

The social event of the year is here!

FogO MENTURY

FILM PREMIERE

2019 RH Dougherty Awards Innovation in Special Events



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Fogo
is here!

The FOGOmentary Film Premiere was a high-profile event to officially launch the introduction of the FOGO (Food Organics Garden Organics) service. The screening of this 30-minute documentary 'The FOGOmentary' and a series of television ads featuring more than 50 local children and television personality Costa Georgiadis highlighted why the Bega Valley needed FOGO. The launch was part of a broader Council objective and strategic outcome to divert organic matter from landfill via an enhanced kerbside collection.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Community champions are critical in the success of large-scale change. Another critical factor in achieving change is to motivate and inspire people from the ground up, not the top down. Our overarching communications strategy for the introduction of FOGO included developing a range of audio visual resources where our region's savvy young recyclers could clearly and simply articulate our key message 'choose the right bin'. These young people have become our official Bega Valley Waste Warriors.

We were fortunate to also have the involvement of Costa Georgiadis – the perfect complement to the Bega Valley Waste Warriors. Costa's involvement and support came about through an existing relationship Council formed as part of delivering its 10-year Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy (2018-2028) 'Recycling the Future'. Costa was a valuable mentor, given his extensive experience and passion for all things waste and recycling.

IT'S ALL IN THE PLANNING

We started working towards The FOGOmentary film premiere nine months prior by calling for young film stars, aged 5-6, via schools and social media. By involving these young people we were involving their parents, grandparents, friends, teachers, schools and communities – we call it the amplification effect. Initially we were going to produce a series of television ads but due to the response, more than 50 applicants, we wanted to create something visual that included every single child. This is how The FOGOmentary came about. We developed relationships from filming day right through to the premiere and beyond, laying strong foundations for our Waste Warriors' role in changing the way we think about waste. Every communication we had, and continue to have, highlights the critical role the Bega Valley Waste Warriors play in their (and our) future.



EVENT PLAN AND FORMAT

With planning we tried to keep costs to a minimum, so anything we purchased we made sure it could be re-used. For example the venue, Bega Valley Civic Centre, did not own red carpet or bollards, so we purchased these with the intent of donating them so the whole community could benefit for a long time to come. It was also a waste-wise event where we provided FOGO water bottles (which families could take home) and a water filling station.

The intent of having a film premiere was to make the children feel like movie stars so we staged a Hollywood Film Premiere style evening complete with red carpet, media wall, paparazzi, live interviews on radio and social media and an all-access pass to a real-live superstar Costa Georgiadis.

We thought of details such as the time of night, it was still daylight because of daylight savings and we wanted to enable people to interact outdoors.

We posted personalised invitations to each child, asking them to bring their whole family. We also invited school principals and key stakeholders from Federal, State and Local Government (Councillors and Council staff), as well as the project funding body, the NSW Environment Protection Authority.

We involved all local media, and our local radio station broadcasted live from the event. We also set up a Film Premiere on our Facebook page, Waste... The Facts, which we launched 12 months prior to build a loyal following and provide a public space where our community could interact, ask questions and get the facts about all things waste-related.



BUDGET

Funding for the event came from a \$641,400 'Waste Less Recycle More' grant from NSW Environment Protection Authority.

The costs to host the night are broken down as follows:

Red Carpet & Bollards	\$2000	LED UP lights	\$2000
Auditorium Hire	\$518	Event cleaning	\$200
Popcorn and Boxes	\$450	Grazing Platters	\$3600
Foyer Area Hire (pre-screening)	\$112	Flights & Accommodation Costa Georgiadis	\$756
Event Staff	\$120	TOTAL	\$9756

Due to venue restrictions of 500, we had to make this an invite only event but we held it in a highly-visible location in the Bega Commemorative Civic Centre. We parked a branded FOGO collection truck at the entrance and had a safe space for the children to run around outdoors. Live videos and the live radio broadcast ensured the whole community could be part of the event.

Creating this exciting outdoor vibe, the combined energy of the children and Costa, and the outside broadcast created a magical vibe even before anyone walked the red carpet. Inside the venue was packed, continuing this magical vibe. Our food choices were focussed on the stars of the night, making sure they had healthy food options at a time of night when we knew they would be hungry, and included popcorn for them to take into the film screening. We also catered for the adults by making sure they had as much fun as their children.

INNOVATION

The purpose of The FOGOmentary was for the Bega Valley Waste Warriors to educate their parents and the broader community about why it is essential to divert waste from landfill. It needed to be innovative and reach the heart of the issue – identified succinctly by one of the stars who say 'we need to get smarter with our waste'. We premiered the event to the stars and their families at the event, then the video premiered again later that night on Facebook so they could watch it again and share it with their friends and families. We then followed up with a television advertising campaign featuring the Bega Valley Waste Warriors – continuing the positive energy and enthusiasm as our community transitioned to the new service.

It was important that we provided all the necessary information to people and gave them the tools for a smooth transition, so we answered all questions on Facebook and continually promoted the Bega Valley Waste APP which gives personal reminders of when to put their bins out. We provided regular information to regional media outlets and ran a 1300 phone line where people could talk directly to the waste team if they had questions. We only got 600 calls to that hotline in the first four weeks of FOGO (some councils reported thousands of calls). We believe that our long-term communications planning and providing information in a variety of ways, combined with the flow-on effects from this launch event, helped with the success of FOGO in the Bega Valley.



LEGACY

We have adapted The FOGOmentary into an education resource for schools to deliver as part of their waste programs. Our ongoing focus is on showing that the people of the Bega Valley are innovative and leading the way in the War on Waste. This started by instilling a sense of immense pride in our community at The FOGOmentary film premiere, then seeing our community run with it from there. Which they have.

A few highlights include:

- Diverting more than 30% of household waste from landfill. An estimated cost saving to Council of \$624,000 annually.

- The FOGOmentary reach of around 30,000 people on Facebook (in a municipality of 33,000 on a Facebook page with around 1000 followers)

The Bega Valley Shire Council is recognised as leading the way:

- Among the lowest contamination rates in Australia, including record low contamination from the first collection of 1% (many councils report contamination rates of up to 80% when FOGO starts) and now falling to 0.4%.
- Winning the Australian Organics Recycling Association (AORA) award for outstanding local government initiative in organics collection, processing and marketing (December 2018)
- Other Councils looking to Bega Valley for advice
- Paved the way for future successful projects and partnerships including one with Ocean2earth Australia who are collecting fish waste from boat ramps and making it into compost (launched April 2019)
- Invitation for Waste Management Coordinator Joley Vidau to speak at Waste 2019, the industry's leading waste management conference, May 14-16 with Amanda Kane, Organics Manager of NSW Environment Protection Authority
www.coffswasteconference.com.au/2019/presentations Organics and FOGO 9
- Invitation from ABC Canberra radio interview May 24 as part of an afternoon program feature discussing the merits of introducing FOGO in the ACT
www.abc.net.au/radio/canberra/programs/afternoons/afternoons/11125696 Interview at 1:34

