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2024 Pickles
IMA Conference
Melbourne
29 – 30 August 2024

Conference Program



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Conference Day 1 - Thursday 29 August

8.30am **Registration Desk Open**

8.30am to 5.15pm **Exhibitors Hall Open**

9.00am to 9.30am **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

IMA CEO: Jody Wright
 Pickles: Gareth Rattray
 MC: Alex Caruana

9.30am to 10.30am **Session 1**

Presentation: **Staying Ahead – Cyber Update**
 Speaker: Blare Sutton, McGrathNicol
 Précis: Blare will provide an update on the current landscape of cyber threats and the importance of continuing to stay aware in order to mitigate risks. As technology, including AI, continues to evolve at a rapid rate, new cyber security challenges and opportunities arise. Blare will assist members to stay up to date with trends in cyber attacks, explore common vulnerabilities and discuss further practical strategies to bolster defences
 Time: 60 minutes

10.30am to 11.00am **Morning Tea/Coffee Break**

11.00am to 1.00pm **Session 2**

Panel: **Sector Forum**
 Chair: Daniel Taylor
 Panellists: Shaun Ferreira, Nissan Financial Services Australia
 Nora Minassian, TG Legal & Technology
 Representative from Westpac Bank
 Darren Cantor, Finance One
 Précis: An opportunity to discuss issues facing Agents including:
 • increasing compliance and data security expectations
 • maximising efficiency and productivity in field work and collections
 • challenges being faced out on the field
 • creating reporting and updating efficiencies and effective communication
 Time: 120 minutes

1.00pm to 2.00pm **Lunch**

2.00pm to 2.45pm **Session 3**

Presentation: **Collections Modernisation – Evolving Business Ideas in a Changing Landscape**
 Speaker: John Ramage, Triple 3 Consultancy Pty Ltd
 Précis: Drawing on firsthand experience within the collections ecosystem (spanning clients and field agent services), John will share insights and experiences on enhancing client partnerships and adapting to industry shifts through innovative approaches. Clients seek partners who can successfully navigate and collaborate amidst change. Today's environment, shaped by competing forces of technology, automation, regulatory updates, and evolving procurement standards, brings new challenges and expectations. John will present ideas to help position your business effectively. A recurring question is, "Collections still Collecting?" With an increased emphasis on hardship and vulnerability, many businesses have integrated new services, leading to a potential decline in field service activities. John will discuss these prevalent shifts and the opportunities they present.
 Time: 45 Minutes

Conference Day 1 - Thursday 29 August

2.45pm to 3.30pm

Session 4

Presentation: **The Small Business Owner's Perspective**

Speaker: Jodie Bedoya, E-Matrix

Precis: Imagine being a struggling business owner who owes money and reaches out to your organisation for assistance. What would you hope for? A common response from small business owners is simple: "A bit of empathy and some knowledge, so I don't feel like I am talking to a brick wall." Jodie will talk you through the challenges of running a small business in Australia, with a view to help you with awareness, language and approach to best assist your customer. Remember: Behind that debt you are collecting, might just be a person striving to keep their business afloat.

Time: 45 Minutes

3.30pm to 4.00pm

Afternoon Tea/Coffee Break

4.00pm to 4.45pm

Session 5

Presentation: **Is Australia on the Rocky Road?**

Speaker: Patrick Coghlan, CreditorWatch

Precis: Is Australia headed for an economic disaster or is it resilient enough to withstand a downturn? What are the current key business risk index insights and what do the next 12 months look like? Patrick will explore the best and worst economic events and impacts for Australian businesses currently, the changes that have occurred in 2024 and how this has shaped the current economic climate. A challenging operating environment has placed additional strain on Australian businesses along with reduced consumer spending. What does this mean for continued business solvency, defaults and consumer confidence?"

Time: 45 Minutes

4.45PM - END OF DAY 1 SESSIONS - DELEGATES AT LEISURE AND RETURN AT 7PM SHARP FOR DINNER

7.00pm to 11.00pm

Conference Dinner



Conference Day 2 – Friday 30 August

8.30am	Registration Desk Open
8.30am to 5.15pm	Exhibitors Hall Open
8.30am to 9.00am	Welcome Breakfast
9.00am to 10.00am	Session 6 – Keynote Speaker
	<p>Presentation: Navigating the Tides of Change: Building Resilience and Leadership in the Face of Stress</p> <p>Speaker: Shaun O’Gorman, the StrongLife Project</p> <p>Précis: Imagine being an overwhelmed leader facing high workplace stress and seeking strategies for resilience and effective leadership. What guidance would you expect? Leaders thrive by using practical advice and real-life examples. Do you want to learn the tools and strategies that not only help manage stress, but also empower and inspire your team to thrive despite challenges?</p> <p>Time: 60 minutes</p>
10.00am to 10.45am	Session 7
	<p>Presentation: How to Lose your Reputation in 5 Minutes</p> <p>Speaker: Lyall Mercer</p> <p>Précis: Lyall Mercer is a public relations and crisis communication strategist, speaker and trainer. The trust of your customers, clients and other key stakeholders is essential to business success, yet in this age of social and digital media it is easy for business – small or large – to damage its reputation and lose this trust. Lyall will reveal how easy it’s to become a reputation victim and how to avoid the pitfalls.</p> <p>Time: 45 minutes</p>
10.45am to 11.15am	Morning Tea/Coffee Break
11.15am to 12.00pm	Session 8
	<p>Presentation: Excel and Be Well</p> <p>Speaker: Anne Whatley-Dale, LivePresent</p> <p>Précis: The challenge of building a business, or team, as well as a life, often means your work ethic collides with your wellness ethic – and navigating being well moves to another day. Especially true when you’ve successfully addressed a difficult conversation or situation, only to be left wondering “what happened?” or with a lingering residual impact that can be hard to shake. The good news? It’s easier than you think to excel in your work without destroying yourself along the way. Join Anne as she talks about how to deal with the challenges of business, selling, service, and management – and being well as you do it. One conversation and one action at a time.</p> <p>Time: 45 minutes</p>
12.00pm to 12.45pm	Session 9
	<p>Presentation: What’s Legal and What’s Not so Legal? Ensuring Compliance and Fair Practices in Field Work</p> <p>Speaker: Shane Sankey, Wallmans Lawyers</p> <p>Précis: Shane will focus on recent changes and developments affecting how repossession agents and process servers carry out their daily duties. What is the current state of play in relation to the legal and compliance framework governing repossessions, court orders and field call activities and what do lenders and agents need to navigate? Through practical insights and case studies, attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of how to conduct mercantile agent activities within the bounds of the law whilst maintaining respect for individual’s rights.</p> <p>Time: 45 minutes</p>

Conference Day 2 – Friday 30 August

12.45pm to 1.45pm **Lunch Break**

1.45pm to 2.30pm **Session 10**

Presentation: **Working with Customers in Vulnerable Circumstances:
A strengths-based approach**

Speaker: Vanessa Herskope & Adam McConvell, Uniting
Précis: IMA members work with some of the most vulnerable in our community, often during highly traumatic life events. In this session members will be supported to reflect on how their own practice can promote or hinder outcomes in the lives of people they work with. Members will build an understanding of the beneficial impact of using a strengths-based model and how it can be implemented in practice.

Time: 45 minutes

2.30pm to 3.15pm **Session 11**

Presentation: **Employment Law – From Restraints to Handcuffs**

Speaker: Jim Parke, Australian Workplace Strategies
Précis: Jim will delve into the latest developments in employment law with a focus on the intricate nuances of restraint of trade clauses and the federal government's proposed legislative intervention. Jim will also explore the recent criminalisation of wage theft and the importance of ensuring employees are paid their full entitlements. With the wage theft offence to carry a maximum of 10 years' imprisonment and fines in the millions of dollars, Jim will provide practical insights and actionable strategies, providing attendees a comprehensive understanding of their rights, obligations, and the evolving legal considerations in the realm of employment relationships.

Time: 45 minutes

3.15pm to 4.00pm **Session 12**

Presentation: **Behind the Veil**

Speaker: Dennis Foster
Précis: Dennis, retired police officer and former mercantile agent, will delve into the often overlooked and misunderstood realms of repossessions and police encounters, shedding light on the stories that lie beneath. Be prepared for gripping narratives of repossession war stories and police investigations involving one of Melbourne's most notorious fraudsters. An entertaining and "behind the scenes" journey into the undoing of Graeme Effrett promises to capture your attention and provide for interesting discussion at closing drinks.

Time: 45 minutes

4.00pm to 5.00pm **Closing Drinks/Canapes and Thank You's**

IMA CEO: Jody Wright
MC: Alex Caruana

