communications, and IABC specifically, can add to their firm's success.

This, together with our new brand (to be publicly launched from June 1<sup>st</sup>) and refresher media training for our Vice Chair, Chair and Past Chair, means we will in the future speak more powerfully for IABC, the industry and business.

Thank you for listening.

## IABC Website - Almost There



As we were compiling this second *Quarterly Update*, our Headquarters staff were overseeing the latter stages of changes to IABC's website which have taken some three years to plan and put in.

Much of the new website went live last December, with a fresher, simpler look and easier to navigate sections.

The 'back end' to the website however is the real gubbins : this has been about moving our membership management system from old to new software and getting everything to work reliably.

We'd like to thank chapter leaders for bearing with us while we've done this. We're nearly there. The final changes to the website will be made in the summer to reflect IABC's new brand, which launches from June 1<sup>st</sup>.

## IABC To Produce Annual Report

As part of uprating our internal and external communications, IABC will produce an Annual Report this year – the first time for many years. It will be available as an interactive PDF in early June and formally presented at the AGM on 16th June at the World Conference.

An Annual Report Committee of Russell Grossman ABC, Alix Edmiston ABC, Meryl David ABC, Ryan Williams ABC and Vita Kernel ABC are overseeing the publication, which is being produced pro-bono with Canadian ImageStudio Creative Communications Ltd ([www.imagestudio.co](http://www.imagestudio.co)).

## Progress Continues With 2015 Business Plan

Last June, IABC signed off a new, three year, long-term strategy.

This says that “**financial recovery** and **sustainability** is primary, as is the loyalty and development of our members and leaders and consolidating gains from the 2011-14 strategy”.

The strategy goes on to say that what is then important for the Association is “**increased reputation** in, and for, the profession; **better brand positioning**; and greater **interaction with business** as a revenue generator. In a changing world, these are the big opportunities to be grasped.”

Our 2015 Business Plan reflects these priorities and is divided into ‘business as usual’ and ‘changing the business’. The Plan gives a clear prioritised framework for IABC's leaders and staff to operate within. This second Quarterly Report for 2015 reflects progress.

Our ‘**business as usual**’ priorities this year are:

1. A programme to focus on **retaining members**.
2. Completing functionality of the **new website** (see left) to include chapter management tools and member enrolment.
3. Ensuring our ‘mature products’ (e.g., **World Conference and the Gold Quill Awards**) remain successful, both for members, and in creating net revenue.
4. Significantly uprating our **external communications**.

Our ‘**changing the business**’ priorities for the year are:

1. Getting the **Global Communications Certification Council** and **IABC Academy** fully functional, delivering the first **Certification exam**, and launching a suite of training products.
2. Creating a new plan for engaging with:
  - **communication practitioners worldwide**, who are not, and who may not choose to become, IABC members (but who may benefit from the Association's products and services while contributing to advance our mission).
  - **businesses** (the ‘business brokerage’ proposal). Aimed at businesses who could benefit significantly from professional communication help they don't yet ask for. This initiative is currently at the advanced research stage.
3. Consulting on, then bringing into alignment, the **different roles** of the International, Regional and Chapter levels.

Anything not listed above is not a priority for 2015.

### IT'S IABC'S SAPPHIRE!

Founded in 1970, IABC is celebrating its **Sapphire Anniversary** : that's 45 years providing worldwide professional service to communicators and to business. We're celebrating with a special video to be shown at the World Conference, and then over social and other media in June.



## New Certification and Academy Committees Appointed

Karamanis



Heuman



Following open competitions, for which there was significant interest, IABC has appointed nine people to the first substantive IABC Academy Committee and five to the Global Communications Certification Council.

The **IABC Academy** will support courses and workshops to help professionals, IABC members or not, towards the new **Global Communications Certification** standard, run by the Council, and how they can continue to maintain their Certification through time.

The IABC Academy will be the "go to" place for career development, whether assessing knowledge and skill gaps, plotting the next career step, or finding development opportunities right across the globe. It brokers approved providers of training & development to upskill people in the **six global principles of communication education** and through the four levels of a professional's career (see below).

Programmes people take through the Academy will also support them in the knowledge and skills to enter an IABC award. An Academy training calendar is being developed and marketed through IABC.

The new Academy Committee is **Julie Bjorkman ABC; Susan Blanchard ABC; Alice Brink ABC; Tamara Hill; Allison MacKenzie ABC; Bish Mukherjee ABC; Aisha Rashid; and Felicia Shiu ABC**. A number of these are experienced IABC members or new faces at the International level.

New GCCC members are **Jim Lukaszewski, Diane Gayeski, Alexandra Kayle** and **Meryl David ABC**. The new Vice Chair is **Liam Fitzpatrick**.



*In two signature appointments, **Dr Theomary Karamanis** will chair the IABC Academy Committee and **Sue Heuman ABC** is new chair of the Certification Council.*

### Theomary Karamanis

A multiple Gold Quill and award-winning communications consultant, Theomary has worked in the US, Europe, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Canada.

Currently in Toronto, teaching for McMaster University as an Associate Professor of Communication & Management and Research Fellow, Theomary moves to a new academic appointment at New York's Cornell University in Summer.

She also serves on the Caribbean Public Health Agency Technical Advisory Committee on Communications.

Theomary is the recipient of numerous professional marketing and communication awards, including a Comm Prix Award, five Gold Quill awards, five Platinum MarCom Awards and two Silver Quills, among others.

She has a Bachelor's in Economics from the Athens University of Economics and Business and an MA in Mass Communication and a PhD degree from Northwestern University in Communication Studies.

### Sue Heuman

Accredited in 1995, Sue has spent nearly 35 years in corporate communications and consulting. She is a long-time IABC volunteer at the local and international level and lives in Edmonton, Canada,

Sue is past Director of IABC Accreditation Exams, past Chair of the IABC Chapter Relations Task Force, and Past Chair of the University Of Alberta School Of Retailing 'Women in Retailing Network.'

She is an instructor with the University of Alberta School of Business, Executive Education and the co-owner of Focus Communications in Edmonton, Canada; a boutique agency serving all sectors.

Sue has extensive experience in the municipal, public and private sectors, providing senior level strategy and advice. Since establishing Focus Communications in 2002, Sue's worked with clients to help them identify challenges and opportunities, and develop strategies to meet their needs.

As an Accredited Business Communicator, she supports and encourages lifelong learning as critically important to staying relevant and current in the changing environment.

## New Campaign Aims To Take The Hassle Out Of Membership Renewal

As part of our 2015 Business Plan, IABC is working on a new programme to ensure members are both retained at their annual renewal and understand the full value of IABC.

First off we recognise that in a busy world, actually renewing membership - like renewing anything - is an administrative 'to do' which gets in the way of doing 'something else'.

So later in 2015 we are going to begin introducing an option for **automatic renewal** ('like your gym membership') in those countries where legislation permits it.

And with a once-off permission from you, IABC will then renew membership automatically until you tell us to stop.

### Less hassle

Not only will this be less hassle for members, it will mean IABC can spend less time and money ensuring renewals, and more on valued-added activities.

Meanwhile, our agency-run **calling campaign** to remind members to renew is bringing in the goods. We are also writing physical letters (remember them in the days before overloaded inboxes?) to members, and increasing the amount of member contact ahead of member anniversaries.

And our online associates continue to grow, with over 40,000 on our main LinkedIn group and 20,000+ on Twitter @IABC (and @RussellAtIABC for the International Chair).

Email Director of Membership, **Melissa Dark ABC** with any membership queries – [mdark@iabc.com](mailto:mdark@iabc.com).

## Neil Griffiths ABC to receive the 2015 Rae Hamlin Award

Neil Griffiths ABC is the 2015 Rae Hamlin Award recipient. The Award recognises an IABC volunteer for their work and impact at the grass-roots level in advancing certification in their chapter, region or workplace.



As one of the founding members of the Global Communications Certification Council, Neil has shepherded the development of the Communication Management Professional (CMP) exam, that will be offered for the first time at the 2015 World Conference. Neil exhibited a diligence to assure this new programme not only meets ISO standards but also honours the values of its predecessor, the ABC.

Neil is Internal Comms Manager at Environmental Resources Management. For the past decade he's practised across a variety of public, private and non-profit organizations.

He's held several IABC leadership positions and in 2013 was named IABC's Regional Leader of the Year. Together with Deborah Hinton, Neil has published two studies on the current and future state of the communication profession: *Where are we now?* *Where should we be?* and *We have met the enemy and he is us*.

## Who are IABC?

We're a broadly diverse community of communication professionals, connecting members to ideas, job opportunities and people through professional learning and a generous culture of sharing.

We believe that in today's world, communication can be a force for good in business and society, and we connect members and businesspeople together for this purpose.

**A thousand people attended IABC Philippines' Gala Awards in January. Congratulations to the 300 winners and to the chapter's brilliant organisation of the event.**

