



## **CROMWELL & DISTRICTS PROMOTION GROUP**

### **CANTERBURY CAMPAIGN 2009**

#### **Objectives**

The purpose of this report is to provide background information for informed discussions on what activities to allow for in the Group's "Marketing Plan 2010-11". It is expected that the Plan will be tabled at the Cromwell Community Board's estimates meeting set for February. At that meeting, the Group application for a grant will be made – last year the value of the grant was \$90,000.

The Group's Canterbury Campaign was formulated in the early 1990's as an initiative and joint venture with the Golden Gate Lodge. In those early days the Group provide staff and displays, while the Golden Gate provided the vehicle for gear, and other support. In November 2009, the Cromwell Promotion Group, continued its promotional efforts into Canterbury. The objectives of the campaign are:

- To attract Canterbury residents to holiday, visit or reside in the Cromwell or Central Otago district. Canterbury, and Christchurch in particular, is seen as the Group's main target market because of its proximity, and population base of 600,000. This population has two basic directions to go at Christmas for sun, fun, and relaxation - either to Nelson-Marlborough, or to come south. This was reinforced in a past Breakfast television programme which indicated that the best towns for holidays weatherwise were Blenheim and Cromwell. Compared to the 'Cantabrians', are the 150,000 Otago-Southlanders who see Central Otago as their 'playground', and are therefore considered a 'captive market'.
- To improve the image of Cromwell in the eyes of the general public. For many years the town was seen to be under threat from flooding, and then it became a 'hydro town' with the influx of Clyde dam workers. It is important to change that image so that Cromwell is perceived as a 'lakeshore town with big town facilities, wineries, orchards, and with all the climatic and landscape attributes of Central Otago'.
- To make Canterbury residents aware that Cromwell and Central Otago exists. This is important especially to school children who visit the Canterbury Show, and who grab a brochure or two, and ask their parents about the town. This is the continuing education process that takes several years. In the past the Group has sent the Cromwell Handbook and other brochures to every school in the South Island but it is uncertain if that influences the 'education' process.

The 2009 campaign varied from previous recent efforts undertaken over the last few years in that TCO did not attend because of funding constraints.

## **Methodology**

The campaign comprised a mixture of events and promotional tools aimed at as wide an audience as possible. Television advertising (used in the past) was not available because of the lack of funding.

### Canterbury Agricultural & Pastoral Association Show

The major effort for the Canterbury Campaign remains the exposure given Cromwell and Central Otago at the Canterbury Show, held Wednesday 11 to Friday 13 November 2009. The Show has overcome the criticism and problems since moving to its new, purpose built site at Wigram.

In 2009, it was heralded a success despite the worst weather conditions in over ten years. There was rain on Wednesday and wind, rain and low temperatures on Show Day Friday. Some 90,000 people attended compared to 115,000 in 2008. Figures for Wednesday were 15,000; 32,000 on Thursday and 42,000 on Friday. Normal figures would be about (20k-35k-60k). The hardy rural and agribusiness community still attended but the high number of urban visitors were kept away by adverse weather, especially on Friday.

There was also an element of recession in the community. One Motel owner noted that his staff numbers had dropped from 11 to 3; and turnover was 50% down. He also noted that five motels had closed in Christchurch over the previous few months.

The Cromwell - Central Otago Marquee (22 x 10m) was located adjacent to the Shearing Stadium alongside the major 'Deans Avenue' through road. As in the past, the Promotion Group planned, set up and managed the display on behalf of the participating operators from Cromwell and Central Otago. The intention was to let local tourist operators staff the exhibit so that they may determine if there was any worth for their individual business.

The theme of the exhibit was "Thyme Out In Central" - denoted by a large banner outside the marquee. This theme has now been used for about five years and remains applicable and 'catchy'. As part of the theme, thyme portions were scattered around the floor (partly sealed) and this created a readily recognisable aroma. This aroma could be smelt from some distance and appeared to work well – and in some ways lessens the smell emulating from adjacent animals. It is not sure if it brings on asthma attacks.

The 'operation' involves frontpersons attracting passer-by traffic with a 'free dried apricot' and a free week away in Central/Cromwell. Once attention is obtained the person goes into the marquee and fills in an entry form for the Holiday for Two. Once in the tent they can have a quick or slow look at the various displays. In essence, clients are attracted into the tent with a 'freebee' and then coerced into entering the prize giveaway.

The marquee was designed to ensure all visitors were subjected to all displays, and not merely an entry into the competition. It is also a resting (or shelter) place during adverse or hot weather with numerous tables and seats. In the middle of this was the "Info Central" desk with brochure display stand and giveaway dried fruit. This aspect appeared to work reasonably well.

The operators who attended included: Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust (Martin & Sue Anderson and Kay Boulton), Northburn Wines (Richard Broadhead and Tom Pinckney), Trail Journeys (Neville Grubb), Stonehouse (Barbara Grubb) and Maniototo Promotions three staff (Rail Trail and Curling). The Cromwell frontpersons included Adrian Somerville, Shirley Howard, Janeen Wood, Sheryl Kernahan and Samantha Mann. The displays included orcharding, wineries, mountain biking, Gold Rush, Rail Trail, Otago Polytechnic, Old Cromwell and an "Info Central" stand complete with brochures.

The Promotion Group provide support and facilities such as display wall, lighting, TV/video (showing the Cromwell "It's a Summer Place... video), tables & chairs, and display screens etc etc. The orchard display was supplemented with the giveaway dried fruit provided by Jones' Family Orchard and Jackson Orchards. Potentially 'missing' displays included: Golden Gate Lodge, Cromwell Golf Course, Goldfields Mining Centre, and the Thyme Festival. Alexandra had no presence. The bulk of the display material is transported to/from Christchurch in the 'Team Cromwell' furniture trailer – generously transported by Summerland Freight.

The display was successful with a prize of a "Holiday for Two" in Cromwell-Central as the main teaser. The public were enticed into the tent by able frontpersons, and then completed the entry form. The winner was Matthew Russel of Christchurch. Coincidentally, he and family are regular stayers at the Cromwell Holiday Camp and enters our MTB events. The prize accommodation is generously provided by Golden Gate Lodge, with the Group providing all other support. The tent is adjacent to the National Party tent and a visit was made by various politicians. Past visitors have been Mayors of Christchurch, and Prime Ministers including Helen Clark.

The number of entries into the competition was lower in 2009. Previous years results have ranged from 7200 in 1998, to 12,000 in the past three years (2006-08). In 2009 there were 10,240 as a result of lower Show attendances. It was further complicated by Trail Journeys having their own separate prize draw for a trip on the Rail Trail. A combined effort is required for 2010. Analysis of the entry forms indicates that 60.3% of visitors came from Christchurch; 31.4% from Canterbury; 3.6% from Otago/Southland; 2.9% remainder of South Island; and 1.8% from North Island/overseas.

The display was also on television with Adrian Somerville appearing on Sky's Channel 99 Country TV. TV3 Sunrise programme also had Adrian handing out dried apricots plus an interview expounding the attractions of Cromwell.

Both Maniototo Promotions and Trail Journeys have indicated that they wish to form part of the Cromwell display again in 2010. The Cromwell - Central Otago tent ideally needs to standardise the display sizes; and have a continuous theme linking the items so that the whole exhibit is 'visually tied together', rather than being a series of small exhibits. However - this would cost a considerable amount of money. Nevertheless, some sort of progress should be made in this direction.

Consideration for any future involvement should: secure the site location; expand on the Central Otago theme and attempt to get a Clyde/Roxburgh/Alexandra presence; with expansion of the orcharding, wineries, education, and golf displays. Major attractions such as the proposed Heritage Farm Show and Motorsport Park could provide further interest depending on how their proposals are progressing.

### Recommendation

It is considered that the 2010 display should be along similar lines as 2009, with further input from the remainder of Central Otago, as suggested above. With the lack of any funding from TCO it appears that Cromwell Promotions should continue to 'lead the way' by organising the display and attempting to obtain further support from other Central Otago organisations. Depending on availability of funding, further improvement and updating of display material should be undertaken.

### New Zealand Trotting Cup

The Group continued its long-standing sponsorship of a race at the NZ Trotting Cup held Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009. This meeting forms part of the "Cup Week" and "Showtime Canterbury" and combines various meetings such as trots, gallops and greyhounds. About 22,000 people attend the NZ Trotting Cup at Addington, and it is the biggest event of its type in the country. The presence of Cromwell at the meeting continued to be very high profile, and widely acknowledged.

As part of the presence at Addington, Cromwell banners are displayed on-course in the bird cage; there was an advertisement in the race book; the race was on Trackside - "Cromwell Lake Dunstan Mobile Pace" formed part of the TAB and newspaper network; and was reported on as results nationwide.

Before the race the commentator welcomed the team from Cromwell. After the race, the Birdcage MC, interviewed Shirley Howard who explained the town's attributes. Each race winner was presented with a 'winner's rug with sponsor's name' that was displayed in the birdcage on a static horse. Cromwell's rug had the Cromwell logo (still needs work to improve quality), and race name and date, and was paraded on the winner after being 'placed' on winning horse. Photos were taken of the Cromwell Team, horse and winning connections.

The Group are also invited to attend the Friday Lindauer Race Day, and in some years are allocated a race if there is a 'spare' available. Notwithstanding that, a race was 'allocated' to Cromwell Lake Dunstan over the New Year period.

### Recommendation

When considering this year's involvement the Group should look at the cost (if applicable) and the value the event adds to our overall strategy with the Christchurch visit. It is recommended that the Group sponsor a race again in 2010, on a similar basis as this year. The reason why we should support a race(s) is that, apart from Cromwell race days, this is the only planned national coverage that the Group obtains; it provides a day out for the executive; and is well received by the Christchurch audience. Maintaining our presence at the event, and at the Canterbury Show, is important if we are to build on our historic presence and exposure in Canterbury.

**Costs**

The costs for the Canterbury Campaign have been relatively consistent over the last few years as follows:

2006 - \$20,998; 2007 - \$20,973; 2008 - \$20,567 and 2009 \$20,040.

The figures do not include GST or costs associated with prize winner. The 2009 figure is provisional only.

**Sponsors and thanks**

The following firms and organisations should be thanked for their involvement with the 2009 Canterbury A&P Show exhibit: Cromwell Information Centre, Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust, Old Cromwell Town, Summerland Freight, Otago Polytechnic Cromwell Campus, Jones' Family Orchard, Jackson Orchards, Northburn Wines, Trail Journeys, Stonehouse and Maniototo Promotions. Individuals who took time off from work/home commitments to assist in promoting Cromwell to the Canterbury public included: Adrian Somerville, Shirley Howard, Samantha Mann, Alan Hedges, Sheryl Kernahan and Gordon Stewart.

**Summary**

The Canterbury Campaign 2009 was a successful promotion comprising a variety of high exposure advertising and promotional opportunities. The combined NZ Cup / A&P Show are a very successful promotional tool for a large audience.

Although Cromwell and Central Otago are not competing with Queenstown and Wanaka for their 'elite natural and adventure market', we should seek out every visitor possible, for our unique towns, landscape and lifestyle. Cromwell and Central Otago must get out into the market place in order to inform the public of the region's attributes. The Promotion Group should support local operators during their establishment phase, so that they may become aware of what is required of them in the future. Involvement in the Canterbury Campaign is seen as the key component of the Cromwell Group's Promotional Strategy to attract people to visit, stay, play or reside in Cromwell.

Terry Emmitt  
Secretary

January 2010