

# ITALIAN BUSINESS MAN OF THE YEAR

NOMINATION  
AND MOTIVATION  
2014



**ANGELO AGRIZZI**

Italian born, Angelo Agrizzi, is the Chief Operating Officer of the BOSASA Group of 80 companies – a position he has held from inception. Business development acumen is profoundly evident within the fifteen year lifespan of the Group. In his COO capacity and with a demanding and significant portfolio, he has remained at the forefront of helping to drive the Group into a powerful brand in South Africa. From small offices in Krugersdorp and (a small team of eight members of personnel), it now has 4000 employees and a well-established national footprint. With an entrepreneurial mind he has been able to identify local and global business opportunities and product needs. The brand has been successfully consolidated through public acknowledgement of product, service delivery worldwide and authentic corporate social responsibility programmes.



## A GLOBAL PLAYER

Analysing global and local events, Angelo annually sets his own standards of delivery which become his constant point of reference based on the following:

**uncompromised integrity, mission critical business responses to evolving events nationally and globally, service to the national interest for economic growth, localised community development in all provinces, resilience in a changing environment, job creation, education and innovation.**

He is nominated for this prestigious award because of the expanded value he has added to the triple bottom line (King 11's corporate good governance soft law) approach to organisational development in a rapidly changing and challenging environment. King 11 has been accepted as a governance model in sixty countries inclusive of Italy. Leaning on the culture of high morale, productivity and loyalty he

has created, he has cushioned the staff against the fiscal crisis. This he has achieved with regular interaction, Company updates, wellness support, orientation to events in the global community, a commitment to streamlining services and emphasizing *'a cycle of excellence and quality of delivery.'*

Motivated personnel willingly volunteer their traditional free time to ensure benchmarks have been met resulting in palpable evidence of integrated team work. **The loyalty of personnel that Angelo Agrizzi commands** towards his vision lends credence to both his signature and ability to translate strategy into reality. Personnel simply trust him.

As an Italian business man Angelo believes that at any one time he is carrying a flag for Italy. As such he knows that exemplary performance as a **captain of industry** is required of him adding to the existing prestige of Italy and the prowess of its own achievers who live in South Africa and make their unique contributions. He does not lose sight of his responsibilities to South Africa with this paradoxical and dual identity.

Agrizzi has been described as a visionary by his peer group *'for seeing the world in a grain of sand'* and then acting on this.

As a proud member of a distinguished Italian family he has dedicated time and energy into celebrating the contribution of the Italian community in South Africa.

Believing that he and his family represent their Italian roots, it is incumbent on all to be leading achievers in their field, contributing to the world of scientific knowledge and learning. Angelo embraces close family ties. He and his wife succeeded in producing a family of high achievers in the socio-political, economic and medical terrains.

## A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY AND FUTURE VISION

Angelo is a student of global events and an **entrepreneur of note**. Observing that the oceans globally are being gutted of fish and that many species have declined by nearly 90 percent, he helped to drive a scientific team to provide meaningful and ecofriendly aquaculture solutions. What was needed was a methodology that took pressure off wild catch fisheries. Wearing both his entrepreneurial and social responsibility hat, he focused on Aquaculture which has a high barrier to entry. Aquaculture growth in South Africa is below global standards but it has the potential to be a global leader with its innovative formula of sustainability. With South Africa contributing only 0.01 per cent, he focused his attention on supporting the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries while developing a viable profitable business. A Biorganics company was born within the BOSASA Group which now fast tracks *'product development'* and a sustainable food supply in a secure uncontaminated environment. This formula defies the global experience of unavoidable contamination providing solutions hitherto undiscovered by overseas scientists. Biorganics provides employment, career path development, poverty alleviation and provision of essential protein. This BOSASA Group division is seen to be a significant and developing contributor to local and national economic growth.



## GROWTH THROUGH RISK MANAGEMENT AND INNOVATION

As Chief Operating Officer he helped to turn a fledgling security company, Dyambu, with an annual turnover of R112,000,000 into a sophisticated risk management operation customised to most industry sectors, today known as the BOSASA Group of Companies. It boasts a significant turnover of R1,46 Billion.

FROM **R112,000,000**  
TO **R1,46BILLION**

Believing that innovation begins at home, **Angelo has pioneered** *'home grown'* software by **grooming a technology division into a sophisticated software development unit**. This serves to promote knowledge management and the twelve main business units into a meaningful integrated whole.



This software has been extended to Full Facilities Management as well as the hospitality industry from which he has historical expertise. The exemplary nature of this software was subsequently recognised by Microsoft headquarters with an offer to purchase what they regarded as unique intellectual property adding value to their existing software stable.

**Angelo has also honed Full Facilities management into an art and a science, declared as such by the leadership of Correctional Centres who have publicly celebrated this sustained service excellence.**

Angelo has made himself an expert on key point security providing risk management services to Airports and once more he earned accolades for service excellence sharing this achievement with his team. High level training of risk management staff at the airports, and absence of corruption in their ranks has led to a dramatic reduction of crime (theft, money laundering, hijacking, mugging and terrorism, drug smuggling and substance abuse). An ongoing scholar of the nature of terrorism and its groups coupled to publication of his blogs on various terrorism subjects, has also earned him

acknowledgement for counter terrorism endeavours in South Africa. This clearly is of global value with the borderless progress of terrorism and drug smuggling.

## PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT

Angelo has ensured that any entry point 'position' or work, such as cleaning or gardening can lead to a university degree for anyone with aspirations and drive. The BOSASA Group has extensive examples of individuals who have entered the Group as general cleaners and gone on to become accountants, executives, auditors, lawyers and doctors. **The Group and its functional teams, under his leadership** (BOSASA is the largest employer in the Mogale developing Metropolitan District by design) demonstrates heightened concern for the under privileged. They are known for taking vagrants and hawkers off the street, teaching them business skills, providing them with appropriate business resources and helping them provide for their families and often communities. Wherever he has initiated SMEE development skills and enterprises there is a measurable drop in crime.

Comments recorded below (in his work with offenders) are relevant to this paragraph. He is also actively engaged with community sports to keep the youth off the street, acquire disciplined thinking and healthy habits/outlooks. Resources for these sports as well as computer centres have been provided by the Group, under the aegis of his vision, for personal growth.

## GROWING PEOPLE

Despite a challenging schedule he finds time to mentor young employees into the bigger picture of running an organisation. **He has been on the founding team of the Watson Corporate University** which provides a wide range of short and long courses, and academic supervision of staff studying for degrees.

Personnel have free access to programmes which inspire them to achieve their potential and advance their careers. The courses are scoped for lateral movement in BOSASA should they wish to pursue alternative careers.

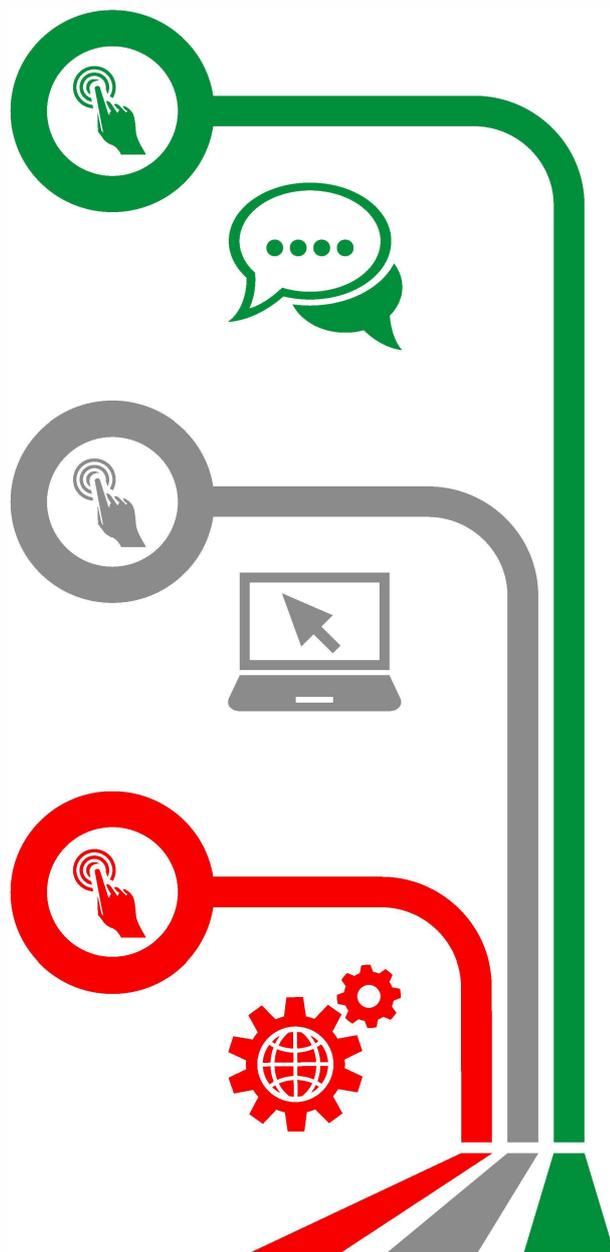
Angelo believes *'no man is an island'*, and he acknowledges the role of the extended family in personnel happiness, productivity and morale.

He has also therefore driven one of the largest corporate online libraries in Africa for personnel who wish to improve their knowledge or who are studying for diplomas or degrees. He has made provision for family members who also seek mentorship with study skills guaranteeing the support of the family and their future wellbeing in one fell swoop. Assistance with best practice research methodology is made available to staff. These mentees/students are consistently awarded distinctions for their work because of this mentorship service.

Innovation is encouraged by giving personnel who understand Group policy and culture the freedom and support to develop viable ideas to market entry level. Most of the Group's intellectual property and unique software is the result of this philosophy.

## OVERALL EMPLOYEE WELLNESS AND INTERPERSONAL HARMONY

To ensure high morale, overall health and wellbeing, a Wellness Division was created, run by professionals. The breadth of services offered by this Division lends testimony to Angelo's knowledge of local and global events: primary care (chronic disease monitoring), financial counselling, psychotherapy, advanced study methods, scientific research and legal counselling by qualified staff trained in aspects of law and bereavement counselling. Angelo has ensured that this service is offered to extended families of



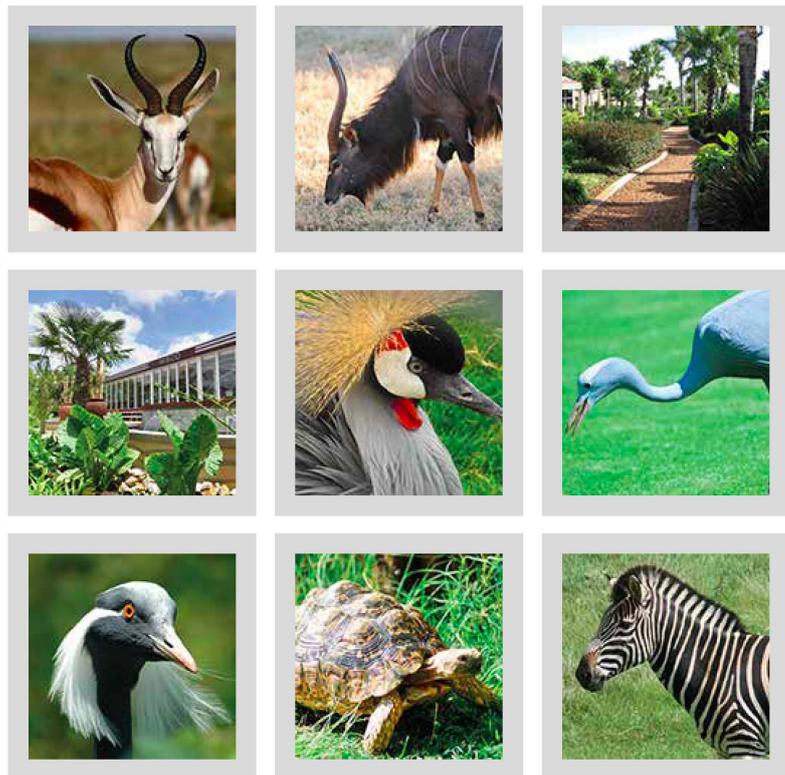
employees should any disruption within the family, illness or death compromise the wellbeing of members of staff. It is not unusual for neighbours of staff to be counselled as well, should death in the family be the result of violence, thereby unsettling the community as they grieve their loss and attempt to recover from shock. Family members who aspire to achieve are assisted with career path counselling and support resources as they seek bursaries for various educational institutes.

## INSPIRING CREATIVITY

Angelo believes that for staff to be creative, it is incumbent on the Group to provide an environment conducive to innovation. Angelo's stamp can be seen in the landscaping, eco friendly design and the architecture of the Mogale Business Park which is the headquarters of the Group. His vision of employee wellbeing is exemplified by twelve Italianate business unit designs within an eco-park which has no peer. This business park sports a Mashie course, walkways (running pathways for those who wish to train), fauna and flora, a lodge, Diner, herb garden and secluded garden settings for staff to reflect on their work. With Springbok, tortoises, rabbits, Nyala, Zebra, peacocks, crown herons and thirty other varieties of bird life, this environment provides a unique setting to metaphorically inspire respect for diversity and individual or team creativity. International visitors describe this setting as *'paradise'* for any person and it provides an environment in which essential work-life balance is guaranteed. Free advice on nutrition and exercise is provided and with Angelo's sponsorship and encouragement every Comrades event and major marathon has included BOSASA staff championing the brand and all it stands for.



*Mogale Business Park*



## EXPANSIVE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Angelo Agrizzi's approach to social responsibility is both holistic and supply chain oriented. His achievements in the corporate world are eclipsed only by his personal social responsibility drive (CSI) and serving the community and country beyond business interests. He believes not only in 'giving back' but being responsible as a citizen for the cooperative wellbeing of others.

For twelve years this has manifested in a successful project where he set himself three criteria: **the reduction of crime, employment creation, and meaningful skills development.**

Trading on his own skill set and knowledge he has pursued a line of community and individual development where he has proof of concept.

Angelo's outreach goes where few corporates venture – correctional centres. Social stigma has been a contributory cause of this normative corporate **'avoidance'** behaviour. The South African **'prison'** environment is unique and relative to the high crime rate, unemployment, illiteracy and nature of offences. Noting the nature of several academic research papers in which it is reported that 80 percent of prisoners in South African Correctional Centres are illiterate, undernourished, come from underprivileged backgrounds and are **'groomed'** into crime, he undertook to drive meaningful change.

Offenders, in conflict with the law and therefore incarcerated are deprived of liberties that most people take for granted. Lack of budget, skilled personnel, and the complex nature of South African prisons has led to thousands of offenders being compromised health wise. High density living in a cell due to high crime rates and concomitant incarceration statistics leads to existing health conditions being adversely affected and the acquisition of other diseases. Mental health issues are

also central to imprisonment.

Angelo is therefore driving his three pronged approach to rehabilitate offenders, encouraging health and growing marketable skills on parole.

A research centre for prison health care is currently being developed under his leadership. This centre will provide benchmarked research for the benefit of Correctional Centres on which government can make informed decisions, reduce costs, manage more efficiently and build capacity. It will therefore serve to contribute to public health in the long and short term. Its value as a research centre will extend globally.

## HLUMANI

Hlumani is a project started by Angelo at Pollsmoor whereby Correctional Centre available land is converted for agricultural purposes. Offenders are taught sustainable farming and they produce crops from which the Correctional Centre benefits as a fresh produce supply. These skills

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OF RSA PRISONERS ARE...

**\* ILLITERATE**  
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too are marketable and 'life' self-sustaining when parole is attained. It also promotes individual pride and self-esteem, essential for a crime free life.

## CHEF AND COOK TRAINING

Using his vast experience in the hospitality industry, Angelo had acquired and installed (at great expense) state of the art equipment for the aging '*prison kitchens*'. With modern equipment offenders are taught to become chefs and cooks through accredited and registered training programmes in partnership with the SA Chefs Association (HTA School of Culinary Arts). This is a national first. These individuals as products of Angelo's education and skills development drive have gone on to become employed in leading South African hotels and restaurants. Many have started their own entrepreneurial operations providing professional level catering to industry and their own communities. The quality of this training in a high risk environment with sustained positive results has earned Angelo and his team global and local acclaim. BOSASA has to date contributed R 70 Million to meaningful social responsibility programmes. As can be seen, none of these are '*wallpaper.*' There is genuine commitment and engagement



*Hlumani - Pollsmoor, Western Cape*

with every project and each of these is publicly visible and acclaimed for its integrity and authenticity. Angelo visits all sites regularly to ensure quality control. He is literally '*hands-on.*'

## EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Angelo has helped to drive early child development programmes. This has national consequence. Through his vision, BOSASA is now a serious participant in promoting the education of children in South Africa. He works with a group of communities in Orange Farm. BOSASA now supports this project by educating teachers, introducing innovative practices, computer training and essential infrastructure, food and nutrition training from experts in the field.



## CONTRIBUTING TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST

It will be noted that a common denominator exists with all of the above. As an Italian, Angelo does not forget his obligations as a South African citizen. He therefore believes that whatever he does with his teams, the national interest must be served. This is evident as a golden thread throughout this motivation. It also consolidates bilateral trade and investment and reciprocal respect.

## PERSONAL LIFE

Angelo is an avid and eclectic reader to which his library collection will testify. He is a passionate supporter of all things Italian and Ferrari is no exception, being an active member of the Ferrari Club. Any visitor to his office will be treated to a range of Ferrari models, the fine detail of which he has himself crafted with intricate patience and care.

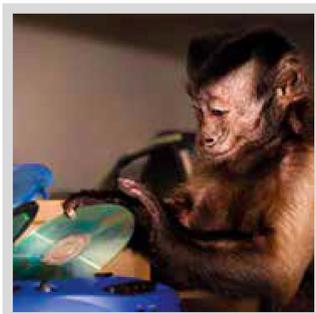


*Ferrari Club*





Both Angelo and his wife Debbie raise specialist trained Capuchin monkeys (the most intelligent new age primates) in conjunction with Helping Hands an organisation committed to placing helper monkeys with the critical disabled - the latest primate helpers being Romeo and Juliet. These phenomenal animals are trained to fetch remotes, switch lights on and off on command, thereby assisting those less fortunate. These tasks are traditionally seen by able bodied people as menial.



Angelo's has gourmet interests in his own domestic kitchen and the culinary arts. He entralls his family and friends with his engaging warmth and hospitality, coupled to his enduring interest in and knowledge of Italian cuisine which he promotes with panache. He has intimate knowledge of the history and cuisine of all Italy's regions as well as the latter's contribution to global cardiovascular health. He promotes this *'health knowledge'* for the welfare of his staff. His other hobbies suggest a newly discovered flair for interior design, drawing on the globally famous Italian experience, textiles and furniture. To this add gardening at his much loved home where he demonstrates his concern for the environment, testing eco-friendly design, and flora choices. He is also an expert on the famous gardens of Italy.



**THIS NOMINATION IS ENDORSED BY COLLEAGUES, CLIENTS, FRIENDS AND EMPLOYEES WHO SHARE AN ENDEARING LOVE AND RESPECT FOR HIM AND BELIEVE IN HIS ABILITY TO DRIVE A SAFE, SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR ALL.**