Pan-African Eduweek

Attended by 450 attendees as the best CPD platform for members.

Employee Assistance Professionals Association of South Africa

ASSOCIATION
SUCCESS STORY

PUBLISHED BY
THE ASSOCIATION OF Association Executives
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PROJECT

EAPA-SA and Pan-African Eduweek

SUCCESS ACHIEVED

Eduweek, attended by close to 450 attendees including over 30 speakers, is the best CPD platform for our members. We received over 5000 entries/responses on the conference mobile app during the event and fantastic feedback in the post-event evaluation.

ORGANISATION

Employee Assistance Professionals Association of South Africa

DATES

February – September 2018

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

Individuals, service providers and EAP related provider categories from South Africa

CATEGORIES

Conference, CPD,

Project Team at the association

= Ms. Bernie Roberson, Events Management
= Mr. TG Chabalala, President
= Ms. T Govender, President Elect
= Mr. T Mamaila, Immediate Past President
= Ms. Radhi Vandayar, Marketing
= Dr. Marion Borchers, Stakeholder & Sponsorship Management
= Ms. Andiswa Lefakane, Finance
= Dr. Pravesh Bhoodram, Membership

Partners

= EnOv8 Event Management - plan the event in conjunction with EAPA-SA: venue-finding, cost negotiation, employing service providers, marketing, registration, invoicing, event implementation etc. They ensure that we provide a world-class educational and engaging event to the delegates
= Stakeholder portfolio - securing and managing of sponsorships and partners, in conjunction with EnOv8
= Service providers in the EAP Industry - Old Mutual, Proactive Health Solutions (PHS), Assegai Strategic Investments (Pty) Ltd, Life Assist, ICAS, Healthi Living Consulting, Metropolitan, Workforce Health, NBC, St John, Nedbank, Life Assist, EAP Expert and many more. Some of these are also members of EAPA-SA
= PHS - mobile app provider
= ICAS - VIP Lounge sponsor, an area that was demarcated for our regular attendees and international guests, giving them a specialised red-carpet experience

Tools & systems

= Conference website - with customised registration forms for delegates, speakers, exhibitors and sponsors
= Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter - Marketing
= Sage Accounting - generating quotes, invoicing and issuing receipts
= Call centre - provided by EnOv8 to deal with queries and assist delegates wishing to attend
= Conference app - easy access to the conference programme, speaker rating, sending notifications and updates to attendees

Introduction

EAPA-SA is a professionally recognised body founded under Section 21 of the Companies Act. It is a non-profit seeking organisation which relies on conferences to generate the much-needed income to fund our projects and to keep our members and providers abreast with both national and international EAP and wellness trends. We research and present on best practices in the EAP field, that benefit not only our constituency, but the wider wellness fraternity at large. EAPA-SA is an affiliate Branch of EAPA International; it is also a recognized professional Association with the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA).

The first conference was launched in 1998 and the Association has since grown to host close to 400 delegates
at conferences across the country. The size of the
delegation attending the EAPA-SA conference has grown
from about 120 delegates in 1999 to over 400 in 2018.

In the year 2018, we celebrated our 20th Anniversary,
hosting a conference with the theme: “Creating the
Future- Innovative Solutions to Uniquely African EAP
Challenges” We paused for a moment, to look back and
reflect on our past while looking forward to re-align our
strategies and re-skill our practitioners and professionals
in order to face future challenges.

Noteworthy to mention is that EAPA-SA was proudly
selected to be the host of The 2nd Pan-African EAP
Conference and to do justice to this honour, we carefully
thought through this theme in setting-up an exciting and
focused programme which brings together industry
experts, speakers, visionaries and provocateurs from
around the world to debate some of the most trending
African EAP Challenges seeking African solutions.

In 2018, we also renamed the conference, which is
henceforth known as Eduweek. As EAPA-SA and the
conference grows, we are developing the concept and
aligning to the education services that we provide. Our
weeklong, annual event is focused on the education of our
members; networking; and growth of the industry at
large. Our commitment to creating positive change
through education and training is now communicated in
our new event name.

The Eduweek runs over 4 days, beginning with a one-day
Pre-Conference training day on a Tuesday.

The proceedings also include a Presidential Awards Dinner
and a team building function. The aim of our Eduweek is
to provide the platform for networking during lunches and
tea breaks and has a specific networking session on the
Friday afternoon.

**Discovery**

The conference has grown over the 20 years to be a
highlight on the EAP calendar for practitioners and service
providers, as the best educational event for our industry.
It is still the only EAP Conference of its kind in South Africa
and Africa. In keeping with the growth and magnitude of
our event, the committee deemed it befitting to re-name
the event to Eduweek.

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education of our members; networking; and growth of the
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change through education and training is now clearly
communicated in our new event name, which is Eduweek.

Our programme offering and profile of speakers has
grown to include many more international speakers and a
wide range of South African experts who share their
knowledge with our delegation.

With EnOv8’s support we have digitized many of our
delegate processes which saves everyone time and is
aligned with the digitisation of the EAP industry and
workplace in general.

**Objectives**

- Focus on trending EAP topics that are relevant and
  impacting the current EAP industry in South Africa;
- Empower and capacitate EAP Practitioners / Professionals
  with a set of skills to enable them to develop themselves in
  the EAP field and fulfill their responsibilities;
- Share best practices with fellow practitioners
  involved in the field;
- Provide industry experts, speakers, visionaries and
  provocateurs from around the world and locally to
  our delegates;
- Integrate technology and optimize on the use of our
  integrated app;
- Increase attendance by 10% which last year
  increased by 14% from 370 delegates to 422 across
  all registration types. Delegate numbers alone
  increased by 30% from 263 to 342;
- Provide CPD (Continuous Professional Development)
  points to our delegates from 2 professional bodies;
- Settle all outstanding debts owed for the Eduweek
  internally;
- Grow membership numbers following the value add
  derived from Eduweek;

**Timeline**

The Eduweek preparations starts already 9 months before
the actual event.

- **1 Feb** - Academic theme provided by EAPA-SA to
  EnOv8
- **Feb – Sept** - The EAPA -SA office staff assist with
  enquiries directed to the EAPA-SA Head Office and
  refer delegates to relevant platforms based on their
  needs.
- **8 Feb** - EnOv8 provide a couple of final theme
  options
- **15 Feb** - EAPA-SA selected one theme for EnOv8 to
  put into design
- **22 Feb** - EnOv8 sent final designs to EAPA
- **1 March** - EAPA-SA approved designs for the various
  platforms
- **8 March** - EnOv8 rolled out the design across all
  marketing channels
- **15 March** - Call for speakers
- **23 April** - Open delegate registrations
- **5 April** - Sponsor & exhibitor Prospectus sent to
  EAPA-SA for approval
- **11 April** - Final changes sent by EAPA-SA
- **17 May** - Sponsor & Exhibitor Prospectus released
- **26 June** - Speaker Programme Announced
- **20 July** - Early bird Programme
- **1 Sept** – Registrations close
Activities

In the year 2018, we celebrated our 20th Anniversary, hosting a conference with the theme: “Creating the Future - Innovative Solutions to Uniquely African EAP Challenges”. We paused for a moment, to look back and reflect on our past while looking forward to re-align our strategies and re-skill our practitioners and professionals in order to face future challenges.

EAPA-SA was proudly selected to be the host of The 2nd Pan-African EAP Conference and to do justice to this honour, we carefully thought through this theme in setting-up an exciting and focused programme which brings together industry experts, speakers, visionaries and provocateurs from around the world to debate some of the most trending African EAP Challenges seeking African solutions.

In 2018, we also renamed the conference, which has become known as Eduweek. As EAPA-SA and the conference grows, we are developing the concept and aligning to the education services that we provide. Our weeklong, annual event is focused on the education of our members; networking; and growth of the industry at large. Our commitment to creating positive change through education and training is distinctively communicated in our new event name - Eduweek.

The Eduweek runs over 4 days, beginning with a one-day Pre-Conference training day on a Tuesday. The proceedings also include a Presidential Awards Dinner and a team building function. The aim of our Eduweek is to provide the platform for networking during lunches and tea breaks and has a specific networking session on the Friday afternoon.

Hosting Eduweek, is an extremely exciting time for EAPA-SA, as we continued to grow, remaining always adaptable, motivated and responsive to the needs of our members. With the support of our partnership who are key EAP service providers, exhibitors, sponsors, NGOs and other associations both in the private and public sectors, we managed to host what delegates have referred to as having exceeded their expectations. Without their support, no doubt hosting a world-class conference would not have been possible.

Innovation

The conference proved to be value for money and a great return on investment for EAPA-SA as the organizer, as well as to our members and general EAP fraternity, as it worked to empower the delegates to be able to fulfill their mandate of providing top of the range EAP services following the educational and developmental sessions they were exposed to at the conference.

In the EAP world, networking is crucial, as it assists you to interact with industry peers, share experiences and learn skills from specialists in the field, that one can apply in own practice.

Time away from the workplace and work life balance is also an important aspect of EAP, and our conference allows our membership delegation to enjoy time away as part of their Continuous Professional Development (CPD) as well as time out from work to re-energise.

In moving with the times and the age of technology, the EAPA-SA app proved to be very popular in that it greatly assisted members to continuously interact with EAPA-SA, the speakers and fellow delegates, by providing input and comments on how they experience the Eduweek and the speakers. We are slowly but surely gearing up for the 4IR.

Marketing

Online:

EAPA-SA has its own website, and Mobile App and uses multiple social media platforms, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter which we use of to market the Eduweek.

We have a conference website, specifically used to showcase the Eduweek and have a space where delegates can apply for the Eduweek attendance, find the speaker programme, shuttle and accommodation information and much more.

The Eduweek was marketed to our database, made up of members, previous delegates, speakers, exhibitors and sponsors via existing channels, e.g. sending weekly emails, including regular and interesting write-ups in the newsletter to members.

We also sent out monthly general newsletters in which we marketed the Eduweek to our members on a regular basis. We focused our marketing communication on the many...
facets of the Eduweek including the speaker programme with highlighted speakers to showcase the learning objectives delegates could expect to reach.

Our Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter pages assisted us in reaching a wider audience, as interesting facts about the speakers and the conference in general were published on a regular basis.

**Offline:**
EAPA-SA consist of 9 regional branches, which we refer to as Chapters.

Each chapter meeting dedicated time to share details of the Eduweek with delegates attending meetings, and a great deal of marketing is also done through word of mouth, as the learnings are shared in places of work.

### Challenges

Due to the fact that the bigger part of our conference attendees is employed by the government, the biggest challenge we faced was their ability to pay the full conference fees, due to budgetary constraints set by treasury.

**Other challenges:**
- Increased conference fee costs
- Last minute changes to programme due to confirmed speaker attendance challenges
- Budget constraints
- Less sponsorships available
- More conferences beginning to compete with us
- As EAPA-SA board members are non-remunerated volunteers, juggling their time between EAPA-SA responsibilities and their full-time employment can be very challenging

### Achievements

The 2018 Eduweek was a definite success and exceeded all our expectations.

1. We provided our members with access to professional development opportunities through various workshops in the Pre-con training and during the 3-day Eduweek.
2. We shared best practices with fellow practitioners involved in the field. This can be seen with the program content, the pre-conference training and the Eduweek session and support by the delegate evaluations.
3. We had about 6 international speaker and more than 25 local speakers.
4. We launched the app and it was optimally utilised by members during the conference, as it worked on all mobile platforms. We received over 5000 entries on the mobile app speaker and event review forms.
5. The attendance rose from an all-inclusive total of 370 in 2017 to a whopping figure of 422 in 2018. This is a consistent increase in our number of 14%, including exhibitors, sponsors and speakers. Our delegate numbers increased by 30%.
6. We provided CPD points from both professional bodies, thereby validating the continuous professional development.
7. To settle all outstanding debts owed for the conference internally. This matter was handled internally by our staff and we received all outstanding monies owed to us without utilising the services of an accredited debt collection service.

With the above said, looking at the finances, the Eduweek, was without a doubt a good return on investment. EAPA-SA managed to realize a surplus of over R2 million, which is vital to the growth and stability of the association.

### Statistics & Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>374</td>
<td>Total attendance inclusive of delegates, staff, exhibitors and sponsors</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>267</td>
<td>Delegates only</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Speakers Only</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sponsors</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Exhibitors</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Financials

The financial basis of the project is to make a profit which will assist with running the association for the next year.

The breakeven point last year was R1,819,683.89

The association does make an initial investment to book the venue, last year this amount was R943,958.00.

The income for 2018 was R3,284,539.00. The return on investment was R1,517,384.93 after all hard costs had been covered.

The money EAPA-SA receives at the end of each conference is kept aside for bookings of the following year’s conference venue & other initial hard costs.

2018 marked the highest attendance EAPA-SA has seen over 10 years and was the highest return on investment. From 2017 to 2018 the ROI increased by 64.7% from R902,986.10 in 2017 to R1,517,384.93.

The financial growth of the EAPA-SA Eduweek is an incredible mark of success for EAPA-SA as it shows we are providing delegates with a quality conference that they will return for year on year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2 586 637.00</td>
<td>Total Invoiced</td>
<td>R4 021 974.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2 116 624.00</td>
<td>Total Paid</td>
<td>R3 785 459.00</td>
</tr>
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What we would do differently

In the future we look to broaden our member reward programme. We also have new loyalty programme, we are now offering discounts to loyal delegates who have attended consecutive years, we would have liked to start earlier so delegates could know we value their ongoing attendance.

As an association, we always want to support speakers in the EAP industry so we can be lenient on deadlines in order to include as many as possible, however this can hold up many other elements of the Eduweek so we would like to have been more strict on deadlines in the beginning as not to create the precedent that we will tend to meet the requirements of the speaker.

We would have started engaging sponsors well in advance, as we often relied on the same sponsors in the beginning and don’t broaden out and approach others. We also became aware that sponsorships were often secured on the financial year before the conference. We know have great relationships with a number of large and small sponsors, we grow these each year while also work on building new relationships with new sponsors (big or small) through our sponsorship portfolio manager Marion Borcherds.

In previous years, we set a theme but were not 100% strict on speakers sticking to the theme. We now have processes in place to ensure that each and every speaker is relevant to both the topic of the conference and the industry which creates a far more streamlined and valuable conference.

Stay relevant in EAP field and trends
Consult members on what they would like to see as part of the conference. This is vital to the growth of the conference and something we highly value now.

Give feedback to members on suggestions made.
Minimize paperwork and do as much as possible electronically. Moving EAPA-SA onto electronic registration systems (for delegates, speaker, sponsors and exhibitors), quoting and invoicing systems as well as the addition of the app has revolutionized the conference and made our lives and the delegates lives a lot easier.

Use easily accessible venues. We previously selected venues based mainly on cost however we know look at a number of factors, including distance, accessibility and cost.

Broaden our stakeholder reach to beyond EAP (area of specialty).

Advice

- Make it easy for your delegates to interact with you, be it registering for the conference or making payments and follow ups.
- Take input and feedback given by your delegates to heart, fully cognizant that not all suggestions are implementable, what counts is that they are acknowledged.

Feedback & Testimonials

Very interesting to see what is trending in EAP field outside of SA. Brilliant presentation and very relevant. The presenter commands an aura of serenity and an awesome presence. We need such in this field. A repeat will do. Presentation was powerful and informative.

Love the energy and engagement with people. Excellent speaker. Energetic and relevant. Great speaker, he should come back next year. Excellent vibrant presentation. Please bring him back next time...

It was more empowering. Made me do some introspection. His presentation was so relevant and exactly what I needed to hear. Thanx. Good presentation. Very informative. Very energising session. Excellent and valuable presentation! We need more speakers like this, good speaker, good message

Wider impact

Following the Eduweek, membership numbers have grown steadily. In fact, following the success of the Eduweek, the number of individuals who subsequently joined and became full time EAPA-SA members, showed a tremendous improvement. In 2018 we had 193 official members and this climbed to 221 members by July 2019. On top of this, the registration fee includes a one-year free membership with the Association, which is necessary to ensure the highest level of practice.