IAD News

Communication director urges greater use of social media, Web platform design needed
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Montemorelos University: Castillo continues as the Adventist institution’s president
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Libna Stevens  
Jun 7, 2011

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7 Jun 2011, Montego Bay, Jamaica...Ansel Oliver/ANN

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Williams Costa Jr. urged the church to increase its financial commitment to the design of information-sharing through the Web, as well as for administrators to further embrace the two-way communication that is offered by social media, which has become an industry standard.

"It's better for leaders to be prepared for interaction," Costa said on June 3 at the Global Internet Evangelism Network forum, an annual world conference designed to enhance the church's use of technology.

"If you want to be heard you need to hear. Corporations are listening because it's the essence of communication today," said Costa, the forum's organizer.

This year's event drew nearly 100 participants from six continents to Montego Bay, Jamaica, June 1 to 5. Most presentations and discussions centered around connectivity and information-sharing and less on Web technology as an end to itself. Many focused heavily on content-sharing through Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Several participants acknowledged that the discussion on social media has progressed: instead of questioning its use, more Adventist administrators are increasingly incorporating social media into ministry. Doing so may increase vulnerability, but also honesty and relevance, they said.

In Central Jamaica, the administrative conference is using Facebook as a key communication forum among members and church leaders -- this despite administrators being against the idea at first. Now the group has 1,000 members, many of whom offered suggestions that were later incorporated into the conference's strategic plan.

"Members appreciate being consulted," said Kemar Douglas, Communication director for the Adventist Church in Central Jamaica.

Some attendees said administrators slow to incorporate technology are often part of a generation gap between technology users. One participant said a challenge is sometimes just educating church leaders that technology doesn't necessarily detract from interactive relationships.

"Understand, the virtual environment is a real environment," said Arnolfo Ardilla, a media producer from Venezuela.

One speaker put the onus on forum participants in leading change. "I think it's up to us to develop examples [for administrators] of how social media can benefit the church," said Bryan Collick, an employee of Twitter, based in San Francisco.

The forum delivered overviews of technologies blended with ministry. One presenter, John Beckett, director of the Office of Global Software and Internet, offered training for netAdventist, the world church's website management platform.
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Inter-American Division  >  Communication Department

Libna Stevens  SHARE  June 16, 2011

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May 16, 2011 - Miami, Florida, United States...Raúl Lozano/IAD Staff

Montemorelos University, an institution operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Inter-American Division (IAD), experienced significant advances from 2006 to 2011. The report came as Dr. Ismael Castillo was reinstated as the institution’s president during a board meeting held in Miami, Florida, yesterday. Dr. Castillo highlighted the most significant accomplishments of the institution during the quinquennium from the perspective of both short-range and long-range goals.

Short-range goals were organized into four engines: the vision engine, which has to do with activities related to missions; the entrepreneurial spirit engine, which has to do with stewardship activities; the quality engine, which has to do with commitment to quality in service; and the compassion and service engine, which has to do with fellowship and kindness inside and outside of campus.

Long-range goals were described with what Castillo called Vision 20/20. "This Vision 20/20 points to the global evangelization of the world through the Inter-American youth in preparation for the Second Coming of Christ," said Castillo.

"An outstanding accomplishment in this quinquennium is the new curriculum," he added. "This is one of our most important accomplishments because it contains a great diversity of learning experiences that are part of the curriculum from now on."

According to the report, 68.2% of the goals were met during the five-year period. Since some goals were very ambitious in their scope, said Castillo, they will carry over for the coming years. "It is good that we have more challenges than accomplishments."

Board members approved the strategic plan for the next five years as well as the recommendations made by accrediting agencies regarding the institution.

As the report concluded, the Montemorelos University’s administrative team for the new five-year period was elected. Dr. Castillo remained as president for the next five years, a position he has held since 1987.

"The job of the nominating committee was done quickly," said Pastor Israel Leito, president of the church in Inter-America and chairman of the nominating committee. "There is no need for a change [in leadership]." he added.

Also voted into their previous posts were Raquel Korniejczuk in charge of academic affairs, Joel Sebastian for financial affairs, and Ekel Collins for student affairs. Pending to vote in will be the academic affairs position previously held by Ruben Meza who will be retiring soon.

Montemorelos University is an Adventist institution accredited by the Adventist Accrediting Association and the second of three Adventist universities worldwide which grants degrees in medicine in addition to Loma Linda University in the United States and Universidad Adventista del Plata in Argentina.