

Fun4Kids

Luke Cann
Festival Director

lcann@warrnambool.vic.gov.au
03 5559 4416.



A WARRNAMBOOL
CITY COUNCIL INITIATIVE

Launched in 1998, Fun4Kids Festival is a not-for-profit event established with the aim of celebrating the imagination and creative spirit of children.

The Festival won both the prestigious Victorian and Australian Tourism Awards for Best Festival/Event in 2006, 2007 & 2008. This resulted in the event being inducted into the Tourism Awards "Hall of Fame" at both the state and national levels.

The festival was awarded Australia's "Best Community Event" at the inaugural Australian Event Awards in 2009 and again in October 2010. The event was also a finalist in the "Best Marketing Campaign" category at the 2010 awards.

The event has received substantial benefits from participating in awards schemes over a number of years. State and National awards have provided recognition of the festival both within the local community, our target market and with sponsors (and potential sponsors). The awards provide credibility to the event's brand and also confidence in new patrons to the event.

This eight day event is recognised as Australia's best children's festival attracting around 25,000 visitors annually. In 2010, the event saw an increase in numbers, attracting more than 25,263 patrons and generating more than \$2.38 million in new tourism expenditure for Warrnambool.

A great catalyst to travel, 15% of all festival goers had never been to Warrnambool before attending the Fun4Kids Festival. 58% of those surveyed indicated they would not have visited Warrnambool this year without the motivation provided by the event.

Following such success, the Warrnambool City Council's Events and Promotion team, needed to assure that they could continually maintain and improve the event in the future, continuing to increase and expose the city as an appealing destination.

With funding assistance from Regional Development Victoria (RDV), Fun4Kids organisers invested in a 2007-2009 Business Growth Plan.

The aim of the plan was to review the festival and develop a platform to promote the festival to a national market, therefore galvanising its position as Australia's best children's festival.

The team identified a range of goals for the festival to work towards. They needed to ensure that they targeted high profile acts and introduce new activities into the festival program to continually refresh the product.

Continuous improvement in the quality of the event, has enhanced the overall appeal, profile and visitor experience of the festival.





The 2010 festival demonstrated that the strategic goals were being achieved. The event saw a total of 36 per cent new patrons to the festival and achieved two sell out days, contrasted with just one in 2009.

The festival also received overwhelmingly positive feedback from festival goers, with 64 per cent of return patronage. Also, 92 per cent of patrons surveyed stated that they were likely to come back to Warrnambool on another occasion.

The festival also implemented new strategies and tactics that would attract visitors by making it 'easier' to access the event and Warrnambool as a holiday destination.

As such, Fun4Kids teamed up with sponsor V/Line to promote rail travel packages from Melbourne to Warrnambool, issuing tickets for \$5.20 return for children when travelling with an adult.

Fun4Kids also implemented a new shuttle service that met passengers at each train and provided drop-off/pick up between accommodation providers and the festival site.

To maintain the financial sustainability of the event the team felt that it was necessary to review ticket pricing to lift the overall revenue. This was deemed challenging by Fun4Kids organisers, taking into account the downturn in the economy during the GFC.

However Fun4Kids increased the ticketing revenue by 12% from 2009 to 2010.

Fun4Kids also took yet another turn with the marketing strategies. The team used e-marketing as a means to actively promote the product and generate awareness about the festival.

Website banners advertisements were placed on all high traffic parents' websites, equating approximately 76 million hits per month. Ultimately these notions enabled the festival to reflect the brands personality and the culture of the environment, assisting in promoting a broader tourism experience.

Overall Fun4Kids 2010 event generated 37,458 bed nights – a 12% increase on 2009. Length of stay also increased from 2.9 nights in 2009 to 3.1 nights in 2010. Local attendance was also increased by 2 per cent. The event contributed \$2,385,261 million new expenditure to the local economy.

This outcome demonstrates why Fun4Kids reins as the leading children's festival in the country.

By constantly reviewing their event, the team is able to continually improve and implement strategies to ensure they produce a successful event for Warrnambool for years to come.

