

IMPRESSIONS ON A GALA EVENING

My name is Beatrix Balassa, and I am working for a large multinational IT and consulting company. I am originally from Budapest, Hungary, and have been working internationally for a long time. While living in Vienna I joined the very inspiring WCN. We had a very pleasant Gala Dinner and inter-

esting program on September 21st, organized by the Theater Pygmalion to honour Secretary of State Mrs Christine Marek.

Again, it was an excellent example of how we can enjoy our time together, watching fabulous, young talents...artists and musicians alike.

We had a chance to link informally among WCN members and their partners, while sharing our experiences and discussing our daily challenges, trying to find ways on how to move forward or solve problems. I feel really honored to be part of this great team and association, and felt very well on this evening.

VIENNA EUROFORUM COMMUNICATION

October 23rd, 2008

Last month we received Selma Prodanovic's invitation to attend the EUROFORUM COMMUNICATION 2008 (Selma, CEO of Brainswork and WCN member, was the organizer of the Forum this year) and I immediately felt that I should not miss it, the focus this time being Romania, Bulgaria, and Moldova.

Yes, I admit that I have been addicted to Central and Eastern Europe for years, especially to Romania and Bulgaria. Yet, even though deeply interested in that region, I am not an expert in Communication or Advertising, not even directly working in that field myself. Therefore, how to join the Forum on a normal working day? I could not find any serious reason for my company to send me there... but I really felt like needing to attend. Not thinking longer about it, I quickly decided to take the convenient day off and registered immediately.

I attended the forum yesterday, and I am really happy about my decision.

A nice and central location, an international public (Austrian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Moldavian, Dutch, Maltese and many others, I guess) from private companies (creative agencies and their clients), diplomatic circles and international Chambers of Commerce, a perfect, very professional organisation in a quiet atmosphere and - for the gourmets among you - an excellent buffet: everything contributed to add to the success of the programme itself.

The programme? A perfectly mastered mix of round tables ("Development of the Region", "Advertising in the Region") and numerous individual presentations by expert speakers from different horizons, countries, and companies, with brilliant and varied personalities. They led us from analysis of markets to specific advertising in the different countries and to the, multicultural approach, a psychological approach of communication in other cultures and languages, from branding to "brandology"; from, weight of history and communist patterns versus creativity and new media in these European coun-

tries, case studies, and much more... The highlight of the day was the brilliant interview, by Selma Prodanovic, of her Special Guest Speaker, Mr. Ioan Holender, Romanian born and Director of the Vienna State Opera.

This full and long day of work, of discovery, of learning and networking ended with dinner, chill-out lounge and live music, and with an additional surprise: as a Première, a presentation of all video-spots laureates at the "Golden Drum Contest 2008", an international advertising contest that had taken place in Portoroz, Slovenia, few days before. The fact that 108 Romanian creative works were nominated tells a lot about the quality of creative communication in this region.

I am not sure that I ever had such a productive "day off" in the past and would like to thank Selma Prodanovic for inviting WCN members to join. I can warmly recommend attending the next Forum, in October 2009, which will focus on Russia.

Marie-Sophie BLONDEAU