

International Networking for Administrative/ Office Professionals Globally

Contents

World Administrators Summit	2
History	2
International Networking Team	3
Topic Brief and expected outcomes.....	3
Research approach.....	3
Information gathered.....	3
Conclusion and Recommendations.....	4



2015 - 9th World Administrators Summit, Papua New Guinea



World Administrators Summit

History

The World Administrators Summit (WASummit) is a working meeting to be held over a two-day period. Its Agenda will cover topics of interest and value to administrative and office professionals around the world.

The WASummit has its roots in 1992, when Professional Secretaries International (now International Association of Administrative Professionals - IAAP) hosted a meeting to bring together the leaders of the various secretarial/administrative/office professional associations throughout the world to participate in an international working summit to discuss global issues affecting secretarial staff.

The first two international secretarial summits were hosted in the United States (New York and Seattle). Since then they have been hosted, approximately three yearly, in South Africa, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Australia, Trinidad and Tobago, New Zealand again and most recently 2015 in Papua New Guinea. At each summit a bid has been received for hosting the following international summit. The 2018 WASummit is in Frankfurt, Germany and the 2021 WASummit will be hosted in Wellington, New Zealand.

At the 8th International Office Professionals Summit held in New Zealand in 2011, the delegates determined the name to be World Administrators Summit and discussed and agreed the purpose of these summits was:

A global meeting of administrative and office professionals and associations; to guide, influence, and positively develop the profession.

Originally the summit was a working event intended only for delegates but from 2000 it was opened up to include participants. Participants were those who were not official delegates but wished to participate in the event. This continued until 2015.

At the 2015 PNG WASummit, the delegates present agreed that future WASummit events should again be for delegates only:

- to ensure the event did not become unwieldy and discussion groups were manageable
- to meet the purpose noted above and
- to make sure costs for delegates were affordable.

NB: The 2018 WASummit, has had Delegate Credentialing forms submitted from 25 countries with some still considering the possibility. This is the largest number of countries to ever participate.

In addition, the Delegates at the 9th WASummit asked the Advisory Council to further research the topics they had been discussing. They did not feel that with the very small numbers present they had sufficient information or the mandate to make recommendations. The topics they requested further research on were:

1. International Credentialing
2. International Position Titles
3. International Networking – Speaking with One Voice

International Networking Team



INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING TEAM



Topic Brief and expected outcomes

To best determine how the global administrative/office professional community networks, and to subsequently put in place recommendations for implementing a globally accessible platform of choice. This platform is where administrative/office professionals* can network internationally. This global platform should reflect the “The Voice of Admin”.

(*A word about nomenclature: Because titles vary so much, we often use the term “administrative/office professional” or “admin” to refer to all professionals in the field)

Research approach

The International Networking Team agreed on the creation of four key questions around networking habits and preferences in the administrative/office professional community.

These questions were subsequently included in the larger WASummit Survey “Position Titles, Tasks and Networking” so that only one research survey was sent out by WASummit 2018. We sought to secure input to the survey from as many administrative/office professionals as possible.

We sought to determine how and where the global administrative/office professionals prefer to communicate to establish key criteria and to put in place recommendations for a common platform relevant to all.

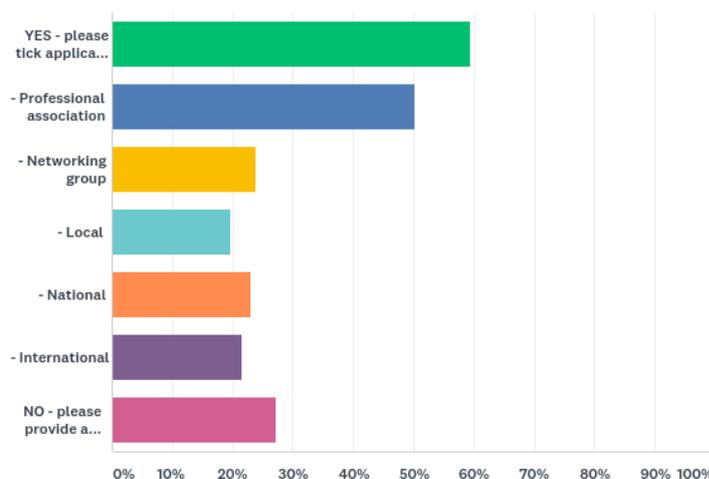
Information gathered

Key points from the “snowball” survey findings from 3369 respondents over many countries included:

- When asked if they were a member of any associations or networking groups, **59.36%** said they were a member of an association or networking group for administrative/office professionals.
- Do note that **27.28%** indicated that they are not a member of any associations or networking groups at all.



Q4 Networking: Are you a member of any associations or networking groups for administrative/office professionals?



- The statistics showed a preference for attending networking events in person quarterly and annually.
- However, it is important to note a significant percentage (**44.32%**) of respondents stated that they do not attend networking events at all.
- **76.72%** of respondents told us that LinkedIn was their preferred place to network online. Administrative/office professionals tell us that by far their most popular channel of networking online is on LinkedIn, outweighing Facebook and other social media platforms.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the data tells us that an online global platform could provide administrative/office professionals with a route to “virtual/online” networking. Linked in appears to be the most popular channel of online networking.

Our recommendation is that we create a new LinkedIn forum (group) for all administrative/office professionals:

1. **Membership:** This forum/group should aim to include a representative from each country in the world.
 - Entry to the LinkedIn group will require criteria for joining.
 - The group should be used as a vehicle to recruit administrative/office professionals from every country in the world, particularly those countries that do not currently connect with or participate in the World Administrators Summit.
 - Social media campaign and World Administrators logo to be used to encourage visibility of the platform.
 - Create hashtag/s to promote the group globally to encourage new administrative/office professionals to join and “network”.



2. **Content:** Content must be relevant to all (key issues, training, challenges, and discussion is needed about the “relevance” to each country as these will vary greatly in terms of need and cultural fit, and of course language and geographical location).
 - We believe that brief online “polls” throughout the year are a good way to garner direction in terms of content and needs.
 - This online platform could have quarterly “virtual” events or introductory events, eg: whereby administrative/office professionals can share best practice, learn from each other’s experiences. Also consider keynote speakers/trainers quarterly.
3. **Security:** Data capture for the group will belong to WASummit Advisory Council and must be securely protected.
 - The group to be moderated by WASummit Advisory Council or council members globally.
 - The platform should not be used as a market-place to “sell” for any 3rd parties, eg: selling places at conferences or selling products unless authorised by WASummit Advisory Council.
 - The group should be branded as a stand-alone entity “World Administrators Group/Members”.

The aim of this group would be to create a truly global network in terms of reach; effectively becoming the one place where the “voices of admins” are heard, allowing us to “Speak with one Voice”.

Rosemary McLennan, Team Leader
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World Administrators Summit 2015 - 2018