

### Transformative Experiences & Event Trends

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 / June 2026) or click on the direct links below:

1. **AI Optimization Best Practices for Press Releases** - <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3721>
2. **EIC 2026 Executive Summary** - <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3722>
3. **Event Behavioural Scorecard** - <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3723>
4. **Return on Attendance – ETL** <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3725>
5. **Incentive Travel Across Generations – SITE** - <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3726>

Overview: <https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3724>

Thank you for: **The Five-Minute News Brief** from **Bob Toovey**, Founder & Owner of **Event Planner News (EPN)**, MESA Member.

1. **A June 2026 survey by the Meetings Industry Association (MIA)** reveals that 90% of business meetings and events professionals believe rising employment costs are hindering their ability to recruit younger and entry-level talent: [VIEW ARTICLE HERE](#)
2. **The Event Technology Awards** hosted their first-ever AI Edition on June 24, 2026, at The White Space at The Ministry in London. The ceremony was created as a sister programme to the traditional autumn Event Technology Awards to focus entirely on how artificial intelligence is reshaping event planning, attendee engagement, and operations: [VIEW RESULTS HERE](#) – **WELL DONE MESA MEMBER EVENTPACK!**
3. MESA was present at **The Meetings Show** this year, marking the fifth time the association has exhibited.

### Main session: Transformative Experiences & Event Trends

We explored how intentional event design can create more meaningful and transformative experiences for attendees. Drawing on both academic research and practical event expertise, the discussion highlighted the importance of designing with purpose, understanding audience needs, and creating opportunities for genuine learning, connection, and lasting impact throughout the entire event journey.

#### Key takeaways:

- Design events with clear objectives and purposeful learning and networking outcomes, rather than focusing only on entertainment or CPD points
- Understand attendees' motivations, backgrounds, and desired outcomes to create more relevant and engaging experiences
- Transformation is most likely to happen through small, incremental moments rather than one dramatic change
- Build opportunities for meaningful audience engagement and authentic community connections
- Balance structured programme elements with space for spontaneous conversations and unexpected moments of value
- Consider the complete attendee journey - from pre-event engagement through to post-event follow-up - to maximise long-term impact
- Measure success by looking beyond attendance to engagement, connections, learning, and the lasting outcomes events create

**Ultimately, the discussion reinforced that memorable events don't happen by chance - they are intentionally designed with clear purpose, meaningful engagement, and opportunities for attendees to learn, connect, and create lasting impact.**

## Definitions of Transformation

“A designed transformative experience is an intentional, voluntary and positive experience that an individual undergoes aimed at triggering a shift of one’s mindset, beliefs, values, and behaviours and long-term wellbeing” (Neuhofer, 2024)

Reference: Neuhofer, B. (2024). Transformative experiences: a conceptual analysis of the integration process. *The Service Industries Journal.*, 44(7–8), 522–537

“Offering transformation means understanding the why behind what customers buy from you – their aspirations for improving aspects of their lives – and then bringing together the resources to make that outcome happen. “ (Pine, 2026)

Reference: Pine II, B. J. (2026). *The transformation economy: Guiding customers to achieve their aspirations*. Harvard Business Review Press

## Further reading

[Krzysztof Celuch](#) – Just published book '[Event Experience and Design: Transformative Approaches](#)' - You can click [Preview PDF](#)

## Ones mentioned in the call:

[The Routledge Handbook of Business Events | Charles Arcodia](#) – You can click [Preview PDF](#)

[Strategic Event Creation - Liz Sharples, Philip Crowther, Daryl May, Chiara Orefice - Google Books](#)

## Katrin’s PhD thesis:

[The holistic conference experience: understanding the individual attendee's conference journey - Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive](#) – You can download the PDF

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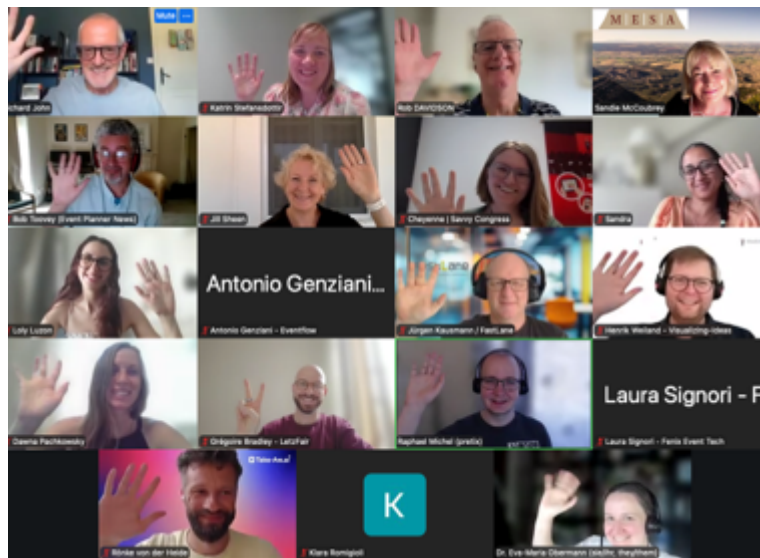
Meeting Planners and MESA Supplier Members

Thank you to our moderator: [Richard John](#), COO of [Realise](#), MESA Member

Thank you to our panel:

[Rob Davidson](#), Managing Director of [MICE Knowledge](#)

[Katrin Stefansdottir](#), Senior Lecturer at [Sheffield Hallam University](#)



## NEXT MEETING:

MESA MONTHLY MEMBER MEETING (4M) 1430 CEST / 1600 CEST:

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> July

"PERFECT STRANGERS" NETWORKING MASTERCLASS

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