

Hitting a high note with the community



Corporate Social Responsibility Excellence – Wesfarmers

By Michael Roberts

Recognising one of the most significant and longstanding relationships in the Western Australian arts sector, Wesfarmers was awarded the Corporate Social Responsibility Excellence accolade at last year's Pinnacle Awards for its principal partnership with West Australian Opera (WAO).

For almost 20 years, Wesfarmers and WAO have worked together to create a vibrant and prosperous arts community within WA, feeding the state's cultural ecosystem and connecting it to the world.

Since 1998, WAO has been able to host more free concerts, develop new artist programs and expand its productions thanks to Wesfarmers' support.

Wesfarmers Arts Manager Helen Carroll said the accolade was the icing on the cake during a high point for the two companies.

"This win is about recognising the longevity of a partnership between a community

organisation and a business that has allowed both of those entities to develop in ways that would not have happened otherwise," she said.

With a shared focus on securing the longevity of the art form for years to come, Ms Carroll said Wesfarmers was committed to fostering future talent and engaging audiences.

"We've done a lot of work on young artist scholarships and focusing on future generations who will keep that art form alive," she said.

"There's nothing more exciting than seeing young Western Australian talent being supported to achieve what they are passionate about."

WAO Executive Director Carolyn Chard said Wesfarmers' early involvement in the arts sector had encouraged other partners to get involved.

"This award was a clear demonstration of the

value of the partnership and certainly gave the state opera company the chance to publicly thank Wesfarmers for its support," she said.

"Community events like Opera in the Park, through the support of partners, funders and donors, can be delivered free of box office to the general public each year."

As one of Australia's largest listed companies, Ms Carroll said Wesfarmers had a huge role to play in supporting programs that benefited WA.

"Having an ongoing connection at a meaningful level with key organisations in the community, whether they are in the arts or medical research, allows us to know which issues are important to the community and how Wesfarmers can make a difference in that area," she said.

"We try to get a feel for where the gaps in support are, helping the sector go to the next level in what they can achieve – and that's certainly been the case for the West Australian Opera."

Looking to the future, Wesfarmers has been laying the groundwork to attract new and younger audiences to the opera space.

"You can't leave the funding entirely up to the government – I think the public demands to live in a culturally diverse society where the arts is a part of everybody's life," Ms Carroll said.

"There's an obligation from the business community because we all benefit from a multidimensional and interesting place."

The \$10,000 prize money from Wesfarmers' award was donated to WAO.



Opera in the Quarry. Image: Form Visuals.



Power to the people

Human Resource Management Excellence – Horizon Power

The first graduates from the Remote Community Utilities Worker trade qualification.

Dedicating seven years to developing the Remote Community Utilities Worker (RCUW) trade qualification, Horizon Power never wavered from its belief the program would be a game-changer for remote communities.

An Australian first, the apprenticeship trains Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders with the necessary electrical skills to maintain networks and power stations, improving the reliability of power supplies in these communities and creating local jobs.

With the first batch of graduates completing the program in 2017, workers also assist the communities in which they live by helping solve minor electrical issues that would otherwise go unattended.

Taking out the Human Resource Management Excellence award, Horizon Power Technical Training Coordinator Shane O'Byrne said it was wonderful to receive recognition for its employees' hard work

Our apprenticeship program has improved lives in WA's most remote communities.

and ingenuity.

"The graduates of the program are incredibly proud of it, which is the most important thing for us, but it is also fantastic to receive acknowledgment from Western Australia's business community," he said.

According to Mr O'Byrne, many isolated areas had to wait a long time for their power problems to be attended to before the initiative was in place.

"We created this unique qualification to help meet the needs of customers living in remote communities," he said.



"Before our graduates took on the role of RCUW, it could take up to 24 hours for qualified crews based in Kununurra to reach towns like Kalumburu if there was a power outage. This problem was exacerbated during the wet season and in the aftermath of severe weather events when flooding and debris can cause delays.

"It meant customers in remote communities were without power for much longer than customers in larger regional towns, placing them at significant disadvantage.

"Since their graduation, the RCUWs have dramatically reduced the time it takes to respond to outages and faults and have improved the reliability of electricity supply for the remote Aboriginal communities in which they live.

"Our apprenticeship program has improved lives in some of Western Australia's most remote communities by creating jobs and boosting the economic development and sustainability of the area."

Choosing to donate its \$10,000 prize money to Ronald McDonald House, Mr O'Byrne said Horizon Power had supported the charity's learning program since 2012.

"This charity provides a home away from home for regional families who have sick children receiving hospital treatment in Perth," he said of Ronald McDonald House.

"The learning program offers free school tuition for children recovering from serious illnesses, allowing them to catch up on missed education."

Entries for the 2018/2019 AIM WA Pinnacle Awards are open. Visit pinnacleawards.com.au



RAC's Intellibus has clocked up nearly 13,000km during its trial phase.

Industry leaders rewarded for creative approach

RAC – Marketing Excellence and Innovation Excellence

As the only organisation to receive two accolades at the 2017 AIM WA Pinnacle Awards, taking out both the Marketing Excellence and Innovation Excellence awards, RAC has established itself as one of the most creative organisations within the state.

Representing more than one million members, RAC has been part of the WA

community for 113 years, but realised it needed a fresh marketing approach to engage audiences amidst changing public expectations.

RAC's Power of Membership campaign was its first integrated campaign to run across all products and services and reject all advertising norms.

Instead of communicating what RAC sells, the campaign focuses on what membership with RAC affords both its members and the community at large.

"As a membership organisation, RAC exists to protect and enhance the lifestyles of our members," RAC Group CEO Terry Agnew FAIM said.

"We do that by providing great products and services that match our members' needs. We reinvest our profits into initiatives that help create a better WA, such as advocating for safer roads, easier transport and more sustainable mobility.

"The Power of Membership campaign aimed

to create a unified platform across all of RAC to clearly connect members and all Western Australians with why it's better to be an RAC member."

Priding itself on a culture which encourages innovation, creativity and collaboration, RAC implemented the first Australian driverless shuttle trail with its line of 'Intellibuses'.

Mr Agnew said two Intellibuses had autonomously driven more than 8500 people through public roads in South Perth, travelling close to 13,000km.

"The RAC Intellibus automated vehicle trial is by far the most innovative project undertaken by RAC in our recent history," he said.

"The Intellibus trial is helping WA better understand the challenges and opportunities of automated vehicle technology.

"RAC is also committed to continuing our focus on leading automated vehicle trials nationally and internationally, with the announcement of our intention to test several driverless passenger 'Autonom' vehicles, which have been designed as an on-demand shared mobility service, bookable through a smartphone app."

In recognition of the critical role the organisation has in WA's road trauma response, RAC's \$10,000 prize money was donated to St John Ambulance.