

Regional Integrated marketing

For Bottom Line Profitability

Case Study

Evaluating projects for additional funding
“Merge”

The Organisation

‘Merge’ is a holiday activity project for disadvantaged children in the Orange region, originally funded by Orange city Council to assist to reduce the petty crime rate that occurs during latter weeks of the school holidays. Children in the program participate in a range of sporting, cultural and entertainment activities – many they have never had the opportunity to experience. Familiarisation with the local police force is also an important part of the program.

The Idea

The stakeholders in the project wished to extend the longevity of the concept in Orange and also to other regions with Koori and disadvantaged population.

The Process

RIM was required to provide an independent evaluation on the project. This involved:

- Statistical analysis against proposed outcome (crime rate)
- Extensive interviews with stakeholders including
 - ♦ Council Staff – Community development officers, social workers, youth development officers, program
 - ♦ Agencies – DOCs, Juvenile Justice,
 - ♦ Police – including aboriginal community liaison officer
 - ♦ Parents & carers
 - ♦ Schools aboriginal community liaison worker
 - ♦ Merge program staff, including Dept Sport and Recreation, Koori community leaders
 - ♦ Program participants (children)
- Distil the interview information to match against outcomes
- Compile a comprehensive report

Hurdles

The community’s innate caution towards figures of authority required tactful and friendly interview skills to glean the full impact of the program on their family.

Results

The Merge project has been awarded funding of \$50 000 by the Department of Education and \$120 000 by Newcrest Mining – Cadia. The project is in the process of being rolled out to other regional areas and has attracted the attention of the metropolitan media.



“The evaluation report completed by RIM clearly mapped the outcomes against objectives and provided quantitative and qualitative data which enabled us to gain significant ongoing funding to extend the project”

Gerald Power, ‘Merge’ Program

Funds pledged for activities

By BEVAN SHIELDS

ORANGE City Council’s Merge Holiday Activity Program is \$50,000 better off after NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos yesterday announced a grant towards the highly successful project.

The program provides more than 100 children aged between seven and 15 with a range of school holiday sporting and entertainment activities.

The program began in 2006 and will continue over the coming year as a result of the funding commitment.

Making the announcement at the Canobolas Rural Technology High School, the minister said the program was an integral part of council’s “clear commitment to providing top quality community services”.

Orange Mayor John Davis responded by cheerfully boasting about the city’s support for a range of community services compared to other councils in the state.

“The fact is that we spend pretty much twice what other cities like Armidale and Dubbo do and I have to say the entire council is proud of our record in that respect,” Cr Davis told Mr Hatzistergos.

Canobolas High principal Chris Condliffe said the community is already recognised for its high level of support for the council’s programs and partnerships as he gave Mr Hatzistergos, who is acting education minister, a tour of the school.

“The Minister was obviously quite keen to learn about the strength of partnerships The Canobolas Rural Technology High School has forged with a wide range of community organisations,” he said.