

office*

*PERSONAL ASSISTANT

*OFFICE MANAGER

*EXECUTIVE SUPPORT

8-9 OCTOBER 2013
OLYMPIA | LONDON

PA community come out in force - office* 2013 reports 11% rise in attendance

office* confirmed its position as the leading annual business event for the UK's executive support professionals, after attracting a record 4,073 attendees to its fourth edition last month. With nearly 2,000 companies from across the UK represented, the aisles were packed with PAs, EAs, VAs, and office managers networking and doing business throughout the two day show.

Queues of enthusiastic visitors marked the opening of this year's event, which took place on 8-9 October at Olympia's National Hall, in London. By the time doors closed, it had witnessed an unparalleled 11% increase in attendees (compared to 3,687 in 2012), and garnered a wealth of glowing testimonials.

"We have been overwhelmed by the positive feedback that we have received since the show. office* has firmly placed itself at the centre of the office professional community and we are already looking forward to planning next year's show," says David Maguire, event manager of office*.

Pitman Training, Selfridges Hampers, EAT., Avery UK, Handpicked Hotels, Starwood Hotels, Babyblooms, Magic Whiteboard, CitySprint, London City Airport, Reed Learning, Hemsley Fraser, and SACO, are just some of the exhibitors that are already rebooked for 2014 (around 60% of 2013 exhibitors have to date).

"From the queues at opening time to the virtually seamless presentations, the extensive learning and development opportunities to the record number of exhibitors and visitors – this year's show has simply been one huge success," says John Palmer, founder and CEO of BeMyVA.com.

"2013 has really upped the level once again," agrees Susie Barron-Stubbley, managing director of Castalia Coaching and Training, which has exhibited at the show since its launch in 2010. "office* is a great opportunity for PAs to get out of the office and meet suppliers, build relationships and up-skill all at the same time. The vibe here has been amazing, lots of energy, and much more people – it's been fantastic!"

Such was the success of office* 2013, that 94% of exhibitors and 84% of visitors rated their experience as excellent/good (with around four in five PAs indicating that they intended to return in 2014). The survey also reveals that the majority of visitors in 2013 were PAs, EAs, VAs, secretaries or administrators (60%) working at companies which employed 250 employees or more (47%). Attending seminars (57%) and meeting suppliers (53%) were their top two reasons for visiting.

"Engaging, informative and inspirational" – great show content draws in the crowds

With 11% of visitors attending for both days, one of the show's key draws has always been its exceptional educational content. Over 70% of all visitors took in the show's 12 free Keynotes and eight free office* Interactive Theatre sessions, and nearly half signed up for one (or more) of the 32 seminars on offer across the two days. Of those that did, an average of 84% rated the quality and mix of both as excellent/good.

Notable highlights for 2013 included standing-room only sessions from Katie Piper – winner of the 2011 Women of the Year 'You Can' Award – and Laura Schwartz, former White House Director of Events and Special Assistant to President Clinton.

Celebrity PA Donna Coulling, Vanessa Vallely, founder of wearethecity.com, and Hamish Jenkinson – former PA to Madonna and current EA to Kevin Spacey also proved popular with the crowds.

The show also featured the unveiling of the results of the 3rd annual National PA Survey to mark National PA Day on 8 October 2013. The survey provides a fascinating insight into the role of modern PAs and can be downloaded in full at www.officeshow.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/National-PA-Survey-2013.pdf.

Visitors that were unable to make it to specific sessions or even the show itself this year, benefited from lively, interactive commentary throughout, courtesy of the #office13 and #nationalpaday Twitter hashtags, which recorded hundreds of uses each day. Prolific tweeters included Nicky Christmas - executive assistant to the CEO of a global events company who signed off her two days of reporting via @PracticalPA with: "I've just had two fabulous days attending @officeshow. Very well done to all the organisers, it really was a fantastic event!"

"Everyone should be able to get something from their day at office*, whether it's inspirational, service-orientated, discounted offers or simply how to make life more efficient and rewarding," says Kim Brown, PA to the Chief Executive of Radian.

"After attending office* 2013 I came back to work, created a brief and highlighted all the topics to my CEO that inspired me to think outside the box. We have always worked well as a team, but now there is that extra fire that motivates both of us to

achieve more and enjoy doing it as I support him on trying to grow the business and network. office*2013 was far better, based on quality of seminars and keynote speakers, than I could have imagined. Thank you for a great two days,” says Kirsti Wennberg, executive assistant to the CEO of Hansoft AB (Sweden).

Summing up her office* visitor experience, PA Karen Johnson, from Pantheon Resources Plc, concludes: “If you are serious about your career as a PA/EA you can't afford to ignore the wealth of industry information available at the office* show.”

office* 2014 returns to Olympia, London, on 7-8 October next year. For further information, please visit www.officeshow.co.uk.

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Notes:

office* was shortlisted for Best UK Trade Show Exhibition (under 2,000m²) at the Association of Event Organisers (AEO) Excellence Awards in 2013.

Diversified Communications UK Ltd (Diversified UK) is a fast growing trade event organiser and publisher based in Brighton and Nailsworth (Glos). Diversified UK's portfolio includes office; SITs – The Service Desk & IT Support Show; Casual Dining (new for 2014); lunch! (winner of Best Marketing Campaign of the Year at the Association of Event Organisers Excellence Awards in 2012, and Best UK Trade Show Exhibition (under 2,000sqm) in 2010 & 2011); Natural & Organic Products Europe; Nordic Organic Food Fair & Natural Products Scandinavia in Malmö, Sweden; Geo Business (new for 2014); Ocean Business (including Offshore Survey Conference & Ocean Careers); MARELEC Marine Electromagnetics conference; camexpo; Natural Products magazine; and the Natural Beauty Yearbook.*

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