

ADESSA

ASSOCIATED DISTRIBUTORS OF EDUCATIONAL
SUPPLIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA



making education happen

Annual General Meeting at The Whitehouse, Klerksdorp: 25 February 2011

Chairperson's Report:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the 2011 ADESSA AGM.

As you are aware, last year's AGM was held in Irene, Pretoria, as part of the first ADESSA Conference and this proved to be very successful, as it drew more people to the AGM than previously. As a result of this, ADESSA members had the opportunity to interact with each other and to offer suggestions that were valuable in our decisions to move forward.

This year's AGM is also part of a conference, but on a larger scale. Emily Sebolai, from the ICT Directorate of North West Education Department, contacted me about 6 months ago to request our assistance in helping them host an ICT Expo for Education Dept officials and schools in North West. As a result, we have established a public-private partnership with them and this ICT Expo is the outcome. We hope that this event is merely the beginning of this partnership with NWED and that it will bear fruit in many other ways for ADESSA and for NWED.

Since last year's AGM, there has been a great deal of growth and development within ADESSA in order to raise our profile and to become more active within the educational arena.

I have been able to negotiate favourable discounts for ADESSA members at most of the educational events that have occurred over the last year. So much so, that in a couple of cases, ADESSA has been offered a discount before I have had the opportunity to ask! From the event organisers perspective, it is advantageous to be able to have access to over 40 companies through ADESSA and this is an aspect that needs to be emphasised on a continuous basis.

We were asked by the organisers of the 2010 ISASA Deputy Heads Association to be responsible for the exhibition aspect of the conference that took place in Somerset West in October. They do not require an income stream from exhibitors, and we made a very generous donation to the conference committee for worthy causes. Because of the success of this, we have again been invited to participate in similar fashion in their 2011 Conference in Pretoria in September. I requested – and we will be given - a formal slot on the programme for exhibitors to address the delegates about their educational products – the “60 second” slot that proved to be so successful at the ADESSA Conference in March last year and which we are using

again at this ICT Expo. This strategy gives exhibitors the opportunity to have access to delegates on a more structured basis, and to give them focused information about the educational materials available.

Over and above the normal business of ADESSA, the main focus of the Executive has been on professionalising ADESSA and raising our profile within the educational sphere.

We invited members to a Strategy Workshop in Cape Town in September and timed it so that it would follow on from the e-Schools Network Conference that month. The SWOT Analysis that Kobus van Wyk facilitated at last year's AGM was used as a basis, and it was developed a great deal further and was fleshed out with details to provide a roadmap for ADESSA over the short term, medium term and long term. This strategy workshop was ably facilitated by Tim Cruise, a member of Exco, and proved to be very successful. I am very pleased to report that the process has already begun, but that we are merely at the beginning of our rejuvenation project.

A branding specialist was consulted and, as you know, we now have a new logo. I must congratulate the members of ADESSA Exco who all participated in this process. Initially we all had different perspectives about colour and design, but continued to work together in a most productive manner until we were all happy with the final product. The logo is bright and modern, and prominently incorporates the ADESSA slogan of "making education happen".

Last year the ADESSA website was given additional functionality with a private login area for members, where a calendar of educational conferences and matters pertaining to the education departments could be displayed – without giving such information to non-ADESSA members. However, the website also needs to be re-branded to the new ADESSA image, and I will be starting this process shortly. Obviously the design and aesthetic aspects need to be renewed, and I will also be looking at what the possibilities are for increased functionality. If you have any ideas or suggestions about this, I will be happy to hear them.

As you are aware, there is regular communication and information sent out to ADESSA members about events and other matters that may be of interest to you. These are in the form of emails that are sent either by me or by Charmaine, the ADESSA secretary, or in a newsletter every few months.

The Business of Teaching, a new educational magazine, has just been launched and ADESSA members were offered 20% off their rate card if they wished to advertise. However, as the response from ADESSA members was disappointing to the publishers, they have reduced this to 10% for this year – the information is on the ADESSA website. ADESSA, as an organisation, has received a free A4 advertorial for each of the quarterly editions for 2011. If this magazine is successful, it would be a wonderful marketing arm for ADESSA – but we shall see how this develops. Certainly, the first edition looks very promising – there are a number of copies here for your perusal.

At the 2010 AGM the Executive Committee was given a mandate to review the ADESSA Constitution. This proved to be necessary as ADESSA has grown tremendously over the years, and some of the aspects needed to be updated. This process was initially handled by Exco and was then given to legal professionals to tighten up as required. The changes are relatively minor, but the constitution has now been professionalised and is within a proper legal framework. One of the changes is that the term “Executive Committee” has been replaced with “Management Committee”, a more appropriate description. You were sent a copy of the new constitution prior to this AGM and we hope that you have looked at it and will vote for it to be adopted in place of the previous one.

At my first ADESSA AGM last year, there was still a great deal that I was in the process of absorbing in terms of ADESSA’s role. In the last year, however, I have developed much more clarity in this regard, and I am very excited about the varied possibilities available to ADESSA and, of course, its members.

The ADESSA Management Committee has been a tower of strength to me, and I am so appreciative to all of them for their time, their energy and their input. I therefore have a special vote of thanks to all of them – Charmaine Friel, ADESSA Secretary, Dereck Marnewick, ADESSA Treasurer, Lyn Pollock, Jacques Zakarian, Tim Cruise, Michelle Holliday, Milford Juniper and Lourens Kruger.

I very much look forward to continuing with the exciting and challenging roadmap that we have set up for ADESSA - and to do so with the assistance and support of our dedicated Management Committee and other members of our association.