

ucisa CEO Corporate Member Update



October 2020



Dear Colleagues,

As the academic year gets underway, either virtually or on- campus, it seems a fitting time to reflect on the ucisa year to date. Many changes have taken place as we continue to strive to support all our members, bringing new member services and benefits to meet and, we hope, exceed your expectations.

Rising to the challenge

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought rapid and far-reaching change to all your organisations and so it will be no surprise that ucisa has followed suit. We have transformed our business and operational model since March this year to rise to the challenges we all face and to ensure members' needs are, and continue to be, met. Looking back, we have found more opportunity than challenge in embracing the new normal, finding even more ways to offer value and support to our members.

ucisa goes virtual and free thanks to ucisa20 sponsors and exhibitors

Having taken the difficult decision to postpone our 2020 Leadership conference, we swiftly took ucisa fully online until March 2022, offering a full series of virtual events, free of charge to members. Whilst not an easy decision to take, with the sector facing straitened budgets for the foreseeable future and many organisations imposing travel bans, it was the most appropriate course of action. Our Leadership Conference sponsors and exhibitors have been exemplary in lending their support, with the majority allowing us to repurpose their sponsorship monies to provide webinars, round tables, members fora and a virtual AGM with inspirational futurist Rohit Talwar, all in a few short weeks.

Listening to our Corporate members

For me, perhaps the most satisfying outcome of all has been the opportunity that this new normal has created to reach out and speak to more corporate members than ever before. This has enabled us to build real relationships and an understanding of your organisations' needs and your collective needs. As a result, we:

- Launched the ucisa Supplier Showcase -providing a year-round exhibition platform for corporate members. This continues to develop - with further showcases added almost weekly - and has quickly risen in popularity to become the third most visited part of our website.
- Introduced the 'Covid offer' section to our website allowing you to showcase the ways in which your organisations were supporting institutions through difficult times
- Introduced more events than ever before, delivering 25 free events to the membership from May to September, the majority of which have been recorded and are available on the ucisa website, providing more opportunities for our corporate member sponsors to gain visibility.
- Increased our event offering to members for the rest of this year with 19 more events currently in the pipeline from October to December.
- Announced that our full programme of conferences would still take place throughout 2020; suitably re-imagined, deconstructed and transformed to suit the virtual medium that is now our day to day reality – all thanks to your feedback and the creativity and agility of our Special Interest Group committees

Our conferences, webinars and events are attracting strong participation numbers and reaching a far wider audience of ucisa members. Most events are averaging 25% of delegates as first-time attendees at a ucisa event, enabling the corporate members involved to gain exposure from a much greater cross-section of the education IT community.

Consultation with Corporate Members to inform future plans

In May I held more than forty individual meetings with corporate members and in July we held two virtual meetings attended by 32 of our corporate members. The meeting provided an opportunity for me to update you on our plans and listen to your feedback as to how ucisa might better support you in these difficult times. You asked for more sponsorship opportunities to help you engage with institution members and asked for us to ensure a range of price points so that organisations of all sizes would have opportunities to raise their profile in this way. You also asked us to look for ways to provide sector insight to corporate members and to ensure your voice is heard. As a result of your feedback, we have introduced a whole range of new initiatives.

New for 2020 /21

- Corporate members will be invited to a CEO briefing meeting twice a year where I will share sector insight and trends and answer questions you may have.
- We will host an annual Horizon Scanning Event with a panel of sector CIO's to highlight key emerging issues and thereby help inform your future business plans.
- We launched a new ucisa CPD programme which allows IT staff in our member institutions to share their experience, top tips and practical advice with our ever increasing audience and opened these up to sponsors at a much lower price point, including a 60 Second Centrepiece for the sponsor. With over 80 attending the first CPD event and already 60 registered for the second (with more than 2 weeks to go), we are confident that this programme will go from strength to strength over the coming year.
- A new Leadership Programme will run throughout 2021, Providing regular injections of inspiration, challenge and thought leadership. This will be the catalyst for creative leadership and innovation that members have previously looked to our annual Leadership Conference to provide. We are keen to talk to any corporate members who would be interested in being part of this programme.
- We will be sending the new corporate member logo to you all in January
- We have introduced a new range of engagement opportunities including corporate blogs, virtual suppers, member quiz nights and will be contacting you individually or inviting you to supplier meetings to outline these opportunities in detail.

We fully appreciate the financial constraints that face our member institutions. With the support and engagement of you, our corporate members, we will continue to deliver timely, relevant, services at no additional charge beyond the annual subscription fee until March 2022 when our postponed Leadership Conference will run from Tuesday 29th March to Thursday 31st March 2022.

Positive feedback

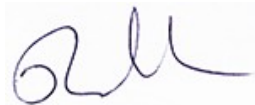
We hope that we have demonstrated that we listen carefully to your feedback and that, as a result, we have our finger on the 'pulse' of our membership. This enables us to respond to needs as they arise or as they change in priority. Certainly the team have been delighted with feedback from members recently, all of which speaks of the renewed energy and enthusiasm they see within ucisa, the drive and commitment they witness and the fact that ucisa has found its voice - a voice that is powerful and compelling.

Your support needed

We are grateful for your ongoing support and believe that we have demonstrated the value that your ucisa membership offers. We therefore ask you to forward a purchase order number for your 2021 membership to accounts@ucisa.ac.uk to allow us to process your renewal smoothly. The fee for corporate membership for 2021 will be £2,430 plus VAT.

As always, we would welcome any specific feedback you may have and look forward to working with and for you in the year ahead.

Best Wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DLG', is displayed on a light blue rectangular background.

Deborah L Green

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