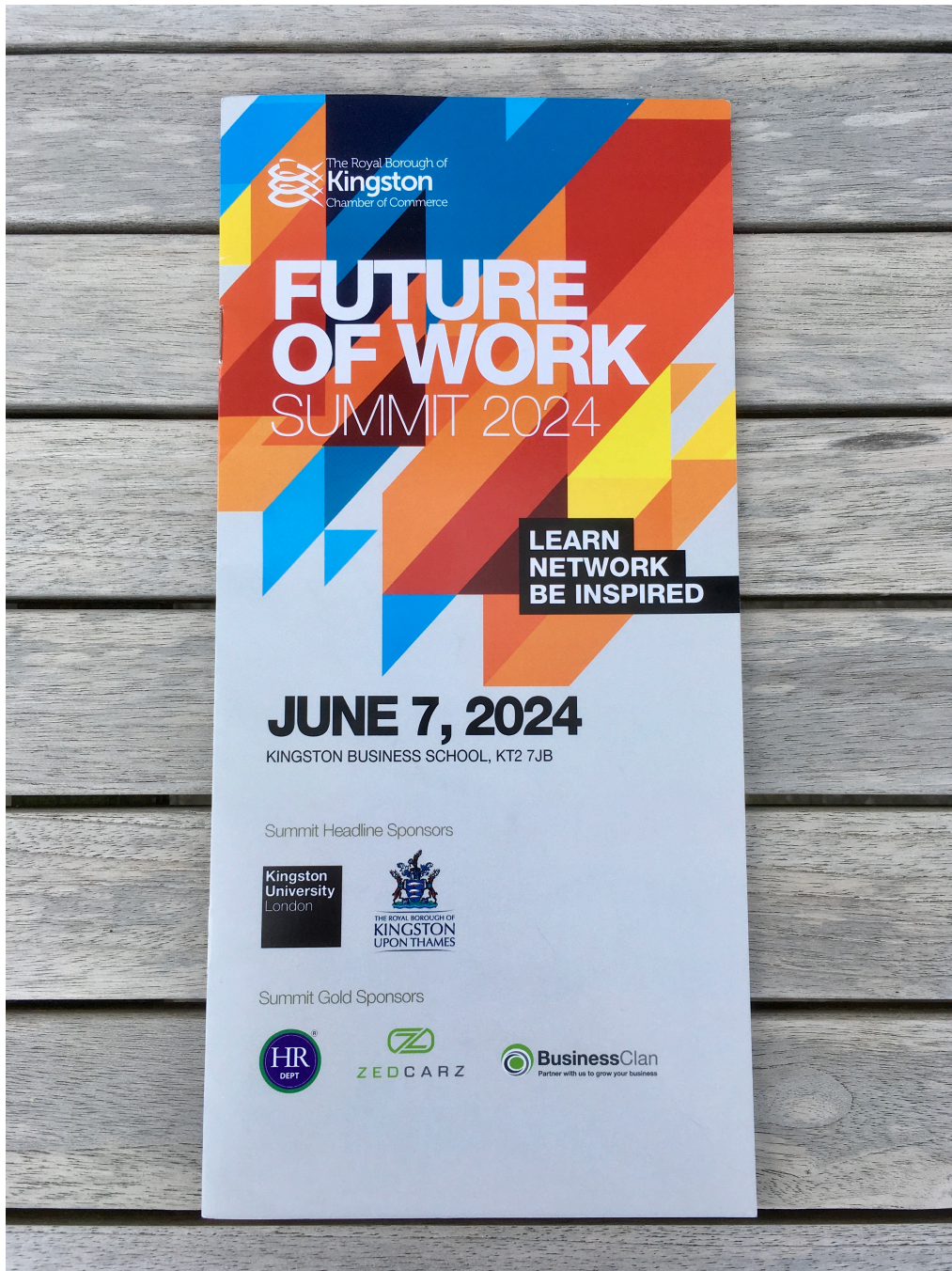

Highlights of the Future of Work Summit 2024 (by Kingston Chamber of Commerce)

Event date: 7 June 2024

Location: Kingston Business School Campus

Hosted by: Forbes Low (CEO at Kingston Chamber of Commerce)



Documentation by: Ardi Kaars

Date of release: 10 June 2024

Introduction: About the event itself

The Future of Work Summit is an annual occasion where insiders from several economic sectors of interest share their views on economic challenges, and the latest trends in work to find new solutions to existing problems, mainly within the UK economy. The event was hosted by Kingston Business School on June 7th this year at the Campus located at Kingston upon Thames.

In this document, I have used Roman numbers to rank the different parts of the schedule. There are no direct quotations, yet covered topics and answered questions have been documented below with utmost care and accuracy based on my own notes, careful listening and a final review. Moreover, I have taken several pictures to highlight the event setup and different stages of discussion. The event has been organised by **Forbes Low (CEO of Kingston Chamber of Commerce)** and **Ilona Saliev (Head of Corporate Development, Partnerships and Events at Kingston Chamber of Commerce)**. At 8:45 am, the event was opened and introduced by **Professor Helen Laville (Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor)** and **Councilor Elizabeth Park (Deputy Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames)**.

I have documented five main sessions at this event, which are as follows:

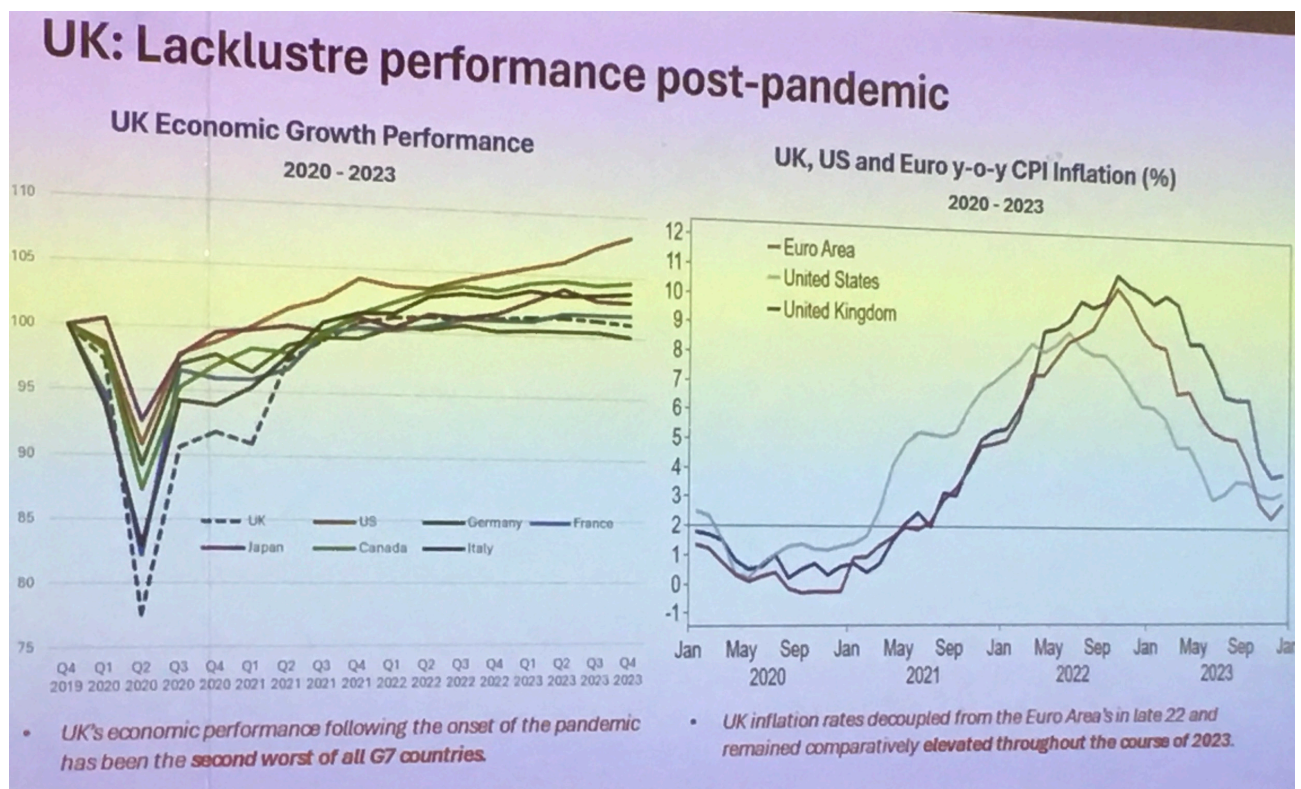
- I. 09:00-09:25 am: UK Economic Overview by Daniel Mahoney (UK Economist at Handelsbanken plc)**
- II. 09:30-10:15 am: Meet the panelists Roundtable: How to be an effective leader?**
- III. 10:25-10:55 am: Business Seminar 1 FINANCE: How to Avoid Early Business Financial Traps? by Clare Mannall (CEM Bookkeeping)**
- IV. 11:00-11:45 am: Meet the panellists Roundtable 2: The Role and Value of Culture in Kingston**
- V. 12:20-12:50 pm: Business seminar 2 COMMUNICATION: How to Have More Impact (and Drive Sales) with the Right Content? by Jude Faultless (Faultless Communication)**
- VI. 12:55-01:25 pm: Business Seminar 3 MARKETING: The Secrets to Smarter Pricing by Mark Peacock (Consultant, PriceMaker Ltd)**
- VII. 01:30-02:40 pm: Innovation Workshop: Lose the Fear of AI and Make it Work for Your Business by Studio ZAO**

I. 09:00-09:25 am: UK Economic Overview by Daniel Mahoney (UK Economist at Handelsbanken plc)

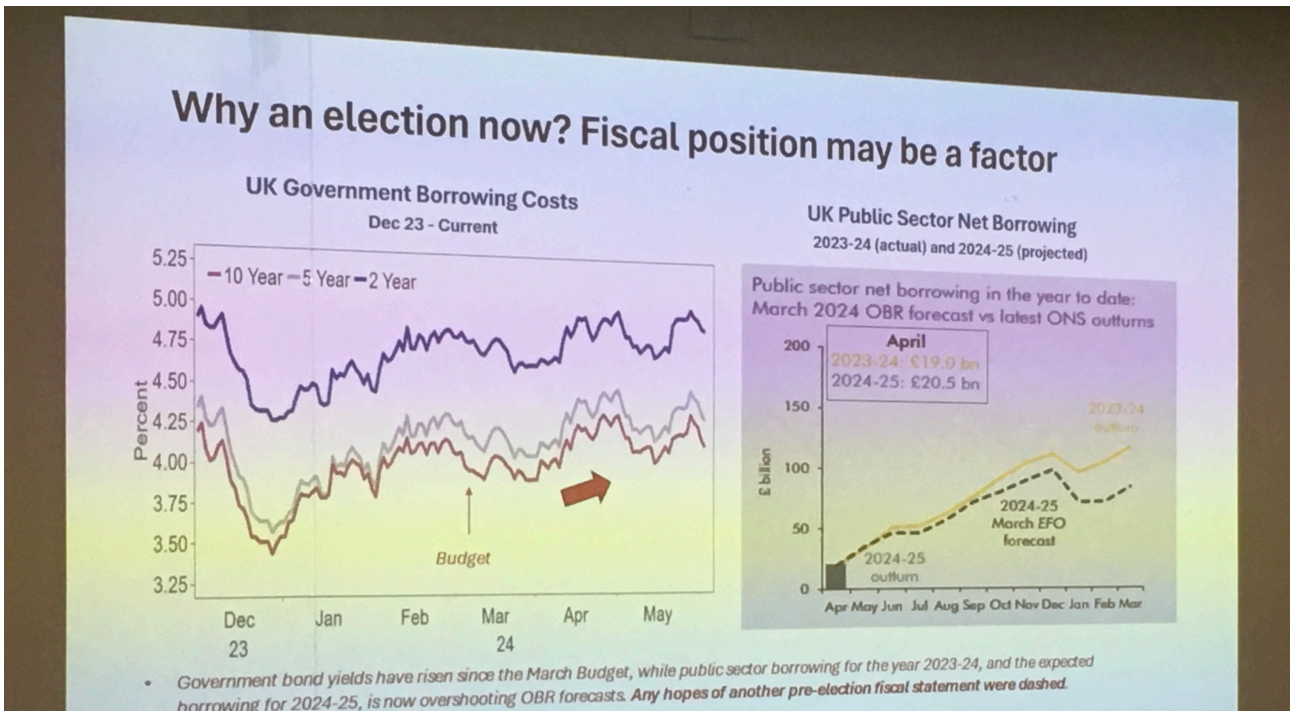


Daniel:

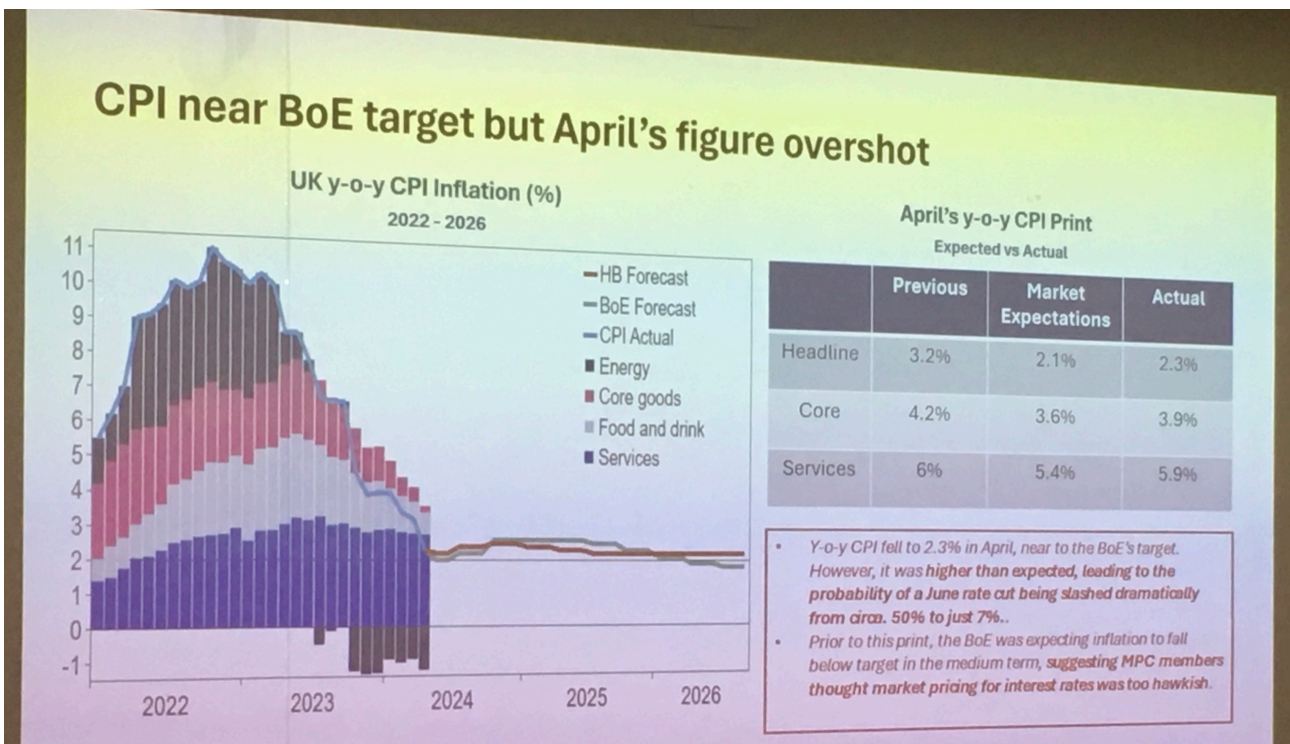
- In September 2022 we have seen a decoupling of inflation between the UK, US and EU, which was elevated through the course of 2023



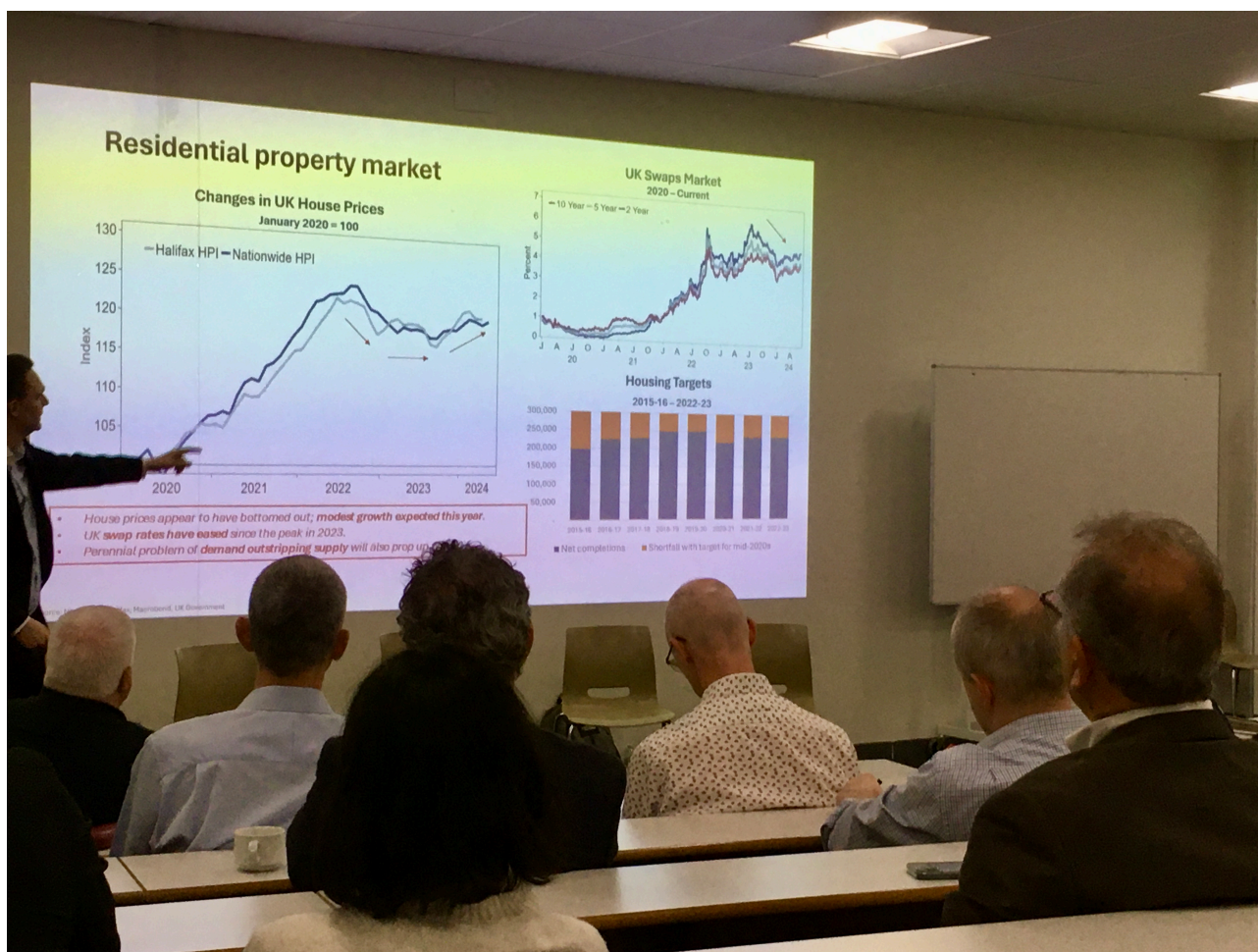
- So has the UK economy turned a corner? The UK is no longer an outlier with respect to inflation and evidence suggests that US inflation could end up proving to be stickier
- Average real wage growth has been positive for nearly a year



- Government bond yields have risen since the March budget for the year 2023-24 and the expected borrowing for 2024-25 is now overshooting OBR forecasts
- At the 2019 general election, domestic political risk associated with the UK was high
- No serious market moves are expected when election results come out this year
- The Bank of England's latest position on rate cuts
- The May MPC decision saw another slight dovish pivot, with two out of nine members voting to start the rate cutting cycle



- Energy prices from April 23-24 have gone down with 32%, yet from October 23-24 the decrease is only expected to be 4%



- Markets are currently pricing in a new neutral rate of around 3.75%, and UK swap rates have eased since May 2023
- Regarding real estate, inner London has been more affected by the pandemic than the outer city in terms of price drop, yet vice versa for office buildings
- Across all asset-classes, the suggestion is there is a widening of returns between quality versus non-quality assets
- Please listen to 'UK Economic Insight' (podcast)

Ardi (me):

- Question: To what extent is there a correlation between EU and UK monetary policy and inflation, especially after the pandemic?

Daniel:

- The UK is historically more inflation-prone than the EU, which is followed by higher interest rates. Actually UK monetary policy is much more similar to the US than the EU
- There are no new rate cuts to be expected by the ECB
- Christine Lagarde has one of the hardest jobs on earth managing 18 or so countries
- The UK currently has Quantitative Tightening (QT) in place, the opposite of Quantitative Easing (QE). The EU is more prone to resort to QE to reduce bond spreads between various countries, such as between Germany and Italy should the gap become too large
- The inflation problem is more under control now in the UK, and in the EU no real changes to monetary policy are to be expected

II. 09:30-10:15 am: Meet the panelists Roundtable: How to be an effective leader?

Participants:

Ash Ali (CEO of Every Child, Every Day, Academy Trust)

Pippa Dunford (Managing Partner at NED)

Daniel Rosier (General Manager at DoubleTree by Hilton, Kingston)

Victoria Walsh (Course Leader for BSc (Hons) Business Management, Kingston University)

Sandra Porter (Facilitator, HR Department)



Sandra:

- Credibility, quantification and values are all determinants of leadership

Ash:

- I have been head teacher for >10 years

Pippa:

- I help leaders become the best of themselves

Daniel:

- Idem

Victoria:

- I teach at Kingston about leadership and psychology
- Backed up by industry experience of over 20 years

Pippa:

- Leadership boils down to three core aspects:
- Vision -> you need to have the right ideas in place
- Influence -> this is a result of values and integrity
- Communication -> give people a reason to turn up every time

Victoria:

- It matters to have a service-mindset

- Focus on the needs and wants of others
- You need to be there for your team
- We need leaders who respect others
- Leaders should be more human these days

Pippa:

- At all times, you need to be your authentic self

Ash:

- As I became more authentic after 3 years, my leadership skills greatly improved, before that it was not that great
- True integrity is what you need -> do what you know to be right
- Do not leave any notes that you have on the kitchen table :)
- Changing models is what you should be doing
- Execution matters -> you need optimism and positivity

Daniel:

- Lots of changes are going on -> it is okay to say 'we're not quite sure what is well'
- Being open with teams about differences is okay
- Recognising the need for change is one thing, after that it boils down to the right execution

Pippa:

- Change is not bad, embrace it

Victoria:

- Normally, when undergraduates start they have no industry experience
- Communication is second most important on our skills list
- 'give me challenges'
- The world of work is changing as fast as you are studying

Daniel:

- Education is more than words and numbers, you also need to teach social skills
- Work with local authorities to go and help young people learn

Ash:

- We need to be focused on people -> this includes character curricular and in-person skills -> get young people ready for change

Pippa:

- How to know what ignites people? People remember such a thing better than words

Sandra:

- Question: How do leaders protect time and intention to learn?

Ash:

- You cannot do everything alone
- Look at what the cash impact is
- Time is your shield and your enemy
- Find a place where you feel belonged

Daniel:

- Time is precious -> we sometimes allow ourselves to be consumed by it
- A lot is learned peer-to-peer
- Learning and developing is something you do every day
- Do not be afraid
- What we learned last year, we learn even more this year

Victoria:

- You need to carve out time -> recognise what you need -> do the same for others, and understand what motivates them

- Get them to think about the fact that they have to understand themselves, and how they might differ from others
- As leaders, we need to be aware about the incredible pace of change, this was true for the past 15-20 years, and now even more applies with developments such as AI and other changes

Ardi (me):

- Question: You may at times spot trends or anomalies in your field for which it is hard to receive feedback, and for which people around you will consider you crazy. What should you do when you are somewhat going against the tide?

Ash:

- Answer: Most importantly, find an ally!

III. 10:25-10:55 am: Business Seminar 1 FINANCE: How to Avoid Early Business Financial Traps? by Clare Mannall (CEM Bookkeeping)

Content not available online

Content not available online

IV. 11:00-11:45 am: Meet the panellists Roundtable 2: The Role and Value of Culture in Kingston



Participants:

David Cunningham

Scott Furlong (Corporate Head of Culture and Programme Director, Kingston College)

Edlyn Mamprin (Head of School - Creative Industries, Kingston College)

Robert O'Dowd

Archie O'Neil (Co-Director at Creative

Robin Hutchinson Facilitator and Community Brain)

Robert:

- At media-level, culture and creative industries do drive local economies
- Taylor Swift in the UK will bring with her billion pounds worth of growth in the UK
- Culture does have economic impact, yet has generally not moved with audience -> 60+, white middle-class is now the average audience -> As a sector, we have not brought certain generations along with us -> New forms of culture are needed
- Screen-writers and actors have gone on strike for AI and deepfakes
- There is a seismic shift to a cultural landscape driven by creative industries
- A lot of cultural organisations are dying -> They cannot keep on putting on

Robin:

- A tragedy of the last 3 years is the loss of festivals

David:

- There are serious challenges -> We need to get the support for festivals, PanAm Vision has been a contributor, likewise Kingston First supported us in the first few years yet has withdrawn after that
- There is no local paper, so it is hard to get the word out
- The face of entertainment is changing due to AI
- My worry: Loss of soul in the game

Archie:

- When thinking about the multi-arts festival, obtaining funding is incredibly challenging
- Festivals are seen as a 'flush in the pan'
- Audience matters -> We believe in a truly local community, and not just disadvantaged people, but community in a much broader sense
- After 16 years, it is still hard to reach out to people
- There is a fuse box, giving young people spaces to create -> It really is about young people
- Key point: Festivals are powerful and need so much more community involvement than is currently the case

Robin:

- Regarding curricula choices, if you do not experience something, you are not going to choose it

Edlyn:

- We offer almost every creative subject -> The bulk of our students start at the age of 16-18 and are very engaged -> It is a joy to work in this field

Robin:

- One of the issues is accessibility -> How to improve on this?

Robert:

- We have given free access to performance towards children at the age of 8, plenty of them came back as students 8 years later and did these performances themselves in their capacity as students
- Exposure has to be facilitated, and often a subsidy will be needed
- Without being political -> This government is actively shutting down humanities
- We need to address this negativity for there is not a lot left besides humanities if we were to judge our performance in other sectors (such as finance)

Archie:

- Regarding accessibility -> Young people WANT to work in the arts

- Work is a powerful thing to transform people's lives
- Soft skills do matter
- Valuing arts for what it is means investment will follow

Scott:

- We all have a role in NOT allowing an opposition narrative (towards the cultural sector) to take hold
- Why can the market not take care of culture? -> Public culture is one of the few things that can take care of democratising funding

Robin:

- What are stupidly called 'soft-skills' are skills necessary to get ahead in life
- There is pressure of the government and family to avoid studying humanities due to a lack of 'return-on-investment'

Question from the audience:

- What is the one thing economists need to pick up from culture?

David:

- A lot more could be done in terms of communication and help promote events at the local council

Robert:

- The cross-culture element deserves attention -> Where is the interrelation between culture, retail etc? Especially given that Kingston is very reliant on retail
- Be more disruptive than following

Robin:

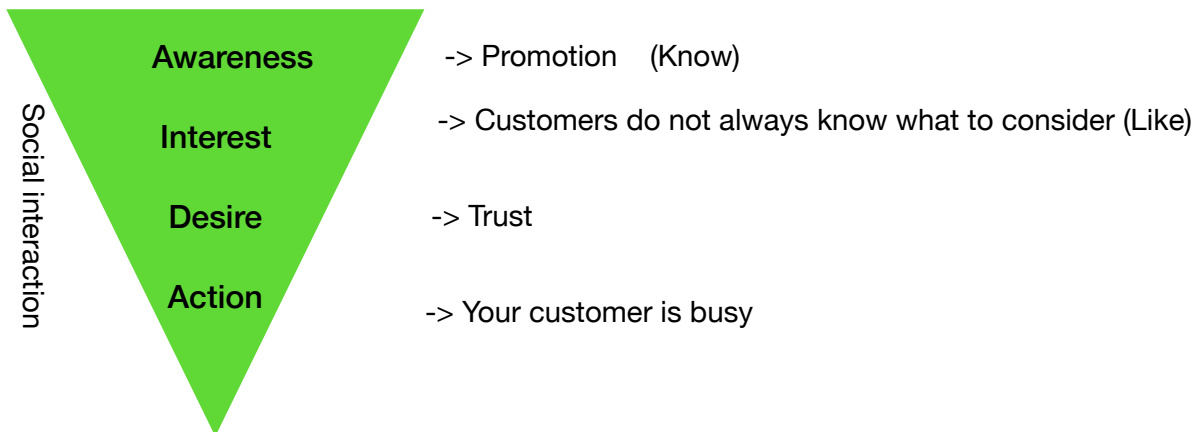
- Kingston is quite insular -> There is no real tourism strategy

V. 12:20-12:50 pm: Business seminar 2 COMMUNICATION: How to Have More Impact (and Drive Sales) with the Right Content? by Jude Faultless (Faultless Communication)

Jude:

- On the one hand, communication should be really easy
 - And yet, we absolutely need to do it, but we can be quite alienated by the 'Gods of Google and AI' in our communication
 - Imagine you had to pay for social media -> It would make a sure difference compared to when it is free, you may not always do the thinking before posting
 - From a business perspective, communication can be quite confusing
 - A lot of noise needs to be filtered out
 - The litmus test of good communication -> Can you keep your customer from scrolling?
 - Communication is about relevance -> There is a bridge between us and our customer
 - It is not about what we say and do, but about what our customer hears and does
 - And there is only communication when it is heard, understood and acted upon
 - It is not about doing more, but about being more relevant
-
- So, should your sales goal be a customer buying goal?
 - Each customer is looking for a solution to their pain point
 - But you cannot sell to someone who is not ready to buy
 - Our goal is to help our customers get so clear on their problem, that they can choose

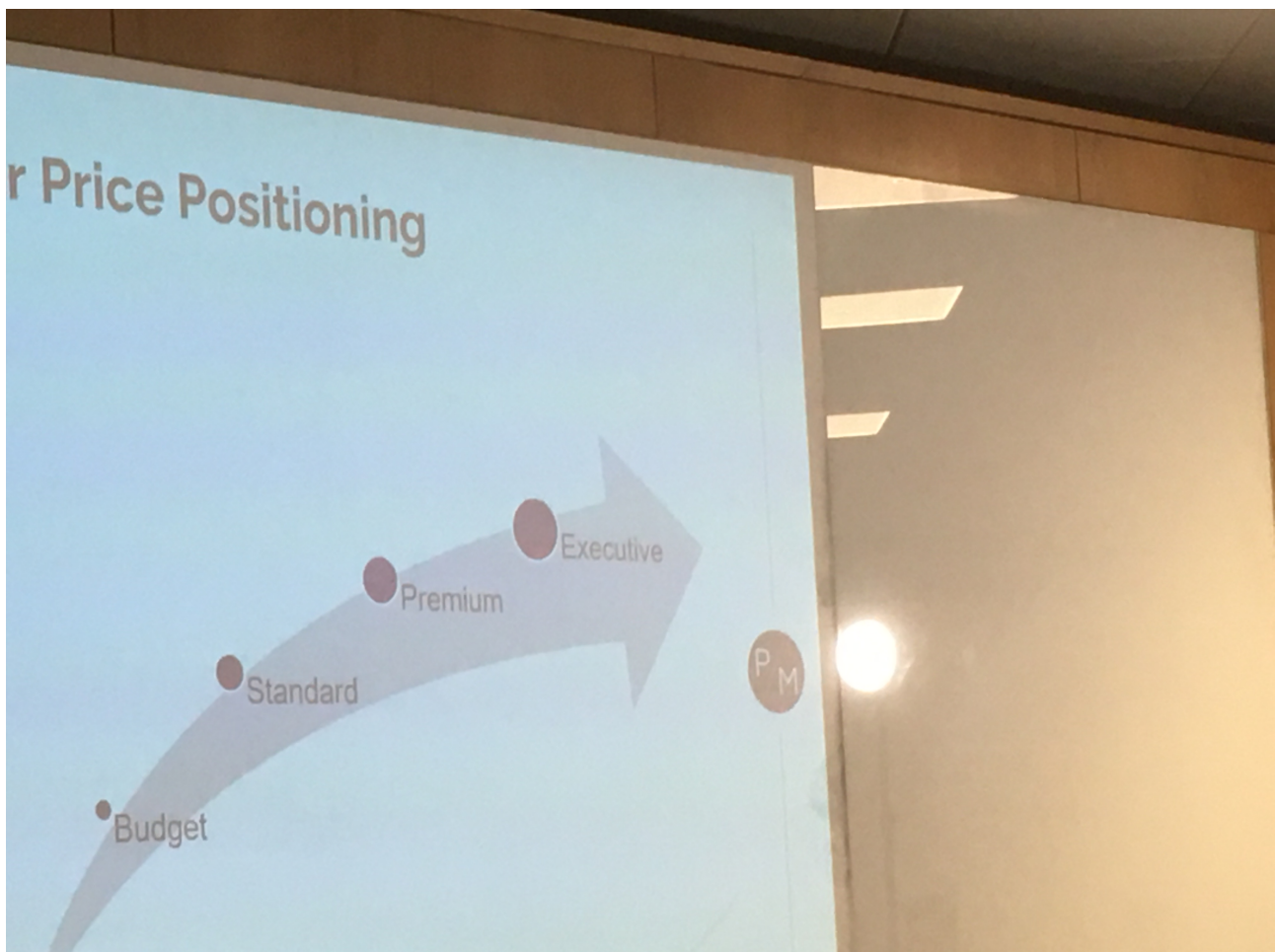
See a figure about relevance on next page ...



- Challenges as a business center around the question how to make sure people want your product -> This is one of the hardest parts

VI. 12:55-01:25 pm: Business Seminar 3 **MARKETING: The Secrets to Smarter Pricing** by Mark Peacock (Consultant, PriceMaker Ltd)

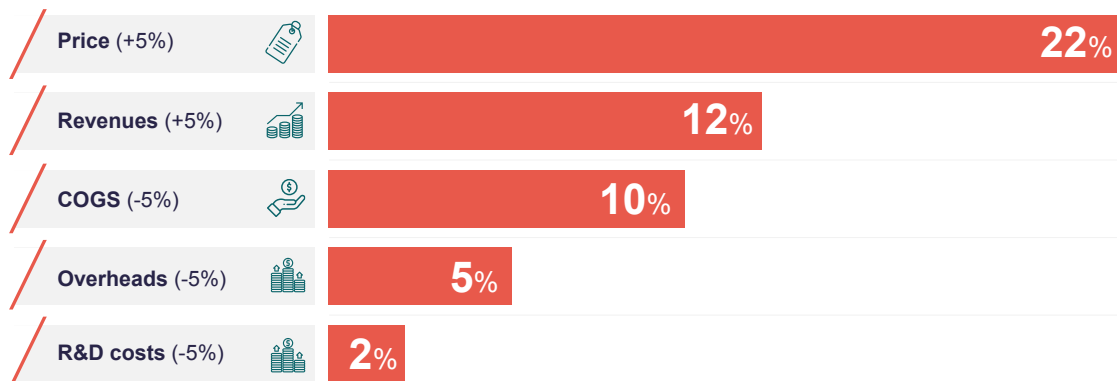
- Here are the top 5 pricing mistakes: i) Under price your services ii) Copy the competition iii) Believe "the market sets the rules" iv) Offer discounts too early v) "Set & forget", failing to regulate and review your process
- Yet there are plenty of things you can do to get the best out of your price -> Prove your price position (value on y-axis and price on x-axis on below picture, taken from a slide presented by Mark during the session)



- Benefits of better prices: Increases in profit from from a 5% improvement intervention can be seen below based on a slide presented by Mark during the session :

BENEFITS OF BETTER PRICING

Increase in profit from a 5% improvement in:



3

Source: Hinterhuber (2014). Towards value-based pricing



pricemaker.co.uk

- Price affects competition
- Interesting case: Aspirin (price) 10 cents or \$2
Pain reduction 60% 85% -> strong placebo effect
- How do you effectively sell a \$2K watch? -> Place it next to a \$10K watch

Ardi (me):

- Question: Is there a linear relationship in this phenomenon? Say you place a \$50K Patek Philippe watch next to a \$200K Lange & Söhne watch, will you have the same effect?

Mark:

- Answer: This relationship is certainly not linear, and there is a special relationship with luxury goods such as these, for the high price in fact increases demand instead
- High to low pricing -> A 'normal' menu has 'low to high' prices
- Here are 5 top tips:
 - Avoid commoditisation -> it is better to charge 5000 Pounds at once than 10 times 500 Pounds, for in the former case the price is seen as an investment and in the latter case as an expense
 - Set clear Price Positioning based on i) Brand & reputation ii) Market Position iii) Revenue & Profit targets
 - Use Price Anchors, since i) People like a bargain ii) The way to sell more is not per se to lower prices, use a high price anchor instead and mention the highest price option first
 - Always offer a choice of price options -> Whether bespoke or standardised does not really matter
 - Make pricing easy for your customers -> The human brain makes 35000 decisions per day

Ardi (me):

- Question: Regarding point iv, if discontinuous prices are used for cheap and/or expensive services and not for the middle option, how does the balance of choices change?

Mark:

- Answer: You will typically see a 30% 60% 10% distribution across the three options. When you modify cheap and expensive options as you described, you will have a fatter distribution with relatively more cheap and expensive versus middle-of-the-road services chosen.

VII. 01:30-02:40 pm: Innovation Workshop: Lose the Fear of AI and Make it Work for Your Business by Studio ZAO

Speakers:

Belle Padt of Studio Zao

AI Expert Andrew Grant

Partner AI at Dx Cubed, advising PF / VC clients; Senior Director for AI at imagination services; Chaired VC AI start-up Satalia, acquired by WPP

Belle:

- We believe in SME's growth -> And we collaborate with AI specialists to achieve that
- This workshop's setup: i) introduction ii) understanding AI iii) exercise: exploring AI user cases iv) apply
- Write down your worst fear surrounding AI and your hope regarding AI

Ardi (me):

- My fear: A dystopian society where humans are subservient to robots and to the rest of nature
- My hope: A well-organised, future-oriented society with healthy interactions between people, and a high degree of high-tech usage for problem-solving

Andrew:

- The AI 'apocalypse' could take away almost 8 million jobs in the UK, says report
- There are lot of negative news items about AI -> yet throughout history, things change
- Let us take things back a step -> This may be the most useful, augmentative opportunity
- We will have to do less useless or time-consuming tasks
- 90% of AI is for commercial applications, and thus not based on evidence from scratch
- So what does Chat GPT do? -> Analyses what word comes next (see below)
- Input (A): My favourite drink Output (B): is ... lychee ... bubble ... tea
- It can do a lot, but there are limits
- AI CAN DO ... i) Automate repetitive tasks ii) Analyse data at scale iii) Augment decision-making iv) And in some cases transform / disrupt traditional business models
- AI CANT DO ... i) Understand context ii) Replace human judgement entirely
- Practical use: Recruitment; reading spreadsheets
- But it is nice to be nervous -> we recommend starting small and focusing on a small business problem
- For today, i) Pick a challenge and discuss ii) Create a user case iii) What is the first step you take?

In our workshop team, we chose the challenge human resources and formulated the following points to be kept in mind for organisations when using AI:

- i) Finding members ii) Improving the selection process iii) measuring performance iv) finding blind spots / hidden skills v) finding the right people vi) retain people vii) dismiss people
- As a user case, we see added value in using AI for Profile selection LinkedIn and bear the following questions in mind: i) How well do they specify people ii) Which parameters are used? iii) How do you make sure your core assumptions in the model are right and the profiles selected are accurate?

On a final note

The Kingston Future of Work Summit lasted until about three o'clock in the afternoon. The last half hour or so I have used for networking, and had the pleasure to listen to and speak with various people in person, including Mr. Ash Ali, Mrs. Clare Mannall, Mr. Andrew Grant and Mr. Mark Peacock. On a final note, I thank Mr. Forbes Low and Mrs. Ilona Saliev for having invited me! For comments/feedback, please send an E-mail to quero@discounted-by-a-lightning-strike.com. Thank you for reading!

I have no interests to declare other than my attendance as a board member of investment committee Carpe Divitias.