NSA New CEO Announcement Video
By Brian Walter, NSA President 2017-2018

This is an exciting day...because we are announcing the hiring of a new CEO for the National Speakers Association. Now sure, we *could* just reveal the name now. But we're *speakers*...and we know how important it is to tell the full *story*.

In April of this year, NSA's long-serving and respected CEO, Stacy Tetschner, accepted a new position with the United Motorcoach Association. We acknowledged the uniqueness of his 25+ years of dedicated service, were grateful for the 5 weeks he gave us to prepare for a transition, and wished him similar success in his new role.

Then the NSA Executive Committee leapt into action, and directly interviewed multiple candidates for the NSA *Interim* CEO position. We hired the eminently qualified Chris Packard. Chris' immediate value of providing operational expertise and a steady hand allowed us the margin to conduct a truly professional, national search for NSA's next CEO. We knew this was a tremendous opportunity for NSA to make a pivot. And we were determined to serve our members by doing this right.

So, rather than improvise a search process, we formed a diverse NSA CEO Transition Committee. It was made up of highly skilled members from all parts of our Association. Then we hired Sterling Martin Associates, one of the leading search firms in the country that specializes in associations and non-profits. They were tasked with finding us the *best candidates* to lead and to grow NSA.

The "word" of NSA's open CEO position was quickly shared nationally through many publications and networks. Those postings alone generated 62 initial applications. But the primary source for CEO prospects came through the efforts of Sterling Martin's team. They did direct outreach to 545 individuals. That ultimately resulted in 58 screening interviews with high potentials. Then, through intensive long format phone interviews, a slate of 20 candidates was presented to the NSA CEO Transition Committee.

Each Transition Committee member read through an extensive dossier of candidate backgrounds, and then rated each candidate on a numeric scale on a previously developed Key Competencies Scale for the NSA CEO position. The ratings were then collated and ranked.

The CEO Transition Committee members held three Zoom calls and discussed every candidate's qualifications. The Committee reached consensus on reducing the list of candidates down to the Top 7. On October 27th, the Transition Committee met in Atlanta and conducted in-person interviews with the Top 7 candidates. They then narrowed that list down to the Top 5.

These candidates were further vetted with a series of confidential assessments and background checks. Then they were given a specific scenario on NSA issues and opportunities, and told to prepare a detailed go-forward strategy.

On November 14th, the Top 5 candidates gave their in-person presentations to the CEO Transition Committee. And then the CEO Transition Committee further evaluated and discussed the 5 candidates and narrowed it down to the Top 2 finalists.

On November 15th, at the NSA Board of Directors Meeting in Tempe, each finalist gave an opening statement, made a presentation to the Board, and were then interviewed extensively. Out of the 17 Board members present, all 17 unanimously voted for the same finalist on the first confidential ballot.

And so...now we can reveal to you the National Speakers Association's next CEO...Mary Lue Peck!

Mary Lue is coming to NSA from the Institute for Supply Management. ISM is an international association with 50,000 members in 90 countries. Mary Lue has been their Chief Content and Engagement Officer...in charge of ISM's specialty conferences, publications, online learning, new product offerings, marketing, CMS, and membership growth.

Mary Lue was tasked with leading and moving the organization into the future. They turned around budget deficits, transformed their culture, upgraded their technology, increased event attendance, sponsorships and membership, and improved their financial status by millions.

We liked the sound of...pretty much ALL of that.

But what turned out to be a *surprise* benefit of hiring Mary Lue is...she already happens to be based in Arizona. ISM is headquartered right here in Tempe...a mere 11 minutes away from NSA headquarters. So, there is minimal transition time or expense due to location.

Mary Lue will officially begin as NSA CEO on January 2nd. The NSA CEO Transition Committee is already working with her now on a robust transition plan. We look forward to her leadership.

Please join us in welcoming Mary Lue Peck to the National Speakers Association!