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AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL
MARITIME MUSEUM

How Australia's premier Maritime Museum staffed up for a Sydney Summer.

McArthur
Best people fit. Making a difference.

Client

The Australian National Maritime Museum, located in Sydney's Darling Harbour is Australia's premier institution dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the nation's maritime history. With a diverse collection of historic vessels, artifacts and exhibits, the Museum serves as a significant cultural and educational hub explaining Australia's relationship with the water from ancient times to now.

McArthur provides staff every day for the Museum in front of house, retail and events held at the venue.



Objective: *The ANMM faced the challenge of recruiting a new team of 8-10 staff members to supplement their core crew during the peak Summer season. The primary goal was to ensure the efficient and seamless operation of the venue while providing visitors with a memorable experience. The Museum needed to attract skilled and dedicated individuals who shared a passion for enhancing the visitor experience and contribute to the institution's mission.*

McArthur's approach

To fulfill the ANMM recruitment needs, we employed a strategic approach that included paid advertising, professional networks and social media.

Our objective was to reach a broad and qualified pool of candidates who were not only well-suited for the roles but also aligned with the Museum's vision and values.

The staff are not just Front of House staff, but need to be 'explainers' communicating the venue's offering and provide a quality customer service experience for visitors both local and international. They 'talk the talk' despite being new to the core crew of long-standing casual staff.



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Outcome

The ANMM was able to successfully recruit a new team of 8-10 staff members from the sizeable pool of applicants. These individuals were selected based on their qualifications, experience, and shared enthusiasm for the venue and maritime history, ensuring the Museum's Summer season was adequately staffed. The new team played a vital role in enhancing the visitor experience, supporting the core crew and contributing to the institution's mission.



How

McArthur took a three step approach:

Paid advertising on SEEK: We initiated the recruitment campaign by crafting a compelling job posting and placed it on Seek, targeting those with solid event and venue experience, looking for regular casual work over Summer.

Leveraging a Personal Linked In Post: We placed the same ad on the Account Manager's personal Linked In page, with a written post inviting applications. By leveraging staff networks in the events industry, we aimed to draw in candidates who might not have seen the original ad but had a genuine interest in working in a Museum during peak time.

McArthur staff network outreach: From our database of experienced casual event staff we promoted the job posting and invited staff and their friends to apply.



Application review and candidate selection

Following the extended outreach efforts, we reviewed all the applications received. We received 137 applications through Seek, and another 12 through responses to social media or direct enquiries. McArthur directed people to apply through the Seek ad in order to link with the McArthur database for efficient onboarding.

After reviewing applications, a total of 14 candidates were selected and interviewed directly by McArthur. This pool was cut down to a short list of approximately 10 who then progressed to an interview by the client (two senior Museum staff via online video interview).

The candidate pool was then divided into two categories:

Museum Event Operations staff: 2 candidates were allocated to the Museum's 'Venues' team of casual staff to assist with set up and pack down of events in the busy end of year period.

Museum Front of House staff: The remaining 8 candidates were integrated into the Museum's core Front of House staff. They were part of the venue's daily functions, meeting and greeting visitors, working on the ticketing desk, supervising attendance at designated locations in the venue.



Training

During November, the ANMM initiated a training program for the newly recruited team members. Each 'new recruit' was allocated to a FOH position every 1-2 days, rostered onto a shift to shadow the FOH manager and learn the operations.

The training program covered different areas of venue operations:

Museum History and Collections:

To ensure the team members have a strong understanding of the ANMM's history and significance of its collections, current events and educational activities.



Customer Service:

Focused on enhancing visitor engagement, understanding of the visitor FAQs and ensuring that each team member can provide a memorable and informative experience to Museum guests.



Operational procedures: Ensuring all team members are well-versed in the daily operations, safety protocols and venue management.



Team collaboration: Promoting effective communication and teamwork to ensure smooth operations and a positive work environment.



Training Readiness

Following a 4 week training period in November and early December, the newly recruited team were integrated into the core team, managing the daily front of house service. They are well prepared to uphold the Museum's mission of preserving and promoting Australia's maritime history by providing a professional visitor services' experience.

Staffing - some statistics

- Shift hours and staffing were monitored and adjusted to accommodate any increase in visitor numbers every week during November.
- **From 1st December**
With a new Exhibition, a new shift 'band' operated 7 days (4 hour shift x 7 days)
- **From 16 December**
To start the NSW school holidays, a second shift 'band' was added (4 hour shift x 7 days)
- **From 20 December**
Extended trading hours began, increasing the hours for every shift.
- **From 26 December - 4 February**
11 shifts 'bands' were operational, clocking in 78 hours/day.
- **Number of FOH staff**
26 staff, with 16 core crew, and 5 - 10 rostered to fill in for core crew days off, and gaps.
- **From late November - 18 December**
Event operations staff: 1 - 2 new recruits in event operations every week (set up and pack down; FOH)

Conclusion

The partnership with the ANMM for their 2023-2024 Summer recruitment program demonstrated the effectiveness of leveraging McArthur's networks to recruit and train experienced, committed and enthusiastic staff. The newly recruited team's contribution positively impacted the Museum's capacity to deliver engaging experiences to it's visitors during the busiest time of the year.