

# News release

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## **Conference brings global business opportunities into sharp focus**

Businesses leaders from Perth and the South West heard first hand how they could become a successful part of the global economy at the 2009 South West Focus Conference.

The event, which was organised by the South West Development Commission and South West Chambers of Commerce and Industry, was held at Bunbury's All Seasons Sanctuary Golf Resort on April 2.

It attracted a diverse range of speakers including Simon Johnson, the Western Australian Trade Office representative based in Mumbai.

With "engaging global industries" as the theme, speakers explored the opportunities and challenges of doing business in the world's economic hot spots, dispensing tips for success along the way.

AFL coaching great Kevin Sheedy kicked off the conference by encouraging people to look for business opportunities that might be under their feet.

"Look where sometimes people don't look," he said.

Perdaman Chemicals and Fertilisers projects director Joseph McCarthy talked about opening up a new market for local coal through the building of a urea plant at Collie.

Alan Lindsay from the Australian Centre for Digital Innovation spoke about setting up a digital animation business that would allow him to work in partnership with film and television professionals around the world from Bunbury.

Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce WA chair Edmund Damouni and The Confucius Institute at the University of WA business development manager Vada Ng highlighted the trade environments in the Middle East and China.

Former London-based Agent General of Western Australia Noel Ashcroft spoke about opportunities at the premium end of the European and Russian markets.

And Austrade Western Australia's Adam Dennis relayed success stories and spoke of potential markets for local businesses.

2009 South West Focus Conference chairman and South West Chambers of Commerce and Industry president David Kerr said a growing number of South West businesses were actively participating in the global economy.

"Through improved technologies, communications, transport and distribution systems there are increasing opportunities for people to engage in the international marketplace," he said.

"With applied creative thinking and calculated risk taking, many other local businesses can be a successful part of the global economy."

Mr Kerr said the conference was well supported and had received positive feedback from the people who attended.

"The speakers were relevant and helped to increase people's understanding of the opportunities available and also some of the cultural nuances that people need to understand before going into the global marketplace," he said.

"I hope the conference was educational and inspired delegates to consider how their business might recognise and position itself to take advantage of the changing global business landscape."

The South West Chambers of Commerce and Industry, together with the South West Development Commission, host the South West Focus Conference as an initiative to support business development in the region.

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