

Stand out student leads to beauty sponsorship

By Kathryn Calvert

When Bella Vi's Melissa Furze first clapped eyes on Christchurch beauty therapist Emma McDonald, she knew the talented 20-year-old had something special.

Emma, an aspiring student at the Aoraki Polytechnic in Christchurch, had entered the Bella Vi Fantasy/Glamour makeup competition offered to the institution's beauty students last year... and had won.

"We could see she had a real talent, and had put a fantastic effort into her makeover," Melissa remembers. "She was a stand-out."

So when Emma, a talented ballerina and animal rights campaigner, approached Melissa's Tauranga-based company asking if they would sponsor her for the Miss World New Zealand competition earlier this year, Bella Vi jumped at the chance.

"We saw that she was a very talented young lady with much potential, and she enjoyed working with our mineral makeup," Melissa says. "We were happy to support her in her quest and provide her with all her makeup for the campaign."

For Emma, the sponsorship cemented her place in the competition, in which she came second runner-up. The fulltime beauty technician/therapist and part-time waitress, who last year was awarded a City & Guilds Gold Medal in beauty therapy (awarded to only three therapists from around the world who scored 100% in the final exam and provided outstanding answers), says the experience was amazing.

Sponsorship money for Miss World



Emma McDonald

New Zealand, a non-profit entity, is used for items like rehearsal venue hire, programme ticketing, contestant training, costumes, lighting and sound, and entry fees and flights to the Miss World 2010 competition in Vietnam.

Anything in excess of these costs is donated to Variety – the Children's Charity, Emma says, because it can best distribute the funds to areas which need the most help at the time.

"There is another award for the contestant who raises the most money for Variety through sponsorship, fundraising and ticket sales, and this further helps to promote sponsors and allows the contestant who receives this award to be fast-tracked straight to the final eight contestants," she says.

Bella Vi is no stranger to sponsorship. "We are a company that likes to give

support, knowledge and future skills and training to our stockists and beauty training academies that use Bella Vi pure minerals," Melissa says. "We take great pleasure in supporting our selected charities... the Look Good, Feel Better charity that works for women with cancer, the children's Christmas Event and more.

"Emma is passionate, and we have truly enjoyed the opportunity to be able to give to her, as well as our New Zealand causes and events with an open heart."

Emma – who says the proudest moment of her life was winning the Gold Medal for her beauty therapy exam – has competed in three other pageants, including the Miss World Supermodel competition in Taipei last year and being crowned Miss Earth Christchurch. She hopes to be a photographic model and study medicine, as well as develop and further her career in beauty therapy.

All this will need to fit around her volunteer and charity work, which includes helping organisations such as CURE Kids, IHC, SAFE, Greenpeace, Look Good Feel Better and World Vision. She says she is indebted to her sponsors, who she hopes will benefit throughout the year from her personality and achievements.

"I feel I am a positive upbeat person who is more than happy to talk to and make time for anyone," Emma says. "I'm sometimes loud and spontaneous, but I consider this a quality. I know that I am not perfect and that I have faults as we all do. I just try my best to be true to myself and enjoy my life while enhancing the quality of other people's."

Starting out in sponsorship... 10 top tips

Sponsorship may seem like the perfect way to spotlight and promote your business, but before you race out to find your perfect cause, take a moment to consider the pros and cons for your business.

Sponsorship can be more complex than it seems... never

consider it simply a matter of putting your company logo on something or someone. This type of advertising creates a delicate and sometimes tricky relationship between two parties with different aims and agendas, and you should be prepared to spend management time and resources for it to succeed.

Check whether sponsorship is right for you. Realistically gauge how much interest it will create with potential clients, and what audience it will attract. Never go ahead with a sponsorship project just because you can afford it, as there are often hidden costs.

What do you want your sponsorship to achieve... attract new audiences, promote new products or ideas? Whatever the reasons, they must be robust enough to turn into clear objectives.

Do the sums... once a sponsorship project is identified, it must be costed honestly. Don't scribble a budget on the back of a serviette – be brutal and don't ignore hidden costs such as administration and staff. Don't forget to look at your tax obligations, either.

A basic rule of sponsorship is that benefits the 'sponsee' gets from you should be reasonable in relation to the cost. A major benefit for any sponsor is the reflected glory of being associated with your business, so decide what your company/brand/logo is worth to the outside world.

Draw up a list of potential partners, organisations or charities with which you are happy to link up. Review them carefully and if the relationship seems to have potential, test the water.

Set out and agree the benefits to your 'sponsee' right at the start. These can vary from simply using your logo, to promotional activities, reciprocal endorsements and entertainment opportunities. Keep the benefits reasonable in relation to the cost of sponsorship, and put all costs in the sponsorship agreement.

Once all the details have been thrashed out, draw up a letter of agreement that will cover your business with any Government acts. Include basic activities and milestones, dates (including when the sponsorship starts and ends), payment details and schedules, and representatives of both parties.

There are no secrets to running a successful sponsorship – but good communication, excellent organisation and a bit of creative flair can't go wrong. Have regular reporting sessions, identify when to launch and relevant developments, stick to the agreement deadlines and milestones.

Promoting the sponsorship can be done via media, mail shots, placements in salons or public venues. Set out how both parties will be represented and, if you're enlisting the held of celebrities, get them on board early.

Make the most of the relationship and think creatively. Look for additional ways of building the sponsorship relationship, such as promotional and sales opportunities, and links to other companies. At the end, decide if you want to take the relationship forward into the future.

DOs *and* DON'Ts

DO:

- Treat sponsorship as a business deal
- Aim for a mutually beneficial partnership
- Plan promotional activities in advance
- Check the opposition – anything around that's likely to take the edge off your sponsorship?
- Talk to each other regularly and honestly.

DON'T:

- Act emotionally and convince yourself that the benefits outweigh the costs
- Plan the sponsorship without consulting your partner at every stage
- Make assumptions about tax, costs or budgets



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