



Campaign launched to discover Britain's longest serving PA

A search for Britain's longest serving PA has been launched by Diversified Business Communications UK – the organiser behind the office* show – to mark this year's National PA Day celebrations.

Speaking ahead of the third annual National PA Day on 8 October, which is also the opening day of office* – the UK's leading exhibition and conference for PAs, office managers and executive support professionals, the show's event manager David Maguire, says this new initiative seeks to highlight the important contributions and commitment that long-serving members of the PA profession have made to UK businesses.

"We see this as a great opportunity for the whole nation – not just those that are working as PAs themselves – to support this campaign and help us to find Britain's longest serving PA," says Maguire.

"There are thousands of people, either professionally or personally, who know someone who has been working as a PA or secretary for years – at their children's school for example, or a local business, or, of course, their own workplace," he says. "So, not only are we inviting all professional PAs, EAs, VAs and secretaries to nominate themselves but we want to hear from their friends and colleagues as well."

Explaining the genesis behind the campaign, Maguire says: "Last year's annual National PA Survey certainly revealed some surprising results – particularly about the way that the profession sees itself from the outside looking in – with nearly three quarters (of the 1,430 PA's surveyed) saying that they felt that being a PA was undervalued as a professional career choice.

"Whilst there are many reasons for this, including feeling unappreciated or overlooked by their boss or company, from the feedback we've received there does seem to be a general consensus that the root cause stems from years (decades even) of misconceptions surrounding the role of a PA. And this is exactly what National PA Day continues to challenge. For whilst the role has evolved almost unrecognisably over the last 10-20 years many outdated attitudes and gender stereotypes (particularly around qualifications and career aspirations) are still firmly lodged in place.

"There are an estimated 650,000 people working across the UK in a PA role – and although their job titles may vary and the industries that they support can be worlds apart – together their profession contributes positively to the productivity of every single part of the economy. Which brings us back to our campaign to find Britain's longest serving PA. For what better career ambassadors are there to promote the PA profession than the individuals who have chosen to dedicate years of their working lives to it? By recognising – and promoting – the achievements of long serving PAs, we aim to encourage greater support and enthusiasm for the profession as a whole," he concludes.

Entry/nomination forms are available to complete online at www.nationalpaday.co.uk, with Britain's longest serving PA to be named prior to National PA Day. Britain's longest serving PA will also be awarded a complimentary night's stay for two at the Park Tower Knightsbridge in London (including dinner at its award winning One-O-One restaurant).

As in previous years thousands of PAs will be joining their peers at this year's office* show to celebrate National PA Day on 8 October. The day will also see the launch of the results of the latest National PA Survey.

To register for a free entry pass to office* 2013 at Olympia, London, on 8-9 October, please visit www.officeshow.co.uk (www.eventdata.co.uk/Visitor/Office.aspx?AffiliateCode=OFF109) and use priority code OFF109. Entry includes free access to the Keynote Theatre and office* Interactive Theatre (see the online programme for full details).

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Notes:

office* attracted 3,687 attendees to its 2012 event. It was shortlisted for Best UK Trade Show Exhibition (under 2,000m²) at the Association of Event Organisers (AEO) Excellence Awards in 2013.

Diversified Business Communications UK Ltd (Diversified UK) is a fast growing trade event organiser and publisher based in Brighton and Nailsworth (Glos). In addition to office, Diversified UK's portfolio includes SITS – The Service Desk & IT Support Show; SITS Europe in Berlin, Germany (new for 2014); Service Desk 360; lunch!; Casual Dining (new for 2014); Natural & Organic Products Europe; Natural Products Scandinavia and Nordic Organic Food Fair in Malmö, Sweden; camexpo; Ocean Business (including Offshore Survey Conference & Ocean Careers); Ocean Buzz; MARELEC Marine Electromagnetics conference in Hamburg, Germany; Natural Products magazine; and the Natural Beauty Yearbook.*

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