

# No room for technophobia in direct selling industry

With so much focus on the fourth industrial revolution in politics and organisations, the direct selling industry needs to learn to innovate and embrace technology in order to be future-fit. This is according to Cornelle van Graan, chairperson of the Direct Selling Association (DSA) of South Africa.



Image credit: @DSASouthAfrica via Twitter

The DSA, an industry self-regulatory body for direct selling companies in South Africa, held its annual Awards Luncheon themed 'The Future is Us, Get Future Fit', at the Gallagher Convention Centre on Tuesday, 23 July 2019.

## Merging digital with customer-centricity

"Lots of industries have finally realised that the relationship between organisation and customer is of crucial importance. Of course, the direct selling industry, by virtue of the personal relationship built with its customer base, has always been aware of this. Going into tomorrow, however, being client-centric will have to be married with being digital, and it is very important for this industry to continue the positive client-serving trend it already possesses," she says.

The event, which saw media personality Leanne Manas as programme director and Dion Chang as the main speaker, is used annually as a platform to celebrate best performers from all 31 of the DSA's member companies, as well as to share the industry's results for the previous financial year.

## Industry trends

"Trends this year reveal more young people coming into the industry and a rise in online sales methods thanks to the prominence of social media. For us, this is data pointing us in the direction of being future fit. The future truly does belong to the youth, and it is a privilege to have them show us through these stats that this industry is well framed for them and that online platforms truly are the avenue to use to reach them," says Van Graan.

"The data from our research will, therefore, bode well in pointing at what areas need more attention for a future digital world."

At the luncheon, Van Graan revealed the industry results and trends for year 2018. "In order to sustain any hope for the future, innovation needs to happen on the level of member companies, but also on the level of individual direct sellers that belong to these companies. To survive in tomorrow's digital climate, especially in this industry, there is no longer any room for technophobia, digital shyness or avoidance – these will only lead to companies and sellers being left behind.

"The industry's success depends on being in tune with the environment in which it exists. At present the environment is buzzing with smart uses of digital resources, our strategies will need to align," she concludes.

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