

TAMWORTH COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL

**Recommendations to secure the future of the
Tamworth Country Music Festival**
*Comments can be directed to
Rebel Thomson Tourism Tamworth
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Market Situation

- Core Audience is 55 years and over (44.6%), visiting the region by car or motor home from NSW, QLD and or VIC
- Growth Audiences 35 to 54 year olds (42.4%), families, visiting the region by car from NSW, QLD and or VIC. 20 to 34 year olds (12%), single, travelling in groups (females) from NSW, QLD and VIC with high disposable incomes
- International Markets with high visitation to Australia or with strong country music industry and fan base: England, Canada, New Zealand , Japan, England, China, France, Ireland and Scotland

DATES

- January is considered to be Country Music month, the Event should be held at the end of the month.
- The markets should dictate the dates and therefore if a future focus for the event is families and young people Event dates should be within the January school holiday period.
- Where Australia Day falls on a Monday or Friday of that relevant period the official Event program should be extended to include this designated public holiday.
- Dates for future Events should be set with a generic marketing tag developed to avoid confusion over future dates.

Heritage

SHORT TERM

- Create a Heritage Committee to ensure that the Event's heritage remains visible in any future directions.
- Create a prominent and dedicated Australian Country Music Heritage venue within the CBD during the Event to celebrate the cultural beginnings of the Festival.
- Continue to recognize all awards and associations who participate in the country music industry and the Event calendar.
- Creation of a public and prestigious recognition award or exhibition in honour of individuals or organisations who made Tamworth the Country Music Capital
- Publicly and prominently honour and recognise the pioneers for Australian country music at the Event
- Reinvigorate support for the Australia Country Music Foundation Hall of Fame.

MEDIUM TERM

- Commission an official written or visual History of the Tamworth Country Music story for posterity and marketing purposes. Have this history endorsed by local fore fathers (descendents) and honoured by the Minister of Arts.

Music & Programming

SHORT TERM

- A specific targeted program to attract new audiences is to be developed and implemented for the First Weekend. Program an international Country Music Artist for the First Weekend of the Festival to target new audiences.
- Development of an Official Artist Accreditation/Registration system for the Event. This will include self classification of the genre.
- Explore partnering with other events throughout the year to leverage co-branding rights and media spend e.g. Sydney Festival.
- Develop a mentoring program between top tier country music artists and new and emerging talent.
- Develop a strategy to centralise the planning and programming of all music and Event activities in Council owned venues with far greater efficiency comprehensiveness and exclusivity.
- Create genre specific performance space within the CBD littered with top tier and emerging talent every day of the Event.
- Create and centralise a themed calendar of country music events in and around the Tamworth region to commence the process of giving meaning back to Country Music Capital of Australia.
- Review of Awards production and programming to determine if the vision of the Awards is an artistic and creative showcase or a marketing vehicle for the industry and the Event. Conduct an independent SWOT analysis of the Awards production and programming using the ARIAs and the CCMAAs as the national and international benchmarks.
- Appoint a curator or skilled contractor responsible for the music and programming content of Council owned venues.
- Establish a 'Project 40' committee to commence immediate planning and programming for the Events forty year anniversary.

MEDIUM TERM

- Maintain that the primary focus for the Event is country music.

Festival Atmosphere

SHORT TERM

- Official definition of Event precincts.
- The CBD to become a specially planned and curated precinct for the Event. Plan and design a new CBD precinct for the Event period, engaging with all stakeholders in that area.
- Any redesign must include country music artist participation, curated stages, country themeing, street entertainment, day and night busking and traders.
- Include a curated program for Bicentennial Park or No.1 Oval for the entire Event.
- Create new commercial opportunities within the Event.
- Visitor information booths throughout Tamworth during Event period.
- Celebrate the Event with street banners and signage on all major roads in Tamworth and defining genres, themes or precincts. Use Sydney Olympic Public Orientation as a benchmark.
- Expand the intranet to include access to all stakeholders to obtain daily updated information including maps, timetables, regular consultation and dialogue about new initiatives.

MEDIUM TERM

- Undertake broader activities to celebrate Tamworth as a destination during the Event.
- Install permanent structures around town to identify Tamworth as the home of Country Music for 356 days of the year. This could include touch screen kiosks providing tourism information, Festival updates and information on upcoming Country Music events, music boxes and downloads.

Quality Assurance

SHORT TERM

- Introduction of a Quality Assurance Accreditation Program utilizing a 'Guarantee of Quality' symbol. This program could be called "TAMWORTH GOLD".
- Commence negotiation with Tamworth Regional Development Corporation or The Tamworth District Chamber of Commerce to administer the system and to commence an education campaign on the affects of price gouging.
- Creation of a dedicated "Artist Accommodation Precinct" to manage short and long term stays for artists and bands e.g. school dormitories.

MEDIUM TERM

- Continue to measure public confidence in the Event as a value-for-money regional Australian 'must do' experience via visitor surveys.
- Maintain close to 100% occupancy throughout the duration of the Event.

Brand & Intellectual Property

SHORT TERM

- Collate an inventory of all images and symbols and logos
- Define the brands of the Awards, the Festival, the Event and Tamworth (as the capital of country music).
- Develop a design brief for new brand imagery for the event, select creative agency to develop new imagery and marketing collateral.
- A brand plan is required to provide structure for how the brands work together to promote both the geographical location and the Event. Develop a Brand Strategy ensuring; New logo remains consistent and unchanged year on year. Look, feel & styling that is refreshed each year. Brand protection and management. Style Guide.
- Define the foundation Key Festival Collateral Inventory (KCFI) where logos can be applied and exposed.

MEDIUM TERM

- Continue to measure brand awareness and recognition via visitor and industry surveys (locally and internationally).

Marketing & PR

SHORT TERM

- Marketing and PR of the Event needs to be undertaken exclusively by one body.
- Develop dedicated and co-operative Marketing Strategy with a short term emphasis on new audience definition, brand definition, strong and immediate digital strategy, international marketing strategy. See support document.
- Develop dedicated and co-operative Public Relations Strategy with a short term emphasis on key event messages, year round media relationships (including cross promotion, customer promotions, consumer competitions using newly developed event products with metro media partners to drive increased engagement with the festival and it's messaging).
- Nominate official Event spokespeople including artists.
- Creation of a centralised and conclusive guide to the Event.
- Launch the Festival and Awards at an iconic and accessible metropolitan locations e.g. Sydney Harbour, Opera House Forecourt etc.
- Reinstate media feed from Event to ensure an Event controlled feed to news.
- Combine, communicate and consolidate the Marketing and PR Plan with the sponsorship plan.
- Develop Official Festival Information Booths for placement around CBD, TRECC precinct and out toward the airport. Clearly Identifiable and well informed / knowledgeable staff.

MEDIUM TERM

- Include Adelaide and Perth in Festival launches, alternate each year between additional launch events in Darwin and Canberra.
- December National Media Drive tour by the Event ambassador(s) to promote Event and Country Music messages.
- Develop marketing and public relations Exchange Programs to deliver Tamworth and Event messaging year round to National and International markets.
- Take established Event Products to international trade shows for inbound operators via Tourism NSW and Tourism Australia.

Management Structure

A Management Structure external to Council is established to oversee the broad operations of the Event including such elements as:

- Planning the use of Council owned venues (including the CBD);
- Year-round marketing of the Event (including launch);
- Commercialisation of Event assets;
- Coordination of Event messages;
- Coordination of Event service provision including the development of service level agreements with relevant agencies
- Research and development of new artistic, programming and other Event initiatives,
- Event Marketing and PR Management and planning;
- IP management and protection;
- Stakeholder communications;
- Year-round planning for the Event; and
- Planning future directions of the Event.

Government Coordination

SHORT TERM

- Research and map government agency connections and relationships.
- Identify any relationships and opportunities to work closely with government departments.

MEDIUM TERM

- Festival Government Coordination is a blueprint for other emerging regional events and Festivals.

Environment

SHORT TERM

- The environmental credentials of any event of this stature should not be ignored.
- Identify the best and most feasible method for undertaking environmental audit on the Event.
- Conduct an audit to give the Event Management Organization a series of modules on sustainability incorporating event management best practices.
- Identify leverage opportunities with recognised environmental organisations and programs such as 'Keep Australia Beautiful', 'Tidy Town', 'Don't Waste Tamworth'.
- Develop a Sustainable Festival Communications Plan.

MEDIUM TERM

- Develop a sponsorship package to align with the Sustainable Festival communications plan.
- Benchmarks against for successful and recognised green festivals such as: **City of London Festival** <http://www.colf.org/>, **Manchester International Festival** <http://www.mif.co.uk/>, **Bluesfest** www.bluesfest.com.au, **Southbound** <http://www.sunsetevents.com.au/Festivals/Southbound/latestnews/default.aspx>

CONTACT FOR FEEDBACK:

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