

Co-operative boasts its own web site

Agra is accessible on a global scale since April this year with the introduction of its web site. The launch of this much-anticipated goal on 26th April 2002 was preceded by a year's in-depth analysis regarding the necessity and advantages offered by such a web presence and the development of the site itself.

The changing business environment spawned the development of a web site for Agra. In order to maintain a competitive edge in this new information technology dominated business economy, it was necessary that Agra adapt. The information needs of clients, suppliers and other information users has changed to such an extent that businesses cannot but adjust to the new information requirements and demands.

By conducting much of our business via the Internet, we are convinced that our web site will generate new business avenues and therefore enable Agra to add further value for its members.

The web site was launched by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development at a prestigious function held in Windhoek. Honourable Minister Helmut Angula addressed the importance of the web site for the agricultural sector and the country as a whole, emphasising the advantages it holds for farmers and in particular for those in remote areas. "Farmers, consumers and business people will now have an Agra branch in their living rooms...Agra has brought development and empowerment to the farming community by providing this service", the Honourable Minister said.

Agra's web site is extremely user-friendly and contains a wealth of information. Detailed information on the co-operative, its history, individual branches and affiliates is available at the click of a button.



Photo: Hon. Helmut Angula, Minister of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development receives a gift from AGRA's CEO Peter Kazmaier at the prestigious web site launch.

The retail page offers a product catalogue and the imminent opportunity to place orders electronically. A page detailing product specials is available and queries can also be posted online. The livestock department is represented by numerous pages providing information on auctions, export, meat prices, stud services, livestock for sale and a genetic library which enables any breeder or buyer to quickly source, or advertise, any genetic material.

Agra's organisational and operational structure is depicted on the web site and clearly indicates the functioning of the co-operative. Contact details for each branch and livestock agents are

available at the click of a button.

Agra's financial statements for the previous two years provide interesting reading and can be downloaded from the site. These pages include, amongst others, the Balance Sheets, Income- and Cash Flow Statements.

The monthly newsletter "Die Ring" can be downloaded from and read on the web site. All previous editions of the year are archived and available under the "Printed Materials" page.

Numerous suppliers are linked to the web site, which enables users to source additional information on product and service offerings.

Positive feedback has been received from various sources, indicating the favourable reception of the web site. The Namibian Economic and Policy Research Unit reacted as follows: "I just felt the need to congratulate you on an excellent web site, it has everything one can hope for and the format is very user friendly. I hope more web sites could be like Agra's."

We believe that our members and other users will share this sentiment. With this latest technological addition to our fold, Agra will be able to generate new business, increase competitiveness and operate to the greater benefit of its members.