



# **AHRC EQUINE INFLUENZA FORUM**

**QHRB – MARKETING CHALLENGES  
FACED POST EI (STATE PERSPECTIVE)?**

# WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR CONSUMERS?

18 to 65 year old blue collar males with a predisposition to addictive behaviours:

- Redirected wagering funds to Interstate product
- Found alternative gambling options
- Found alternative entertainment options

## Social Groups

- Found alternative sponsorship options
- Found alternative function options (Eg. Christmas break-ups)



# WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR CONSUMERS?

Had to follow the fortunes of Equine Influenza through the Newspapers, leading to:

- Confusion about the return of racing
- Confusion about how horses would respond to being infected or vaccinated
- Confusion about public access once racing returned
- Frustration, Cynicism and Disenchantment



# WHAT FAITH!

- Communication was aimed at our industry participants
- Little attention was paid to consumer awareness of the racing calendar
- Little effort was made to engage consumers in Interstate harness options
- Faith was placed in punters to simply return when the coast was clear
- Market share was offered to competitors on a platter



# THE SOLUTION

- Qld Government Financial Assistance Package
  - Provide funds
  - Address the revenue impact EI has had on the QHRB and Clubs
    - Motivate wagering
    - Motivate attendances to signal “Return of Racing”
    - Leverage the opportunity
  - Remove ANY confusion
  - Needed a Plan





# THE PLAN

- Two Phases
  1. Return to Racing
  2. Feature Event
- Integrated marketing campaign
- Primary objective
  - Increase wagering
  - Increase race meeting attendances
- Secondary objective
  - Raise awareness of the harness racing product offering and complement existing marketing activities of Clubs



# RETURN TO RACING

- Awareness Campaign
  - Media engagement
  - Leverage existing networks
  - Ambassador: Troy Cassar-Daley
- Relevant Theme
  - Celebration of industry
  - 'Born To Survive'
- Engagement of Industry
  - Thankyou
  - Rewards



# FEATURE EVENT

- **RACING FIESTA**
- Extended period
- Deferred Racing Features
- Requires excitement and a fresh theme
- El 'united' the industry = build a campaign around this
- Profile Product
- Offer more than just racing





# CAMPAIGN DETAIL

- Desired project image:
  - Back Racing – bigger and better
  - United front – EI has brought people together
  - Colorful and fun
  - Quality horses, trainers and drivers
  - High excitement and adrenalin
  - Venues for all ages
  - Colorful characters
  - High profile patrons attending on-course



# PRODUCT PROFILE

- Our business is more than just racing:
  - Wagering
  - Food and beverage
  - Networking
  - Entertainment
  - Tourism
  - Social/leisure



# RACING FIESTA

- Requires a high impact and high frequency promotional campaign
- Marketing subsidies to enhance localised Club initiatives that align with the campaign
- Advertise predominantly via print and radio channels supplemented by outdoor and online activities
- Incorporate low cost television access



# SO WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

The marketing challenges for EI combat States remain essentially the same as for everyone else, including international administrators – with the added incentive of cuddling those consumers we ignored during the EI response.



# CHALLENGES

- Falling Attendances
- Increased reliance on off-course turnover
- Corporate Bookmakers & Betting Exchanges
- Attracting younger generations
- Maximise wagering on harness racing
- Diversify and increase income streams





# CHALLENGES

- Improve the level of professionalism across the industry
- Optimise the quality and quantity of race broadcasts
- Provide 'Pathways' for new people to participate in the industry
- Ensure the highest standards of integrity throughout the racing industry



# CHALLENGES

- Protect and develop the harness racing horse population
- Excite people about harness racing
- Maximise returns to owners, trainers, drivers, breeders and studmasters
- Deliver a safe environment for all

