

17 experts address PIPES X Conference

The Southern African Plastic Pipe Manufacturers Association (SAPPMA) recently hosted its PIPES X Conference in Midrand. With more than 200 delegates were in attendance, SAPPMA CEO Jan Venter said the conference has become firmly established in the industry's events calendar.



The PIPES X Conference took place in Johannesburg last week.

“The plastic pipe industry is arguably one of the most important industries in South Africa’s infrastructure as water distribution, waste disposal, irrigation, telecommunications and myriad other services rely on pipe infrastructures to work effectively. Through hosting our yearly PIPES conferences and other activities, SAPPMA has proven that we are heavily invested in the well-being of the local plastics pipe industry – especially where standards and technical specifications are concerned. We have already exposed more than 1,500 delegates to close to 200 technical papers since the first time we hosted our PIPES conference. This year we are privileged to have 17 experts in their field sharing their expertise with you coming from as far afield as Australia, Spain, Germany and the Middle East,” Venter said.

Keynote speakers at this year’s conference were Corné Krige - ex-Springbok rugby captain who led the team to the World Cup in 2003 – who shared some of the life lessons he had learned about effective leadership in sport and business, followed by Ralph Triebel of LHA Management Consultants who gave an overview of the trends in the local pipe market.

Reflecting on current problems

Many of the papers presented on the day reflected the current problems the South African industry is facing with regards to the accreditation of national standards. Explained Venter: “Quality in general and long-term product quality, in particular, is one of our cornerstones. Considering that approximately 40,000km of plastic pipe is manufactured annually in South Africa, we are doing everything in our power to prevent a general deterioration of plastic piping systems in our country. SAPPMA has been at the forefront of this situation and is probably furthest down the road to facilitate alternative mechanisms.”

Venter also announced that the PPCA (Plastic Pipes Conference Association) has agreed to sponsor ten presenters from this year's conference in Berlin to present their papers at next year's PIPES XI conference, thereby giving the event an even greater international footprint. He encouraged delegates to work together and do everything in their power to ensure the future of the industry through maintaining excellent quality and adhering to industry standards. "There are many exciting, new markets and opportunities emerging for the plastic pipe industry. We have an ever-increasing role to play, and are making a difference where it matters. Let's make sure that we are part of the solution – not part of the problem," Venter concluded.

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