

A feast of records

Medic West Africa broke all records this year. Bryan Pearson reports, and remembers back to the early beginnings of the meeting over 25 years ago!

The conference and exhibition world in Africa is really taking off. Medic West Africa (MWA) and its sister event Medic East Africa (MEA) (see opposite page) established new high-water marks for such events at the end of last year.

MWA became the largest trade show in Nigeria for the first time. To outstrip the long-time leader, Nigeria Oil and Gas (NOG) takes some doing. If only, as one wag opined – the federal government budget could be similarly apportioned, then Nigeria's health woes would be settled in a trice!

It was indeed a time of record success: more exhibitors, more visitors, and more delegates than ever in its history.

And I should know, having launched the very first such meeting back in 1986! In those days if 20% of the exhibitors signed up for the following year we were happy. Remarkably, this year 94% of the exhibition space was contracted during the show for next year. Fortunately we have found a little bit of additional space so some expansion is possible in 2014.

Or like many a famous city, we'll have to start going upwards! JNCI started the trend with the very first double storey stand at a healthcare show in Nigeria (see picture below)

But it wasn't all exhibition, there was also a significant amount of learning

and conferencing going on, with subjects ranging from obesity to objective imaging; allergies to hospital planning. With CPD points (coordinated excellently by Bey Health) available for attending most of the meetings there was value on offer all round.

And back to the exhibition; there were more than 300 international and local exhibitors, from 45 countries with seven country pavilions. Of the visitors surveyed, 98% said they would return in 2014, 85% said they had learned about new products, and 92% said they had successfully established new contacts/relations for the future.

Njide Ndili, Secretary, Society for Quality in Healthcare in Nigeria commented: 'Medic West Africa has again proven its capacity to bring together world class medical equipment manufacturers to Nigeria. MWA exhibition exposes the hospitals to new and improved contacts with the suppliers.'

Dr Olurotimi Olojede, President of the Nigerian Dental Association, commented: 'Medic West Africa is one of its kind in the history of healthcare in Nigeria because it is the only event that brings together all of the professions to network and do business.'

The meeting returns to the Eko Hotel in Lagos from October 15–17th 2014. You will no doubt hear plenty more about it in the columns of this journal!



Lucky winner of the day-1 raffle draw of visitors, Dr Saliu of Ariset Medical (left) being presented with his smart phone; panoramic view of one side of the hall (below left); and Queen of the Castle (below right) standing atop the JNCI double-decker!



Yes Minister! Medic East Africa starts early

Three weeks after Lagos, the show set up again in Nairobi for what turned out to be another excellent event. BP reports.

It shows how time flies as it was 10 years since a Medic Africa had been held in Nairobi, though I swore that it was 'only 3 or 4.' But Medic East Africa (MEA) slotted easily back into the Kenyan schedule in early November.

This was in effect the 37th Medic Africa meeting and it produced an early and very novel 'first'. Usually opening ceremonies are difficult affairs, often drawn out to allow for the late arrival of the guest of honour. Not this time. Minister James Macharia called to say he had had to shuffle his appointments because of a call from State House and as such he would attend '1 hour earlier than scheduled.' We rejigged quickly, gathered up an audience, and were ready to welcome him. In the event he was so impressed with the size and dimension of the meeting that he overstayed his deadline to leave by 45 minutes. But very good to see some genuine interest and involvement from such a figure.

The meeting filled the Kenyatta International Conference Centre plenary hall to capacity, and featured 220 exhibitors from 34 countries. The feature stands were by Siemens, Nairobi X-Ray Supplies, Philips Medical Systems, and Elekta from Sweden.

Conference-wise there were four different CPD accredited meetings taking

place in parallel to the exhibition covering the subject areas of: Healthcare Management; Healthcare Financing; Total Radiology; and the Medical Laboratory. Attendance at the conferences was a little disappointing, but maybe we didn't get the programmes out in good enough time.

The day before the meeting opened there was a big rainstorm, and suddenly the roof sprung a leak! Fortunately we were able to rejig the floorplan enough to leave a gap, but in the event the venue management were able to step in and identify the problem and plug the hole and we had no further problems.

Attendance was excellent for the meeting with a little over 2000 visitors plus conference delegates.

Next year, to allow for significant expansion of the exhibition component, the meeting will be moved to the brand new Visa Oshwal Centre in the Westlands suburb of Nairobi. It will also move forward slightly to 23–25th September 2014. The exhibition this year extended to over 1500 square metres, but we anticipate a near doubling of exhibition space being required next year.

Busy stand from Crown Healthcare (below); plus a game of how many tricks can my bed produce as Linet show off their latest product line (below middle); Siemens feature stand (below bottom); and a wide-angle shot of the exhibition area (bottom left).





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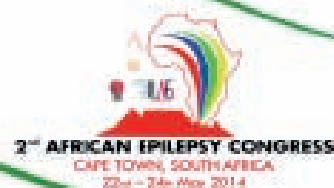


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