



# OUR MANIFESTO AND PROGRAMME FOR THE NEW NORMAL



## FOREWORD by Kerry Hallard



Well, it happened. The pandemic that scientists predicted, authors wrote about and films brought to life.

Countries ground to a halt.

People panicked and went crazy for a while.

‘Zooming’ became a way of life.

But some industries were ready. Some stepped up and delivered big time. Some helped to educate. Some helped the NHS heroes. Some kept the country ticking over. I’m so incredibly proud of how well the global strategic sourcing industry has responded to the many issues created by COVID-19. Our mini-survey shows that as a result, trust in company partnerships is higher today than it was before the pandemic.

It is my belief that not only has the global strategic sourcing industry been critical to getting many companies through the challenges to date, but that it will be essential to drive the global economy out of this inevitable downturn.

Strategic sourcing will be key in transforming businesses quickly AND making them more resilient moving forward. That’s why we’re not looking to the future in trepidation. The pandemic clearly demonstrated to the whole country what worked (and what didn’t). So next time we can say that we’re fully prepared and ready to carry on delivering business as usual.

The GSA has revised its manifesto to recognise what has happened and to provide a programme of work that will guide members quickly and safely through their restarting strategies. Whether you are a member of the GSA or not, I invite you to get involved and collaborate as a community to help drive and deliver the inevitable change.

**Stay safe and stay sane.**

Kerry Hallard  
CEO  
Kerryh@gsa-uk.com

## FOREWORD by Mark Devonshire



The last few months have seen an exponential increase in the use of technology. Governments, work, education and health has been enabled by technology across the world and there has been an exponential increase in collaboration tools for use in health, work and pleasure.

By far this is the greatest period of change that we are seeing in our lifetimes, and our industry is at the centre of it. Over the last few years we have talked Digital, but now we are truly seeing the Digital revolution.

The Digital Revolution is here. A cashless society is a reality. Virtual is the new norm, and all organisations are rethinking Physical. The High Street as we know it will not exist. Schooling, learning, working and health will become business as usual to be virtual and Digital. Tech is at the heart of our new society. All surveys and studies across the globe are indicating CEOs and companies are in the majority accelerating Technological Transformation.

The economy will be challenging with most views being that it will take at least two years from now to return to current levels. History demonstrates that sourcing significantly peaks in such times for cost reasons. We will see a new version of outsourcing, which is not of the 'your mess for less' characteristic but transparent value output based services highly enabled by automation and cloud.

Can we predict the next 6 or 24 months though, as every day so much changes and forecasting somewhat futile. However all businesses are searching for potential answers, new ways of working, best practice and ideas from across the globe. The GSA has a pivotal and central role in helping our members and the Industry globally with this.

*Our industry is at a pivot point to true Digital Transformation.  
The GSA will make and help that pivot happen for our members  
and the Industry.*

Mark Devonshire  
GSA Chairman  
Markd@gsa-uk.com



“  
OUR BIGGEST  
CHALLENGE.  
OUR BIGGEST  
SUCCESS.”

Not since World War II has so much been asked of UK businesses, the people that run them and the people that work for them in such a short period of time. Yet our industry has responded brilliantly to the challenges that lockdown and COVID-19 have brought to UK businesses. We have kept the lights on and the wheels turning for UK plc.

COVID-19 stress-tested the strategic sourcing industry and brought with it challenges. Yet during this most testing time, we exceeded and we excelled. We collaborated and helped businesses keep going. We rethought how we worked. We challenged the norm. We saw trust increase between providers and buyers, and created a more agile, value-rich and cost-effective way of working for businesses the length and breadth of the UK.

“  
**RETHINKING  
SOURCING.  
RESTARTING UK.**  
”

We believe that there's never been a better time, or a greater need, to celebrate and promote ourselves as an industry. We have helped businesses keep going through all the challenges that COVID-19 brought – and continue to do so.

**Our industry is uniquely placed to help companies through their restarting strategies, and beyond.**

Whatever the new normal looks like, we are ready.

We need to be one step ahead. We are ready to embrace change.

More than ever, we need to collaborate and showcase the brilliance of the sourcing industry, promote a clear future for this rapidly changing industry, and make a noise about it.

The GSA will lead this charge and champion the industry like never before. At the time it needs it the most.

**WE ARE READY TO RETHINK SOURCING  
AND READY TO RESTART THE UK**





“

# A MANIFESTO FOR THE NEW NORMAL

”

PHOTO BY FREE TO USE ON UNSPLASH



EDWARD HOWELL ON UNSPLASH



ENGIN AKYURT ON UNSPLASH

Our 2018 Manifesto laid the groundwork that allowed our industry to adapt so successfully to the momentous changes that happened during the coronavirus pandemic. As an industry we excelled: partnering and collaborating in ways almost unthinkable in 2019. We should be rightly proud. These are the skills and spirit that will see the industry thrive and grow: helping UK plc get back on its feet through agility, trust, adopting new technologies, reskilling talent, and working to more flexible contracting models.

**In light of the challenges posed by the pandemic, we are publishing a revised manifesto that is focused not only on championing the success of the industry, but on painting a very clear picture of the future of our industry and providing a path to get all our members there.**



ETIENNE GODIARD ON UNSPLASH



SAM MCGEE ON UNSPLASH



# OUR MANIFESTO PLEDGES FOR THE STRATEGIC SOURCING INDUSTRY:

- To positively promote our vision for the industry's future
- To maintain world class standards
- To champion a vision for the changing face of the industry post-COVID-19
- To upskill talent through promoting core competencies critical to the profession
- To continually improve the industry's positive reputation
- To promote ethical and socially responsible sourcing and partnering
- To create a unified voice to campaign for issues that most matter

# A MANIFESTO WITH MEANING

## TO POSITIVELY PROMOTE OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

of the strategic sourcing industry and profession. We will create a clear language set and tone of voice so we can accurately, clearly, and consistently promote and better communicate the aims of the global technology and business services industry. These are to deliver strategic value through operating flexibly, transparently and collaboratively.

The aim of the industry is to utilise best practice to deliver technology-led transformation and continuous business improvement, through partnering and a blended global eco-system made of millions of highly talented individuals worldwide. We aim for the industry to be recognised as a significant and positive contributor to the global economy, and that it will be a major factor in re-energising many economies worldwide.

**MAINTAIN WORLD CLASS STANDARDS** in strategic sourcing through continual development and deployment of best practices, the promotion of collaboration and through professional partnering.

**CHAMPION A VISION** for the changing face of the industry after COVID-19 that addresses risk, builds resilience, and plans for business continuity. Collaboration and partnerships will be increasingly important in this: we will work to ensure the industry is as transparent as possible to engender trust.

**UPSKILL TALENT** through promoting core competencies and capabilities critical to the profession as it rapidly evolves as businesses reengineer post-COVID-19. We will develop new qualifications in response to recent industry trends and disruptors like the coronavirus pandemic.

## CONTINUALLY IMPROVE THE POSITIVE REPUTATION

of the strategic sourcing industry, proving the significant value it contributes to UK plc and economies globally. We will highlight the industry's incredible response to the challenges of COVID-19: showcase our best practice, celebrate the high levels of trust within the industry, and show evidence of innovations that made a positive difference during the pandemic.

We will communicate this to companies, media, influencers, and Government in order to deliver market growth and attract the best talent.

## PROMOTE ETHICAL AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE SOURCING AND PARTNERING.

We encourage transparency, promote ethical corporate and professional conduct, and aim that these behaviours are inbuilt to achieve success across a rapidly changing industry.

**CREATE A UNITED VOICE TO CAMPAIGN** for the issues that most matter to the sourcing industry. Now is not the time for anti-globalisation or protectionism, but it's still essential that UK talent is looked after. We will work to ensure that UK talent is not left on the way-side and instead is reskilled for new careers.



# THE GSA PROGRAMME

## RETHINKING SOURCING, RESTARTING UK - HOW WE'RE GOING TO DO IT.

Our new programme has been designed to help our members achieve not just the goals set out in our revised 2020 Manifesto, but also to thrive and adapt in the new normal. From offering free access to our Global Strategic Sourcing Standard to providing the tools needed to take a strategic, informed approach to industry and all its attendant challenges going forward, the new programme provides reassurance and advice to buy-side and suppliers, and members and non-members alike.





“  
A NEW PROGRAMME  
TO RESTART THE UK  
”

PHOTO BY OWEN KEMP ON UNSPLASH

In recognition of the speed of change, and the increased need for guidance during this period of uncertainty, we are offering **free access** to our highly respected best practice, including the Global Strategic Sourcing Standard to the broader community in UK companies, the UK Government, and industry professionals worldwide. **We are committed, as a mature and respected industry association, to ensuring that best practice is easily accessible to individuals and companies during this uncertain time, when they need it most.**

Our industry will guide them by ensuring they understand best practice and have the know-how to carry it out and do it right. Many businesses will be partnering in different ways for the first time to get their restart programmes going: we firmly believe that we should do all we can to help them during this challenging period.

## CHAMPIONING THE UK

Although now isn't the time for anti-globalisation and protectionism, it is the time to promote as well as review the talent and skills we have in the UK. Championing the outstanding delivery support in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the North of England among others, is vital to the future role of the UK in the global strategic sourcing landscape.

We must highlight UK technology and business services innovations and champion our domestic service providers and dynamic tech community. The UK may not be the largest delivery destination, but we are a mature user and deliverer of technology and business services, and the most innovative and complex sourcing arrangements are often contracted in the UK.

“  
A SNAPSHOT  
OF OUR VISION  
OF WORKING  
”

**AGILITY AND TRUST WILL BE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL  
WORKING POST-COVID-19.**

Successful clients and providers alike will adapt and work with blended sourcing eco-systems that will allow them to use best-in-class players from around the world to deliver exceptional solutions. Innovation, collaboration, and new alliances will be the backbone of an exciting new normal. It is these that will be the building blocks of our new programme of work, and have informed its development every step of the way.

*Our revised programme will cover all key topics within the industry and be delivered through a carefully curated blend of virtual events and meetings, best practice guides, and content including SourcingTV.*



# THE IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC SOURCING

TALENT &  
WELLNESS

THE SOURCING  
ECO-SYSTEM

SUSTAINABILITY

CONTRACTING

THE STRATEGIC  
SOURCING  
FUNCTION

TECH-ENABLED  
BUSINESS SERVICE  
DELIVERY

INCLUSION &  
DIVERSITY

⌘

ENTERPRISE-WIDE  
AUTOMATION

If the global pandemic has shown UK plc anything it is that the need for, and benefits of, strategic sourcing are clear. Indeed, it's vital for the success of businesses going forward. The future is here, and it's one which sees strategic partnerships formed out of highly blended ecosystems. This means the ability to be agile, lean, adaptable and embrace teamwork will be key for the success of our buy-side and supply-side members alike. We've seen what's possible during the sourcing industry's incredible response to COVID-19 and will continue to champion this new approach.



**Our research shows the best performing companies have a *strategic sourcing function*.**

**The companies that responded the fastest and the best to the challenges thrown up by COVID-19 have a *strategic sourcing function*.**

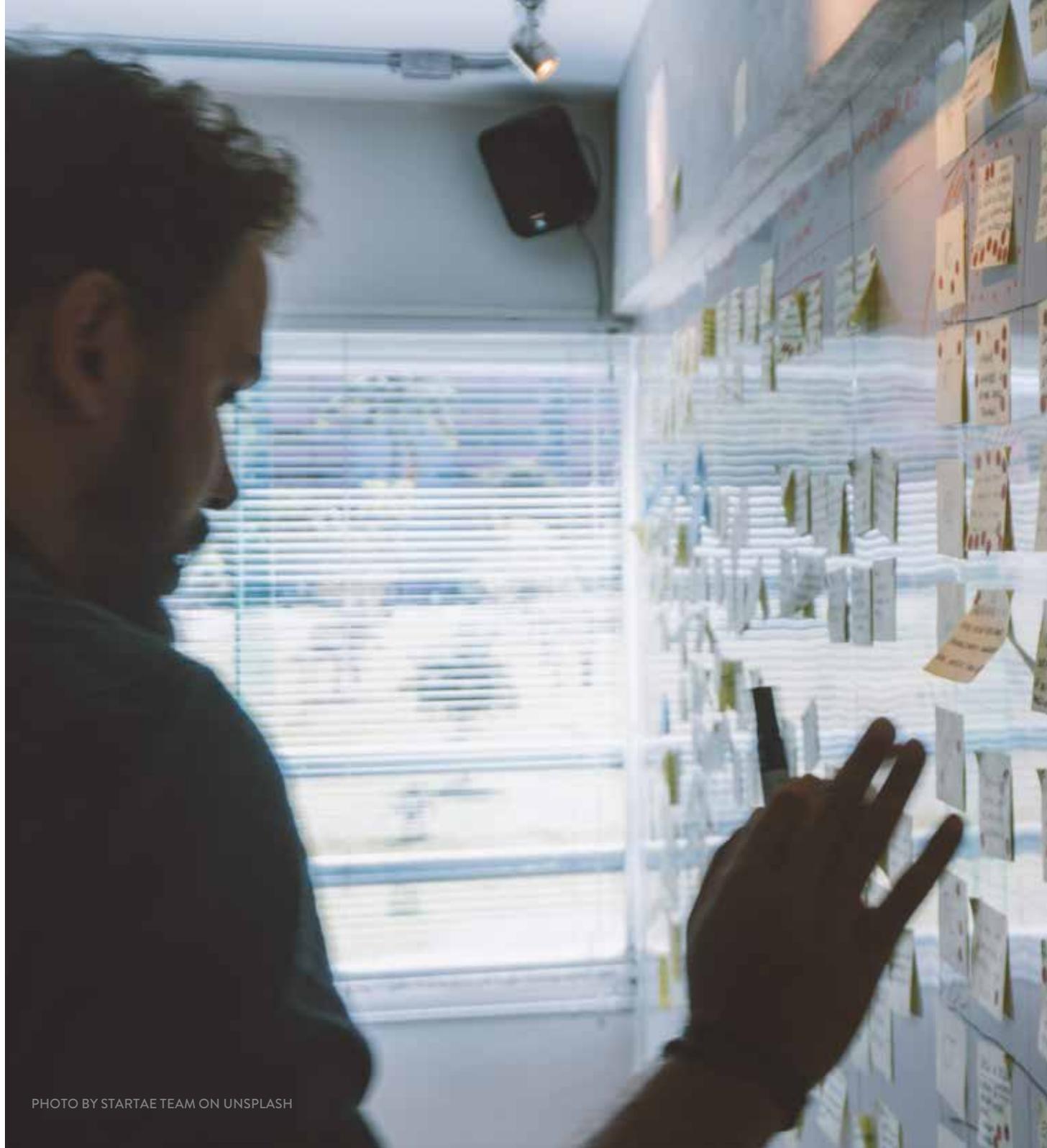
**The *trend to strategic sourcing will accelerate in a post-COVID-19 environment*.**

*We will provide detailed information on the make-up of the strategic sourcing function and guidance on how to transition buy-side businesses from the old school siloed approach to having a sourcing function that transcends the business, finance, IT, operations and procurement.*

***Our focus will continue to be and accelerate on driving value through partnering, rather than merely cutting costs.***

***We will continue to promote the strategic sourcing skill set and for it to be recognised as a profession.***

***We will work out what the industry and organisations within it need to do to attract and upskill talent across the breadth of strategic sourcing. This programme of work is supported by a number of important work streams, in addition to the GSA's standard activities.***





## THE SOURCING ECO-SYSTEM

The COVID-19 crisis saw the sourcing industry rise to myriad challenges: creating new partnerships, adopting new models of working overnight, and delivering time-sensitive technology solutions. All were and continue to be absolutely key to helping business thrive. We proved we can adapt, and we will continue to do so by championing a blended sourcing eco-system where buyers and providers partner with a variety of partners. This new model is where we will see new alliances forming among providers, and clients managing integrated service providers themselves.

The GSA is committed to bringing highly innovative and dynamic players into the sourcing eco-system for all of our membership base to partner with. We will do this through the launch of the GSA Entrepreneurs' Club. We have developed a highly compelling offering for the start-up / SME community who wish to sell their services in to mid-size and enterprise buyers. This is comprised of:

- **GSA PARTNER PLATFORM**

Through services like our GSA Partner Platform we will continue to help all our members chart this rapidly changing landscape where decisions are being made at lightning speed. This will ensure that companies (buyers and suppliers) are armed with verified and approved companies, to help speed up the RFP process, which is more important than ever during these times. It's an easy to navigate platform, like checktrade.com, but for the service provider community. This will enable companies to build a long/short list of potential partners that meet their criteria, with the added assurance of freely available reviews on what customers think of their service capabilities. Great for buyers and providers seeking partners to use, and a fabulous platform to promote service providers' profiles and capabilities.

- **SOURCING SERIES**

A series of webinars focused on coaching start-ups in how to market to and engage and partner with enterprise clients.

- **SME INDUSTRY CODE OF CONDUCT**

The GSA will champion alignment to its Industry Code of Conduct for working with start-ups and SMEs. This will include an exposé on payment terms.

“

PEOPLE FIRST,  
ALWAYS.

”

PHOTO BY YOU X VENTURES ON UNSPLASH

**TALENT IS KEY.** *We believe there are not currently enough strategic sourcing professionals or people with the ability to transcend the skills needed to create real added value through partnering or to have the confidence to adopt the technology solutions, operating models or contracting models that will be needed post-COVID-19.*

Our talent programme is focused on attracting and upskilling talent through the use of industry Ambassadors who will not only encourage people to join our industry, but actively promote it as a profession in colleges and universities going forward. We also offer a broad programme of professional development covering a range of courses and qualifications. The GSA framework of the competencies and capabilities is key to helping members identify areas for developing talent. Running in tandem with this are our freely available educational webinars.

*People are the key to the future of not only our industry but for UK plc. Now is not the time to adopt stringent cost measures and only plan for the short term: we believe it is more important than ever to invest in talent. To that end we continue to support the Living Wage Foundation as well as actively promote inclusion, diversity, and wellness in the workplace. In these uncertain times, support – financial and for mental wellbeing – are vital as employees adapt to working from home and an uncertain new normal.*



“  
EMBRACE THE  
NEW ERA IN  
CONTRACTING  
”

PHOTO BY TIM GOUV ON UNSPLASH

**THE DAY OF THE HUNDRED-PLUS PAGE CONTRACT IS ALL BUT OVER.** We are seeing the start of a new era in contracting – one that’s backed up by our research which shows that organisations are aiming to have shorter contracts with lower associated costs. These new contracting models are part of the new wave of working more adaptably and flexibly - with the burdens of the cost and time of past models, well, a thing of the past.

*The GSA will be here to help you navigate these new models in this changing environment – from how to get cost out of your contracts to how to stress test your exits. Of course, members will still be able to access GSA best practice guides relating to contracts and a suite of legal templates and toolkits as we continue our work towards GSA Standard Terms.*



“

THE FUTURE  
OF CX IS  
ALREADY HERE

”

PHOTO BY EFREN BARAHONA ON UNSPLASH

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IS AT THE HEART OF ANY SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATION.**

It's why the customer service industry is so important post-COVID-19. Automation is increasing in sophistication and use at warp speed, and agents who once worked at centres are now working from home. Customer experience in 2020 is vastly different from 2019. We anticipate increasing levels of WFH as well as an acceleration of automation: there will be no going back.

*We will guide buy-side members on how to best change their delivery models in this rapidly changing environment, while helping service providers move to Service Provider 2.0. To that end, we are developing a think tank to assess the future trends around predicting your customers' needs and behaviours so all members can deliver the ultimate CX.*



## CHAMPIONING OUR MEMBERS, CHAMPIONING BEST PRACTICE



PHOTO BY JASON LEUNG ON UNSPLASH

**To be armed with knowledge of best practice will be a key element of successfully responding to the business challenges of COVID-19.**

It's why we are offering all the services and the GSA's Global Strategic Sourcing Standard in our programme free during the current crisis. This is just one of the ways we are helping our members in this challenging time. Ingrained in our ethics is making the industry code of conduct clear and understandable, our continued drive to abolishing pay to play in our industry, and supporting the Living Wage Foundation.

As the most established and trusted organisation for sourcing best practice, we will continue to use our highly influential network of professionals to disseminate best practices in the UK and globally.

*All GSA services are currently freely available to access, however organisations and individuals who need more assistance can get tailored help from our GSA Consulting Services .*



PHOTO BY CLARK TIBBS ON UNSPLASH

## SUSTAINABILITY

**It was an issue that was front of mind pre-COVID-19 and should still be one of the most important areas for buy-side companies when they consider who their service providers are.**

Millennials in particular are increasingly determining their involvement with companies and making buying decisions on the basis of their ethical values. Ethics matter. Now is not the time to slacken your commitment to sustainability.

*Sustainability features strongly in our programme: highlighting best practices in 4th party assurance, the Modern Slavery Act, dropping pay to play, as well as covering the important areas of plastics, carbon footprints and paying the Living Wage.*

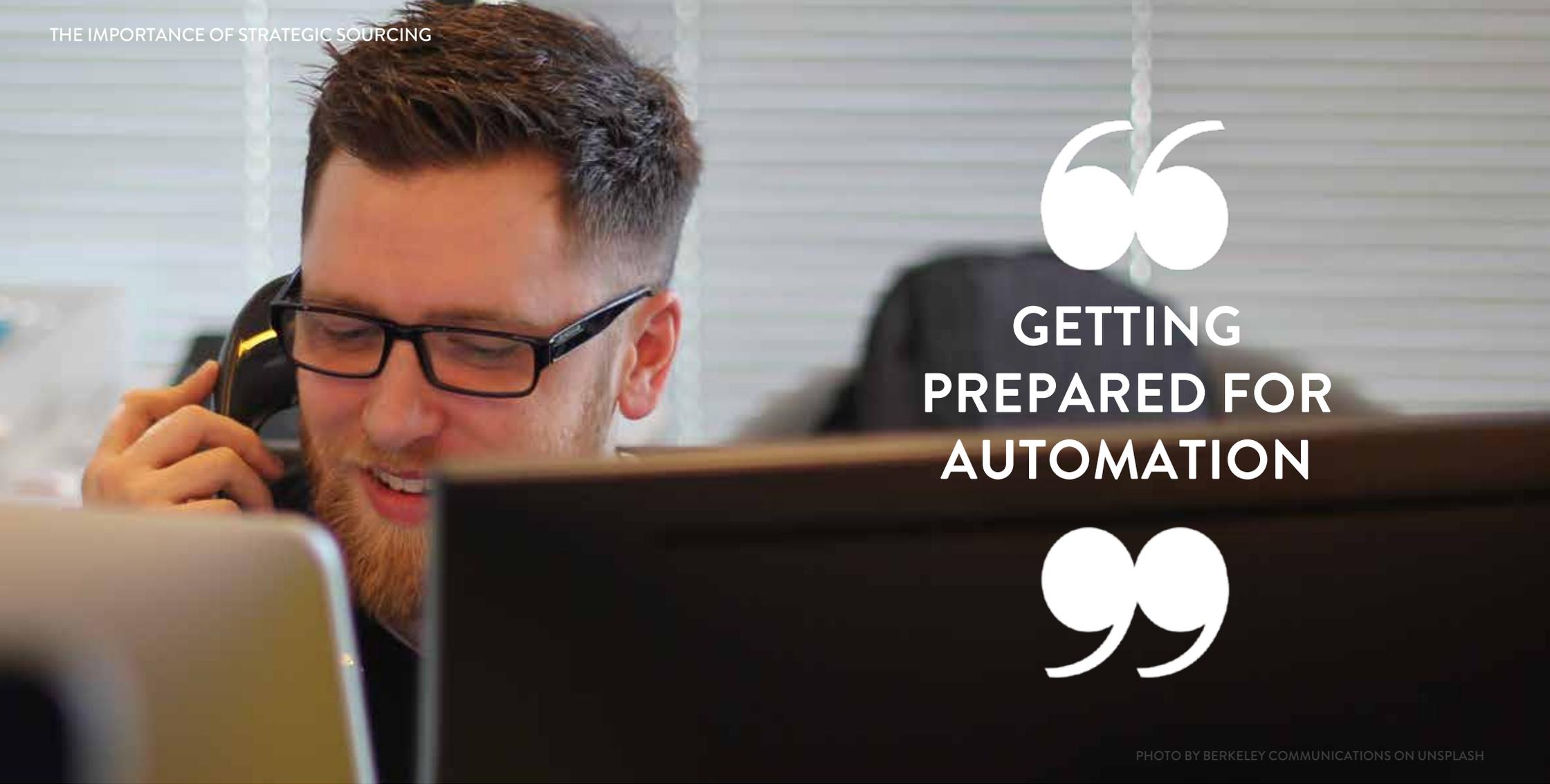
“

## TECH-ENABLED BUSINESS THAT DELIVERS

”

In a post-COVID-19 business world, one thing is absolutely certain: it's going to be all about technology-enabled business service delivery. The days when technology was the domain of the IT department are ancient history. It's now the business who decides what the technology needs are. These decisions are going to be made increasingly at speed, and result in a myriad of smaller entrepreneurial technology companies working together. This is a game changer.

*Through our SourcingTech series of events we will help sourcing professionals understand all the new technologies coming down the line and how they can introduce them in their sourcing arrangements. We will explore the opportunities and challenges posed by technology in a series that covers, among others: cloud, blockchain, AI, and cybersecurity*



“  
GETTING  
PREPARED FOR  
AUTOMATION  
”

PHOTO BY BERKELEY COMMUNICATIONS ON UNSPLASH

**We have long thought that an ‘automate-first’ approach is the future of sourcing with the ultimate result being enterprise-wide automation.** COVID-19 has pushed the GO button on many organisations’ automation projects that would normally be idling in the background as a ‘nice to have/will try later’. Most important of all is the need for buy-side members to have a strategic approach to adopting automation and making it work for their organisations. It is not a plug in and not just a cost-saving exercise.

Strategies that embrace existing workers and move their work up the value chain are key to ensuring automation is ingrained (and accepted) in the workplace of the not so distant future.

*We will provide guidance on moving to an automate-first approach which we believe is key in the future of sourcing and will promote the possibilities of, and route to, enterprise-wide automation. Expect us to continue our ‘drop the bot’ campaign, as robotic imagery and language continues to hold the industry back.*

“  
NOT JUST  
WORDS.  
MEANINGFUL  
ACTIONS.  
”

### **INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY**

UK businesses have, with Government help, been able to keep their employees on the pay-roll post-COVID-19. Once that security blanket is dropped, there will be the temptation to cut costs, cut wages, and cut staff. People will be vulnerable. We will revise our mentoring programmes to offer support. We will continue to promote and share best practice for building community groups across subjects that include fertility, menopause, and GLBTQ, during these challenging times. We will also continue our work to ensure that there are ever more women in more senior positions in sourcing.

# WHY THE GSA MATTERS

**POST-COVID-19 WE ARE FOCUSED MORE THAN EVER ON HARNESSING THE MUCH-EVIDENCED COLLABORATIVE SPIRIT SHOWN BY THE SOURCING INDUSTRY.**

**We are stronger when we collaborate.** It's why we are offering our new programme free during this period of change, in a bid to share best practice as widely as possible, share ideas and break down old tribal walls. As the only organisation that invests time and energy to benefit the industry and profession as a whole, we believe we are in a strong position to expertly guide and reassure companies as they navigate the new normal.

As the challenges posed by the pandemic are only increasing, we want to help our supply-side members understand how they need to adapt and change to deliver to buyers' ever-changing requirements as Service Provider 2.0 properly takes off.

**We acknowledge change, share insights, and reinvent to assist our industry through times of challenge and change.**

**With all the uncertainty that COVID-19 challenges have brought, one thing is certain – and that is change is here to stay.**

We are determined to guide the industry through this period which will see the industry go through rapid and intense changes as it adopts new operating models, embraces new sourcing eco-systems, sees increased automation and technology-led solutions, and adapts to new contracting models.

*We will continue to actively work to guide the strategic sourcing industry by acknowledging the work of others in our joint field, by sharing best practice from leaders, workshops and events through a new and revised programme of work that directly addresses the challenges and opportunities posed by COVID-19 to the industry.*



# YOUR INDUSTRY NEEDS YOU!

**BECOME A MEMBER AND SHAPE AND STEER OUR NEW GSA PROGRAMME - AND BE THE CHANGE OUR INDUSTRY NEEDS.**

We've already shown we are stronger together as an industry: keeping UK plc going during the most challenging time in living memory. We've gained kudos along the way – but there's so much more we can do to actively shape not only the future of our industry but the future of UK industry as we step forward together and rise to the exciting challenge of restarting the UK.

Join the GSA as a member and drive and shape the industry change. Subscribe to access and align to best practice, or simply join the conversation.

**BE PART OF THE GSA, JOIN TODAY!**

Email: [admin@gsa-uk.com](mailto:admin@gsa-uk.com)

Website: [www.gsa-uk.com](http://www.gsa-uk.com)

