



## PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT 2008



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## **Appendix**

- Supporting material including press releases, e news, media notifications and publicity

## **FESTIVAL CAIRNS PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT 2008**

### **1. Overview of Festival Cairns 2008**

As the curtains close on another Festival Cairns, there is no doubt that in its seventh year, Queensland's largest regional community celebration has continued on its successful path to present a dynamic program with broad appeal.

With success measured in terms of participation in, and subscription to, events, economic impact and ability to focus attention on the city of Cairns, Festival Cairns 2008 certainly hit its straps – involving participation by some 175,000 people and providing an economic impact to the tune of \$20 million.

Festival Cairns – as an event – reaches all of its many and varied objectives through efficient and effective management of resources. Managed by EventsCairns from the outset, an operations manager and team of four staff work their magic in conjunction with a dedicated team of specialized contractors that span event management, theming companies, public relations, advertising, signage and web-based marketers.

In 2008, true to form, Festival Cairns continued to bring its vision to life; providing its local community and visitors with one giant colourful umbrella – under which a quality program of some 45 events fall. Within an official program of free and ticketed events, Festival Cairns incorporated 25 days of activity covering a whole range of events that fall under the categories of music, sport, arts and entertainment, food, wine and family based festivals. In offering such a diverse and varied program it achieves what is often impossible – the ability to talk to a range of audiences from young families to youth, artisans, multi-cultural communities and visitors.

This achievement is exemplified by this year's highlights that included the second annual TimeOUT concert, the QLD Cup NBL championship, Food, Wine and All That Jazz, Carnival on Collins, Cairns Amateurs Spring Racing Carnival and the annual Parade of Lights finale spectacular and fireworks display.

As with every year, 2008 was poignant in that it introduced a series of new events and initiatives to the program. The launch of Ergon Energy's Busking Festival is a case in point and comprising both an amateur and professional program, was deemed a great success by organizers and the people of Cairns. It is hoped that this event will gather momentum with the years and in so doing, provide a major drawcard to the city in terms of buskers and visitors vying for a wonderful score of outdoor entertainment.

On that note, what Festival Cairns does particularly well, is focus attention or showcase its public amenities and precincts. The wonderful assets of Cairns come the fore when Festival Cairns is on. Places like the Cairns Esplanade, Lagoon, City Place, the Tanks Art Centre, Centre of Contemporary Arts, Flecker Botanic Gardens and Cairns City Port are all brought to the fore as venues of supreme enjoyment.

The business community of Cairns is integral to the success of Festival Cairns and in 2008 was particularly so. Event partners such as BDO Kendalls who staged Swing by the Lagoon, Supa /IGA and of course, founding event partner Pacific Toyota – all take a vested interest in the success and well being of Festival Cairns. Without them, along with

Ergon Energy, Cairns Family Medical Centre, The Pier, Cairns Ports, Shangri-la, Rydges Hotels and Resorts and a whole host of others, are the backbone of Festival Cairns.

For the second year running, Festival Cairns conveyed its theme of Love Cairns, Love the Environment, through its Dress Up Your Business Campaign. Riding on the success of its inaugural year, managed to attract in excess of 30 businesses who pro-actively got celebrated the Festival with its recognizable icons of stars, hearts, fish and palm fronds.

Of all the events, perhaps it is the RACQ Insurance Parade of Lights that best illustrates the community's acceptance and love of Festival Cairns. In 2008, some 30,000 local residents and visitors turned out in droves to line the Esplanade as the annual procession made its way gradually along the street. Dancing, drumming, music and much more makes for an overt celebration of Cairns and what makes life in the north so appealing to its community. For many, it is all about the great outdoors, the emerald hills, the azure seas and the balmy nights...encapsulated to perfection by the Parade of Lights.

To understand Festival Cairns, one must first understand its heritage, In 2002 Festival Cairns was born. An event unlike any other in Australia, it successfully delivered the concept of a multi-dimensional program of free and ticketed events spanning music, art, culture, sport and entertainment. This event would take place in spring and roll out over three action-packed weeks - bringing people out and about to enjoy life in the tropics while showcasing the city's precincts of public enjoyment – be it Cairns Esplanade, Cairns Civic Theatre, The Tanks Arts Centre, CoCA or Cairns Regional Gallery.

In its short history, Festival Cairns has been delivered to the people by the people. That is via a combination of Council funding and private sector contributions. While Council has also played an important role overseeing its operation and development –a privately owned event management company, in conjunction with its sponsors and event partners, has put the wheels in motion and brought Festival Cairns to life.

Over the years it has evolved gradually into a memorable and worthwhile event that somehow manages to talk to the people – be they youth, families, multi-cultural communities -even sporting enthusiasts.

## **2. Introduction**

The following activity report outlines media relations activity undertaken by Pip Miller PR on the behalf of EventsCairns for Festival Cairns 2008.

This activity was undertaken on an ongoing basis between June and November 2007.

This is the seventh year Pip Miller PR has provided a public relations consultancy service for Festival Cairns.

## **3. The Basic Strategy**

### **Primary Objective:**

For the seventh Festival Cairns event, Pip Miller worked in conjunction with EventsCairns and several event partners to co ordinate all media relations activity with a view to generating positive media coverage in the local marketplace.

## **Secondary objectives:**

- a) generate media coverage in the national press and glossy magazines
- b) international media generated through tourism networks – TQ, TA and TTNQ
- c) coordination of vip finale event

This year the campaign was undertaken with a shorter lead time from June to November inclusive, however it is important to note activity continues right throughout the year.

## **The Program:**

The public relations activity commenced with foundation work in conjunction with operations manager, Narell Black. This included a focus on following:

- securing support of local schools in a range of activities including lantern art project and parade participation.

The actual communication effort started with the distribution of a press release within the local catchment appealing to school children and was followed closely by the distribution of a date-claimer and photographs to longer lead publications, webguides and newsletters. Travel trade press and leisure/womens and lifestyle magazines/publications were targeted – as well as the major daily newspapers.

The effort then focussed locally with the event partners meeting on Wed 18 June followed by the call for a new Parade partner following the temporary withdrawal of RACQ Insurance and the announcement of Supa IGA's sponsorship. The official media launch took place on Wed 6 August. While a media release and notification was issued for all preceding events, a comprehensive media kit was prepared and distributed. This is a significant and time-consuming process that has been very well commended over the years as a valuable tool for journalists.

In the meantime, considerable support was given to event partners to assist their activity as well as focussing on key festival events be it, , 'Dress Up Your Business', the Tanks Art Centre's program, Rotary's Duck Race, United Youth Concert, Busking Festival, Swing by the Lagoon, Reggaetown, Cairns Harbourlights inaugural lunch and other Council associated events.

Media relations were ongoing – sourcing and fielding media enquiries with information, media releases, advertorial and photographs.

The public relations consultant is also responsible for facilitating radio, press and television interviews with spokespeople, who again this year was Narell Black.

In 2007 a daily blog was introduced as part of the media page on the Festival Cairns website. In 2008, Cairns.com.au was the website designer and the integration of a media page and blog was no longer possible. In this case, feeling it very important to continue the integration with web information for journalists, all media releases and blogging was filed on my own personal website and links were promoted across all mediums.

**FACT: 45 blogs entries were made starting officially with the first on 12 June 08. This is a full and detailed record.**

The event itself meant highlighting and presenting each event to media and targeting messages to suit. In addition, co ordination of photo-stories and exclusives for Cairns Sun, The Cairns Post, Cairnseye, City Life and other media. All uploaded on [www.pipmillerpr.com.au](http://www.pipmillerpr.com.au)

#### **4. Media Releases**

- **General News Releases**

**FACT: 25** press releases (not including those prepared and distributed for Busking Festival, Tanks, Reggaetown) prepared, approved and distributed. Please note that all were uploaded onto [www.pipmillerpr.com.au](http://www.pipmillerpr.com.au).

**FACT:** A further 20 press releases written exclusively for the media kit issued on August 6 at media launch. This media kit was accompanied by a disk.

- **Media Opportunities**

**FACT: 8** media notifications issued independently and a further 15 as part of twice weekly e news – of which there were 7. The independent media notifications were for: Parade sponsor announcement, BDO Kendalls media launch, Calanna Duck Race Fundraising Launch, Cairns Harbourlights Wine and Dine Lunch and Parade of Lights winner's presentation.

In total, 23 media opportunities organised and attended.

- **Festival Cairns 2008 Overview**

A 1500 word document was produced as an overview of all the events to be used as reporting and marketing for Festival Cairns 2009.

#### **5. Media Kit**

The media kit is always a very time-consuming, albeit worthwhile process that sets the foundation of communications material for journalists researching and writing about the event. This document was prepared for the media launch on 6 August and was uploaded onto [www.pipmillerpr.com.au](http://www.pipmillerpr.com.au)

50 hard copies of this kit were produced. These were selectively given to journalists in Cairns (at the event and afterwards, hand-delivered to those that couldn't attend) and mailed to journalists in Port Douglas, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

The full colour, bound Media Kit revised and revamped for 2008 to comprise:

- Glossy cover featuring program cover
- Index (Intro Letter, Official Program of Events, Press Releases, Fact Sheets by Category)
- CD disk with its own media kit design
- Official Program
- Links to [www.pipmillerpr.com.au](http://www.pipmillerpr.com.au) where could be downloaded on line as a full document or individual releases and fact sheets.

## **6. Blog**

Blogging by the 'pr' officially commenced on 12 June 08 via [www.pipmillerpr.com.au](http://www.pipmillerpr.com.au). It was first introduced as part of the official Festival Cairns website in 2007 to replace the e-news concept, however was soon deemed as an 'added extra' and not effective enough in terms of communicating with media; general public, yes – perhaps.

The blog was definitely a worthwhile exercise, however in 2008 could no longer integrate as part of new website designed by Cairns.com.au and was taken into my own website.

Some 45 blog entries were made in the period June to November 08.

## **7. Media Updates by Email**

This year the number and nature of e-newsletters issued was based on one at the beginning and end of each week for a total of 7 distributions or e-newsletters. These also uploaded onto the website.

The e-news program commenced in the week leading into Festival Cairns on 26 August and comprised some 7 different e-newsletters – many of which contained photographs, links, editor's notes and general commentary.

**See appendix**

## **8. City Life, Passport to Cairns, Wotif.com and MacAir**

Articles researched and written specifically for:

- August and September issues of Passport to Cairns
- September issue of Macair
- August September issue of City Life
- September issue of TNT magazine
- Cairns Eye Cover Stories for two publications during Festival Cairns
- Wotif.com Promo Page
- Aura magazine

As well as spiels and blurbs for:

- Jetstar
- Voyeur
- Travellink
- The Australian Way (Qantas Inflight)
- World Travel Guide
- Living In Cairns
- Travel Australia
- TQ News
- The Buzz (Tourism Australia)
- TTNQ In Touch
- Cairns Community Newspapers
- Austguide Travel News

- Touraters Web guide
- Guam Radio

## 9. Publicity Record

### 9.1 General Publicity Achievement

The publicity record in 2008 is impressive with the public relations consultants own clipping service reporting a total of 192 clips.

### 9.2 Electronic Media Record (Cairns only for months of Aug and Sept 08 only)

Extensive coverage was increased significantly in 2008 with Win and Seven TV news broadcasting no less than 15 news bulletin stories in each over months of August and September. In addition, similar support from radio that was stepped up in 2008 to record a total of 33 reports – namely, Hot, Sea and 4CA FM news (15) and ABC Radio Far North (15) and Easy Mix 846 (3).

On the day leading into the finale for Festival Cairns, Friday 19 September, Pip Miller was interviewed by visiting crew from **Guam Radio** that was broadcast live across Guam, Micronesia. This was part of a Continental Airlines initiative with TTNQ.

Other broadcast publicity included an extensive interview on Southern Cross TEN's **David and Kim** in the Mornings on Thursday 18 September and **State Focus** on Sunday 5 October.

### 9.3 Press Coverage

The Cairns Post has become Festival Cairns greatest ally and is the main medium responsible for communicating the event and its partners in a positive way.

In August and September along this newspaper recorded a total of 66 clips which was further supported by 10 in Wednesday's free lift out, Cairns eye (not including cover stories and features) and 20 stories in The Cairns Sun.

Other publicity in local publications Pakmag (cover story), Cairns Kids Magazine, Hype and City Life.

Notable publicity included that in Australian Fin Review, Daily Telegraph, House and Garden, The Sunday Mail, Coalfields Express, Tourism on Q, Virgin's Voyeur, Inflight Magazine, The Road Ahead and more. Regional publicity in Townsville Bulletin, Innisfail Advocate, The Port Douglas and Mossman Gazette, Tablelander and Tablelands Advertiser and Cairns Northern News.

### See clippings

## 10. General Outcomes

After seven years, felt like the PR was truly hitting its straps. An increased work load due to the expanded responsibilities assisting event manager and coordination of the finale event did not diminish the media relations effort or its response.

The communication of this event continues to evolve and this year was no exception with the continuation of a 'blog' and further upgrades to media kit – proving that Festival Cairns is a contemporary community event.

Event greater support shown in 2008 by prime medium, The Cairns Post, made the PR's job easier and results are tabled in the appendix spreadsheets. Editor, Mark Alexander, is obviously very supportive and editorial assigned a journalist, Kylie Reghenzani, to report on most stories. Community and Time Out editors were also supportive.

Electronic media, namely WIN and SEVEN news and MR Works Radio news were also increasingly supportive and inroads were made into achieving further publicity on a national and international scale.

**Prepared by Pip Miller  
December 08**