

MEDIA RELEASE

Record attendance at 2014 Direct Sales Conference

PartyLite wins prestigious ASTRA Award

The Annual European Direct Sales Conference enjoyed a record attendance of 170 participants from Europe and other parts of the world. In parallel, there was a growth in sponsors, service providers, speakers and workshops.

In his opening speech, **Seldia Chairman Magnus Brännstrom**, just re-elected for a second 2-year term, highlighted the growth of the industry in terms of sales and workforce during 2013. WFDSA Chairman Alessandro Carlucci then emphasized the importance of a good branding strategy for the industry, which would address the younger generations.

Two panels followed the Chairmen's presentations. From the CEO panel:

Peter Strydom of Amway: "The most important factor in our industry are ethical behavior and the codes of conduct. In this regard, the direct selling associations across Europe are very important, and Seldia in particular."

Martin Koehler of PartyLite: "It is evident that the success of our industry lies in embracing innovation and social media."

Alessandro Carlucci of Natura : "What is special about direct selling, is that all companies involved regularly meet in a friendly atmosphere. This is a strength in this sector."

Patrice Jacuelin of Guy Demarle: "The direct selling model fits well in modern times and it remains a perfect distribution model to generate sales".

At the branding panel, both **Sara de Dios of Havas Communications Group** and **Tom Harms of Herbalife** underlined that a brand should offer more than recognition for the consumer. As the session moderator **Ben Woodward of Nikken** captured it: "Successful brands offer a sense of 'community' and 'belonging' to the consumer".

Prof. Dr. Jules Stuyck and consumer representative **Amel Haikem of Association Léo Lagrange** presented Seldia's new European website for consumer complaints, www.fairselling.eu, which was welcomed as an excellent illustration for the industry's commitment to work with consumers and to offer an accessible resolution for any dispute that may arise.

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The conference included four breakout sessions on “sales through tablets”, “food and cosmetics regulation”, “DSA best practices” and “cost reduction”. The conclusion was made by retail trend watcher **Olivier Badot, Dean at the prestigious French ESCP business school.**

Great attendance at Industry Awards

Preceding the conference, five ASTRA industry awards were celebrated in a dynamic evening for a crowd of 120 participants. The winners were:

Best Direct Selling Company of the Year	PartyLite
Best Direct Selling Association of the Year	UK DSA
Best Start Up Company of the Year	Stella & Dot
Best Service Provider of the Year	Meridian Deutschland

An ASTRA Personality of the Year Award was handed to Teresa Jimenez, Spanish Member of European Parliament, for her active support to the Women Entrepreneurship Platform and hosting a large Seldia event in the European Parliament.

“The European Direct Selling Conference has established itself as a must-attend event on the annual direct selling calendar” explains Seldia’s Director Maurits Bruggink, “The industry is buoyant and growing and this is reflected in the conference. The substance of the conference focuses on business growth and application of young generation technologies to maintain this growth. This trend will continue for next year’s conference on 7 October 2015 in Brussels.”

Notes to the editor

SELDIA (www.seldia.eu) is the representative body for the direct selling sector in Europe, whose members include 28 European Direct Selling Associations (DSAs), 23 of which in EU Member States. SELDIA represents directly through its corporate members and indirectly through the national associations over 1,000 direct selling companies with annual sales in excess of 40 billion Euro and 12 million independent direct sellers.

Direct selling is the marketing of consumer goods and services directly to consumers on a person-to-person basis, generally in their home or the home of others, at their workplace and other places away from permanent retail locations. Direct selling typically occurs through explanation or demonstration by salespeople referred to as direct sellers.

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