

**Your Voice, Your Value: Using Speaking to Define Your Supplier Expertise!**

Thank you for: **The Five-Minute Window** from [Al Mercuro](#), Strategic Marketing & Client Engagement Advisor, [Genesis Exhibits](#), MESA Member: **International Exhibitors & Attendance – sentiment toward US events**:

- **Observed Trends: Non-uniform Decline** - U.S. conferences are reporting 20–30% drops in international attendance, with the most significant impact felt among exhibitors from Europe, Asia, and LATAM depending on the specific industry and host city
- **Key Concerns Driving Hesitation: Compounded Uncertainty** - Rising operational costs (labour/drayage) paired with visa delays, trade policy volatility, and an unpredictable border entry experience are creating significant barriers to entry
- **Behavioural Shifts We're Seeing: Strategic Downsizing** - International exhibitors are increasingly skipping or scaling back U.S. presence in favour of regional European shows, hybrid participation, or fewer, more highly targeted U.S. events
- **What Still Pulls Exhibitors to the U.S.: Essential Market Access** - The U.S. remains a "must-attend" destination due to its unrivalled access to North American decision-makers and the high ROI generated by pre-booked meetings at flagship shows

Thank you for the **E-Book Express Showcase** by [Richard John](#), COO of [Realise](#), MESA Member. View in the Community Platform – [Trends, Reports, Videos & E-Books](#) (Files / E-Books / 4M's / Jan 2026) or click on the direct links below:

1. Ways AI can Improve General Sessions <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3445>
2. Closing the Accessibility Act <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3447>
3. Place, Culture, Technology <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3451>
4. Guide to Event Psychology <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3448>
5. IBTM World Review <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3449>

Overview – <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3450>

**Main topic: Your Voice, Your Value: Using Speaking to Define Your Supplier Expertise!**

**Maria Franzoni** emphasised that successful speaking is a business lever built on **clarity, relevance, and consistency** rather than just a stage performance. To define your expertise, you should prioritise the **audience's struggle** over your own cleverness, using **one strong idea** supported by sticky stories and real-world social proof. By practicing in **low-risk environments** and using AI only as a support tool, speakers can build a **credible, regular presence** that turns visibility into a tangible pipeline for growth.

- **Focus on one strong message** supported by clear stories instead of overwhelming listeners with multiple half-formed ideas
- **Utilise varied platforms** like podcasts, panels, and briefings, as you don't need a traditional stage to start using your voice
- **Improve through real-life practice** in low-risk environments to build confidence and refine your skill
- **Share client success stories** instead of company history to build faster social proof and trust
- **Clarify your spoken voice through writing**, using short articles or LinkedIn posts to sharpen what you stand for
- **Update your digital presence**, specifically LinkedIn and websites, to clearly signal your availability for engagements
- **Maintain a consistent presence**, which builds more recognition and reputation than a single "standout" appearance

**Your Voice, Your Value - Practical tips for using speaking to define your expertise (From Maria Franzoni)**

1. **You don't need a stage to start using your voice** - Speaking is not limited to keynotes, it includes panels, fireside chats, podcasts, internal sessions, trade-show conversations and client briefings. All these build visibility and confidence over time.
2. **Start with the audience's problem, not your expertise** - The fastest way to lose people is to show how clever you are too early. Begin where your audience is struggling, then show how your experience helps them move forward. Less content, more relevance.
3. **One strong idea beats five half-formed ones** - Trying to cram everything you know into a short slot overwhelms people. Pick one clear message, support it with stories or examples, and leave space for conversation or follow-up.
4. **Being nervous is normal** - Many capable people don't speak because they think they have nothing "big enough" to say. Credibility comes from practical experience, not extreme achievements. Audiences value insight they can use.

5. **Speaking is a skill you can practice safely** - Low-risk environments like internal sessions, campfires, panels and podcasts are ideal places to practise. Confidence grows through repetition.
6. **Panels reward clarity** - Being memorable on a panel isn't about talking the most. It's about having a clear point of view, offering a useful perspective, and being willing to challenge politely when needed.
7. **Stories do the heavy lifting** - Facts inform, stories stick. Keep a folder of case studies and personal examples you can draw on. It makes preparation faster and delivery more natural.
8. **Written voice supports spoken voice** - Short LinkedIn posts, articles and case studies help you clarify what you stand for. Writing regularly makes speaking easier because you're practising saying the same ideas in different ways.
9. **Social proof builds trust faster than claims** - Case studies, testimonials and examples of real-world application matter more than polished slides. If people can see how you've helped others, they're more likely to listen to you.
10. **AI should support your thinking, not replace it** - AI can help you organise ideas, draft content or stay consistent, but your perspective still needs to come from lived experience. Use tools to save time, not to dilute your voice.
11. **Speaking is a business lever, not a performance hobby** - Whether you're selling technology, services or expertise, speaking works best when it's connected to a clear outcome: credibility, relationships, visibility or pipeline, and hopefully you'll also get some applause.
12. **Consistency matters more than brilliance** - Regular, credible presence builds recognition. Showing up repeatedly with the same clear message will do more for your reputation than one standout appearance followed by silence.

Download as pdf from <https://themesa.community/members-only-2026>

### Additional Information

Keep in touch with Maria - LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mariafranzoni/> / Website for free resources and podcast <https://www.mariafranzoni.me/> Now available: **The Bookability Formula** – discover what the top 1% of speakers do differently [Order here](#)

Book: Phil M Jones – [“Exactly What to Say – The Magic Words for Influence and Impact”](#)

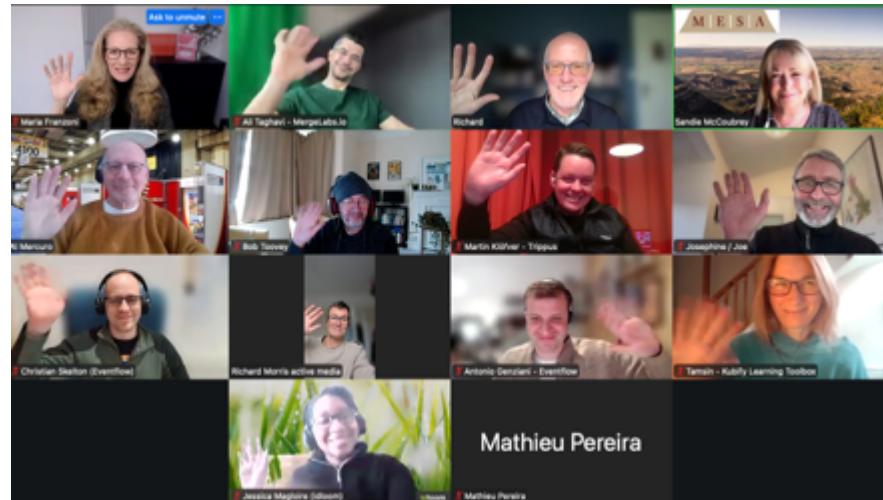
Book: Sasha Frieze - [“The Chief Event Officer’s Playbook”](#)

Book: David Newman - [“Market Eminence”](#)

Thank you to our speaker & moderator:

Moderator: [Richard John](#), COO of [Realise](#), MESA Member.

With Guest Industry Speaker [Maria Franzoni](#), Founder & Chief Mentor of [Speaking Business Academy](#)



### NEXT MEETING:

**MESA MONTHLY MEMBER MEETINGS (4M's)**

**1400 GMT / 1500 CET:**

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February - Events as the Engine: Mastering Event-Led Growth (ELG) for Pipeline & Revenue – With **Richard Morris** and **Richard John**, MESA Members.

[MESA Events page](#)

[MESA MONTHLY MEMBER MEETINGS \(4M's\)](#)

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