

Broome, Western Australia

## GOOLARRI MEDIA ENTERPRISES PTY LTD



Goolarri Media Enterprises is an Indigenous company owned by the Broome Aboriginal Media Association. Established in 1996, the company has developed a national reputation as an Indigenous media source and for its wide range of activities, including television, radio, events management, music development and recording, training and information technology and networks support. Goolarri Media Enterprises has evolved during its nine year history as a unique regional media service for both Indigenous and non – Indigenous media and communications in the Kullarri region. The company is continually energised by the passion and dedication of its enthusiastic directors, Board and staff and is making a significant impact across the nation, as reflected in its extensive range of awards for business and industry excellence and contribution.

### The Story So Far . . .

Goolarri Media Enterprises (GME) was an outcome of ten years of community discussion about the need for an Indigenous media service within the growing town of Broome and the broader Kimberley region. Initiated by the Broome Aboriginal Media Association (BAMA) in 1996, GME has evolved into a multifaceted media company, fuelled by its desire to develop and foster the growth of Indigenous media in the Kullarri region of northern Western Australia.



*Pallas going to air*

## Building The Future Through Enterprise –

### Stories of Successful Enterprises and Entrepreneurs

By also encompassing the needs and interests of the non – Indigenous community, it acts as a powerful medium through which the two can come together. GME seeks every window of opportunity to enhance social and cultural issues in the Kimberley, and has created eight business sections to achieve its goals, namely –

- **Goolarri Radio 99.7 FM**

Clearly the most popular station in Broome! Radio Goolarri made its first historical broadcast in August 1991 using local ABC studios and since 1998 it has been broadcasting a full time service under its own community radio license. GME views the station as – *‘a vehicle for social, cultural and political voices and an arena for traditional language, music and culture at the same time as broadcasting contemporary forms of artistic expression. It’s a place where Aboriginal people can tell their own stories in their own way and where Indigenous and non – Indigenous people can unite.’ (GME brochure)*

- **Goolarri Television GTV, Channel 35**

GTV is a local Broome television service that operates a 24 hour television channel with a mix of Indigenous and non- Indigenous programs. Programs are generated locally and seek to provide a unique insight into local culture and lifestyle.

- **Television Production House**

Complimenting GTV35, GME has produced various programs and documentaries for both SBS and ABC. The company is continuously involved in the production of commercials, high – end graphics, documentaries and music videos.



Mary G and his *Mary G Show* is a great example of GME media creations. Mary G is a cult figure across Northern Australia through the program which was originally produced through Goolarri. Recently two series of six half hour variety programs were produced for

## BUILDING THE FUTURE THROUGH ENTERPRISE

### Stories of Successful Enterprises and Entrepreneurs

SBS – each program was recorded before a live audience from GME’s Gimme Gimme Club. Mary G is in fact Mark Bin Baker, a former boiler maker now comedian, artist, musician, creator of the Stompem Ground Festival and a former artistic director of GME.

- **Goolarri Music Studios**

This facility provides the opportunity for local musicians to rehearse, record albums, develop skills and train in the music industry. Locally produced albums include *‘Full Moon Over Broome’*, *‘Didj’un’*, *‘Mystic’*, *‘Little Bit of Rock n’ Roll’* and *‘Songs From the Heart’*.

- **PAKAM Network**

The Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media Networks are located with GME and provide a full-time satellite delivered radio network service to towns and communities across Western Australia.



*Studio Production*

- **Events Management**

GME has a long history of creating, planning, coordinating and implementing festivals and events. Examples of such events include the Stompem Ground Arts and Cultural Festival, Shinju Matsuri Festival, NAIDOC Week, Battle of the Bands and the concept of an Indo-Pacific Festival. GME has created its own venue spaces on site – the Gimme Gimme Club and the Goolarri Outdoor Venue - to showcase local and national live music acts, as well as providing local Indigenous groups and families with a low cost venue site.

- **Goolarri Training**

In December 2003, GME received Registered Training Organisation status enabling the organisation to deliver nationally recognised media training. GME has developed a reality based training model to accommodate the specific training needs of Indigenous and mainstream media within a regional and recreational context.

## Building The Future Through Enterprise – Stories of Successful Enterprises and Entrepreneurs

The above represents an amazing portfolio of services and achievements within a nine year period. The organisation’s vision for the future includes –

- the creation of the world class multi media and training facility to be named the ‘Goolarri Knowledge Centre of Excellence’;
- to increase local employment beyond the current 32 staff ; and
- increase investment in the organisation to assist in the career development of Goolarri performing artists and specific GME investments projects – including the creation of a BAMA Gift Account which will allow philanthropic organisations and businesses to make tax deductible donations.

### Impact

In the words of Kevin Fong, Managing Director –  
*‘Goolarri is a relevant and beneficent organisation that contributes enormously to the social, cultural and economic fabric of Broome, the Kimberley and Australia and a clear practical example of practical reconciliation.’* Such a view is clearly



*Minister Andrews Awards Kevin Fong and Robert Lee of GME with National CDEP / IEC Achievement Award*

supported by the extensive range of initiatives outlined above. National and international recognition that the organisation has won over the last 10 years includes –

- Small Business of the Year Award (Australian Institute of Management)
- Minister’s Award for Excellence as an Employer of New Apprentices
- Prime Ministers Small Business of the Year Training Award
- International Tech Museum Award for Technology Benefiting Humanity
- The National CDEP / IEC Achievement Award for Community and Cultural Benefit

Recently, Goolarri was selected by the National Museum as an exhibition feature for the next four years. In May 2005, Dot West, Goolarri Head of Production and Business Development, received the Tudawali Award – an annual national award to the individual who has made a significant contribution to the development of Indigenous media or the creation of a landmark body of work in film and television.

GME has also been a significant trainer of young people. In the words of managing Director, Kevin Fong – *'Goolarri is essentially about giving our young people and participants the wings to fly and a place where they can come back to.'* As a business that utilised the Community Employment Development Program (CDEP), GME has seen 26 of its CDEP participant's progress to full or part-time employment within the media industry.

## Success Factors

GME management has identified six critical factors in their development.

### *Leadership and Staff Commitment*

GME has always had an energetic team in terms of Board members, directors and staff. GME has been fortunate in being a place which *'attracts and generates passion'*.

### *Vision of the Founders*

The vision of the creators of the organisation is a continual source of inspiration. In Dot West's words – *'They simply wanted Indigenous people to be seen and heard.'* – A place for creative expression where Indigenous people were able to tell their own story.



*Filming a scene*

### *Opportunity Obsession*

GME has continued to improve through opportunity obsessive attitudes and behaviours. It has been prepared to claim those opportunities that are regularly presented such as the television license opportunity.

### *Governance Structures*

BAMA owns the assets and elects the Board of GME, which then determines long term plans and policies. Day to day decision making rests with the three executive directors. Such arrangements enable the organisation to avoid personal / family interference, and the politics that can hinder organisational life.

### *CDEP Involvement*

GME has had a long history of successful outcomes with CDEP, being a host employer since 1999. GME see CDEP as an effective tool for potential employees to test out their media interests and develop the necessary industry skills. The organisation over its history can identify countless success stories of people who began their media industry journey via CDEP. Currently, 15 full time members of GME are CDEP participants with top

#### **SUCCESS FACTORS**

- Leadership & Staff
- Commitment
- Vision of the Founders
- Opportunity Obsession
- Governance Structures
- CDEP Involvement
- Partnerships



*Filming*

up arrangements, ensuring they receive an industry standard award wage for their contribution to the organisation. Dot West of GME is realistic about the value of CDEP – *‘Without CDEP, we would have to cut services. CDEP has been vital to the success of GME’.*

## *Partnerships*

GME is continually open to partner with other groups to achieve synergy and new opportunities, including other business, community groups and government agencies.

## **Advice to other Indigenous people contemplating the enterprise option**

Reflecting back on the GME journey, Dot West advises –

*'Passion is essential – and you must employ people who can share that passion.'*

*'Take baby steps at the beginning, but never let an opportunity pass.'*

## **For Further Information**

Kevin Fong  
Director

Dot West  
Head of Production and Business Development

Goolarri Media Enterprises Pty Ltd

Postal: PO Box 2708  
Broome, WA, 6725

Phone: (08) 9192 1325

Fax: (08) 9193 6407

Email: [dorothy@gme.com.au](mailto:dorothy@gme.com.au)

Website: [www.gme.com.au](http://www.gme.com.au)