

# Ekka

ROYAL QUEENSLAND SHOW

Presented By:



## 2026 Agricultural Shows Australia CREATING ENTERTAINMENT ON A BUDGET





# Who am I?

- **Tony Laffan**
- **13 years at the Ekka – Since 2013**
- **35 years Professional Entertainer**



# Who am I?

- **Tony Laffan**
- **13 years at the Ekka – Since 2013**
- **35 years Professional Entertainer**
  - **Face of Dreamworld**



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  - **Ronald MacDonald**

Comedy  
**Magician**  
Anthony Laffan



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  - **Comedy and Clinical Hypnotist**
  - **Head of Education & Entertainment**

# Today's Presentation Agenda

- RQS Background and the Future
- Entertainers Superannuation
- Ai in the Entertainment Industry
- Negotiating Fees
- Cost Saving Ideas
- Selecting Performers
- No Cost Entertainment
- Collaboration
- Questions



# My local Ag Show

- My local Ag Show is run by:

***“The Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland”*** (RNA)

- Our official title is:

***“The Royal Queensland Show”*** (RQS)

- We are affectionally known as:

***“The Ekka”*** (The Exhibition)

- We too are a:

***“Not for Profit”*** (Organisation)





# Royal Queensland Show

**Agricultural Shows Australia Trivia: TRUE or FALSE?**

A member of the Royal Family has to visit your show for it to be anointed a “Royal Show.”

**TRUE!**

**1920 - *Edward, Prince of Wales*** visited the Ekka. (before the “Royal” prefix was officially added)

**1921 -** The prefix “**Royal**” was then given by **King George V**, changing the name officially to.

***“The Royal Queensland Show”***



# 2026 Ekka Celebrates 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

- **1875 - RNA was established**
- **1876 - First Ag Show, a year later**
- **2026 - 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**
- **August Sat 8<sup>th</sup> - Sun 16<sup>th</sup>**
- **9 Day Show - Across two full weekends**



# 2026 Entertainment Exclusive Sneak Preview

A highlight of this year's program will be a

**Tribute to the iconic**

**‘Precision Driving Team.’**

**A legendary act born at the Ekka.**

**In the early 1970’s.**

***Created by RNA Councillor Lloyd Robinson.***

**Honouring the past - Igniting the future**

# 2032 The Future

In seven years' time,  
The Brisbane Showgrounds  
will become the venue for the  
2032 Olympic & Paralympic  
Athletes Village.

**Brisbane 2032**  
Olympic Games Host  
*Queensland*

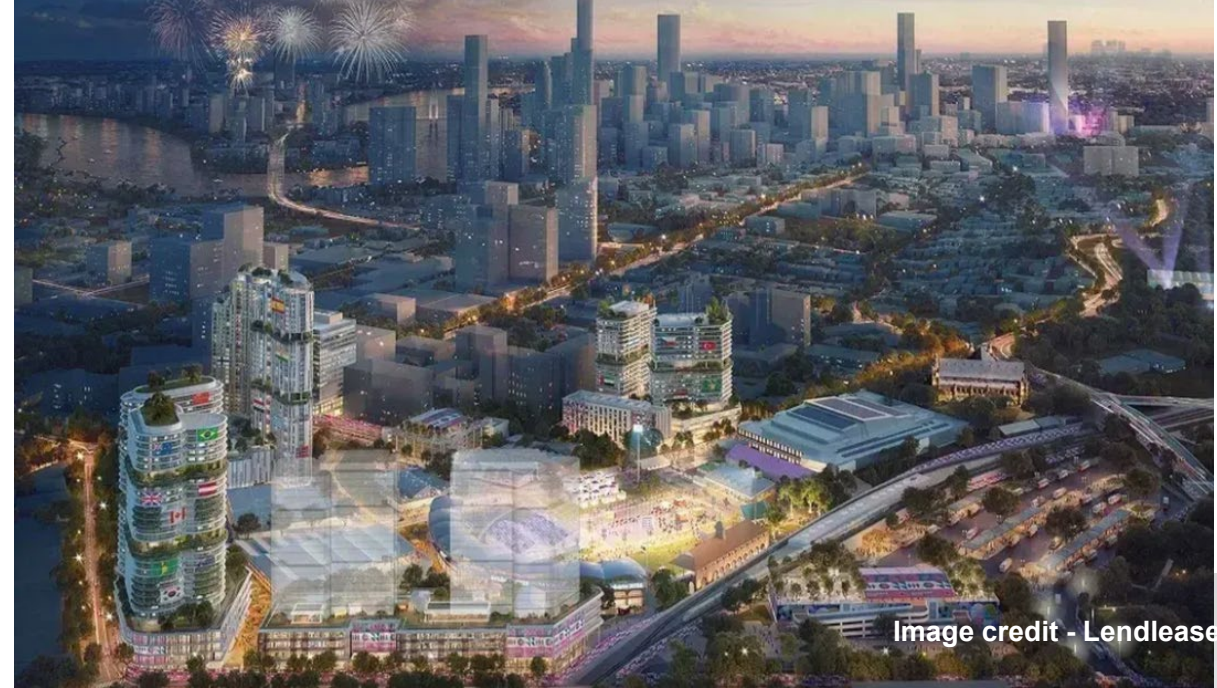


Fri 23 Jul to Sun 08 Aug

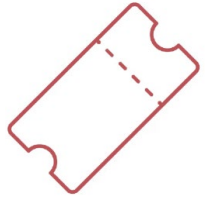
**Brisbane 2032**  
Paralympic Games Host  
*Queensland*



Tue 24 Aug to Sun 05 Sep



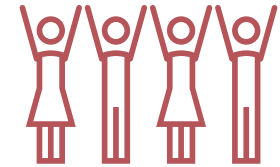
# 2025 Ekka at a Glance



**400,000+**  
Guests through the gate  
(Growth of 24% from  
2024)



**21,000+**  
Competition  
Entries



**1,500+**  
Amazing  
Volunteers

## Top three Key Segments

1.  
Families with children under 17



2.  
Empty nesters



3.  
Young Singles / Couples



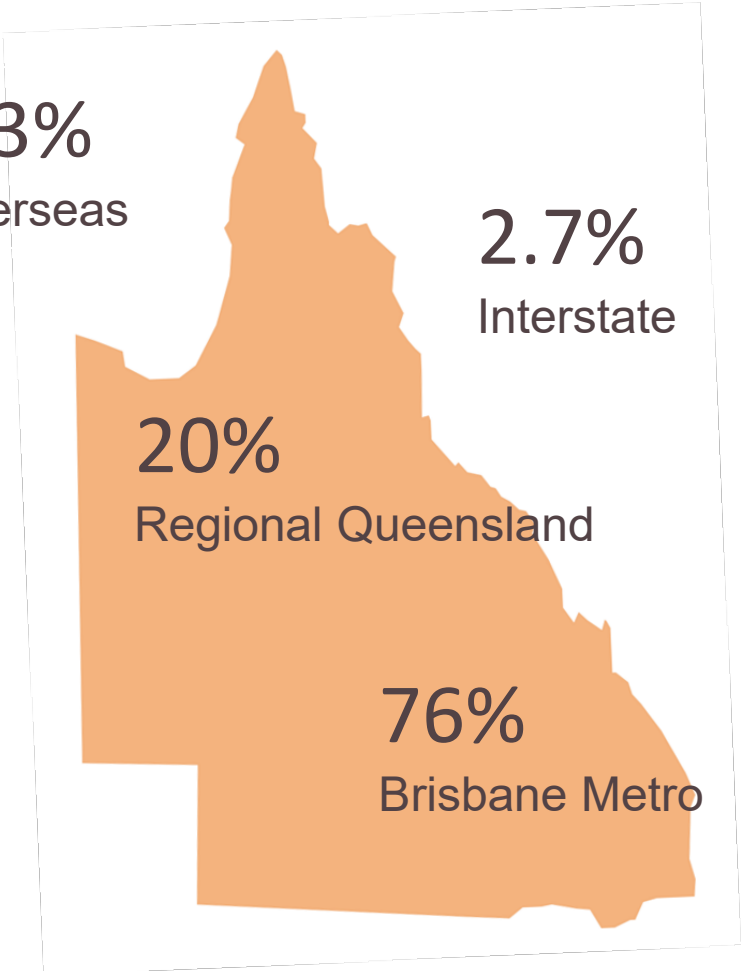
# 2025 Ekka Survey

1.3%  
Overseas

2.7%  
Interstate

20%  
Regional Queensland

76%  
Brisbane Metro



# The Main Arena Night-Time Show

# Ekka NITES



EkkaNITES 2025



EkkaNITES 2025 — image by Dominic Hubert



EkkaNITES 2025



# 2025 Ekka-NITES: Survey Results

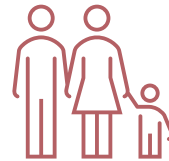
**EkkaNITES was shown to be a key driver  
behind many guests attending Ekka**

50%



Of SINKS & DINKS experienced  
night-time entertainment

38.9%

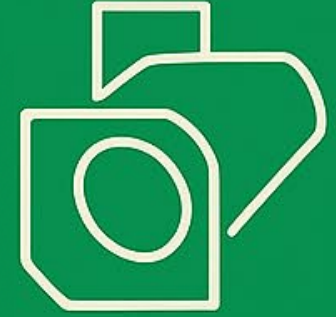


Of Families experienced  
night-time entertainment

32.9%



Of Empty Nesters experienced  
night-time entertainment)



# ENTERTAINMENT ON A BUDGET



**Tony Laffan**

Ekka Head of Education & Entertainment



# Budgets Are All Relative

**Ekka: 9 Day Show - 400,000 guests**

**Sydney: 14 Day Show - 850,000 guests**

*We all must be creative and resourceful*

- **You want Ekka's Entertainment Budget**
- **I want Sydney's Entertainment Budget**
- **Sydney wants Calgary Stampede's Budget**





# ENTERTAINERS SUPERANNUATION



# Disclaimer:



- The information provided is for general information purposes only.
- I am not a qualified accountant or financial adviser.
- The content does not constitute financial legal advice.
- This information is intended as a general overview only.
- Always seek professional advice to ensure compliance with current laws.

# 2026 Superannuation Payments:

The new Superannuation legislation is not for performers to negotiate an extra 12% pay rise

## No one can afford a 12% increase on Entertainment Budgets

- All performance fees will continue to be negotiated as a single gross amount, inclusive of superannuation, plus GST.
- Historically, performer contracts have always been treated as superannuation included within the negotiated fee. Performers were expected by the ATO to manage and pay their own super contributions from that amount.
- Due to widespread industry non-compliance, where many performers have not been contributing to their super and are reaching retirement with inadequate savings, the ATO now requires hirers to deduct, and pay the superannuation portion before the performer is paid. \* In certain circumstances - Not for every performer!
- This new process ensures performers meet their compulsory super obligations, as they have not managed this themselves very well historically.

# Sole Trader / Individual:



If the performer is an Individual (**Sole Trader:**)

- **You must pay** into their Superannuation Account.
- We are collecting their **superannuation companies' details** and we are paying the super **as part of their fee**.
- We will **not** be paying an **extra amount on top of quoted fees**.
- **Our Sole Trader Contract States:** “Fee \$X + GST, includes superannuation at the statutory rate, payable by hirer.”
- The performer **invoices us for the fee**, (plus GST).
- We separately calculate 12% Super and pay that percentage directly into their nominated **fund from the agreed fee**.
- **You**, as the hirer, **are 100% responsible**. (If the performer qualifies – **Sole Trader**).
- If you fail to pay, you can be hit with the ‘**Superannuation Guarantee Charge**’ and **penalties**.
- **TIP:** Ask for their ‘**Superannuation Companies Details**’ at the same time you ask for their **P/L, Insurances and Risk Assessments**.

# Company (Pty Ltd) or Trust

- If a performer operates through a Company (**Pty Ltd**) or **Trust**, and our contract is with that entity, We have **NO Superannuation Guarantee (SG)** / **No obligation** to pay their super. e.g. FMX, Fireworks.
- We **do not require** their superannuation fund details, and **no superannuation** payment will be made by us in this instance.



# Invoices and Super



## Should the invoice show a separate superannuation amount?

- **Not compulsorily** for the performer to include a “**superannuation line**” on their **invoice**. (We are asking for it though)
- The performer’s invoice can just show: “Performance fee – 3 x 45 min sets: \$1,750 + GST”.
- Many events and venues are adding more clarity in their **Sole Trader Contracts**:

**“Fee: \$1,750 + GST, inclusive of superannuation at the statutory rate (currently 12%) to be paid by the hirer to the artist’s nominated fund.”**

- It is **good practice** for your **booking contract** (not necessarily the invoice) to **state clearly** whether the fee is “**plus super**” or “**inclusive of super**”.

# Contracts

**Fees:** RNA prefer payment via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):

## Banking Details

BSB Number: 123-456

Account Number: 503614808

Account Name: Tony B Laffan

## Super Contribution Details

Super fund name: Australian Retirement Trust (ABN 60 905 115 063)

Unique Superannuation Identifier (USI): 12 345 678 910 112

Member Account Number: 123456789

**Agreed Total Fee: \$1,750.00 (includes super)**

## Fee Breakdown

1. Invoiced payment to Performer: \$1,562.50
2. 12% Super Contribution Payment: \$187.50 (RNA to pay direct into nominated account, on behalf of the performer)

Contract Sum:	\$1,750.00	GST:	\$ 0.00	Total:	\$1,750.00
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10% Due 30 days following invoice submission: Payment 1  
RNA PO#12345677  
\$156.25

90% Due within 30 days after The Ekka 2026: Payment 2  
RNA PO#12345678  
\$1,406.25

Super Contribution: Payment 2  
RNA PO#12345679  
\$187.50

\*The RNA maintains a 30-day term regarding payments of invoices.

\*Your super will be paid at 12% by the RNA, directly to your nominated superannuation fund, within the timeframe required by law.

\*\*\*Suppliers submit 1 (one) invoice that covers all payments, rather than submitting 3 (three).



# Booking Agents - Bands



- If a performer is **booked through an agency**, we try **not to collect superannuation** information.
- **\*\*WARNING - Super is not added on top of the gross fee in the agency's invoice. Watch out for the 'opportinists'**
- The fee is **NOT** structured as “**plus GST, plus super**”; it is simply the agreed invoiced amount, which includes super.
- If a Band is **booked through an agent**, we **do not collect superannuation** information from each individual player.
- It is **up to the Agent** to pay into each band members super account.
- Booking Bands Directly - We have on occasions (rarely) paid each player's fee and super but try to avoid this.

# Hire and Production Companies

- For **Hire companies** e.g. Sound, Lighting, Screens and similar production suppliers  
\*\*No superannuation amount is to be part of their invoices.
- These **companies** are **responsible** for **paying superannuation** to their own employees.  
\*\*As has been the case in years previously.



A green background with white line-art icons and text. The central text reads "AI PROGRAMS SAVE TIME". Below it is the equation "TIME = MONEY". Surrounding the text are various icons: a microphone, two people, a bar chart, a 3D bar chart, three dollar signs, a line graph, musical notes, a checkmark, and a large dollar sign. A network of white lines connects these elements.

# AI PROGRAMS SAVE TIME

**TIME = MONEY**

# Media Consultants – Use Ai – Expert Copy

What's on your mind today?

write A media style bio - Jericho Jack 4-year-old Brahman X Hereford Bullock that is riden like a horse around the arean in a sdle and stockmen on top. This cow is like the otehr famous cows that are ridin with a saddle. Bulls eye was famouse fomr the Rooftop express show and dave manchon. Can you grite a bio about this



## Jericho Jack – Australia's Saddle-Riding Bullock Sensation

Meet **Jericho Jack**, a remarkable 4-year-old **Brahman × Hereford bullock** redefining what's possible in the Australian arena. Trained to be **ridden with a saddle by experienced stockmen**, Jericho Jack moves with the balance, calm and control of a seasoned horse—turning heads every time he enters the ring.

Following in the hoofprints of Australia's legendary saddle-trained cattle, Jericho Jack is often compared to **Bullseye**, the iconic riding bullock made famous through the *Rooftop Express* show and stockman **Dave Manchon**. Like those trailblazers, Jack represents a rare and time-honoured bush skill—built on patience, trust and an extraordinary bond between animal and rider.

With the strength of a Brahman and the steady temperament of a Hereford, Jericho Jack thrives under lights, crowds and applause. Whether leading a parade, standing proud in the spotlight, or carrying a stockman around the arena, he delivers a performance that is equal parts tradition, spectacle and outback authenticity.

A true original and a crowd favourite, **Jericho Jack is living proof that Australia's bush skills are alive, evolving, and still capable of amazing audiences—one ride at a time.**



make shorter for the show program, then wrute a version for social mediua post like instagramamnd  
facebook



ChatGPT can make mistakes. Check important info.

## Show Program Bio (Short Version)

**Jericho Jack** is a 4-year-old **Brahman × Hereford bullock** trained to be ridden with a saddle by experienced stockmen—just like a horse. Following in the tradition of legendary saddle bullocks such as **Bullseye** from the *Rooftop Express* show, Jericho Jack showcases a rare and time-honoured Australian bush skill. Calm, powerful and crowd-ready, he is a true outback original and a standout in the arena.

---

## Social Media Version (Instagram / Facebook)

🐃 Meet Jericho Jack 🐃

He's not a horse... he's a **saddle-riding bullock**.

Jericho Jack is a 4-year-old **Brahman** × **Hereford** trained to carry a stockman around the arena with confidence and calm—continuing the legacy of famous riding bullocks like **Bullseye** from the *Rooftop Express* show.

A rare bush skill, a powerful bond, and a true crowd favourite.

You don't see this every day. AU 🔥

#JerichoJack #SaddleRidingBullock #AustralianBushSkills #Ekka #OutbackOriginal



# Save Money: Use A1 - Not a Graphic Artist



Existing Clip Art



Ai created Clip Art



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# AI PROGRAMS SAVE TIME

**TIME = MONEY**



## image generator

By NAIF J ALOTAIBI

A GPT specialized in generating and refining images with a mix of professional and friendly tone. image generator

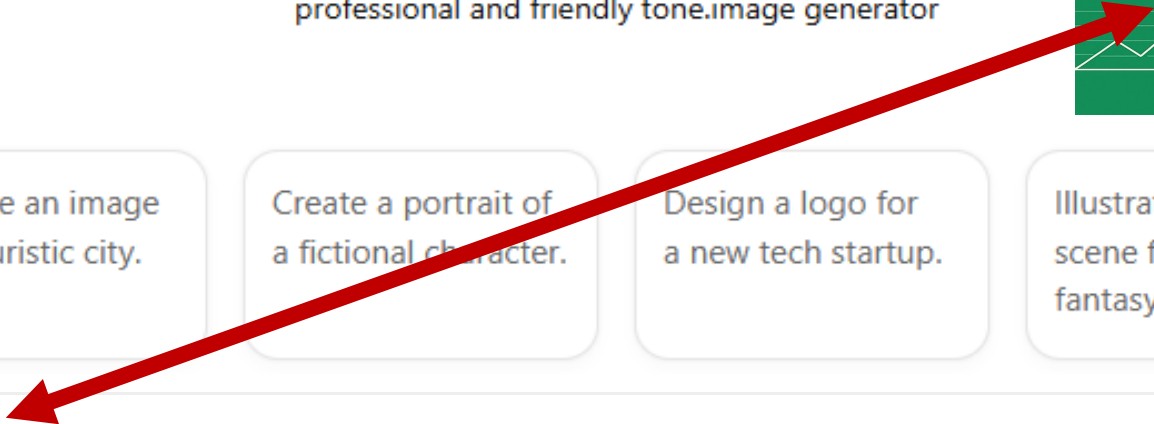


Generate an image of a futuristic city.

Create a portrait of a fictional character.

Design a logo for a new tech startup.

Illustrate a scene from a fantasy novel.



create a A1 POster for powerpoint presentation, ENTERTAINMENT ON A BUDGET.  
use Ekka Green colours. Audnece are Ag show organisers. Entertiamnt refers to booking performers.  
ratio 16x9. and include the letters using  
Ai Programs SAVE TIME  
TIME = MONEY





# THE FLINCH METHOD

THE ART OF NEGOTIATING

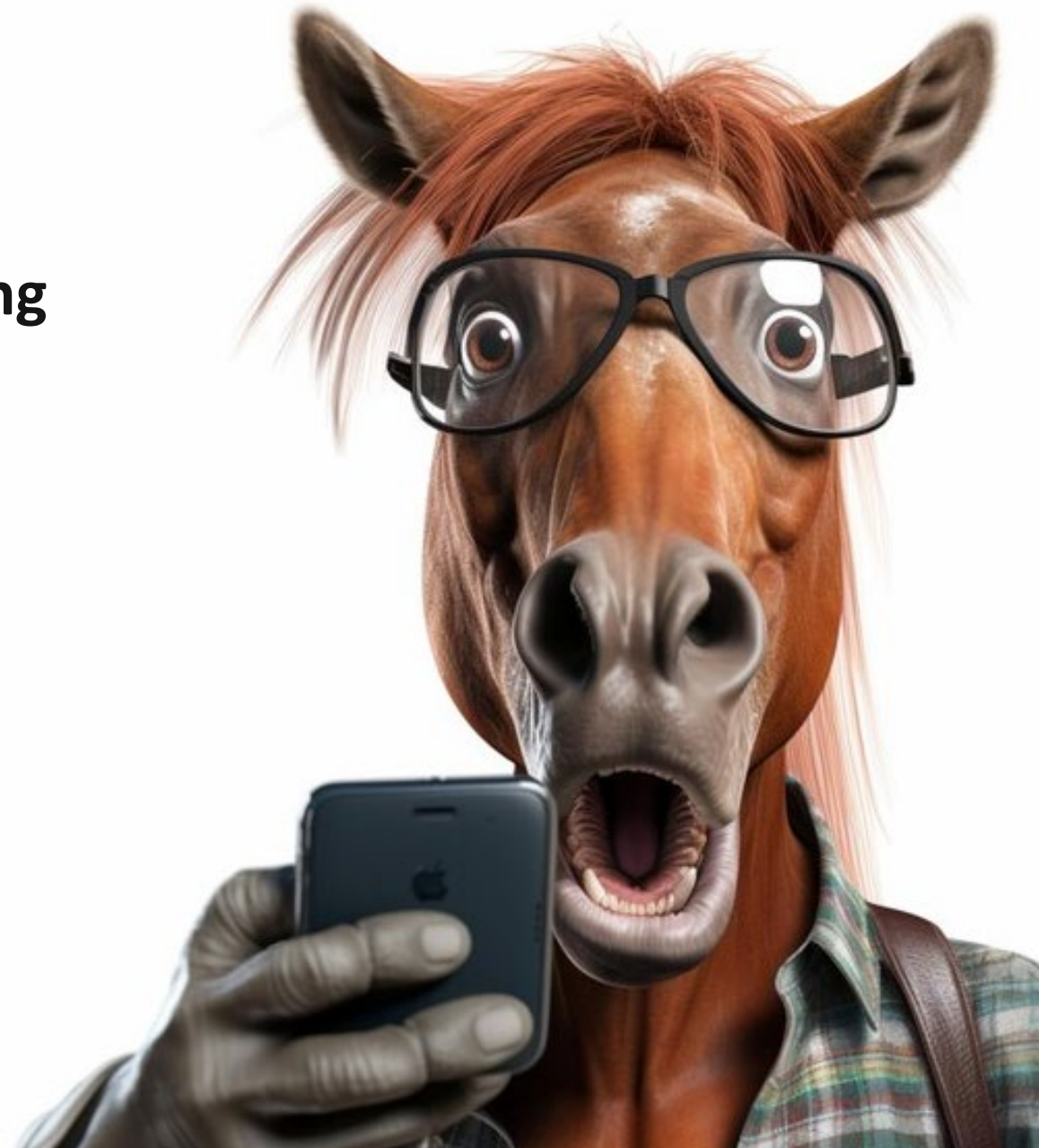


# The Flinch Method

## The Flinch Method – The Art of Negotiating

### What It Is *Not*:

- Not rude or aggressive
- Not emotional or dramatic



# Example of the Flinch

As a Performer I used it to increase my fee to match clients' budgets:

On the Phone : My fee is \$1000

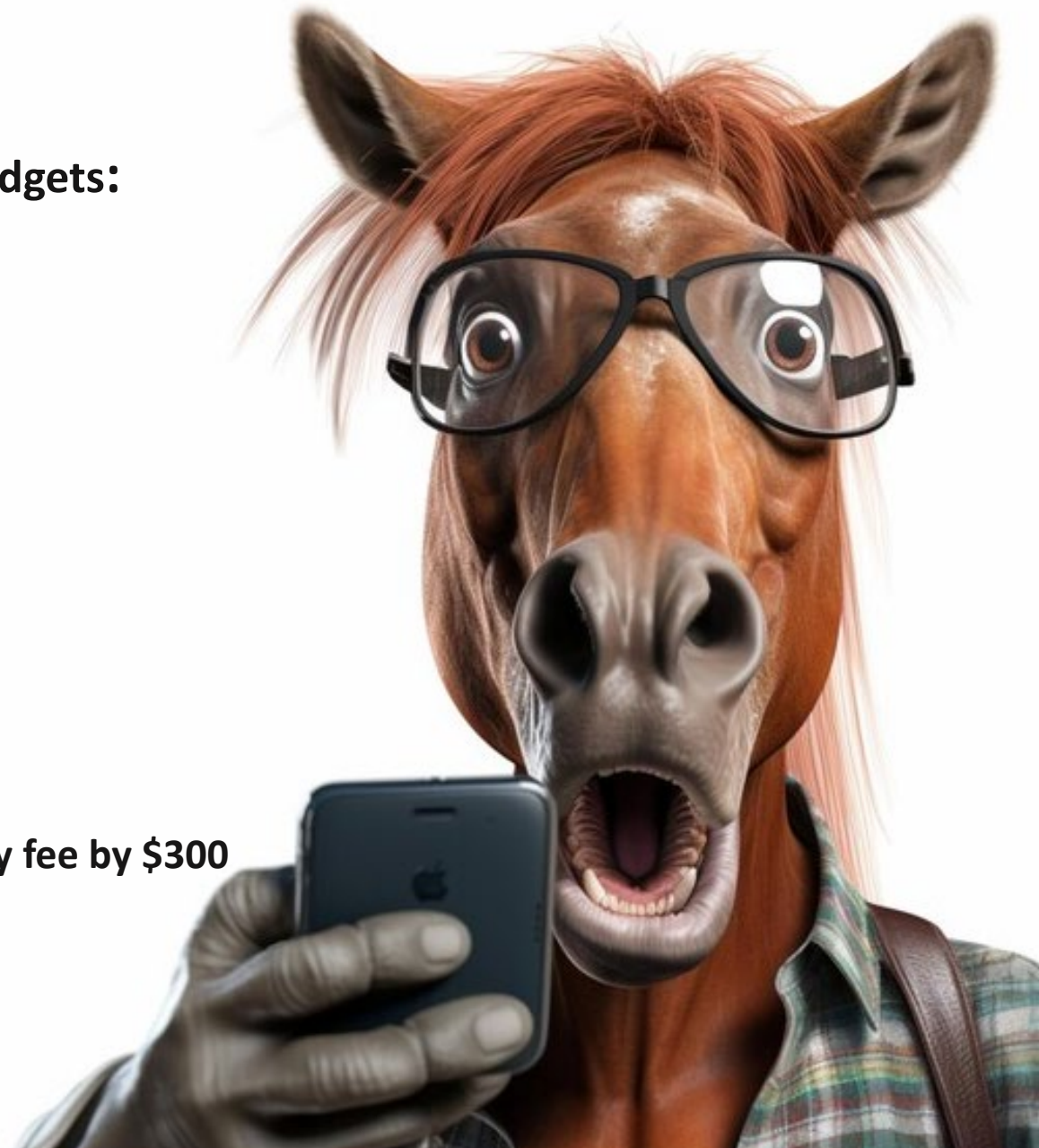
**\*No Flinch**

– For an extra \$300 I could perform roving magic at the Bar that night

**\*No Flinch**

– And for another \$250 I could perform at the Presidents Reception

**\*Flinch!** – I found out their budget limit was \$1300, and I increased my fee by \$300



# Example of the Flinch

I reduced my fee to find the client's budget and not lose the gig:

I would say:

My fee is \$1000

\*Flinch! 😞

– Well, that fee includes performing roving magic at the Bar at night as part of that fee, Normally I charge extra \$300 on top for that, but I can include that in the price

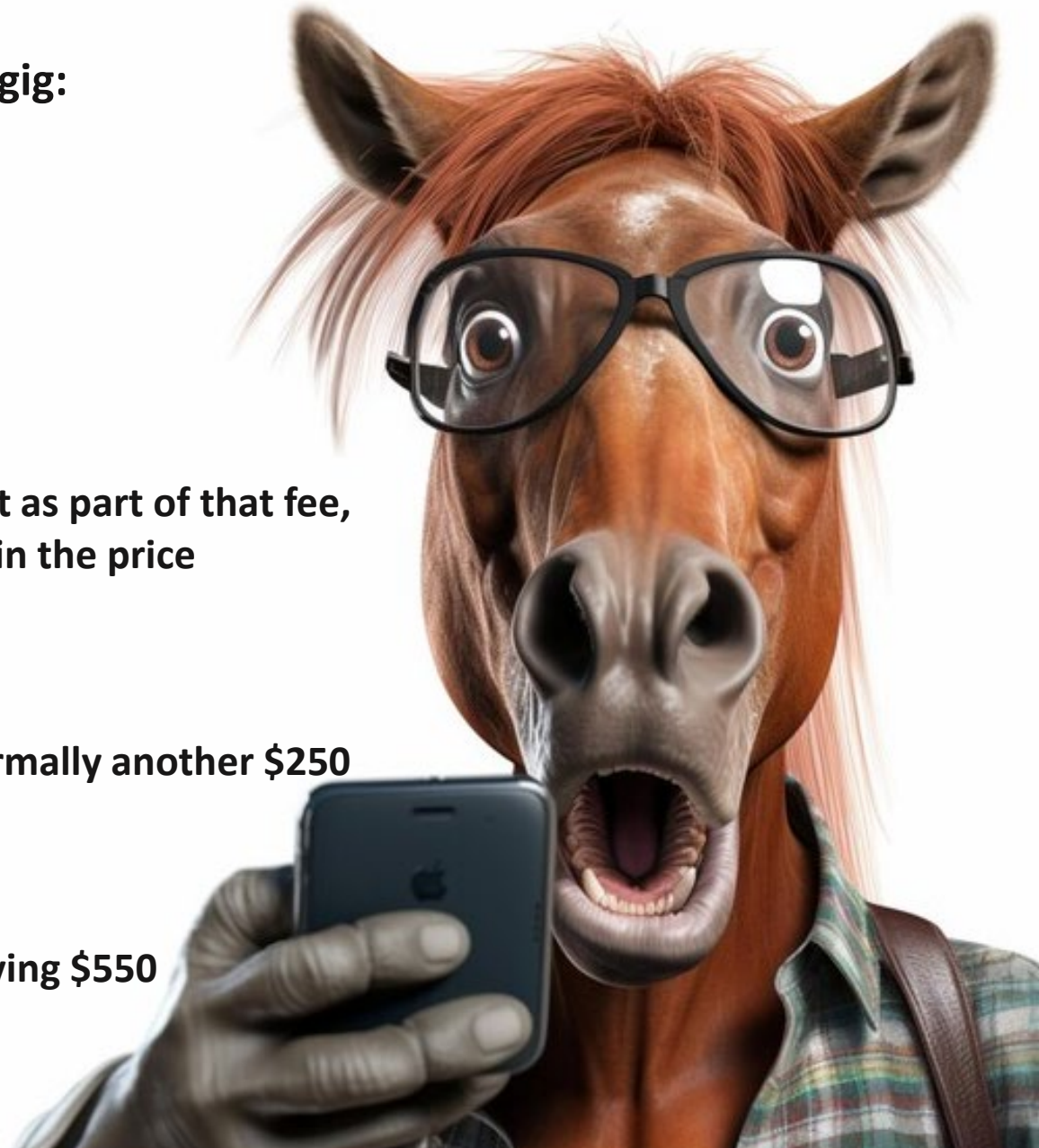
\*Client Still Flinching 😞

– and I could also perform at the Presidents Reception, which is normally another \$250

\*Done 😊

– Client felt they were getting great value, getting extra and not paying \$550

Or... If they still Flinched, I would offer to reduce by \$300 and say...  
I won't rove at the Bar, and I can reduce the fee to \$700 - \*Done 😊



# Flinch Method - As a Booker

**Booker: What is your fee for your roving Act?**

**Act: The fee is \$1000 for 3 appearances**

**Booker: Pause... mmm, ... Can you do 5 appearances per day please for that?**

**Act: No Flinch – Yes, I'm there anyway, I can do a couple more... just for you.**

**Booker: Great I'd really appreciate it if you could appear at the media launch as well?**

**Act: No Flinch - Yes of course, media is important to sell tickets**

**Booker: ...and The President loves magic - Could you include something for the Presidents Reception while you're here?**

**Act: No Flinch. If it's for the President who signs the cheques, of course.**

**Booker: And do you mind appearing in the Grand Parade in front of the full arena. It's just on one of the days?**

**Act: If it's just for one day, yes, I'm happy to help you out.**

**Booker: Any chance you know how to sing the National Anthem?**

**Act: F@#+K Off! \*Flinch ☹️ ...Game over**



# The Flinch – Final Thoughts

## Best Practice

- Be respectful
- Keep conversation natural
- Pair it with silence

## Risks if Misused

- Overacting can damage trust
- Repeated flinching can feel manipulative
- You miss out on an act you want

**Please Remember:**

***“We do need entertainers to make a living!  
Pay them what you can afford, so they can  
survive and keep performing for us”***





# RANDOM IDEAS



I DON'T WANT TO TELL YOU HOW TO SUCK EGGS.



# **Non-Paid Entertainment**

**Engage Schools &  
Community Groups**

**For Example: Marching Bands**

**In 2025 we had  
17 Marching Bands in 9 days**

**...That we didn't pay for**



# Non-Paid Entertainment Competitions

We have 20 'One Day Events' we don't pay for!

- Dance Schools (Schools and Privately Owned)
- Line Dancing (Clubs and Dance Schools)
- Bush Poetry (Schools and Enthusiasts)
- Whip Cracking (Association)
- Dart Competition (Local Club)
- Arm Wrestling (Association /Local Pub)
- Strongman (Local Gyms)
- Body Building Competition (Gym)
- Archery Competition (Sporting Clubs)
- Remote Control Car Competition (Club)
- Axe Throwing Competition (Local Business)



# Non-Paid Administration Ideas

## Event Staff:

- Look for Event Management Students
  - \*TAFE's
  - \*Colleges
  - \*High Schools

## Surveys:

- Survey Monkey:  
Collect valuable data and feedback from  
Guests, Entertainers, and Production

[www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)



# HIRE COMPANIES – Sponsors



- Ask if they can discount or add extra's - Offer them display signage during the event as contra.
- Write into their contract as 'Value in Kind'.
- Qualify the amount of the reduction, or extra hire equipment at no charge, and draft into a contract agreement.
- Ask sponsors to provide prizes for your competitions. Our Country Music Competition - \$70k in prizes "in kind".
- Barter with Tickets - They have a cash value - Instead of cash, supply tickets as part of the agreement.
- It is important to create a spreadsheet table of dollar amount, verses number of tickets, and log for tracking to keep under control and consistent across all sponsors.

# MC's - Sponsored

Source various people in your Community who already are public speakers for no fee to MC events:

- Real Estate Agents (Brought to you by Ray White)
- Local Community Radio Station
- Commercial Radio Station Interns
- School Drama Students
- Rural Ambassadors
- Showgirls
- Ag Auctioneers



# Non-Paid Mascot's Appearances & Parade

Instead of paying for a Trade-Mark Costume Character, source Community Organisation Mascots that don't cost you funds.



# Non-Paid Mascot's Appearances & Parade

Contact your local State Sporting Teams such as NRL:



# Non-Paid Mascot's Appearances & Parade

Contact your various State Sporting Codes i.e. AFL:



# Mascot's Appearances & Parade

Other State Sporting Codes i.e. Cricket, Basketball, State of Origin. Netball all have a mascots!



# Non-Paid Mascot's Appearances & Parade

Contact business's that have mascots such as Night Owl, Spec Savers, Streets, Cadbury. There are many more!!



# Mascot's Appearances & Parade

Contact various Ag Industries such as Pineapple, Bananas and Fruit and Veggie Growers. They all have mascots. Ask everyone!



# Bands:

## Value for Money

- Always ask yourself - Do I need a duo, or 3-piece band or 5-piece?
- Use Soloists in the morning. You don't need a 3-piece band at 10am.
- You can reduce costs by hiring singers with backing tracks?
- Ask if they have and can bring their own PA?
- Can they also sing the National Anthem while they are here.
- Source Music Schools, offering students real live stage experience.
- Watch Ch7's AGT, The Voice, and contact the local singers directly via their Social pages that have appeared on the show.

Many are 'up and coming' artists who are affordable, but You can advertise: "As seen on TV" "Direct from Ch7's The Voice"  
*... without the TV celebrity price tag!*



# Talent Competition

- Run a One Day Ag Show Music Talent Search Competition.
- Run a Busking Competition that goes across each day of your show with public voting using QR Code for a People Choice Award.
- Give prizes (donated by local companies) to entrants, tickets for entry, a trophy to the winner.
- National Anthem – Run an online Community Talent Contest for the Honour.



# Organisations

- **Local Choir - Reach out to local community choirs and theatre groups.**
- **School Music Depts.**
- **Re-Enactment Societies – Roving Characters.**
- **Associations and Clubs – Speedway, Penny Farthing, etc.**
- **Government Departments.**
  - **Police Pipe and Drums.**
  - **Defence Force: Army Band.**
- **Harness Racing - The Trots.**



# Selecting Performers

- Roving - Hire Solo not group acts for best value if budgets are limited.
- Book Acts that create Maximum guest exposure or coverage.  
i.e. A Closeup Magician covers 10 people at a time - A Stilt Walker covers 200.
- Look for Acts that can supply Multiple Characters and change each appearance.
- Multiple skills - stilts, trick bikes, juggling, magic, children's show, adult show.
- Minimum - 5 runs/appearances per day. (We are not a shopping centre - 3 hr call)
- Always ask ... and “What else can you do?”
- Pool your budget - Book One performer that can do multiple styles of shows.  
- Booking one act to do different styles of shows reduces expenses and fees.





**LET'S WORK  
TOGETHER**

**SHARE RESOURCES**



# Don't Compete – Collaborate

## Work with your Capital City Royal Show

- Capital City Royal Shows are all collaborating with all each other for acts.
- Remember: Other Ag Shows are not the competition:  
“We are all here to HELP to one another”
- Royal Shows have many full-time expert Staff to help you - Reach OUT!
- Leverage your show, by association with your Capital City Show.
- The Capital City Show is the end result of regional Ag Shows Competitions.  
e.g. Fruitcake and other comps - Let's Do it with Entertainment.
- Local Country Music Competition - Given a paid booking at the Royal Show.

# WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER



*We are family*  
**IN AG SHOWS.**



COMMUNITY



RESPECT



SUPPORT



TRADITION



TOGETHER



We are all members of  
**AGRICULTURAL SHOWS AUSTRALIA**

# Collaboration is the Key to Booking Acts

- Collaborate with other local Ag Shows to approach an act you all want.
- Talk to acts for a bulk discount reduced fee by sharing expenses such as travel - Create a mini tour circuit.

(I started Ag touring with the Robinsons Family Circus and Allan Baxter's Magic Circus in the 80's on the Northern run.)



# QUESTIONS



*We are family*  
**IN AG SHOWS.**

COMMUNITY | RESPECT | SUPPORT | TRADITION | TOGETHER

**ASA** We are all members of  
**AGRICULTURAL SHOWS AUSTRALIA**

*We are family*  
**IN AG SHOWS.**

COMMUNITY | RESPECT | SUPPORT | TRADITION | TOGETHER

**ASA** We are all members of  
**AGRICULTURAL SHOWS AUSTRALIA**

Final Thought - Be Careful - Ai is Not Perfect



*Thank-you*



**Tony Laffan**  
**TLaffan@rna.org.au**