

International President Terrie Baxter - Keynote Address  
ITC International Convention, Brisbane, Australia, July 2007.

Two years ago in Baltimore, I invited you to “Lift up your Life and Soar!”

ITC has been the catalyst which has helped countless members to do precisely that since 1938 – to soar beyond even their own expectations. For those of you who are now trying to discreetly double-check by counting on their fingers – yes, next year we celebrate our 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday – 70 years since we started and then joined forces across the world to create an international organisation dedicated to the development of its members.

Each member’s destination has been different, personal and individual. Each of us has aimed for our own targeted heights – some are still reaching for that goal, others are startled at how far above it they’ve flown. Standing here tonight as your International President I know that I have soared with ITC way beyond the modest intentions with which I joined.

While International Convention always provides a valuable opportunity for reflection on what we have achieved during the term (and we will do much of that over the next few days) – it offers an even more exciting opportunity to plan for the next two years.

So what do we plan for, when we’re already soaring?

How about soaring to new heights?

How about filing a flight plan more ambitious, aiming for a more distant destination?

If we’ve enjoyed flying high and free as swallows, sparrows and starlings - why don’t we launch ourselves into a rarer atmosphere, and soar like eagles?

We can do it.

We may need a wider wingspan, we could add some muscle and some turbo-power to our launch run, but we’ve got the essential aerodynamics: The nearly ten thousand meetings which members run using the ITC master manual training at 361 clubs across the world, every year.

We – those members who prepare and run those programmes, who evaluate newer members and submit to assessment for higher accreditation yourselves – we are the heart of the ITC bird.

The ITC Master Manual is the framework, the aerodynamic structure of our product. And, as with any successful product in a modern, global commercial world, it’s the added-value of our programmes and products from PowerTalk and Accreditation to Speech Contests and Leadership Training, which give us a unique place in the market.

But to grab our rightful market share, to regain the position we held in the past, requires more than passionate members and a great product. We have relied on that passion-and-product bird for years. But the stronger the heart and body, the larger and more powerful the wings must be.

Your Board has chosen, during the past two years, to consider the wings of ITC – to dissect them with detailed analytical care, to find out exactly what and where their strengths and weaknesses are, to highlight and address the stress points, to eliminate any metal fatigue and to give you the increased wingspan, muscle and turbo-power you have been asking for.

But before I introduce you to the very exciting (and believe me, they are very exciting) developments your Board is introducing, let me just go back a little way to see how we got here.

Around five years ago a sombre International Board, meeting in ITC Headquarters in Anaheim, received a hard, cold wake-up call in the form of the Executive Officer's report.

It was clear. And it was dire. The organisation had been deficit budgeting for too long, membership continued to decline, further eroding income, investment funds had been ill-considered and we were in imminent – that is to say, within a few short years – danger of insolvency.

Many of you will recall the difficult decisions made at that time by a courageous Board. The only solutions were drastic – so drastic solutions were imposed. Our building was closed and sold and ITC's administration was contracted out. For members who had been part of building that management edifice, it was a time of dissension and even fear. It is to the credit of those who steered the ship at that time that they remained steadfast, in the face of great opposition.

For two years from the time we met at Convention 2003 in Durban, South Africa, until our gathering again in Baltimore, Maryland, we re-laid some of the foundations and reinforced some of the walls of ITC management. It was quiet, hard work – but background work, which doesn't appear exciting – if it appears at all – to the average member's view. Budgeting, planning and managing better. Disciplining, trimming, conserving, streamlining, automating and re-organising. All necessary – vital – to ITC's survival. But very hard to expect members to be enthusiastic about.

But we did address an issue members had identified for some time: that of internal communication.

All Club Mailings were increasingly expensive – and sadly, not all were passed on to the membership. As a result, some members felt very remote from your International Board and sometimes did not even know about major events and announcements. Ironically, over time, the Board members have become more and more accessible through the medium of email. But at the time when they were corresponding directly with members more than ever in our history, some members were feeling more isolated.

And so the CLO system of distributing information was born. Together with the monthly "From the Boardroom" bulletin, members were able to receive detailed information, directly from the Board, every single month.

At the same time, the major framework - the ITC Master Manual - was completely re-written, retaining the best core of ITC training updated in a comprehensive, consolidated form. And so, in Baltimore, we were able to present you with an organisation which was once again solidly based on a modern training programme and – for the first time in many years – a budget which was beautiful, beautiful black!

We appointed our first Fellows of ITC at that Convention, acknowledging the best of our organisation's trainers. Bestowing them with Fellowships entitles our 24 Fellows the right to run POWERtalk short course training within our own ranks. Preparing members to train others, acting as both standard-bearers and quality-controllers.

Over the past few years, the relatively new POWERtalk course format has been tested in practical settings around the ITC world, allowing clubs and individuals to work with the material in their own environments. That experience has differed from club to club, region to region, as different local culture and experience has acted on the programme. And just as in the case of the Master Manual, the POWERtalk short course has proved to have that solid core. It is a powerful base for future expansion.

These changing and challenging events of the past five years, have echoed our history. Our organisation has survived 70 years through periods of optimistic expansion, worrying decline, and several major changes.

In 1975, for example, the then International Toastmistress Clubs enacted an entirely new regional structure for the organisation – and action which resulted in torrid turmoil and not a little anger on the part of (shall we say) more comfortable members. This notwithstanding the words of President Mary Lee Ton in her Installation acceptance speech: <sup>1</sup> *“It seems to me that the nip-and-tuck operation simply is not adequate to keep Toastmistress a strong, viable force in today’s world.”*

In the process, she said: *“we undoubtedly will rattle doors of hitherto sacrosanct customs. We will nip at the heels of long-established sacred cows, and we might even clank the chains which made yesterday’s trial balloons today’s traditions. This is as it should be, for the successful organisation adapts and experiments with many resources as it seeks paths of progress to answer the needs of a wide diversity of people.”*

Our organisation was then in a phase of steady growth, and that re-structuring enabled consolidation without inhibiting expansion. Ten years later, membership had climbed to over 24 thousand<sup>2</sup>.

What was next?

Many of you will remember: International Toastmistress Clubs became International Training in Communication – ITC.

There was no denying that the name Toastmistress was well past its sell-by date. Toastmasters - the organisation which was a great a part of our foundation - had long since opened its doors to women and was rapidly encroaching on our market share – a share previously protected by their intransigent refusal to admit women for so long.

Although a large part of our history, they had become our competition. The decision to shake off a name which branded us in the perception of the market as being for women only was appropriate, and timely.

And yet, as ITC, membership numbers fell steadily. Another ten years on, and ITC had fewer than 12 thousand members<sup>3</sup>. By the turn of the century, we just scraped the 10 thousand mark.

I do not want to spend – or indeed, waste – too much time on an analysis of the reasons. We’ve been around that bush far too many times, with far too many opinions being expressed based on hearsay, prejudice, observation and subjective experience. Suffice it to say that, regardless of the changing needs of society, the market for our product is not smaller – it is far greater than ever before in history. The proof of that lies, ironically, in the continued success of our competition.

We have simply lost our market share to the competition. Our renaming, while a necessary and courageous step, has ultimately failed in its execution – we lost our brand identity, our well-established reputation, and exchanged them for a name which has simply not become known. We threw the baby out with the bathwater. We lost our brand value and failed to create a new one. The ITC brand, regrettably, remains anonymous.

If you type “Toastmistress” in Microsoft’s spellchecker, it pops up, spelt with a capital “T”. In other words, more than 20 years after we discarded the name, it is still recognised by the software which epitomises the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. That’s a strong brand!

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<sup>1</sup> *Toastmistress* Vol. 37, No 1, Sept/Oct 1975, p17

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Board of Directors 1984-84, to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention in Dallas, Texas, reported in *Toastmistress* Vol. 46, No 1, Sept/Oct 1984, p4

<sup>3</sup> *ITC Communicator*, Vol. 11 No. 4 March/April 1996, p23

But can we go back? No – that simply isn't an option. The Toastmistress brand may have significant value and credibility in the market and yes, it could regain even more. And yes, as many members are keen to tell us, it's the easiest way in the world to tell potential members so much, so quickly!

But it's a name for an historical time. It's a label which excludes half the population of the world – and is uncomfortable for most of the rest. This dissection of the ITC brand, the microscopic examination of strengths and weaknesses, is an example of the kind of exercise your Board has undertaken, as we examined every feather on the wings of our ITC bird.

At the Division I and II Conference in Las Vegas, President Elect Mary Marshall told delegates of our work. She told you that we were: “re-searching the real marketplace for the ITC product and the best real product for the ITC market;” that we were “re-taining the best of ITC's established programme and history;” that we would “re-brand ITC's products to give them instant recognition;” and that we would “re-ward success like never before!”

Our actions involved a complete, global strategic review, and the development of a Global Marketing Strategy. The review included a qualitative research exercise across the ITC world which involved more than 70 ITC members from all levels of the organisation. We canvassed the views of new members and of past international presidents, of committee chairs, of speech contestants, of Parliamentarians. Young and old, male and female and as many ethnic groups and nationalities as we could.

Let me at this stage take a minute to thank all of you who were called on. Qualitative research, by its nature, means taking the time to provide in-depth information and detailed views – it's not just a quick tick-box exercise. While we were not surprised at the extent of your commitment to this exercise, we were – and remain – extremely grateful.

Although the analysis of the nearly 800 pages of the information we received was a major task, the volume meant we could be far more certain of the validity of the outcome. The task was professionally undertaken, we are confident that the methodology was appropriate. And the results of the analysis were clear.

One aspect was surprising – we found out just how much we have been assuming that members were resistant to some changes. It is possible that we have all been hearing a few strong, but not necessarily positive voices, and believing that they were representative. Not so. On some issues there was, astoundingly, virtual unanimity on the need for drastic change – so much so that we have been able to act with greater courage than we may have otherwise. You have not only given us permission – you have told us, very clearly, what you want us to do.

The next step of the process was to distill the results of the analysis into a clear plan to address the key issues raised. At the Board meeting held in The Hague at the time of the President's Training Weekend we accepted this plan as the Global Marketing Strategy for ITC.

It was important that we separated ourselves from the proposing of the Strategy. All of us – and your Board members are no exceptions – tend to have subjective views about what we want in ITC - and many of us hold those views passionately.

But it's not about what we want, personally. ITC cannot be allowed to become a vehicle for anyone's personal views and needs. We know you will have your own – and we believe at the same time that you will support the strategy we have planned, because it's so obviously in the interests of the future of the entire organisation.

We're excited at the prospect of your joining us in filing our new flight plan, to a further destination.

So let's have a look at the key action platforms of the plan. The core will build on the existing strengths of ITC, with the revival of some neglected aspects, and the addition of some very new initiatives.

When I close this session, we'll have a brief break before the entertainment, during which one person at each table will be asked to go across to the tables at the back of the room, and collect a goodie-bag for each person at that table. Please be accurate when counting – these are not trifling promotional giveaways. They comprise a valuable set of items, tools and information which will enable you to digest the waterfall of information I'm about to give you, and begin putting some of it into practice.

About now, you're starting to run out of patience – “Just what *is* she going to tell us?” you may be thinking. “But whatever it is, I wish she'd just get on with it!”

The Global Marketing Action Group, which has met several times since adopting the Strategy in October last year, has worked hard at planning and implementing the detail.

These then are the key action platforms:

Quality Products! - We make sure our programmes are great to show off!

plus...

Professional Marketing Tools! - We make it easy for you to show off our programmes!

Plus...

Incentives to Action - We give you rewards for showing off!

Equals...

We all win!

Let's look at some of the detail...

Quality products

The Master Manual, already re-written, will be updated on an on-going basis, and we have begun Quality Control through your Fellows of ITC.

After four years of piloting POWERtalk, we have re-packaged it into a more comprehensive, more user-friendly version, with clearer guidelines and instructions. Still in the form of six modules, but designed to meet the needs of both you, our members as course leaders, and the market which comes to you for training.

The course is still suitable to be adapted for the general public as well as business, political, church or community groups, but is not so flexible that its structural integrity depends on who is providing the training.

A CD containing all six modules, plus the revised PowerPoint presentations which go with them, is one of the items you'll find in your goodie-bag tonight.

The package also includes a set of professionally-designed print advertisements. If you choose to advertise a POWERtalk course in your local media – provided you use these adverts or a similar version - we will subsidise 50% of the cost. You heard right!

If you weren't sure about that, here it is again: if you use the approved advertising material in print advertising, International will bear 50% of the cost.

At about this time your minds are beginning to buzz with questions – and believe me, in the next few minutes you'll have plenty more fighting for space in your minds! Because we know just how much information we're giving, and just how much more you'll want, we have reserved the plenary session from 11.30 to 12.30am on Wednesday just for questions and answers... your conference program has the

details of how to submit questions, which must be in writing. Please do so by 5pm on Tuesday, and place them in the box at the Registrations desk. This will help us deal with all the greatest number of the most common questions.

So try to stay focused on what I'm telling you! But if that's hard, a summary will be available on the website, so there's no need to get out those pens just yet.

Not only have we given you a better POWERtalk, better packaged and delivered, with better quality control AND the professional advertising material to sell it – we've gone one step further.

In future, it's going to be easy and more exciting to promote and publicise the programme – and our organisation.

We listened to what you told us in the research.

We recognised the need to re-brand ITC.

But we also recognised that that's a major step.

To re-brand, based on our own likes and dislikes would be to risk our entire future on our personal tastes – or an inflated idea of our own opinions and knowledge. We are mindful of our roles as guardians of the well-being of our organisation, and that we are merely caretakers for a few short years in time. We had no intention of lightly tinkering with 70 years of history under two names.

So we undertook further professional research, to find out what the external market thought – both of our current image and name, and of possible new names for our product. We are not proposing to change the legal name of ITC – we are incorporated under that name in the State of California and will remain so until our members decide otherwise. But our research clearly indicated that we need a new product brand to appeal to today's market.

We researched a short list of names, using an external professional agency and facilitator. The subjects were selected by their demography - men and women between the ages of the age of 25 and 45 who were in the “young, career-minded” bracket. What emerged was two clear answers, directly from our market:

One: You need a new name

Two: The new name must be.....

POWERtalk International!

...with the tagline...

....coaching in effective speaking...

In your CD in the goodie bags tonight you'll find, details of the brand standards.

This is the original artist's description of the design motivation:

“ The icon provides a sense of movement both outwards and inwards, reflecting the communication channel of sending and receiving, speaking and listening, writing and reading. It has a modern international feeling, without reverting to the more old-fashioned physical globe. The general feel is businesslike, with colours which suggest modernity and freshness. The caps typeface of “Power” echoes the name, with its sense of size and strength, while the lower case “talk” emphasises simplicity, clarity and forward movement.”

There is also a small sample of hard copy examples to take back to your clubs, but you'll find that the CD contains everything you need, from details of print requirements for colours to the artwork for business cards, And there are templates for stationery, to ensure that all documents from all clubs around the world

are professional and consistent. We are determined to build a solid brand – and that means ensuring we have the highest brand standards possible. That means we expect all our members to be brand policemen, to ensure that the brand is presented correctly on every occasion.

You'll also find a hard copy of our new promotional brochure – this one has proved very popular with members, so we're re-branding the same one as before. It looks like this...

I know what some of you are thinking right now: What about having this sexy electronic version on my screen? The answer is yes – anyone who wants one can have it – just ask IMS and they'll email it to you. And you can send it on to whoever you wish. If you prefer, you can order hard copies the usual way.

What else is new? – well, if you visit our website next week, this is what you'll see...

In fact, if you have a laptop with you, you can try going to [www.powertalkinternational.com](http://www.powertalkinternational.com) and see if you can get a sneak preview. From Monday, all traffic to our old address will be re-directed to this new site.

I hope you're not running out of steam, because I'm just getting started! Now, where were we? Remember we said we'd listened to what you were telling us? The next announcement shouldn't be a surprise then:

We're bringing back the magazine.

Members wanted it, but the cost had become prohibitive – and no matter how much you said you wanted it, you weren't prepared to pay for it separately. You wanted it to be part of your dues. So we found a way to do that.

Yes, we've given it a new name as well – and here's the new version of

Powertalking!

It's all electronic, saving us the money on postage and giving you the ability to read it, keep it, file it and most importantly - send it to whoever you like – all at the same time. If any Region would like to professionally print hard copies, IMS will supply ready-for print finished artwork, and if members would like to simply print their own copies on plain paper, they can do so.  
...Especially if you want to keep copies of the fabulous people featured...

This first issue covers all the new features of *POWERtalk* International, so that we can inform all our members across the world, at the same time. It goes out on Monday, and members can download it. If you do, an icon will be placed on your desktop. In future, every time you click on the *POWERtalking* icon on your desktop, you'll be informed whether there is an updated version available yet, and asked if you want to download it.

From the next issue onward we'll be returning to the traditional role of the magazine, with the emphasis on education.

Aside from the name, colour and style of the new branding, there are two aspects we would especially like you to support.

Firstly, the tagline “Coaching in Effective Speaking”.

We have been using this in a relatively low-key way for over two years, and now we intend to emphasise it in all the places our name appears. Together with the name “*POWERtalk* International” it encapsulates exactly who we are and what we offer. No more lengthy explanations of what we do – a few words says it all.

Secondly, in every case you'll also see the acknowledgement of our history. When we originally changed our name, every effort was made to establish the new one by using it exclusively. Perhaps we became a little paranoid about never using the name Toastmistress. As a result, somewhere along the line, some of us came to think it was a shameful thing. It is not. Perhaps our generation is sometimes embarrassed at the picture it conjures up – but we should know that younger people simply assume that a name like that is part of history – they don't see it as a reflection of what our organisation is like now. Let us not be ashamed of our history – we are modern, our product is needed and wanted by people in their 20s and 30s, and we have 70 years of solid experience behind us – let's boast about it!

So let's see how we're going: These are the key action platforms again:

### Quality Products

We make sure our programmes are great to show off, by giving you the great new Powertalk Modules and training aids!

plus...

### Professional Marketing Tools

We make it easy for you to show off our programmes with a modern new brand, researched and professionally designed to appeal to today's market!

plus

And that final part to the equation:

### Incentives to Action

We're going to give you irresistible incentives to showing off!

And what's the best incentive?

Reward. Recognition. If you've done something worthwhile, it should be worthwhile – if you've done something which benefits all of us – we want to make sure you're recognised for it.

And here are your rewards: For Regions

Any Region which increases its 1 August 2006 numbers by 75 % by 31 July 2008 and holds them until 30 April 2009, will receive a Convention Grant. That grant will help fund the Current and Incoming Region Presidents' and the Region Speech Contestant's travel to and accommodation at convention. The grant covers up to NZD1000 each for Region Pres and Speech contestant, for travel and accommodation for three nights, plus Convention Registration.

Region Presidents work hard for our organisation – although we want to encourage and reward that. We want to provide an incentive for the best people to put themselves forward for election to Region Board, unashamedly. We know how much time and effort it takes to manage a Region well, and the results of dedicated leadership always show in healthy, growing regions. For many, attendance at Convention is an unattainable dream – and for many regions, a President who has achieved that dream means better training, better service and an efficient and dedicated Region Board.

Funding speech contestants has, in years past, been debated fairly hotly. We'd like to put that debate to bed: the opportunity for speaking competitively, for rising through the ranks of contest winners and being acknowledged and rewarded, does not appeal to all members. But it does attract, and more importantly retain the naturally competitive people – and the most talented.

We believe it's time to recognise superb competitive speaking with more than a pin or a trophy. To raise up these winners as role models for others and to acknowledge their special efforts and gifts.

And there is solid commercial benefit to be gained. The single most successful aspect of our opposition's continued high profile is through speech contests and contestants. It's the way they have succeeded – and the way they have taken our market share steadily over the last 20 years. We're going to get it back!

Not all of us are great competitive speakers, but we know that these members have drive, ambition and that they put in many hours of hard work. We know that they have publicity value – let's remember that the International winner of our opposition's contest has an immediate contract on the commercial speaker's circuit.

Let's attract these people. Let's reward them, give them a prize to aim at, to keep them working through the levels of our organisation. And the way to do it is to offer the same rewards they can find in other organisations. The reward that if they achieve success in a strong region, their ability to go on to the highest level doesn't depend on where they live – or how much money they have.

The administrative details of all the incentives will be listed on the website and published in your *POWERtalking* flipfolio.

We know that the best advertising campaign we have is the enthusiasm of our members. Increasing membership is not missionary work - it can be as simple as enthusiastically inviting people to attend a meeting. Inviting anyone at all – not waiting for those who show an interest. They visit, they enjoy themselves and they join – or, if it's not for them, they see what we do, and tell others about us.

With the help of well-run programmes – either at a regular club meeting or a Powertalk short course, visitors are very quickly enthused. There's no need to “sell” our training, no need to convince anyone to join. In fact, the harder we try to convince people, the more they are likely to resist. It's as simple as inviting people to come along to a meeting and see if they enjoy it. No high pressure, no asking for a commitment – just a simple invitation. In your packs you will find a set of postcards with the bright new *POWERtalk* branding – and an invitation. These are available from IMS and will be featured on the website among the new items of merchandise.

You'd like to double your membership? Send out some invitations! Run a *POWERtalk* short course! So what if it doesn't work the first time – do it again! I can promise it will work. And the beauty of it is that all the while, you're doing exactly what you joined ITC for – you're learning, growing, developing skills, and having fun.

We know that Regions will accept this challenge, and we are encouraging you to start planning, immediately after this Convention: What are you going to do? Here's an idea: How about setting some incentives yourselves? Why not offer clubs a discount on Region dues if they attract a given number of new members? Don't tell me you can't afford it – all you have to do is add up the numbers: X number of new members means Y increase in income to Region - how much of that new income can you do without?

That's precisely how we are funding this incentive: it's not a drain on International's budget – if Regions achieve the numbers, the costs are covered. If they don't, there are no extra costs. Yes, it is a stretch, but it's attainable. Bulk discounts on dues are only one way – you can offer other rewards such as free Conference registration or subsidies towards Conference travel and accommodation to club or council presidents. Reward your own speech contestants, and encourage great competition at every level.

Take a look at the numbers in the case of your Region. Here in Australia, the region will have to attract 218 members by July next year – just over the ditch, New Zealand Region will need to find another 106.

Get that campaign going! Remember the adage that if you aim for the moon, sometimes you land in the stars!

If you get your 106 new members – or even anywhere in the stars around that number, how much good will you have done? How much learning and fun would you have had? But most of all: How much would your Region have progressed towards being strong and healthy? Will it be part of a strong and growing international organisation, as other Regions strive for the same thing? Will we have gone from near bankruptcy five years ago, to a solid foundation today and real growth since then?

Region presidents – it's a bold and daring challenge. It's your challenge.

But we haven't neglected clubs – it's not all up to Regions: Clubs will earn their own rewards. The existing 20/20 incentive will continue and in addition, International will give one free International membership to any club which doubles its membership in one year. How will your club use it? – it's up to you! But to help you push along those “intending” new members, we will provide every club with a hard copy of the first stages – sections 1 to 4 – of the Master Manual. This is for the President or Treasurer to hold, so that it can be presented to a new member immediately. That means no waiting – once the forms and dues are processed at IMS, the membership card and pin will be forwarded, together with a new Master Manual set to hold onto – for the next new member.

And as for those strong clubs, with already enthusiastic and dynamic members, here's something else for you: Start a new club. To help you along, there will be a 10% discount on International dues for any new club started with 10 members, and a 12% discount for 20 or more members; assistance for the new club to run a PowerTalk training course within six months, including the free PowerTalk training kit and subsidised advertising; free extra MM to hold for new joiners, one set of officer's pins and one free MM with basic sections to hold for visitors.

Starting a new club requires time and hard work, as well as enthusiasm. But with the help of the *POWERtalk* short course, it becomes a lot easier. Get onto your PREM team, ask for help from your Region, advice from your Division VP. IMS will assist with the administration and supplies and before you know it, your lonely club will have a sister club in the same city – maybe a breakfast one, or a corporate one, or a Chamber of Commerce one.

These incentives are appealing to those who serve as officers of ITC, or who enjoy the challenge of speech contests – but what about members who work quietly away through the Accreditation levels, acquiring new skills and qualifications as they grow? These are the self-starters, the self-motivated members who remain with us as they steadily climb their personal ladders of achievement.

We know that the more members we have working on Accreditation, the longer they stay. The longer they stay and grow, the more value they have as leaders, role models and trainers. We want more of them.

And so, to encourage maximum participation in the programme, we're going to challenge our accreditation chairmen with a new competition. We know you work hard at encouraging and helping members – and we do try to acknowledge that at Convention. But we're going one step further:

We will provide one free convention registration a year - that's two for each Convention - for the Region Accreditation chairman who achieves the most.

It's not all about raw numbers – otherwise the biggest regions would have the advantage. So a benchmark will be set as a percentage. And details will be in the packages provided.

Two years ago, I invited you to “Lift up your Life and Soar!”

Now, as we count down to the 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday of our organisation next year, I and your International Board invite you to enjoy your Convention, make the most of the training and friendship you will find here over the next few days... and then return to your Regions and clubs with determination to unfurl the powerful new wings of POWERtalk International and fly!