

CEO's Message

Customer Service

The customer experience remains our number one priority. We are proud of the diversity of our customers, which is reflected in our programs, products and services.

We strive to make Sydney Opera House an exciting place to visit and hope that our customers can see the changes that we have made to deliver on our promise of an inspiring experience.

In September 2005 an online customer survey was launched. From this 1,600 customers gave us feedback on their visit. I am pleased to report that most areas scored 80% or better, but our focus is firmly on continual improvement.

During the year we introduced a new behaviourally based Customer Service Training program that was positively embraced by our frontline tour, information, usher and security staff.

Performing Arts

A total of 1,129,879 people were attracted to 1,558 performances this year. Once again, a number of sell-out successes resulted from the innovative and diverse programs offered by Sydney Opera House as well as by our major presenting partners: Sydney Symphony, Opera Australia, Sydney Theatre Company and The Australian Ballet.

Sydney Opera House performances for younger audiences increased by 40% to 274. The demand for high-quality programs for younger audiences continued, with the *House:Ed* and *Kids at the House* programs continuing to surpass audience expectations.

The new Recording Studio was kept busy with a wide range of projects and we will make good use of all our experiences since opening when we create the first ever live transmission of the *Vienna Philharmonic* in September 2006.

Tourism and Visitor Experience

Our tour experience was enhanced with the introduction of daily Asian language tours, which attracted 24,752 visitors in the first six months of operation. A total of 270,040 people took a Sydney Opera House tour this year, an increase of 23,087 on last year (9.3%). Attendances for the premium Backstage Tour also increased by 30% to 995 visitors. Plans for next year include introduction of online purchasing for tours; trialling of an exclusive high-tea experience; and implementing audio-visual components into the one-hour tour experience.

A new Access Strategic Plan 2005/08 was endorsed by the Trust. Developed in consultation with key stakeholders including staff, customers, Accessible Arts and other disability access groups, the Plan's ultimate focus is on improving accessibility of facilities and services for everyone who visits, works and performs here.

Building Program

A number of important building works were completed this year including the new Colonnade, new roof shell lighting poles installed on the Western Broadwalk, and a new Multi-Media Suite was completed complementing the Recording Studio.

A number of improvements were made to backstage facilities. A moveable stage extension to the Playhouse which now allows for three different stage configurations; new audio consoles enhance the audio capabilities allowing for greater versatility in performance program development; and new follow spotlights in the Concert Hall afford better lighting for artists.

Updating the critical hub of all our operations, the main switchboard and all electrical components were replaced over 12 months without any disruption to business. This was a major operation and we have now future-proofed the new system for the next 20 to 30 years.

Looking to the future of our information technology, an Information Systems Strategic Plan for the next three years was developed following a strategic review with our business partner, Hewlett Packard. It is designed to increase the stability, ensure systems and services alignment and will allow us to leverage new technologies to maximise business opportunities.

People and Culture

This year we ran a second employee opinion survey, with 120 staff across the organisation taking part. I am pleased to report that results showed improvement across every area surveyed, with particular increases in employee satisfaction in areas that received major organisational attention, such as internal communication and customer service initiatives. However, we still have work to do in the areas of reward and recognition and career growth and development, which is a priority for next year.

Once again our occupational health and safety program was a priority. Our active OH&S Committee consists of representatives from every portfolio, as well as from key groups and satellite work venues. A key initiative of the Committee was the very successful safety week program that involved 25 events over a five day period. We have undertaken a review of injury management, and worked with our presenting companies to implement safety programs and training. Also a number of staff updated their qualifications.

A management and leadership capability framework was launched this year designed to improve the skills of our executives, managers and supervisors.

Thank You

There are many people and organisations who contribute to the success of our programs. I am overwhelmed by the commitment of staff who rally together to put on the most amazing events, whilst at the same time implementing a number of corporate initiatives, I thank you for your ongoing dedication and professional approach. I would like to thank our strategic presenting partners for the wealth of programs that they offer and for their collaborative efforts and to our sponsors HP, Lexus, Country Energy, LG, Four Seasons Hotel and the National Australia Bank who make it possible to expand experiences for so many people, thank you. Lastly I wish to sincerely thank the Trust and my executive team for their support and leadership.

Norman Gillespie
Chief Executive

