



Wangaratta Festival of Jazz and Blues

Strategic Plan

2016 -2021

Executive Summary...

The Wangaratta Festival of Jazz and Blues is an icon amongst regional festivals and has a long history of delivering world class music, in a regional environment that provides strong economic benefit to the Rural City of Wangaratta and the surrounding townships.

The festival has experienced peaks and troughs in attendance as well as financial success over its 26 year history but continues to play an integral part in the economic, cultural and social threads of the community.

Significant changes were implemented for the 2015 festival in order to secure the festival's future through the attraction of new audiences (the crossover stage in King George Gardens), deliver a financially responsible festival (a change to the free offering traditionally held on Reid Street but moved to the popular Riverside Precinct) and a marketing campaign that maximised exposure through diverse channels, a Festival App and an increased presence in social media.

The Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021 is focussed on delivering a financially sustainable festival that by year 5 aims to generate 100% of its income through ticket sales. The plan identifies two types of audiences – those who already engage with the festival and those who are yet to engage. The Marketing Plan will develop a blue print that sees the festival offering opportunities for the current audience to engage more and on a deeper level whilst developing a plan to seek out new audiences who are yet to engage with jazz and blues. Strengthening community and business relationships has been identified as a key growth opportunity and one which will provide a more diverse offering to both existing and new audiences without stretching the financial and human resources within the festival organisation. Strong engaged audiences will create greater opportunities for artists and as a result will strengthen and grow the jazz ecology.

Who we are ...

Conceived by a group of locals in 1989 as a way to attract visitors and raise the profile of the town, the first Wangaratta Festival of Jazz (as it was then known) was staged in 1990, with attendances at around 2500. Since then – with blues added to the program in 1994 – it has grown to become an internationally renowned event, attracting around 25,000 visitors, and more than 200 jazz and blues artists from the USA, the UK, Europe and Australia.

With a diverse, eclectic mix of jazz greats and rising stars, each year the program showcases jazz and blues of all styles, including original, contemporary, traditional, mainstream, experimental and improvised. A central feature remains the National Jazz Awards; a competition designed to encourage and promote young musicians.

The Festival has won numerous tourism and sponsorship awards, and is recognised internationally as the foremost jazz and blues event in Australia.

Our Vision ...

A world class musical experience in Wangaratta.

What we do...

We bring a world class festival to Wangaratta.

Our Values...

- Inspiration
- Artistic Excellence
- Community
- Integrity
- Respect the tradition, embrace the new

Our purpose...

Our purpose is to

1. Deliver a great product,
2. Build a large and diverse audience,
3. Encourage an engaged community,
4. Be a successful organisation and
5. Create growth

Value proposition :

4 Market segments	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Local residents2. Regional residents3. Experience seekers4. Jazz Fans
Customer Experience	World class performances Safe/friendly hospitality Great wine and regional produce A great weekend away
Offering	Unique performances Unique combos Unique jazz moments
Benefits	Opens our ears Expands our minds
Differentiation	Total emersion in the music A whole weekend of world class jazz and blues A different jazz adventure every year
Proof	26 years of continuous festivals Community support

Artistic principles...

We aim to present a program where Australian and international jazz and blues artists, who maintain the highest standards of their art form, can engage and inspire each other and our audience through the international language of music. As well as celebrating the tradition of jazz and blues, we showcase those artists who are keeping the music fresh and vibrant by playing creative, contemporary repertoire that challenges and excites.

Building on Success...

Building on twenty six successful years, the Wangaratta Jazz and Blues festival is ready to grow and claim its position as a prominent cultural event on the local, national and international stage.

The Board has consolidated its financial and strategic position in recent years and is now focusing on artistic growth and its contribution to the national musical ecology. It has identified four key strategic areas, which focus on artistic excellence, artist development, audience growth and engagement with the Wangaratta Community and surrounding region.

The festival will define and showcase the Australian Jazz and Blues sound and influence the art form on a national and international scale.

Wangaratta Festival of Jazz Snapshot

Product:	Contemporary jazz and blues performances Music education Food and wine Local produce
Features	4 days of events Over 100 performances Workshops Youth awards Biggest cultural tourism event in NE Vic
Main activities:	Booking and coordination of Jazz and Blues performers Event management Facilitating youth workshops Management of National Jazz Awards Coordination of volunteers
Partners	Hospitality and tourism sector Wangaratta Rural City Council Volunteers Service groups
Funding	Grants Ticket sales Donations Sponsorships
Capability	Not for profit organisation Community managed event
Reason to exist	To drive economic development and regional branding To build social capital To broaden minds through new experiences To expose youth to world class musicians

Visitation

Attendance:	Attendance: 15,000	
Origin:	Melbourne	44%
	Regional Vic	37%
	NSW	17%
	Other states	1%
	International	1%
Age:	Over 60	8%
	56 - 60	16%
	46 - 55	16%
	36 - 45	15%
	26 - 35	17%
	18 - 25	14%
	Under 18	12%
Psychographic:	Socially aware, visible achievers, local music lovers	
Average spend:	\$500 per person	
Economic value:	\$2.9 million	

Situational analysis

STRENGTHS

1. Strong brand recognition with target market.
2. Customer satisfaction & loyalty
3. Long established festival
4. Committed volunteer team
5. Peer/industry recognition
6. Goodwill associated with "new era, new beginning".
7. Respected artistic director.
8. The 'Mecca' for jazz

WEAKNESSES

1. Financial position subject to Government funding
2. Organisational structure
3. Need for improved Intellectual Property
4. Investment in IT and capability building limited by budget
5. Marketing capacity limited by budget
6. Cost structures relative to margin
7. Capacity constraints

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Attract targeted sponsorship
2. Increase engagement and partnering
3. Bolster local hospitality capability
4. Embrace new technology
5. Learn from other festivals
6. Extend product offering
7. Sponsored Jazz Hall of Fame in Wangaratta
8. Integrate Festival into broader regional tourist calendar and strategy.

THREATS

1. Capacity constraint – venues & accom.
2. Becoming a 'me too' festival.
3. Losing status in jazz world to Melbourne Festival.
4. Reductions in government arts funding.
5. Size and ageing nature of core jazz niche market
6. Economic climate.
7. Losing community support.

The Plan

1

Great Product

Provide artists with a vehicle to experiment, learn and create distinctive and original music from a uniquely Australian perspective that will influence and shape the national Jazz and Blues scene

	Strategy	Action	Resources	KPI	Timeframe
1.1	Engage with artists	Actively program opportunities for artists to collaborate and experiment and develop initiatives that bring together difference styles of jazz and blues with other types of music	Artistic Director	at least 2 new collaborations per festival	annual
		develop young / emerging artists fringe event 3 - 5 months prior to Oct /Nov event	Artistic sub committee	1 event per festival	annual
1.2	Build artistic capacity	recognise and reward excellence in jazz and blues through awards & competitions	Artistic Director	National Jazz Awards	annual
		develop mentoring & training programs for musicians, producers and artistic directors	Board & Artistic sub committee	Program in place	2019

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Large & Diverse Audiences

Present music experiences that captivate and resonate with audiences.

	Strategy	Action	Resources	KPI	Timeframe
2.1	Current audience - move from annual engagement to engagement throughout the year	membership program introduced	Marketing Plan Marketing budget Marketing contractor	2,000 members in Year 1. Annual increase 10%	October 2016
		regular relevant communications	Marketing budget Marketing contractor	At least 4 communications per year to each market segment in line with ticketing milestones. Increase in sales by 5% each year.	annual
2.2	New audience - reaching out with relevant offer and pricing through strong communication channels	developing a crossover programming	Artistic Director Artistic sub committee Artistic budget		annual - program announced May each year
		pricing structure that reduces risk and encourages participation	Marketing Plan Marketing budget Marketing contractor		annual - program announced May each year

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Engaged Community

Engage the Wangaratta and surrounding communities through stimulating cultural expression and economic growth.

	Strategy	Action	Resources	KPI	Timeframe
3.1	Build volunteer capacity	build reward & recognition	Board	recognise a minimum of 2 life members each year	annual
		establish training program to support volunteers	The Centre / Wangaratta Rural City Council (RCoW)	10% increase annually of volunteers receiving a formal recognition	annual
3.2	Build links with business	engage with Business Wangaratta and RCoW Eco Dev & Tourism departments to strengthen ties	Board & RCoW	Liaise with key personnel in organisations to strengthen relationships and increase communication Look for ways to work together for mutual benefit	by June 2016
		create Board Business Champions (\$ and in-kind support)	Board & Marketing contractor	Increase Friends of the Festival cash contributions by 5% each year Develop "in kind" support program to reduce reliance on Festival cash reserves	by June 2016
		encourage complementary fringe events by private business or community groups	Board	Establish criteria and mutual benefits Develop Expression of Interest process Include in Marketing Plan	by April 2016
		create a fun and competitive environment that announces the arrival of the festival 2 weeks before the festival	Board	Successful "Dress Your Shop Window" competition	annual
3.3	Encourage year round participation in the festival	Further develop schools involvement	Engaged community sub committee	1 - 2 schools program a jazz related activity	annual
		Deliver 1 community activity over a 3 - 4 month period with a performance opportunity close to or part of the festival	Engaged community sub committee	Community activity delivered	annual

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Successful Organisation

A strong, connected and financially diverse organisation supported by good governance which incorporates succession planning and a strong organisational structure.

	Strategy	Action	Resources	KPI	Timeframe
4.1	Board structure	recruit Board members according to the strategic needs of the organisation.	Board	Board members allocated to portfolio areas	annual
4.2	Organisation structure	annual review of organisation structure to ensure alignment with Strategic Plan	Board	annual review	annual
4.3	Succession planning	develop continuous improvement policy and processes including position descriptions for Board members and paid contractors	Board	annual review	annual
4.4	Financial stability	profit of 5% of total expenditure budgeted for annually	Annual budget	profit of 5% of total expenditure	end Year 2
		ticket sales 100% of total revenue	Annual budget Marketing Plan	ticket sales 100% of total revenue	end Year 5

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Growth

An organisation that grows and improves through a diverse and sustainable funding model.

	Strategy	Action	Resources	KPI	Timeframe
5.1	Increase revenue without corresponding expenditure	maximise ticket sales capacity across venues	Marketing Plan	ticket sales 100% of venue capacity by Year 5	annual
5.2	Review Festival brand to articulate year long cultural profile of Wangaratta	develop annual marketing strategy	Marketing Plan	Marketing Plan completed by April each year	annual
5.3	Evaluate pricing impact on sales	annual evaluation of ticketing structure	Budget SABO ticketing system	actual ticket sales equal or better than forecast.	annual
		evaluate ticketing data for insights	SABO ticketing system	evaluation completed insights noted and improvements for following year implemented	annual
5.4	Obtain audience feedback	annual survey of audience	Audience survey by Marketing contractor	survey sent within 7 days of festival close. Evaluation completed by Board and recommendations made for implementation for following year.	annual
		survey of artists	Audience survey by Artistic Director	survey sent within 14 days of festival close. Evaluation completed by Artistic sub committee and recommendations made for implementation for following year.	annual

