

saaci matters @ conference

tenacity
accountability
sustainability
knowledge



News from the SAACI national conference
26 - 28 July 2009
CSIR International Convention Centre

SAACI is not for turning inward

"Now is not the time to turn inward."

This was the strong message from SAACI chairman Thomas Overbeck when officially opening the SAACI 2009 national conference yesterday morning.

"Tourism is South Africa's new gold and despite the economic meltdown, people are still traveling and conferencing, albeit in a toned down fashion. To continue contributing to this economic stimulator, I believe SAACI should keep on traveling the road of cooperation that it has embarked on.

"We are a major role-player in the industry and our contributions have made a marked difference to growing the industry. The biggest of these is our cooperation with the Tourism Business Council of South Africa which led to the joint hosting of an industry lunch with President Zuma just before the elections. He was presented with industry background, and robust questions which will have a marked influence on our industry were put to him. One of these was the importance of a single Ministry of Tourism to ensure sustained growth. The rest is history and we again congratulate Marthinus van Schalkwyk on his appointment as Minister of Tourism. And SAACI was part of this major

breakthrough. "Furthermore, we were in the fold with the hosting of the Miss World finals, FEDHASA's 60th anniversary as well as with its strongly established Imvelo Awards, which focus on responsible tourism. SAACI is committed towards green conferences – this is not negotiable – and this year's conference will be adjudicated to set a benchmark for future applications. Imvelo gets our full support. Add to this our involvement with Meetings Africa, which is now established as the continent's leading business tourism exhibition, as well as various local and national tourism indabas, and I believe you will agree, now is not the time to turn inward. By continuing on the road of cooperation we chose to travel, we will heed the President's call to responsibly take the economic meltdown head on.

"How will this benefit our members? We have irrevocably proved that inclusivity is the way to benefit our members. By visibly being with – and leading – relevant people and organisations that shape the future of our industry is part of the value-add to our member, Thomas said.

Ass regards recent industry opinion polls about a dedicated events association, Thomas said there were mixed results.

"We at SAACI firmly believe that we are already filling that role successfully. We do not need another association. The events industry is not too large to be excluded from our fold. Events companies and organisers are already well established within our association and playing a meaningful role in the Conference and Events Chapter. Although events are becoming an independently recognised industry, it is still a form of gathering, not dissimilar to conferences, conventions and banquets.

"Furthermore, SAACI has been very involved with the Services SETA in developing training programmes for the events industry. In this regard valuable input has been sourced and supplied by SAACI members, with all of this leading up to the establishment of a new board for training in the events sector.

About youth development in SAACI Thomas said the association is committed to help develop young people in this dynamic industry.

"With this conference we have already put words into actions with young people from various training institutions being part of the organising team. An additional SAACI youth chapter is in the offing with details being thrashed out. We are also supporting the National

Tourism Careers Expo that will take place in September in Durban. By exposing young people to our industry is the only way in which we will attract them to join and enhance our vibrant industry. They are, after all, the leaders of tomorrow and how will we attain them if we do not inform and train them?" Thomas said.



"I believe SAACI should keep on traveling the road of cooperation that it has embarked on" - outgoing SAACI National Chairman Thomas Overbeck.

Show me the money!

Whilst turnover is vanity and profit is sanity, cash is king.

These wise words came from National Chairman of Grant Thornton SA, Leonard Brehm as the opening speaker at the SAACI 2009 national conference yesterday.

"Profit is an opinion while cash is fact. Do not let suppliers use you to finance their causes – get invoices out in time. Evaluate and monitor the creditworthiness of new and existing clients before extending credit. Do not assume that your customers and suppliers are financially healthy.

"Get smarter on tax payments. Reduce tax liabilities by fully utilising available deductions and allowances. Check the timing for paying VAT and register for e-filing as, for example, payments are only due on the last working day of the month as opposed to the 25th. But do not stop paying tax - work out a payment plan with SARS."

Leonard said not to fall into the trap of cutting marketing spend or laying off staff in economic challenging times.

"If staff lay-off is inevitable, look at your skills pool – remember you will have to buy this back at higher rates once the economy turns for the better."

"Get closer to your bank. Your bank is your partner. Fortunately our banks were not affected by the global credit crunch. That, however, does not mean that they have to solve your problems."

"Now is the time to revisit your business strategy. Now is the time to let go of non-core assets that are not adding value. What kind of business would you like to do in three years time? Assess this and start doing this," he said.



"Cash is king" - National Chairman of Grant Thornton SA, Leonard Brehm.



The TASKmasters who set the tone - from left - outgoing National Chairman Thomas Overbeck, his successor Nina Freysen-Pretorius, incoming Deputy National Chairman John Ndlovu and Conference Chairman Nigel Walker.

SAACImatters @ conference – the inaugural issue – was brought to you by SAACI KZN, Junxion Communications, Thebe Exhibitions & Projects and Drewe Associates.



S(c)ene @ SAACI '09



Frank Olivier and the friendly feeding scheme at SAACI '09.



Juggling is not a TASK for the faint-hearted!



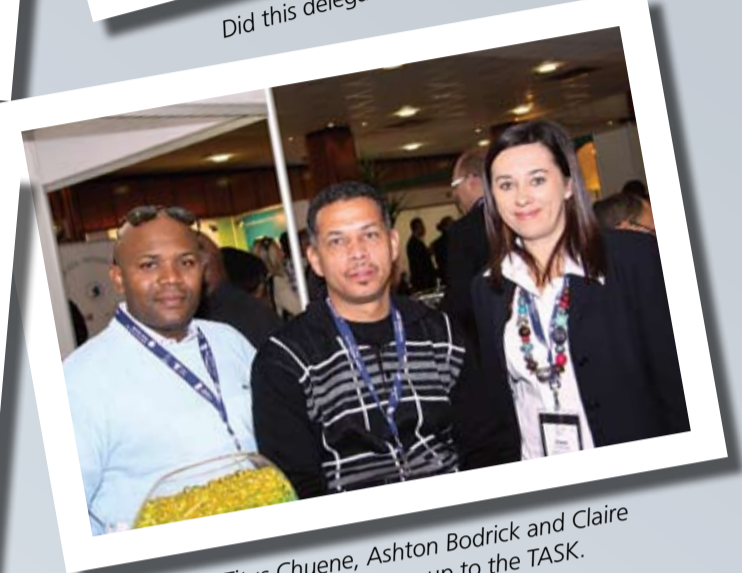
Did this delegate run away from the TASK?



Paul Mc Connan says you've got to be plugged in.



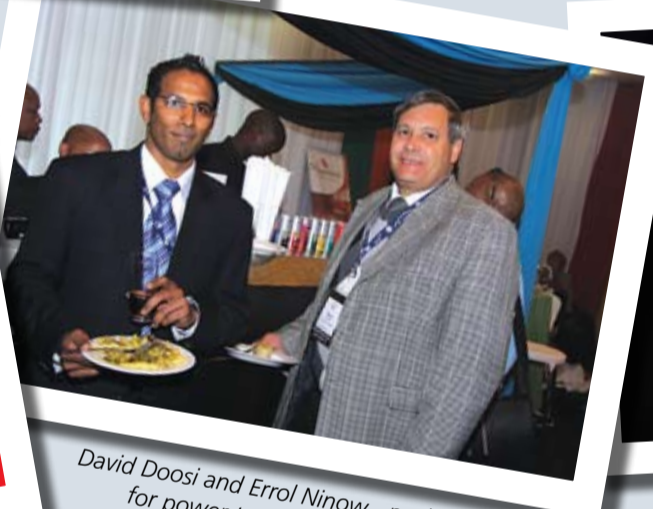
SAACI '09 has raised the bar.



Titus Chuene, Ashton Bodrick and Claire Cummings are up to the TASK.



An apple a day...



David Doosi and Errol Ninow - pecking for power to face the TASK.



Ernie Heath says the future is a journey.



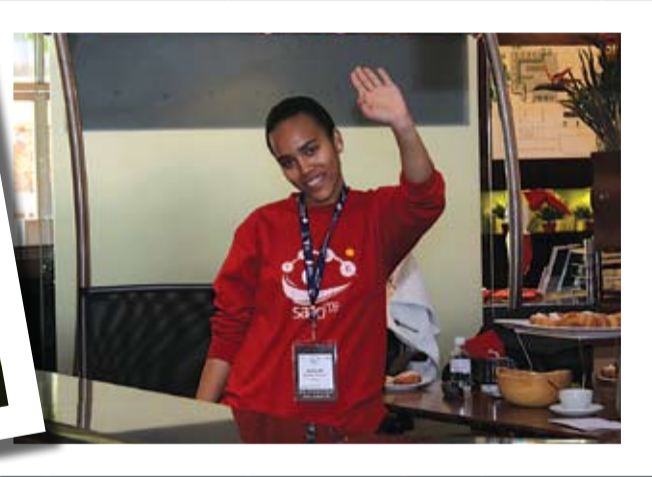
SAACI's Nicolette is definitely up to the TASK.



Glynis says you HAVE to be at Meetings Africa 2010.



A seamless transition!



Sammy - the TASK team in action.



Some observe the TASK.



Old friendships renewed.



Lunch - a TASK made easy by the CSIR International Convention Centre.

The TASK is a GREEN one @ SAACI conference

"I am very proud to say our 2009 SAACI national conference is a green one," says conference chairman Nigel Walker.

"We have commissioned The Heritage Environmental Management Company to position the conference as a green event. The process entailed pre-conference organising support and guidance, followed by an on-site review and audit of the actual event and a post-conference report on the findings and status of the event.

"Also a first for SAACI was the establishment of a separate 'Green' working group to coordinate all planning and operational issues that may impact on the overall environmental performance of the conference. Furthermore, today's greening session will set future trends for SAACI in this regard."

The CSIR International Convention Centre also prides itself on steps taken to ensure green conferencing and was recently awarded silver status by the Heritage Environmental Rating Programme.

The centre's General Manager, Glenn Harding, says all waste – paper, glass and plastic - is recycled and stringent energy saving methods are applied through the centre's computerised building management system.

The CSIR is also accredited in terms of ISO 14001 for environmental management.

"We have also started an earthworm 'farm' whereby organic waste is digested and converted into nutrient-rich soil food.

"We will assist SAACI to every end to ensure that this conference becomes the association's benchmark for green conferences," says Harding.

"Among others, we manage and monitor all aspects of energy usage during the conference and calculate the complete amount of carbon dioxide created by the conference and apply an offset action."

Nigel says no forward-thinking conference organiser can ignore the impact of presenting a green conference today.

For more information visit stand 18.



Ruan Spies of the Heritage Environmental Management Company awaits your visit to stand 18 to discuss the greening of your next conference.

It is good to have you here!

"Welcome to South Africa's capital city, a business tourism hub of note."

Welcoming delegates to the 2009 SAACI national conference the Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane, Dr Gwen Ramokgopa said it was a privilege to be the host of the first ever business tourism association conference in the city.

"From business tourism offerings of note to tourism products like the world-famous National Zoological Gardens, the Union Buildings - administrative seat of government - Church Square, the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park, the city has something for every taste and budget.

"With tourism now officially South Africa's new gold, we are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that Tshwane receives its rightful share of the cake. Business tourism is an important part of the tourism environment. In this regard I salute the sterling work done by the Tshwane Tourism Action Team who assisted in making this conference and the city's participation happen.

"This team, made up of private sector tourism stakeholders who work pro bono with the city's tourism division,

has made a marked difference to tourism in the city. In a mere nine months the team has developed a city tourism strategy and tourism brand and has launched a website, in line with local and international state-of-the-art tourism websites. Marketing tools such as a tourism brochure and a tourism Z-fold, used during Indaba and the Confederations Cup have been developed, while strategically placed tourism information points are in the offing."

She said research to establish a comprehensive accommodation database is being conducted to ensure that the city has the latest information on accommodation available.

"The establishment of a Regional Tourism Organisation is in the offing. In all these action plans the involvement of the communities is paramount, with a communications plan being developed.

"We are also ensuring that green tourism remains high on our priority list - this is not negotiable. In the same vein, service excellence is one aspect that we can never falter on. In tourism you have one chance to impress a visitor - if you do not meet or excel on expectations, that visitor will simply never return."



Tshwane's Executive Mayor Dr Gwen Ramokgopa welcomed SAACI delegates to the city of champions.

Tips from Thebe

Carol Weaving, Managing Director of the Thebe Exhibitions & Projects Group, a proud SAACI member, gives a few tips on surviving the credit crunch:

We are living in challenging times and I think it is crucial that, in the process of surviving the credit crunch, we take special care not to implement measures that are not in our long-term interest. Our exhibition and events industry has definitely matured over the years and we should focus on maintaining it at this high level.

One thing we should not do, I believe, is to discount exhibition space. It is bad for business, it 'unprofessionalises' the industry and sets a precedent for future years. It is also dangerous in the sense that show managers may not be putting enough into marketing their events and in the end we compromise on quality.

It is far better to find creative ways

of adding value to exhibitors and making sure that more visitors attend a show or conference. As organisers we can do more public relations and marketing value-adds such as additional web exposure.

Facebook, for instance, has become increasingly important as a social medium. It is free and it has more than 175 million users worldwide! In South Africa companies and organisations are also using it more and more in their awareness and marketing campaigns - definitely something to think about.

One thing we are sure of in the current economic climate is unpredictability. Now more than ever we have to be innovative and keep our eye on the ball, focusing on our goals and objectives.

I believe we should also look at international case studies and learn from them.

The Dubai World Trade Centre, for example, reported a 10 percent increase in visitor numbers for exhibitions, conventions and conferences in 2008.

Also, following in the steps of the strategic development of Dubai, the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Center and Airport Expo Dubai received some 1,1 million visitors last year.

The fact of the matter is that we will undoubtedly move out of this current phase of doom and gloom - and when we do, we should be poised and ready to tackle the immediate challenges and capitalise on the positive.

Discounting can be commercial suicide. It reduces margins that are already low. So let's rather be innovative and work with our industry partners, including the accommodation and airline sectors, to add value.

And the SAACI awards go to...

SAACI announced the names of the 2009 winners of its Fellowship and Personality Awards at its national conference last night.

The Fellowship award went to Gwynn Glaister-Heaton and Nigel Walker is SAACI's Personality of the Year.

Awards have been made since 1997. Nominations are received from SAACI members and the winners are chosen by a specially appointed panel. The Fellowship Award goes to a member who has had a minimum of ten years' of service and who has made a positive contribution to the development of SAACI, while the Personality of the Year Award is made to a person who has made an outstanding contribution to the conference industry by

virtue of his or her involvement.

Outgoing SAACI National Chairman Thomas Overbeck said Nigel and Gwynn are two conference industry leaders and worthy SAACI award winners.

"Both Nigel and Gwynn deserve the recognition of our association on a national level. We look forward to continue working with them to grow SAACI and the professionalism of the conference industry in South Africa."

The Conference and Events Chapter's national winners of the Extra Mile Awards were also announced. They are Michelle Rixon of Southern Sun, Magrecht Hefer of the Sandton Convention Centre and Hein Morkel of Emperors Palace.

Achieve perfection in Durban in 2010 – will you be delegate number 1?

Next year's SAACI national conference will be held at the Elangeni Hotel in Durban from 14 to 17 August.

Themed *Together we achieve perfection*, the programme will aim to foster international and domestic exchange and friendship in the pursuit of an even stronger business tourism industry in Southern Africa.



Craig Drysdale invites you to SAACI 2010 in Durban.

SAACI KZN chairman Craig Drysdale says delegates will discover an intense intellectual exchange in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

"They will meet captains from around Southern Africa and the world in a two-day programme that will include keynote talks to highlight some of the major developments in the business industry in recent years, abstract,

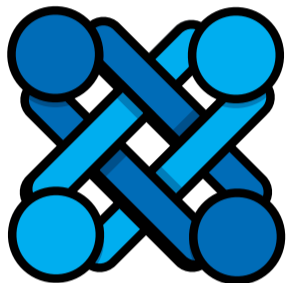
poster and small group sessions to foster an exchange between individuals and organisations."

SAACI KZN is collecting business cards during this conference, so do make sure they have yours, because you may qualify for this afternoon's lucky draw. You may be the first delegate to SAACI 2010, winning free registration for the conference, free accommodation, transport and return flights.

Do not miss this!

For more information visit www.saaciconf2010.co.za

TOGETHER WE ACHIEVE PERFECTION



2010 CONFERENCE

Go to TASK for cancer awareness at stand 19

SAACI delegates are urged to do their bit for cancer awareness. Just speak to Charles Drewe on stand 19 and go to TASK!

Cause Marketing Fundraisers represented by Sho-sho-lo-za Marketing and in association with MNet and Drew Associates are taking the lead in cancer awareness campaigns.

Their campaign creates opportunities to support a mammography truck which will make stops around the country to offer women free mammograms. Educational units will be set up where the public will have access to important information on cancer and the risks this disease carries.

Breast cancer luncheons will be held at different conference centres in South Africa. Celebrities who suffered from this disease will speak on relevant topics and encourage crowds through their personal struggles and testimonies. These events will raise funds for the mobile mammography and educational vehicle.

Events not to be missed are the breast cancer golf days, presented by MNet. Companies have the opportunity to sponsor these golf days and show they care

Seeing that cancer affects men just as much, golf days for men will be presented by Cause Marketing Fundraisers.

In association with Men's Health and the Prostate Foundation of South Africa, the first national major campaign is proudly launching the 'More Balls than Most' golf days. These will be held to raise funds for awareness campaigns for both testicular and prostate cancer. Tents will be set up at the events which will offer blood tests for prostate cancer that will be sent back to the individual. Information on each of the diseases will be displayed.

"Creating awareness of cancer can be fun," says Charles, "so please join us in this crucial cause."



Charles Drewe invites all delegates to stand 19 to go to TASK.

And they experienced Tshwane

SAACI delegates were treated to a true Tshwane experience over the weekend.

Courtesy of Tshwane Tourism and the Tshwane Tourism Association, guests were hosted on a night tour of the Pretoria Zoo on Saturday and a city tour on Sunday morning.

Tembeka Mhlekwa, Strategic Executive Director: Economic Development at the City of Tshwane says it was an honour to welcome SAACI delegates to Tshwane. "Now that you have experienced what we have to offer, I believe you will be back, sooner rather than later."



"You will be back, sooner rather than later" - Tshwane Tourism's Tembeka Mhlekwa.

"From business tourism offerings of note, to tourism products like the world-famous National Zoological Gardens - the Union Buildings - administrative seat of government - Church Square, the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park, the city has something for every taste and budget."

Tembeka says tourism promotion in Tshwane is driven by the Tshwane Tourism Action Team. Born only nine months ago, this team, composed of members of private sector tourism stakeholders and the City of Tshwane's tourism division, plays an

integral role in shaping the future of tourism in the city.

"This is a prime example of private/public sector participation. This team was instrumental in arranging Sunday evening's welcome function and in showcasing the city's tourism products. With this combination, the face of tourism in Tshwane has changed irrevocably. It is certainly good to be part of a winning team. As you return to your homes tonight, spread the message that here is a team that can enhance tourism - whatever your needs, the team will oblige!"



SAACI delegates also saw Loftus Versveld, the jewel in Tshwane's 2010 World Cup crown.



A taste of history to be found only in Tshwane - a visit to top tourist attraction The Voortrekker Monument.



SAACI delegates will have noticed the friendly faces and helpful attitudes of the conference task team - students from the Tshwane University of Technology and the University of the North West who are assisting the organisers to ensure a smooth conference experience.

Taking a short break yesterday morning were (back) Essoh Roland, Siyabonga Mzizi, Roxanne Marais, Louise-Marié Botha and Xolile Manele and (front) Bongiwé Dlamini, Sammy Nailate and Dineo Molaba. Kgaugelo Sekokotla, Komane Tladi and Primrose Madokwe were too busy assisting delegates to even be in the picture!

Also read about these young people on www.saaciconf.co.za and see what they have to say about working at the SAACI conference.