

How to Capture and Keep Audience Attention

Online Seminar Series
Wednesday, September 2
9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

Do you find it challenging to capture and keep the attention of your audience members when you speak? Are they distracted and paying more attention to their cell phones, laptops, and internal dialogue than to your presentation? Do you wish you could find ways to make your topic more interesting so your audience members would perk up, pay attention, and participate? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you owe it to yourself to attend this interactive, entertaining session that will teach you the secrets of how to capture and keep the attention of your audience members throughout your entire presentation.

John Watkis of **Speak Performance International** will be presenting our September Online Seminar, **Speaking Performance: How to Capture and Keep Audience Attention**, on Wednesday, September 2, from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m.

John Watkis is an international speaker, speechwriter, and speaking performance coach with Speak Performance International. He works with existing and emerging leaders who want to turn ordinary speeches into engaging experiences that leave audiences wanting an encore. John is the author of the recently released book, *Speaking Notes: The Eight Essential Elements to Make Your Speech Music to Their Ears*.

The cost is \$45 for VSAE members and \$75 for non-members. All Seminar Passes will be accepted. 1.5 CAE hours.

Visit vsae.org to register today. Once registered, you will receive a link to join the seminar.

Virtual Annual Conference Was a Success!

On August 17-18, VSAE held its first ever Virtual Annual Conference. Over the two days, we provided 9 sessions, 10 speakers, 2 SIG meetings, and a Virtual Happy Hour. One hundred eighteen people attended the event; a number that far exceeded our expectations.

The VSAE Board made the decision to go all virtual on July 28 and our staff went to work immediately to transition the in-person event to virtual in just

"You always do everything with the level of excellence that sets the bar for the rest of us. I appreciate it and learn a lot from you all. I thought the topics were great and it was nice to be able to connect even through a screen."

*Sarah Gouger, Executive Director
The Builders' Exchange Association of Virginia*

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UPCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2
Online Seminar:
Speaking Performance:
How to Capture and Keep
Audience Attention

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
SeminarWeb:
10 Non-Dues Revenue Ideas
You've Probably Never Seen

OCTOBER DATES TBD
Virtual Fall Conference

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8
SeminarWeb:
ENGAGE! Harnessing the
Power of Video Marketing—
and How to Do it Right

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6
Online Seminar:
Reversing the Trend:
Reimagining Membership
Recruitment and Retention

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12
Virtual Meeting Planner SIG

NOVEMBER DATES TBD
Virtual CEO &
Senior Staff Retreat

Check out all events at
vsae.org/calendar



VSAE'S HEALTH PLAN IS OFF AND RUNNING!

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AND ITS MEMBERS TO BE PART OF IT**

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- ✓ Increased membership and retention, as you must be a member to participate

For more information, please contact:



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Leadership reflections



Phyllis Errico, JD, CAE
VSAE President

It feels like it has been a very long summer, too long without the ability to be together in ways we have grown to expect and now more than ever before, greatly appreciate. Since I last wrote to you in May when I started my VSAE presidency, we have all faced unexpected challenges and times of profound change in our world.

Throughout the last few months your VSAE Board and staff have worked tirelessly to make sure we evaluate each event on our VSAE schedule and that we find ways to continue to support all of you and to provide information, guidance and education. We have offered a number of relevant virtual workshops to our members on issues including Innovation, Legal Governance, Technology Security, and Strategic Planning. VSAE held both the AMC Retreat and the Meeting Planner Summit events with an in-person or virtual offering, and just last month we held a virtual SIG-a-Palooza with an inspirational opening by John Sarvay and a day full of energetic sessions. Many of you attended multiple SIG meetings and the feedback has been extremely enthusiastic and positive.

We also worked with **Colonial Williamsburg Resorts** towards providing an in-person Annual Conference. However, circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic made an in-person event impossible. In making this difficult decision, the board and the staff's first and foremost consideration was the safety of our members, while we remained committed to supporting our membership with a quality program. Thus, the board determined that the best course of action was to move to an all virtual Annual Conference.

I've said it before, but it bears repeating, the members and staff of VSAE are some of the most creative, nimble, and passionate individuals I have ever had the pleasure to work with. In less than three weeks, we were able to put together a quality program with very little lead time and we hope you feel the same way. I want to thank all of our speakers and thought leaders, the VSAE board for its thoughtful and steady leadership, and the VSAE staff for making it all happen.

A Virtual Voyage

"This year's VSAE virtual conference really illustrates that our members are not only leaders in the association field but also a group of very generous and caring individuals who rally together and support one another both professionally and personally."

The Annual Conference program was full of incredible substantive content that was both relevant and engaging. These sessions provided a much-needed respite from the stress and isolation many of us have been experiencing in the last six months. The Virtual Happy Hour at the end of the first day gave us a chance to unwind and participate in a spirited virtual scavenger hunt. Not only was it a time to visit and to laugh with each other, some of us actually learned some new things about our using our technology! The final session was a discussion led by Scott Wayne of Envoy Intelligence that tied together the program and offered members a chance to see and talk with one another about what has been happening in our work worlds and to share experiences and support. We bid a fond farewell to Executive Director **Sonnica Montemayor** who we will all miss, and welcomed **Terry Monroe** into that role going forward.

This year's VSAE virtual conference really illustrates that our members are not only leaders in the association field but also a group of very generous and caring individuals who rally together and support one another both professionally and personally. Ours is a group that models social networking and social capital in the best possible way, and shows once again that VSAE members are the best at being the best, even in an uncertain environment.

With the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual events are replacing live events. We asked two members, **Courtney Fleming**, Senior Vice President of Education & Training/Communications for the **Virginia Bankers Association**, and **Kathy Rabalais**, Executive Director of the **Virginia Water Environment Association**, about how they have adapted to the new normal.

What impact has COVID-19 had on your industry overall, and how has the association adapted?

CF: Virginia's banking industry has provided extraordinary support and assistance to their customers and communities impacted by COVID-19. They have continued to provide the products and services on which their customers rely and have also made needed accommodations for those directly impacted by the pandemic. Bank employees across Virginia have worked non-stop to assist businesses, due to the banks' role as the conduit for various government relief programs. The VBA has responded through timely communications with our members, the media, and other organizations; member outreach and education; and the virtual convening of various segments of our membership to provide up-to-date information, access to decision makers, and idea sharing opportunities.

KR: Our members are essential employees in that they ensure there is clean, safe water for all the residents of Virginia. Our industry has an aged workforce so there has been great concern in ensuring there is continuity of operations. At the onset of the pandemic, we held weekly webinars in which industry professionals provided guidance and direction on collective efforts to address concerns related to COVID-19 while also assessing the state's current capabilities. As we gained a better understanding of needs and resources, we were able to move to holding the meetings bi-weekly.

How has your role changed due to COVID-19?

CF: We had a strong start to the year with several successful events and conferences taking place in the first quarter. When the world changed in mid-March, everything we do also changed, since our education and training programs are primarily focused on



our members gathering together in person. Our team has been working since then to completely reimagine our offerings for the rest of the year. This has been a challenging experience, and we have learned a lot about our ability to be extremely nimble and creative.

KR: I have spent a lot more time on contract re-negotiations and converting in-person events into virtual. A significant amount of time has been spent learning our new virtual conference platform and ensuring the processes we have in place to offer continuing education for virtual learning meets all regulatory requirements.

What was the most challenging thing(s) you encountered while planning/hosting a virtual meeting?

CF: For years, our members have told us that networking and relationship building are the primary reasons they attend VBA events. There is a lot that can be accomplished over Zoom or in a virtual conference platform, but I have yet to find a virtual program that can mimic the magic that occurs when bankers from across Virginia come together in person.

KR: We are a very volunteer driven association and it took some time to get everyone to shift to virtual thinking versus in-person. We needed to get buy-in from various groups which resulted in many meetings with different stakeholders.

What was the most surprising thing(s) you encountered while planning/hosting a virtual meeting?

CF: I have been pleasantly surprised at how engaged our members are in a virtual training program or meeting. They chat with each other and with the instructors, utilizing the

engagement tools that are available in Zoom. I have also been pleased with how many ways we can structure or format a virtual training program to best achieve the particular learning outcomes.

Did you work with other regional, state, or national peer associations during the planning process?

CF: The power of a network of colleagues with similar roles and responsibilities can never be underestimated. I have leaned on colleagues at other state banking associations, local trade associations, and the American Bankers Association, for support and idea sharing over the last several months. We are also working with four Mid-Atlantic bankers associations on a virtual speakers series for bank CEOs and senior executives that was to be an in-person event. Plans are also underway for a virtual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit in partnership with the American Bankers Association in November.

KR: Yes, our National Association provided a platform for states to share information and resources to assist with moving to fully online events. We networked and shared information on software vendors and best practices.

What feedback have you received from your members, sponsors, etc. about moving to a "virtual meeting"?

CF: The feedback overall has been positive. Our members, sponsors and colleagues are all navigating a challenge none of us have ever experienced, and it has allowed for more creativity and flexibility among the group. One of the many silver linings in these challenging times is that we have given ourselves permission to release imperfect programs to just "see how it goes" in order to quickly

meet the needs of our customers. We have found that there is a much higher tolerance and appreciation for trying something new.

KR: We have received an extremely positive response to converting our annual meeting to a virtual event. Registration is going well and we anticipate we will exceed our revised budget projections. Most of our members are required to fulfill continuing education requirements and they appreciate the ability to earn them even during this time of social distancing and keep abreast of the latest industry trends.

What advice do you have for VSAE members that may be planning or hosting a virtual event in the near future?

CF: One of my favorite presenters, Noah Scalin, said something that is always in the back of my mind as we are reimagining our in-person events into virtual experiences. "Everybody can make a snowball. You don't have to make a perfect snowball; it just has to be round. The trick is if you stand at the top of the mountain and start rolling your snowballs down, one of them is going to make an avalanche. Who knows which one? The more you roll down, the more likely that is to happen. Make more snowballs." We have an opportunity to be very innovative right now. My advice is to throw hundreds of what might seem to you like imperfect snowballs in your efforts to provide transformative virtual opportunities for your membership. I'd be willing to bet that the avalanche created by one of those snowballs will pave the way for more meaningful experiences for your members and for your association into the future.

KR: Do your research when selecting a virtual platform. Depending on the scope of your event there are lots of companies that can meet your needs without breaking the bank. I also think it is important to narrow your focus when having to make a quick shift. Don't think that you need to totally replicate your in-person event. Focus on a few things and do them well!

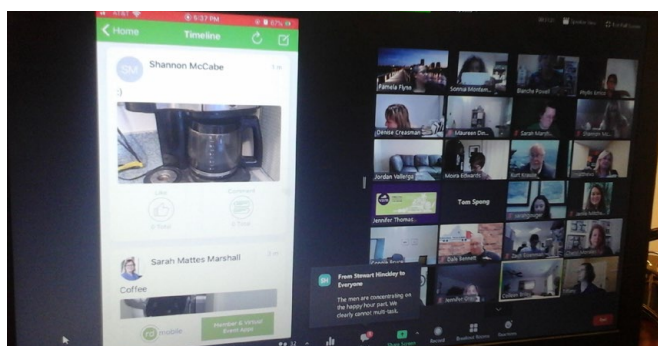
> Annual Conference, continued from page 1



A facilitated discussion on where associations are today led by Scott Wayne of Envoy Intelligence.

two and a half weeks. With a lot of hard work, trial and error, and several sleepless nights, they pulled it off. We learned a lot of lessons from this experience, mostly about what NOT to do. We had a handful of technical glitches, but luckily only behind the scenes. We are thankful that so

many members participated and excited that some brand-new non-members experienced VSAE for the first time. We have received so many nice notes from attendees letting us know they had a positive experience. Thank you for your continued support of VSAE.



Attendees were entertained during the Happy Hour with a virtual scavenger hunt. Pictured is the answer to the clue, "I drip nector of the gods. Take me away and see what happens." Thank you to **Tiffany Brown** for writing all of the clues and to all who participated.



Two-Room Suites
Complimentary Breakfast
Evening Reception



Our Embassy Suites by Hilton Hampton Hotel & Convention Center provides premium accommodations in Hampton, Virginia. Situated at the Intersection of I-64 and I-664 in Hampton, and close to both the Norfolk International Airport and the Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport, our hotel provides easy access to excellent Virginia attractions. We are the quality choice for your next event.

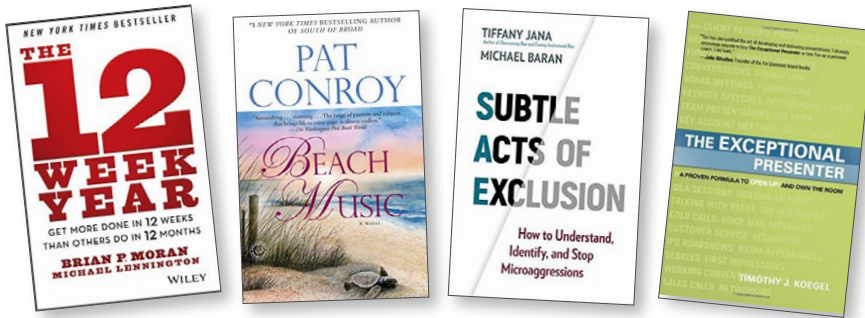
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ASSOCIATION BOOKSHELF

What are you reading? If you have a book you'd like to recommend to your association colleagues, let us know! Send the title and author, along with a brief description, to **Lorraine Meade** at lorraine@vsae.org and look for them in future newsletters.



The 12 Week Year *Get More Done in 12 Weeks* *Than Others Do In 12 Months*

by Brian P. Moran and Michael Lennington

This amazing book (that I have now read twice!) is transformational. *The 12 Week Year* is a how-to book for both individuals and organizations that would like to accomplish more in the next 12 weeks than others will in the next 12 months. It has been vetted by thousands of clients and hundreds of companies, and is backed by years of real life experience. The authors unlock the simple secret to help you accomplish more.

I've started implementing the process and am having tremendous success with it.

Sydney Thomas
LeadingAge Virginia

Beach Music

by Pat Conroy

Pat Conroy is a fascinating and masterful storyteller in this book that ties together historical fiction and modern-day relationships and experiences.

Sidney Lyda
The Blackburn Inn and Conference Center

Subtle Acts of Exclusion *How to Understand, Identify,* *and Stop Microaggressions*

by Drs. Tiffany Jana and Michael Baran

This book offers practical, accessible, and non-judgmental guidance for preventing microaggressions at work. Jana and Baran give simple and clear tools to identify and address subtle acts of exclusion (SAE) — exaggerated stereotypes, backhanded compliments, unfounded assumptions, or objectification, which are insidious and damaging to coworkers and colleagues. The authors even offer scripts for approaching difficult, uncomfortable, and deeply personal discussions in a professional setting.

Rhea George
AIA Virginia

The Exceptional Presenter: *A Proven Formula to Open* *Up and Own the Room*

by Timothy J. Koegel

After reading this book with chapters focusing on organization, techniques, understanding your audience, and using nervous energy to create positive results, your next presentation will be a breeze!

Cheryl Morales
Newport News Tourism

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Relax, and Spread Out

Kingsmill Resort is a unique escape, situated on 2,900 acres overlooking stunning views of the James River. With no long hallways or central buildings, Kingsmill is perfectly designed for what we now refer to as “social distancing.” Each unit has its own private parking and outdoor entrance. Condominium units feature their own living area and full kitchen with washer and dryer. Additionally, with 150 rooms paired with over 16,000 sq. ft. of meeting space, there is plenty to go around.

Endless Recreation

At Kingsmill Resort, you can ride a jet ski, get a spa treatment, and play 36 holes of golf all within the private gated community. Play until your heart is content on 15 tennis and pickle ball courts or unwind along miles of walking and bike trails. From leisure guests to groups and meetings, there is something to enjoy for everyone.

A Year of Distinction

When you think of Williamsburg, Virginia, it is easy to picture revolutionary soldiers and tricornered hats, but it is so much more. The area is also a rich destination of unique food and beverage offerings, craft breweries, and world-class attractions. In 2020 alone, Williamsburg & Kingsmill Resort were awarded: Best Small Town in the South by Southern Living Magazine, a Top 15 City in the United States by Travel + Leisure, AAA's Best of Housekeeping Award, TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence, and top 10 Golf Course in Virginia – River Course, by GolfWeek.

Tour Tested, Player Approved

Kingsmill Resort is home to over 35 PGA and LPGA tour events, most recently, the 2021 Pure Silk Championship. The Pete Dye River Course offers players social media post



worthy views of the James River, and has been a tour favorite for decades. The Arnold Palmer designed Plantation course is an inviting yet daunting round of 18 holes for amateur and professional players alike.

Dine Your Way

At Kingsmill, there is something for every plate. With select on-site dining restaurants including James Landing Grille, the only waterfront restaurant in the Williamsburg area, local flare and distinct flavors can be

found around every corner. Conference and meetings programs also have the flexibility with banquet and event menus to design the perfect event for their guests.

CONTACT:

For more information or to begin planning your next event, contact **James Gelfand**, Vice President, at james.gelfand@kingsmill.com or **(757) 253-3927**.



When the time is right, book your next meeting at Kingsmill Resort to receive a complimentary one-hour welcome reception with an open bar and light hors d'oeuvres.*

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*Offer valid for new bookings for 2020 & 2021. 35 room nights per night with two-night minimum to qualify.

AROUND THE COMMONWEALTH



The **Blackburn Inn and Conference Center** is completing a new conference center with over 7000 square feet of meeting space and a beautiful new spa scheduled to open at the end of August. The center is a meticulously restored historic building offering lots of natural light, expansive space with 26 foot ceilings, convenient on-site parking, and outdoor spaces with beautiful views of downtown Staunton.

Rachel Foutz is now the Manager of Education and Events with the **Better Business Bureau Serving Central Virginia**.

Kelli Gaudreau, formerly Legislative Affairs Advisor at **Hunton Andrews Kurth**, is now the Director of Operations with the **VA Beer Wholesalers Association**.

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2924 Emerywood Parkway
Suite 202

Richmond, Virginia 23294

PHONE: (804) 747-4971

FAX: (804) 747-5022

info@vsaae.org

vsaae.org

Sonnica Montemayor, CAE
Editor

Lorraine Meade

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**Art and Editorial Deadline
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August 28

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