

EYE TO EYE

DECEMBER 2018

Issue 2

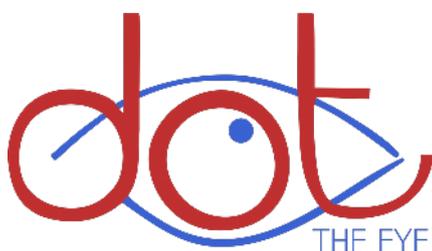
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INTRODUCTION

Merry Christmas and welcome to the December 2018 edition of the Eye to Eye newsletter from Dot-The-Eye. This newsletter is a chance to reflect on 2018 and what we have achieved.

We started the year with an updated website, which was the first of our publications and marketing materials to feature 'Ted' the Dot The Eye mascot. We were looking for something that made us stand out from the crowd, Hamish, the oldest son of Lynn our Professional Development and Membership Manager, drew a series of abstract pictures that feature Ted in different settings.



This year has seen the team grow again as the company has expanded. Page 6 and 7 of this newsletter features highlights from various members of the team.

Ensuring our systems and customer systems were GDPR compliant was our major focus at the start of the year. Toward the end of the summer we had some changes in staff which meant Molly and Richard were thrown in at the deep end as the last half of the year is, as always, a busy time with back to back deadlines.



Now as we prepare to head out on our Christmas do, a trip to bath for lunch followed by Peter Pan the pantomime - 'oh yes we are going!', my team and I would like to wish you a healthy happy and prosperous 2019.



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SOUTH AFRICA

Words and Pictures by Iona Davis



During the final year of her GCSEs, local teen Iona Davis was given the opportunity to undertake three weeks of voluntary conservation and community support work in South Africa. However the key requirement was that she raised £3,500 of funding to cover the costs of her travel, subsistence, and insurance.

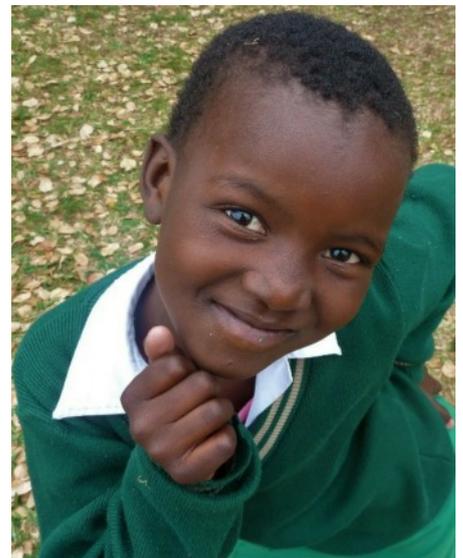
It is hard to know where to start when faced with writing an article surrounding my three weeks in South Africa. Not because there is nothing to say. In fact, quite the opposite. It's difficult to know how to put an experience that affected me so deeply into words and onto paper. To write something worth reading you first must do something worth writing about. In that respect, writing about my trip should be easy. I will never forget the lessons I learned and will be forever chasing the feelings I experienced whilst living the way I did. Even over such a short period of time, my experience in South Africa was so special, enlightening and inspirational that it became clear that the effect

was never going to be limited to the three weeks I am about to describe.

The first couple of days were spent in the urban setting of Durban. I have always enjoyed city culture and so easing into the South African way of life was as thrilling as the adventure and community impact promised in the following weeks. A closeness with the people around me developed in these days, which was vital if we were to become a team that could survive and thrive in the environment we were to experience.



The animals we witnessed in such a natural and intimate way played a huge role in my lasting enjoyment of the trip, but even the lion-behind-the-tent story was not what set this expedition aside from the holiday stigma. The work we did over there, in conservation and within the community, felt impactful and fulfilling. The donations of people attending my fundraising events and generous sponsorship from Dot-The-Eye - based in my hometown - abetted me to travel to help people in a community on the other side of the world.



We were responsible for educating one school in the importance of preventing the poaching of rhinos, whilst in another we helped renovate their place of learning. We hope to have enabled a more successful school life through our 'school in a bag', which included essentials to help

each child gain resources to utilise the little education they receive. In this rural part of Africa, ignorance can be encouraged as a form of maintaining control and numbers, and it was saddening to see children so unexposed to aspiration.



The landscapes and animals of South Africa were amazing and I am unable to fully emphasise the connection I made with nature but, for me, my trip to Africa was about the people. It's odd how one can learn so much about one's lifestyle through being exposed to others that completely contrast it. These people live simple lives and to really experience what is meant by this, we partook a home visit to a household in the village of the community project school. A day was spent eating, cleaning, playing and working as we would as a

member of the family. In both the school and the homestead we were given opportunity to interact with the children; their playful nature, unforgettable character and moving, unitive singing is what I will always remember of the youth we interacted with.

The wildlife and landscape of Africa could tempt me to abandon life as I know it. However, it won't always be that way without the work by men to reverse the damage done by man. We contributed to this workload through plastic pulling. With an industry for pineapple farming, large amounts of plastic sheeting had been dumped in a dried-up river bed but we were able to pull a white rhino worth of weight from the bed, with ambitions to continue! On my last night in Africa, I slept on the beach under the stars of an entirely different hemisphere. I would love to be able to say I was up all night preoccupied with the way I would let this trip impact me, but mostly I was conscious of the '3 metre crocodile' we had been warned of as we kayaked to our last base, Pongola River Camp. It felt fitting that a night in the open was how I

would end a trip revolving around a closeness to nature and the nature of humanity. I am incredibly grateful for the support I have received with my fundraising and to have had the fortune to experience Africa and its people in the way I have.



The things I have learnt about this entirely different culture and my own life, through and with other people, is a journey I had never imagined when I originally completed that form in my last year of secondary school.

Filled with aspiration, reflection and a need to explore more of Africa and the rest of the world, I can only thank Dot-The-Eye for the contribution they made towards me raising the funds to take me on a trip that I'm positive will sculpt the way I live the rest of my life.

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EVENT MANAGEMENT

By Emma Jane Taylor

Whenever I am asked what Dot-The-Eye does and I give people an overview of the six different areas we cover, 98% of the time the individual's focus narrows to the running of events, which they assume must be lots of fun and very exciting.

I believe that many people hold this view based on their own experience of attending events, but what they do not realise is how much effort it takes to put on a high-quality event which leaves the delegates feeling like it was worth every penny.

For the last 10 years as a company, we have run two annual events within two weeks of each other, one of which takes place in an international location and the other which is based in the United Kingdom. For both of these customers, these are their flagship events and are key to their reputation. We also run a wide range of small events throughout the year.

The planning involved in putting on a world class event is key, and for us this means ensuring that we have a good working relationship with our customers. Understanding what the messages, themes and goals are for any event is very important, because it gives you the ability to build a focused and relevant marketing strategy to help engage your potential delegates and grow attendance.

These are my top tips for planning a successful event.

START PLANNING EARLY

When you first start thinking about an event it feels a long way off, but before you know it the event is about to take place. From all my years of experience in being involved with events, I know nothing ever goes to plan; your keynote speaker is taken ill, a supplier lets you down, a planned topic for discussion is no longer valid, and so on.

As part of your plan, have a timeline which shows key milestones. The events I have mentioned above both have planning cycles that are in excess of 12 months prior to the actual event date.

GET EVERYONE TO BUY INTO THE IDEA

For an event to be a success, everyone involved in organising and promoting it must be on board. Your customer has to be confident that the structure

of the conference i.e. speakers, format and timings, will deliver. This can take time but the benefits are worth the initial effort.

HOLD REGULAR TEAM MEETINGS

I often hear the call of "Not another meeting", but when planning an event with a timeline in place, regular catch up meetings to check if every thing is on track and to resolve issues that have arisen, can de-risk an event dramatically. Over the whole planning cycle the frequency of 'regular meetings' will vary.

HAVE A CLEAR SET OF MESSAGES ABOUT YOUR EVENT

Many people talk about the threat to events from modern technology. However, with a clear set of messages the modern technology can be turned to our advantage; not only can you get your message out more easily, but if approached correctly we can get our potential delegates energised about the event before it even starts, and use them to engage with a wider audience.



IDLS2018, one of the major events in Dot-The-Eye's calendar

DON'T SCRIMP ON QUALITY

Budgets are tight and everyone is always looking to see where they can save money. However, it is important that delegates still feel that they are attending a quality event. I would sooner drop an element from the programme and deliver everything else to a high standard, rather than deliver all of the elements to a lower standard.

DON'T BE SCARED OF FEEDBACK

Always ask for feedback and not only from your delegates, but from all stakeholders including your suppliers, the venue, and so on.

It is a well known fact that people who are happy are generally less likely to give feedback, and those people who are unhappy will take more time to make a complaint. This could lead to some results looking more negative than expected, but it is not a complete representation of your average delegate's experience.

Collect the feedback and do not react to it immediately, but take some time to reflect on the comments. Individuals often have valid reasons for complaining and they may be highlighting something that you had not considered. Listening to feedback will enable you to improve your future events.

DON'T STOP TALKING ABOUT THE EVENT WHEN IT FINISHES

Ensure that your next newsletter features outcomes, feedback, highlights and photos from the event. Ensure that you thank those who contributed to making the event a success. This helps to create a following for the next event.

For further advice regarding the running of events, or to enquire about how Dot-The-Eye can assist you with managing an event, please contact us directly via enquiries@dot-the-eye.com, or call Emma Jane on 01460 298 090.



ASEC2017, another major event in Dot-The-Eye's calendar

DOT-THE-EYE 2018 TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

Lynn



"The organisation and implementation of SEP Examinations for INCOSE UK was a Professional Development highlight of 2018. There were lots of interesting challenges in sourcing and liaising with the venues and supporting all the candidates through the experience of preparing for and sitting the examination. Not mention receiving their results!"

Professional Development and Membership Manager

Ben

"Successfully gaining a handle on our own private virtual server environment has expanded our potential at Dot The Eye and has been fun to learn at the same time. As a developer, I always enjoy more power, more control and more possibilities!"

IT Programmer



John



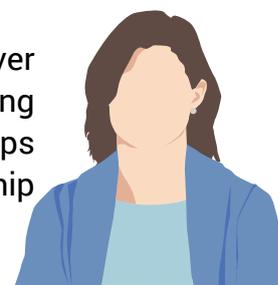
"My personal highlight of 2018 was being in San Diego as a member of the IDLS2018 management team helping to deliver a symposium that had been two years in the making. Meeting the International Data Link Society members and getting to know them as people rather than just as a name and membership number is so important. I hope they were as pleased to meet me as I was them."

Finance Officer

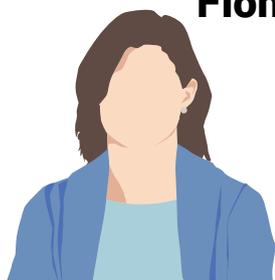
Julia

"2018 has been a great year for INCOSE UK. Membership has increased over the year to a high of almost a thousand members. The Portal for transferring files, since GDPR came into force is working well and is secure, which keeps us in line with the rules. We are still striving to streamline the Membership area, along with the reconciliations."

Membership Coordinator



Fiona



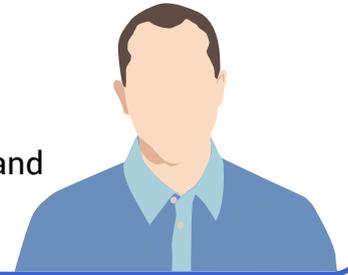
"Aside from my commute, which takes all of 70 seconds door-to-desk, what I like most about working at Dot -The-Eye is the enthusiasm shown by the newly certified ASEPs and CSEPs when asked whether they would like to appear in Preview. It's really endearing and lifts the spirits."

Professional Development and Membership Coordinator

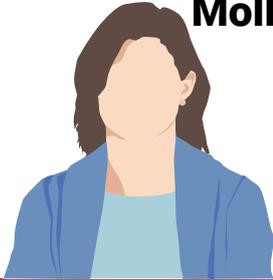
George

"Visiting the United States for the first time, where we were organising this year's IDLS, was one of my 2018 highlights. The event went very smoothly and I got to see what it's like living and working in California and how it's different to the UK."

IT Assistant



Molly



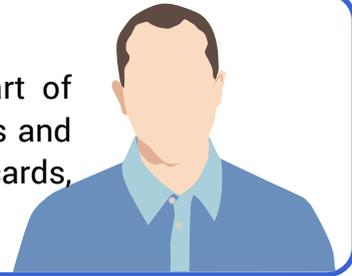
"Since I started working at Dot-The-Eye in August I had been involved in helping to organise one of our client's flagship events. In November I had the opportunity to attend the event as part of the events team, I really enjoyed seeing the event I had helped to organise come together to be a great success."

Publications and Communications Assistant

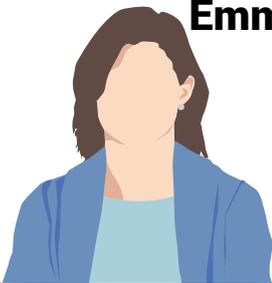
Richard

"Being able to use my creative side so soon after becoming a part of Dot-The-Eye has been my highlight. I have only been here for 5 months and have already designed flyers, newsletters, Christmas and Thank You cards, and an enamel pin badge."

Publications and Communications Assistant



Emma



"I have been with Dot The Eye since February, after being offered a place as an apprentice doing Business Administration, I have been very grateful to receive so many fantastic opportunities learning about the business and getting involved with events and also receiving fantastic support."

Business Administration Apprentice

Watch out for Ted on his travels!

