★ **CATE Navigate Conference**

Pat Cody thoroughly enjoyed the CATE conference.

As the year catapulted to a close I looked forward to the Careers and Transition Educators conference and I was not disappointed.   It was exceptional.   The organising committee had ticked off all the key components of what is required to run a large scale professional development event.

Sky City in Auckland was a perfect venue, allowing the sea of delegates (over 700) to flow freely from keynote presentations, to workshops to the amazing food and back again!

The navigation metaphor provided a strong brand and connect, both to the City of Sails and the content of the workshops and key messages. There really was a sense of embarking on a voyage – culminating in the dinner and dance on the HMNZS Canterbury on the Friday night.

But hey what about the professional development?

The keynote speakers were a significant highlight. John McCarthy, Professor David Bibby, Jeremy Baker, Rod Oram, Stuart Middleton all had the ability to place New Zealand's economic, socio economic and career opportunities into a global context.   While Li Cunxin (Mao's Last Dancer) provided a powerful narrative of determination, persistence and achievement against significant odds.

I strongly suggest that CDANZ members take the opportunity to read the keynote speeches. You can download them at
http://www.cate.co.nz/navigate-presentations/

There was a broad range of valuable workshops. Again all the workshop material have been downloaded onto the CATE website.

The professional networking and professional discussions were also really enjoyable. It was also a good way to develop leads and work for 2011.

A highlight for me was the opening by Auckland Girls' Grammar and closing by North Cross Intermediate. The students' waiata captured the audience and for me made me feel very optimistic of the talents and futures that our youth have.   The next CATE conference is in Rotorua on 23-26 November 2011.

I applaud the Auckland Branch of CATE on the Navigate conference. Thanks for a great experience.