

CCR Expo proves to be one of SA's most exciting exhibitions

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At the end of last year, Scan Display and Interactive Africa combined their respective talents for building exhibitions and designing events to manage the Department of Environmental Affairs' (DEA) South African Climate Change Response Expo (CCR Expo). The Expo proved to be one of the most exciting - and complex - exhibitions hosted in this country.



COP 17

The CCR Expo ran alongside the biggest conference Durban has ever hosted, COP17, which attracted in the region of 15 000 international delegates and visitors including support staff, media and those attending side events. While COP17 was a fairly exclusive event, the CCR Expo was a space where everyone (including COP17 delegates, government, business, civil society and the South African public) could join in the conversation around climate change.



One of the challenges, and in some ways the charm, of the CCR Expo was that its 'blank canvas' was a tarmac car park. The space had to be transformed within 28 days into a marquee village housing 140 exhibitors, conference and networking facilities for side events, a fully equipped media centre, and a stage for live entertainment. In addition there had to be sufficient catering available on-site for the anticipated - and realised - 10 000+ visitors a day.



Kylie van Staden, branch manager of Scan Display Durban and project manager for this project, says: "The COP event deals with rather grave subject matter. Therefore we wanted to create a really vibrant space where delegates could escape the heavy talks and experience some of what South Africa has on offer - not only our innovations to address climate change issues, but also our food, artists and culture."



Green innovations

An aspect of the CCR Expo that contributed to its success was that it became a hub of green innovations. All the exhibitors were approved through a curatorship project which ensured they had a genuine investment in challenging climate change and were not simply 'window dressing'.

Scan-Interactive requested all exhibitors to sign a Responsible Exhibitor Charter where they pledged to adopt greening principles in their exhibition space. Green Stand Awards acknowledged the exhibitors who excelled at this.

The Expo's infrastructure also embraced green innovations such as eco-friendly sound-dampening walling (used for the first time as a modular system in South Africa), glass fronted marquees, a giant banana leaf canopy made from 99% sustainable materials and eco-friendly floor graffiti.

Greening

As with any large event, the conference, its side events and the CCR Expo, created a large carbon footprint. It was important to Scan-Interactive and the DEA that event greening practices were implemented to minimise the carbon-related

emissions of the Expo as far as possible.

van Staden says: "Procurement was a key area for greening. Wherever possible we sourced Durban-based suppliers and service providers, as well as local artists and indigenous plants. This reduced the project's transport requirements, and ensured we supported local business."

Other event greening practices adopted at the Expo included: banning bottled water, recycling (with an onsite worm farm for composting organic waste), rainwater harvesting, using energy-efficient lighting in the marquees and using solar water heaters for the kitchen.

The success of the event's greening programmes will be revealed in more detail in the upcoming months, when the carbon audit report is released.

"I believe the CCR Expo has set a new standard for South African exhibitions, specifically in terms of new technologies and greening," says van Staden.

To view more photographs, please visit the CCR Expo Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CCRExpo.

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