



Chairpersons Report 2015

I am pleased to present the 2015 Annual Report detailing activities of the Melbourne Business Awards over the past 12 months

The 2014 year finished on a high with the December Gala Breakfast, the last to be held at Hemisphere prior to its closure. An audience of over 200 saw Harry Dam accept the MBA Business of the Year trophy for 2014 on behalf of The Wrapping Paper Company, with a very memorable and emotional speech - a worthy winner from 8 amazing nominees. The Innovation Award, sponsored by AusIndustry was presented to Bestech and Young Achiever Awards to Matt O'Keefe and Katrina Dukellis, sponsored and presented by Rotary. A great morning was capped off with a very humorous presentation "Tricky People" by Andrew Fuller.

THE BREAKFASTS

The core activity of the organisation is the 5 breakfasts it hosts each year, where successful and innovative businesses are showcased, guest speakers enlighten and much networking occurs.

Our first breakfast for 2015 opened with a move to Woodlands Golf Club. This new venue has been very well received and certainly adds a relaxing aspect to all as they venture in at 6.30 for the breakfasts. Our thanks to Woodlands for their long term association with our organisation and we look forward to further strengthening ties with them.

To date four very successful breakfasts have been held with attendances steadily growing to around 140+. Kamahl Barhoush has emceed each breakfast in an extremely professional style, engaging nominees, guest speakers and the entire audience. His warmth and great adlibbing has entertained and added friendliness and humour to each breakfast. We are delighted that Kam has agreed to volunteer his service again in 2016, and that his inclusive style will further develop the audience's spirited participation, as evidenced in 2015.

Our thanks go to all the guest speakers over the past year. All have given of their time voluntarily to enlighten, motivate and entertain the audience across a variety of topics.

- **February**- John Wall, group General Manager from Acquire Learning "Education to Employment"
- **May** - Les Twentyman from 20th Man Fund "The Ice Epidemic affecting us all"
- **July** - Don Elgin Paralympian "Embracing Change and Building Morale in the Workplace"
- **September** - Alex Kingsbury CSIRO Research Group leader in additive manufacturing (3D Printing)

2015 has identified another amazing, diverse and highly impressive group of nominees

- February Nominees -Tempo Foods, Moose Enterprises
- April Nominees - Composites Constructions , Nulab Group
- June Nominees - CMPT, Casafico
- August Nominees - Versatile Technology, Rolls Pack

Sincere thanks to Suzanne Ferguson from City of Kingston and all others who assisted in the sourcing of the Business of the Year Nominees.

At the time of writing this report the team of judges from the MBA Committee has again completed a full day visiting the sites of the eight 2015 Award Nominees. Judging Day is a highlight and great affirmation of what the MBA is about, seeing first - hand the innovation, passion, skill and people that drive these businesses. It is what energises this committee. We now look forward to the announcement of the 2015 winners at our December Gala Breakfast.

PARTNERS

The MBA began the year on a financially sound basis, and is very appreciative of the support of Principle partners City of Kingston, Bridged Group-Telstra Business Centre Bayside and the Dingley Village Branch of the Bendigo Community Bank. Silver partners in 2015 are AusIndustry, Nugent's Group and M&K Lawyers, and Bronze partners, Department of Business and Innovation and Holmesglen TAFE. The financial commitment of these Partners is the life blood of the organisation and to each we say thank you. Your sponsorship is sincerely appreciated

To all the in-kind sponsors whose services facilitate many aspects of running the MBA we thank you - Complete Colour Printing, Streamscape, Mail and Marketing Solutions, Mossman Media and Myles AV, Advice for Growth and newcomer this year No Grey Creative whom we thank for updating our graphics and on line imagery.

For promotion and support of the MBA idea we thank Tom Gilmour for increasing our member base, and long time associates Ray de Jersey and Bob Gawne for their ongoing efforts to re-engage past nominees and attendees. To Avril Reagan, who is retiring from Holmesglen, our thanks for your commitment and involvement over many years.

There has been very enthusiastic support and a strong level of community spirit from all people on the Committee of Management (derived from our Partner and Member base). The time, energy and enthusiasm from these representatives are invaluable. Development of this spirit extended further into our audience base in 2015 following the Les Twentyman presentation. Donations made by the audience will support a Youth Program in City Of Kingston. A suggestion has been proposed to develop an MBA audience support programme "Extra Assistance" in the future..... An idea that may be further developed in 2016 led by Gary Nugent and Mark Carrazzo

MEMBERS

This year we have 62 Annual Members. Ongoing efforts to increase the member base in 2016 will guarantee more stable numbers at each breakfast and facilitate more efficient management

STRUCTURE

Again in 2015 we are very fortunate to have the services of The Main Event to manage our organisation. We thank Executive Officer Kim Mastrowicz and Gail Mastrowicz for their wonderful organisation, service and the spirit in which they support the MBA and look forward to continuation in 2016

As with all organisations it is the people who make it work. The enthusiasm and participation of the committee members has been reassuring and allowed things to progress. Introduction of three subcommittees "Awards" (led by Paul Kirton), "Marketing" (led by Don Gregg) and Sponsorship (led by Ray de Jersey), and a vote to endorse the leaders of each joining the executive, has created a very sound executive to work with Kim. Further co-ordination and streamlining in 2016 will ensure success and a

greater sharing of the load. For good management this co-ordination must be through the Executive Officer and may require a review of contract with The Main Event by the incoming Committee

THE FUTURE

Once again thanks to Gary Nugent from Nugent Group for the ongoing management of the accounts. Our position is sound and the Treasurers Report shows a small surplus.

Heading into 2016 we have confirmation of the continuing support of our current calendar year partners. This financial security allows us to plan, budget and give clear direction. Early discussions with both Telstra-Bridge Group and Bendigo Bank, who are financial year partners, indicate that they are keen to continue their support at the expiry of their two year agreement in June 2016.

Over the past year the number of attendees at the breakfasts has gradually increased but for future growth and sustainability it will be necessary to build numbers by increasing our member base (companies and individuals who sign up for a year) and also broadening our audience base to include more companies from both the manufacturing, industrial and associated sectors.

A review of the scope of the Awards is currently underway in preparation for the 2016 year. Consideration will need to be given to other affiliated businesses which can enhance these awards and create sustainability for the MBA in a changing business environment.

To extend the activities of the Awards take time, commitment and comes at a cost. If growth is to occur, the incoming committee may need to consider means of increasing income (increasing financial sponsors, the member base, total breakfast attendees or other alternatives). This would provide opportunity to extend the contract with The Main Event or consider other outsourcing to facilitate and manage new concepts and initiatives.

With further refinement, and continuation of the enthusiasm and support which surrounds the MBA the future is looking very positive.

Denise Langford