

With less than a month to the World Education Market 2003, things are heating up. Speakers have been confirmed, participants have been registered and last minute details are slowly but steadily being sorted

held for the second consecutive year in Lisbon, Portugal, WEM 2003 is now in store for participants, living true to its tagline "Solutions for the World of Learning". At the event, which will be held from May 23-25, registered participants will have access to three full days of conference, with sessions that aim to provide global insight, practical strategies and interactive case studies as well as the exhibition and networking events that encourage partnerships and collaborations. To date, about 60 speakers from 20 different countries have confirmed

their participation. Scheduled to deliver the keynote address for the conference programme is Viviane Reding, a member of the European Commission Responsible for Education and Culture while other speakers include Knowledge Economy Expert from the World Bank Institute, Carl Dahlman; Grace Caulfield, global manager of E-learning for Sun Microsystems; Paolo Benesperi, the Minister of Employment, Training and Education for the Tuscany region in Italy; and Mukesh Aghi of Universitas 21, among others.

One session that promises to be particularly beneficial is Reporting on the Marketplace, a previously popular session that will update participants with the latest figures of the education marketplace. Here, trends, opportunities and public-private investment patterns on European, United States and international



NETWORK OPPORTUNITY
WEM is 1 perfect opportunity gathering informal making contacts forging partners

markets will be revealed. Presenting the reports are Dr Claudio Dondi, the president of Scier, Italy; Kosmo Kalliarekos of the Parthenon Group in the US; and Ronald F. Perkinson, a senior education specialist with the International Finance Corporation in the US.

This year, the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) is heading the Malaysian delegation, comprising primarily of MSC-status companies and institutions of higher learning to Lisbon. On board the MDC delegation so far are: Multimedia University, Open University Malaysia, LimKokWing University-College of Creative Technology, Sedaya International College and Universiti Utara Malaysia.

Participants who attended last year's conference have positive feedback and encourage more Malaysians in various aspects of the education and IT industries to check out WEM 2003. Below are the views of several WEM 2002 participants.

Dr. Norrizan Razali, Smart School Flagship Manager, Multimedia Super Corridor

"Anyone involved in education in any way must attend the World Education Market. Whether you're an information technology solutions provider, an academic or policy maker, you will find the experience very beneficial.

"The sessions (talks and presentations) are very focused and networking takes place on a global scale.

"There are companies and institutions at various stages of development sharing their experience at the event, so you never know what you are going to gain.

"Those wanting to foster new business relationships will have an abundance of partners to choose from, while policy makers get to learn the latest trends in the education market.

"Everything there is fresh and focused. If there is one education event you must attend, then this is it. Skip all the rest. The WEM will get you what you want."

Joe Chapon, Vice-President of Learning Forum which runs SuperCamp

I totally support the mission of the

conference to encourage sharing information, experiences, realisations and programmes in the field of education.

The highlight sessions for WEM were: "Reporting on the Marketplace", an update on the international programmes and statistics worldwide; and "Enriching Learning Through International Partnerships" which was very helpful in discussing what multinational companies, SuperCamp, can do and do in other countries.

Many of the other sessions were able to provide a gem or two for teacher training, e-learning opportunities and the reality that technology is only a tool to the learning experience.

Much of my real learning came from talking with the representatives of all the companies who had booths. This is the essence of the conference.

Dr Koo Wee Kor, Inti College Malaysia Vice-President for Administrative Affairs

"The speakers provided a very promising overview on developments in providing education to learners all over the world. The market is not just restricted to young, but includes adult and corporate training, which though trailing, promises to be a big development.

"My overall impression from WEM 2002 is that there is a global realisation of the huge potential demand for education to meet the increasing demand of the knowledge economy. The final demand of the public sector to meet the demand and the need to remove the barrier for education has seen a tremendous boost in innovation and quality delivery of education especially in the private sector. Consumer-centred education services take centre stage.

"The opening up of the mind to a more practical vision of increasing knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of the global economy is the top-most priority in policy making and business decisions in the education sector. Failing which we cannot hope to take our rightful place in the global market where the market place is blind to sentiments and emotions.