

Direct Selling News

Serving the Direct Selling and Network Marketing Executive

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Country Focus

Germany ...the largest direct selling market in Europe



Company Spotlight
Vorwerk celebrate 125
years of success

Mets Trots Gepresentreerd
Major achievement
in the Netherlands



Met Trots Gepresenteerd ...presented with pride

Sindy Staessen (Herbalife) Chair of the Dutch Direct Selling Association (VDV) talks to Kathy Slater about the celebration of its 35th anniversary, which coincided with government recognition of their consumer code.

September 18, 2008, was a significant day for the Dutch DSA (VDV). Over 150 distributors and 50 corporate associates from member companies were present at a special and unique conference organised by the DSA. Delegates at the conference travelled from all over the Netherlands to the prestigious 'De Heerlijkheid Van Ermelo Hotel' set in woodland near the town of Ermelo.

"It was such a proud day for all of us," said Sindy Staessen (Chair VDV) "Not only were we celebrating our 35th anniversary as a DSA but also the achievement of gaining government recognition for our consumer code, earlier in the year." Sindy went on to say, "we achieved our goal of gaining recognition of our consumer code, from start to finish in a year, which was unprecedented. The Netherlands is a small DSA, and the size of our board reflects this. As well as myself, we have Wim van Hattem as a board member; Henk van Bremen, who is our treasurer and Arabella Ferket who is our Secretary General. There were so many complicated consumer and legislation that needed to be checked from every angle, which produced a lot of additional workload."



Kees Fontein, founder of the Dutch Direct Selling Association



Koos Peters, Dutch Consumer's Association

Sindy went on to stress that this initiative was a united effort involving the Consumer's Association, the DSA board and the member companies as well as the Ministry of Economic Affairs. She paid special tribute to Koos Peters of the Dutch Consumer's Association, who was closely involved in the negotiations with the Dutch DSA, drafting the terms and conditions under which the 'Dispute Resolution Commission for Direct Selling will operate.' This is now a tri-partite agreement signed by the DSA, The Consumer Association and the 'Dispute Settlement Committee Foundation for Consumer Affairs' (Stichting Geschillencommissies voor Consumentenzaken) which is chaired by Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Dutch MEP.

The conference and celebrations on September 18th were organised and paid for by the Dutch DSA. "What made the event so very special was the opportunity to meet and talk with distributors from all walks of life" said Sindy. "They came from every direct selling company and different regions of the Netherlands. To continue this theme of unity, we had free seating so that distributors from all companies sat amongst each other throughout the day and exchanged views!"

The programme opened by everyone present being given an item to make music with which broke the ice. Sindy opened the conference and identified the opportunities using the consumer code as a means to give extra assurance to consumers that the direct selling industry offers a quality guarantee for both service and products. It can also be used by direct sellers to show



The music group breaks the ice

consumers that direct selling is an ethical business and to advocate to new recruits that direct selling is a worthwhile and serious business opportunity.

Marie Lacroix of the Federation of European Direct Selling Associations (FEDSA) updated the delegates on the results of the Socio-Economic study which was commissioned by FEDSA in 2007. Koos Peters of the Consumer Association who had played such a significant role was also there. He told the delegates “they should be proud of this achievement which is a milestone in the history of Dutch direct selling.” He also assured everyone that, “Associations that look after consumers’ interests will have the Consumer Association on their side” and went on praise the VDV

for being a representative branch organisation and a professional partner of the Consumer Association that looks after, not only its member companies but also the interests of consumers. Koos ended his presentation by telling the delegates to go and bring the consumer code to life and to display this endorsement with pride within their businesses.

This special day ended with a dinner, which was well attended, and Sindy reported “that there was not a spare seat to be had” she said “the level of noise and discussion amongst the delegates was a measure of the success of the event! All our distributors left the conference feeling proud of their association’s achievement, with a good message to pass on to their customers and colleagues.”



The board of VDV



**Vereniging
Directe Verkoop**
Nederland



de geschillencommissie

Fact File DSA Netherlands

Founder: Kees Fontein

When: 1973

Members: 13

Applicant Members: 2

Supplier Members: 2