



2021 MEDIA EXCELLENCE AWARDS



★ Photography ★ Journalism ★ Advertising ★ Publishing



2021 EXCELLENCE AWARDS WINNERS

PHOTOGRAPHIC AWARDS

- Best News Picture: **TONY MARTIN, Daily Mercury Mackay - "Beyond the Scars"**
Best Sports Picture: **SHANE ZAHNER, Gympie Today - "Down he Goes!"**
Best Portrait/Community Picture: **ALI KUCHEL, Gatton Star - "Pandemic Hero"**

JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS

- Best Editorial Campaign- Print: **BEAUDESERT BULLETIN - Campaign to save historic Pig & Calf Saleyards**
Best Editorial Campaign- Online: **DAILY MERCURY MACKAY - www.dailymercury.com.au: "Hub for our Heroes"**
Best Regular Column: **FRASER COAST CHRONICLE- www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au - Online Editorials - Editor Jessica Grewal**
Excellence in Digital Innovation: **MY WEEKLY PREVIEW: www.sunshinecoastnews.com.au**
Overall Journalistic Excellence Award for an Individual Journalist: **SCOTT SAWYER, Sunshine Coast Daily**
Young Journalist of the Year: **GEORGIE ADAMS, Western Star, Roma**
Overall Journalistic Excellence Award for a Newspaper: **FASSIFERN GUARDIAN & TRIBUNE**
Overall Journalistic Excellence Award for an Online Publication: **SUNSHINE COAST DAILY: www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au**

ADVERTISING AWARDS

- Best Newspaper One-off Commercial Feature: **MY WEEKLY PREVIEW - "Operation Bounceback"**
Best Newspaper Regular Commercial Feature: **WARWICK STANTHORPE TODAY - "Southern Living"**
Best Run of Press Newspaper Feature or Supplement: **MY VILLAGE NEWS - "Takeaway Trail"**
Best Newspaper Supplement Insert: **BUNDABERG TODAY - "Today Magazine"**
Best Locally Produced Advertising Campaign: **WARWICK STANTHORPE TODAY - Helen Harm Real Estate**
Best Locally Produced Print Advertisement: **WARWICK STANTHORPE TODAY - Warwick Indoor Fitness Centre**
Best Special Publication: **NOOSA TODAY - "Seniors Noosa"**
Best Community Promotion: **BURNETT TODAY - "B2B- Locals Supporting Locals"**
Best House Advertisement or Promotion: **DAILY MERCURY, MACKAY and www.dailymercury.com.au: - "My Town"**

BEST NEWSPAPER AWARDS

- Best Paid Newspaper: **FASSIFERN GUARDIAN & TRIBUNE**
Best Free Newspaper: Equal winners: **MY WEEKLY PREVIEW
HERVEY BAY ADVERTISER**
Best Online Publication: **MY WEEKLY PREVIEW: www.sunshinecoastnews.com.au**

PHOTOGRAPHIC AWARDS

Judge: ADAM HOURIGAN.

QCPA has been honoured again this year to have renowned country newspaper photographer Adam Hourigan as judge of the Photography categories.

Adam started with the Daily Examiner at Grafton as a first-year cadet photographer in 1995, and has remained with the publication ever since, with his role expanding to writing, sub-editing, digital producing, and even editing the paper for a short time.

He has won the Northern NSW Prodi Award for Regional Photographer of the Year five times.

In 2014 Adam won the Walkley prize for Regional/Community Photography, and in 2015 the PANPA award for Features Lifestyle Regional award for photography.

He is a member of the Australian Institute of Professional Photography, holding the title of Master with 1 Gold Bar, and he judges both state and international competitions.

AWARD FOR BEST COMMUNITY OR PORTRAIT PICTURE

Judge's comments: Overall, this should be the section in which we excel – we have an amazing range of people which we can tell the story with, but yet we seem to fall short of the mark.

Find these people and don't just accept where you find them, or meet them for a story. Ask them questions, find what attracts and show us personality, show us environmental and let us into their world. The best of this section did just this.

HIGH COMMENDED:

SEAN WHITE, High Country Herald- "Circus Comes To Town"

A great interesting shot let down by poor lighting/technical quality – and the distracting elements. The sign distracts – not enhances – especially if you're going to mention Moscow Circus six times in the story. Less information is sometimes more, but there's still something about the frame that engages.

THIRD PLACE:

ALI KUCHEL, Gatton Star- "Little giggles"

Another quintessential well handled shot. Perhaps shot a little short so background is a little distracting – but there's interest in every expression – and the parents and readers would love it.

SECOND PLACE:

DOMINIC ELSOME, South Burnett Times – "Cattle battle"

Good grab for what can be challenging light and situations. Bread and butter stuff handled well.

FIRST PLACE:

ALI KUCHEL, Gatton Star- "Pandemic Hero"

The perfect example of this – it feels like we're sitting in the room with him. He's comfortable, he's in his environment and I get a sense of what he is, and who he does. Well lit, good composition and simple yet effective storytelling. The standout in the category despite its simplicity.

AWARD FOR BEST SPORTS PICTURE

Judge's comments: A section that is always hard because of lack of specialist equipment, but remember to keep shutter speeds up to freeze action. Look for pivotal moments, or use the opportunity to create interesting arresting portraits.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

JOE HINCHCLIFFE, Fassifern Guardian & Tribune – "Beaudesert Rodeo"

Another good rodeo shot, peak of the action – just watch cropping out the limbs but again at the peak of action.

THIRD PLACE:

ALI KUCHEL, Gatton Star – "In thought"

Good light, nice feeling, simple and emotive and evocative – all very simple.

SECOND PLACE:

LIAM EMERTON, CQ Today – “That winning feeling”

Great reaction shot, and nice framing with the guy in the back knocking over the bails. It’s simple, but it’s the whole story in a nutshell and a piece of genuine jube/action

FIRST PLACE:

SHANE ZAHNER, Gympie Today – ‘Down he goes!’

There’s lots of rodeo shots in here – but this one has that defying gravity kind of feel that is the hallmark. Well separated and all the background looks towards the centre. Well executed and captured.

AWARD FOR BEST NEWS PICTURE

Judge’s comments: A lot of crash photos, and some interesting portraits – what elevates news photos is not just recording what happen, but find the story within the scene. Wait a little longer, get the emotion – that’s what we need.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

ROB MACCOLL, Noosa Today – “NYE Casualty”

Another good grab shot – just a little bit blocked to elevate into the placings but great access and well spotted. A good piece of compassion in what’s going on.

THIRD PLACE:

ROB MACCOLL, Noosa Today – “Schoolies arrest”

Great access, well spotted and well captured technically. Gives us the sense of what was going on and we’re led into the subject.

SECOND PLACE:

ARTHUR GORRIE, Gympie Today – “Fraser Island fire”

Part of a strong series, but it’s tiny helicopter figure that shows the immense scale. Great vantage point and well handled and spotted.

FIRST PLACE:

TONY MARTIN, Daily Mercury, Mackay – “Beyond the scars”

In a world of crashes, and other hard news – this is the standout of the category. Simple, brave, great expression and all on a blank wall. Great work.

JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE

JUDGE: BRIAN HURST

Brian Hurst was editor of The Redland Times and the Bayside Bulletin in Redland City for nearly three decades and was president of Queensland Country Press Association between 2011 and 2013. He now works as digital producer for the Regional Division ABC News online.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Journalists in 2021 and beyond who work in a slimmed-down news organisation need to rise above the ordinary, the obvious. In these days of reduced resources, there is a trap that you might just go through the motions to fill the pages or the website.

But there is an opportunity to give additional context to what is happening in your community.

In many ways, local communities have lost the rich asset of the printed newspaper, which means the online offering needs to give extra value and operate under the essential foundations that made printed newspapers so crucial to their communities.

You, therefore, have to create an online presence that people will come back to every day and many times during the day and night for their news. And this should be accompanied by some time of notification or alerts and email newsletters. These days government departments and emergency services, councils and organisations try to engage with the same audience directly you seek to serve.

Because that audience has been given new opportunities to source their news and information, you have to offer something that these entities don't offer.

You have to provide context in your reporting and explanations. Providing the 'why' of the news.

These government websites might tell what is going on, but these agencies will provide the information on their terms, but most times, they won't tell the community the 'why' of what is happening and what it means to you.

My judging took into account how journalists went beyond the basic coverage and used their initiative to find out more and explain why this was important to their audience or armed their audience with more information from which they could form a view. I looked for reports that questioned what was happening and attempted to tell the audience more than the official statements.

It is becoming clear that we are entering a new era of community journalism in regional areas.

Perhaps we did not expect this expansion to happen. But it is happening, and the future looks exciting.

AWARD FOR BEST EDITORIAL CAMPAIGN - PRINT

This Award recognises the leadership role newspaper publishers play in their communities – initiating and championing campaigns on local issues. Plenty of passionate coverage here

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

HIGH COUNTRY HERALD – Inland Rail corridor issue

THIRD PLACE:

CAIRNS LOCAL NEWS – Flying Fox issue

SECOND PLACE:

FASSIFERN GUARDIAN & TRIBUNE – “Save Boonah’s main street trees”

FIRST PLACE:

BEAUDESERT BULLETIN – Closure of historic Pig & Calf Saleyards

Comment: A classic example of sticking with an issue and leading and progressing a community debate that eventuated in a successful outcome.

AWARD FOR BEST EDITORIAL CAMPAIGN - ONLINE

This Award recognises the leadership role online publishers play in their communities – initiating and championing campaigns on local issues. Some outstanding and emotive topics addressed sensitively.

It is active engagement of the audience which is critical for our online publications.

THIRD PLACE:

SUNSHINE COAST DAILY: www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au – “Herstory- not History”

SECOND PLACE:

SOUTH BURNETT TIMES: www.southburnettimes.com.au – Burnett Mental Health issues
(Journalist Tristan Evert)

FIRST PLACE:

DAILY MERCURY MACKAY: www.dailymercury.com.au – “Hub for our Heroes”

Comment: The Daily Mercury developed the campaign “Hub for our Heroes” - asking the Mackay region to get behind two projects dedicated to helping its servicemen and women as well as its first responders. One project is a social and welfare centre in town on the waterfront, the other a wellness hub at Kinchant Dam.

AWARD FOR BEST COLUMN

This Award is for the best regular column – in print or online – as opinion, conversational, humorous, entertaining or information pieces. Excellent number of entries – and diverse themes - which would all keep readers coming back.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

BEAUDESERT BULLETIN – “What Suzie saw”

CQ TODAY - “This week with Jordie”

CAIRNS LOCAL NEWS – “Wayne’s World”

EQUAL THIRD:

CANUNGRA TIMES – “Humans of Canungra”

WESTERN DOWNS TOWN & COUNTRY – “Nancy’s Natterings”

SECOND PLACE:

MY WEEKLY PREVIEW- “My Opinion” by Jane Stephens

FIRST PLACE:

FRASER COAST CHRONICLE - www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au – Online Editorials by Editor Jessica Grewal

Comment: Jessica explained the importance of an opinion column after the loss of the print edition and provided her readers with well-developed opinion pieces about issues important to her community.

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN DIGITAL INNOVATION

This Award recognises innovation and improvements in online news coverage, presentation and audience engagement.

THIRD PLACE:

NEWS REGIONAL WESTERN GROUP (Western Times, Western Star, Dalby Herald, Chinchilla News, Gatton Star, South Burnett Times, Central & North Burnett Times).

SECOND PLACE:

SUNSHINE COAST DAILY: www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au

FIRST PLACE:

MY WEEKLY PREVIEW: www.sunshinecoastnews.com.au

Comment: The launch in 2020 of a new high-end online site to complement the gloss weekly print publication sets a high standard for presentation, easy audience navigation and access. The supporting EDM (Electronic Direct Mail) has promoted impressive audience engagement as has fostering media partnerships with major Sunshine Coast based sporting organisations.

AWARD FOR JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE FOR AN INDIVIDUAL JOURNALIST

This Award recognises consistent excellence in reporting.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

JANESSA EKERT, Daily Mercury Mackay

JOE HINCHCLIFFE, Fassifern Guardian & Tribune

EQUAL THIRD PLACE:

BRIAN BENNION, Fassifern Guardian & Tribune

MARGIE MACCOLL, Noosa Today

SECOND PLACE:

ARTHUR GORRIE, Gympie Today

FIRST PLACE:

SCOTT SAWYER, Sunshine Coast Daily

Comment: Scott’s body of work demonstrated a willingness to dig deep behind the news of the day. His series of articles covered the collapse of a local construction company, the examination of 3400 pages of documents relating to a council planning decision and a series of articles on the sacking of the council CEO. His work showed a determination to stay with a story until all the facts were exposed.

AWARD FOR YOUNG JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

This Award pays tribute to the outstanding talent – and passion - shown by young journalists working in regional communities. A record number of entries – outstanding!

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

INGRID BARHAM, Bundaberg Today

AMY BUCKINGHAM, Burnett Today

EQUAL THIRD PLACE:

JESSICA McGRATH, Burnett Today

DOMINIC ELSOME, South Burnett Times

SECOND PLACE:

TRISTAN EVERT, South Burnett Times

FIRST PLACE:

GEORGIE ADAMS, Western Star, Roma

Comments: Georgie's almost forensic coverage of the deliberations of a newly elected council showed a commitment, rarely seen these days, to provide oversight of elected representatives. Her coverage came from following nine councillors and council staff to every location in the region, reporting from 9am to 9pm. The result was a series of articles over many months that provided so much detail; the reader might have thought they were in the council meeting.

AWARD FOR OVERALL JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE FOR A NEWSPAPER

This Award evaluates the overall editorial content, standard of journalism and photography.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

WARWICK STANTHORPE TODAY (previously Southern Free Times)

THIRD PLACE:

CQ TODAY

SECOND PLACE:

BURNETT TODAY

FIRST PLACE:

FASSIFERN GUARDIAN & TRIBUNE

Comment: This newspaper is a big read in both size and content. This broadsheet newspaper is a rare luxury for a local community and offers readers a long, weekend read in layouts that scream out quality via its elegant layouts, matched by its quality local stories and wide ranging features.

AWARD FOR OVERALL JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE FOR AN ONLINE PUBLICATION

This Award recognises the editorial quality, coverage, immediacy, presentation and audience engagement of stand-alone mastheads and online news sites linked to newspapers

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

SUNSHINE VALLEY GAZETTE: www.sunshinevalleygazette.com.au

THE EXPRESS, MAREEBA: www.theexpressnewspaper.com.au

THIRD PLACE:

MY WEEKLY PREVIEW: www.sunshinecoastnews.com.au

SECOND PLACE:

DAILY MERCURY MACKAY: www.dailymercury.com.au

FIRST PLACE:

SUNSHINE COAST DAILY: www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au

Comment: The outstanding 24/7 commitment to hard news, investigative journalism and wide-ranging campaigning on serious issues such as domestic violence, exemplifies the high quality of professionalism in the editorial offering of sunshinecoastdaily.com.au. A very engaging online news site which boasts an impressive audience.

ADVERTISING AWARDS

Judge: RON REEDMAN.

Ron Reedman has been judging the QCPA Advertising Awards for 14 years. Before retiring Ron enjoyed a comprehensive newspaper career - starting as a copy holder and then apprentice at Bundaberg News-Mail before rising through the sales team to Advertising Manager.

He served as sales manager and as General Manager at Rockhampton Morning Bulletin, Redland Times and Bayside Bulletin, Tweed Daily News and its stable of Gold Coast "frees", before joining Fairfax's Hunter and Central Coast groups.

Ron was appointed Manager of The Newcastle Post group of newspapers, and then Sales & Marketing Manager of The Newcastle Herald, leading the change from broadsheet to tabloid format.

Ron says that as long as that paper is seen to be a part of its' community there will always be a place for a vibrant local newspaper!

GENERAL COMMENTS:

It was to be expected that Covid has obviously impacted on some of the "regular" entries from previous years, but across most categories, it was heart-warming to see members have provided strong support through innovative ideas to assist their business community during the Covid battle.

Great examples of community publications doing what they do best!

The change of NewsCorp Regionals print editions to Online publications has resulted in a couple of print categories being down on entries, but it has produced a higher standard of professionalism in entries and audience engagement across categories open for both print and online.

AWARD FOR BEST NEWSPAPER ONE-OFF COMMERCIAL FEATURE

Judge's comments: A great variety of entries highlights this year's Award. Calendars, wall charts, show features, wraps, co-op advertising and classy publications, all brimming with advertising revenue clearly indicates print is still in the money! Great to see quite a few entries focussed on promoting businesses impacted by Covid.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

CLIFTON CHRONICLE – The Clifton Show

WARWICK/STANTHORPE TODAY- The Warwick Show

THIRD PLACE:

WARWICK/STANTHORPE TODAY- Introducing our School Principals

EQUAL SECOND PLACE:

NOOSA TODAY – Zero Emissions Noosa

CAIRNS LOCAL NEWS – Small Bar Scene

FIRST PLACE:

MY WEEKLY PREVIEW – Operation Bounce Back

Judge said: This gloss feature is in a class of its own – highlighted Sunshine Coast businesses tackling the Covid-19 challenge.

AWARD FOR BEST NEWSPAPER REGULAR COMMERCIAL FEATURE

Judge's comments: An array of topics, sizes and presentation – but only a couple of top end entries this year, no doubt Covid had an impact for smaller members. Pleased to see entries focussed on technology.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

LOCKYER & SOMERSET INDEPENDENT - Cube Computers

EQUAL THIRD PLACE:

CLIFTON COURIER – Support local business

NOOSA TODAY – Niche luxury accommodation

SECOND PLACE:

MY WEEKLY PREVIEW- My Renovation

FIRST PLACE:

WARWICK/STANTHORPE TODAY – Southern Living

Judge said: Local content in the lifestyle articles and solid advertising secured from a limited market gained this monthly publication the edge over the high quality runner-up.

AWARD FOR THE BEST ROP NEWSPAPER FEATURE SUPPLEMENT

Judge's comments: Some excellent features, well researched with engaging editorial supported with solid revenue. Some major "regulars" missing due to Covid, but that impact also provided opportunity. Impressed by the smaller newspapers' efforts in their limited markets

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

CANUNGRA TIMES – Shop Local this Christmas

LOCKYER & SOMMERSET INDEPENDENT – Set of three school features- Preps, Formals and School Leaders

EQUAL THIRD:

BUNDABERG TODAY – International Day of People with Disability

MAREEBA EXPRESS – International Women's Day

SECOND PLACE:

BURNETT TODAY – 100 years of Peanuts in the Burnett

FIRST PLACE:

MY VILLAGE NEWS – Takeaway Trail

Judge said: This informative feature promoted the switch to takeaways when Covid closed the major restaurant precincts in Fortitude Valley, New Farm, Teneriffe etc. Greatly appreciated support resulting in new ongoing clients.

AWARD FOR BEST NEWSPAPER SUPPLEMENT INSERT

Judge's comments: A smaller number of entries, but great quality reads with strong revenue support. School features full of photos again providing outstanding readership. The gloss real estate inserts are a regular weekly part of the paper and as such have been eliminated.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

BUNDERBERG TODAY – 2020 School Formals

THIRD PLACE:

BURNETT TODAY – Kingaroy High Class of 2020

SECOND PLACE:

GYMPIE TODAY – Welcome to the Gympie Region

FIRST PLACE:

BUNDABERG TODAY – Today Magazine

Judge said: A very classy gloss magazine style tabloid with engaging editorial across many lifestyle topics. No doubt Bundaberg would have been pleasantly surprised.

AWARD FOR BEST LOCALLY PRODUCED PRINT ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN:

Judge's comments: In this category, we need to capitalise on repeat recognition by having the same theme or design running in a series of advertisements. Some entries missed having a benefit headline by just running the business name at the top in the misbelief it will attract readers. The better entries engaged readers.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

BURNETT TODAY – October is Sexual Violence Awareness Month

CANUNGRA TIMES –The Butchery Canungra

THIRD PLACE:

LOCKYER & SOMERSET INDEPENDENT – Elders relocation

SECOND PLACE:

BURNETT TODAY - Personalised Road Safety messages- "It's time to take notice"

FIRST PLACE:

WARWICK/STANTHORPE TODAY- Helen Harm Real Estate

Judge said: Strong headline, great illustrations and relevant message for property investors

AWARD FOR BEST LOCALLY PRODUCED PRINT ADVERTISEMENT:

Judge's comments: A good number of entries made for a competitive section, with some engaging and appealing illustrations, great offers and strong messages.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

CAIRNS LOCAL NEWS – Rediscover the power of newspapers!

LOCKYER & SOMERSET INDEPENDENT – Portable Dummies for Hire

THIRD PLACE:

CQ TODAY – Finlayson & McKenzie funeral planning

SECOND PLACE:

LOCKYER & SOMERSET INDEPENDENT – Old Fernvale Bakery & Café

FIRST PLACE:

WARWICK/STANTHORPE TODAY – Warwick Indoor Recreation & Aquatic Centre

Judge said: A great set of full page advertisements capturing the attention of every reader and challenging them to action.

AWARD FOR BEST SPECIAL PUBLICATION:

Judge's comments: A solid number of entries with maps and charts among the gloss booklets and well researched and presented products. Great to see new players picking up on past revenue ideas with the caricature calendars.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

CQ TODAY - 2021 Caricature Calendar

WESTERN DOWNS TOWN & COUNTRY - 2021 Caricature Calendar

EQUAL THIRD PLACE:

WARWICK/STANTHORPE TODAY- Christmas Catalogue

CQ TODAY – CQ Wedding Expo Guide

SECOND PLACE:

THE EXPRESS, MAREEBA – Tablelands Better Beef Open Day

FIRST PLACE:

NOOSA TODAY – Seniors Today

Judge said: A 40-page tabloid packed full of great articles highlighting locals in action and covering a wide range of pertinent topics for the Sunshine Coast's large retiree community.

AWARD FOR THE BEST COMMUNITY ADVERTISING PROMOTION:

Judge's comments: Support for business communities severely impacted by Covid-19 restrictions came to the fore in this section. Also a couple of "feel good" entries including a photo competition for best district images. This Award is really looking for promotion of community events or issues which the masthead has instigated, is involved in and provided strong promotion. Capitalise on community leadership opportunities.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

LOCKYER & SOMERSET INDEPENDENT – Colours of Lockyer photographic competition

THIRD PLACE:

BEAUDESERT BULLETIN – Save our Pig & Calf Saleyards

SECOND PLACE:

FASSIFERN GUARDIAN & TRIBUNE- "It's not business as usual – but there's still business to be done!"

FIRST PLACE:

BURNETT TODAY – Locals supporting Locals

Judge said: Engaging readers in this shop local promotion promoting impacted business just got the nod ahead of the innovative runner-up which had business support advertising partly funded by the two local politicians

BEST HOUSE ADVERTISEMENT OR PROMOTION – PRINT AND/OR ONLINE:

Judge's comments: How fantastic that this Award attracted one of the strongest and certainly highest quality of entries overall – and it's about time we focussed on advertising ourselves in the same way we do for our customers! It was great to the diversity of strategies – and goals!

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

WARWICK/STANTHORPE TODAY – Subscribe for free!

THIRD PLACE:

CAIRNS LOCAL NEWS – Rediscover the power of newspapers

EQUAL SECOND PLACE:

BURNETT TODAY – Focus on selling your property faster!

MY WEEKLY PREVIEW - Launch of new website www.sunshinecoastnews.com.au

FIRST PLACE:

DAILY MERCURY, MACKAY- www.dailymercury.com.au – “My Town” audience and community engagement

Judge says: In very strong competition and under the Covid cloud, this exceptionally comprehensive.

“My Town” promotion started life in print and then transitioned when the Mercury went online, engaging Mackay’s regional communities and building the online audience and subscriptions. A major project spanning a year!

PUBLICATION AWARDS

These Awards were judged across photography, journalism, advertising, presentation and innovation. Judges said the overall standard of the entries was high. The Awards highlight the changing dynamics of publishing strategies, new players in the game, embracing technology, the development of outstanding online news sites and robust engagement of audiences.

AWARD FOR BEST PAID NEWSPAPER

Comments: Full marks to the new newspapers which have emerged in the past year – especially the paid weeklies setting new era in regional publishing in Queensland.

THIRD PLACE: BUNDABERG TODAY
SECOND PLACE: BURNETT TODAY
FIRST PLACE: FASSIFERN GUARDIAN & TRIBUNE

Judges' comments: Brilliant. Taking Boonah's locally-focussed weekly tabloid to bi-weekly with the addition of a spectacular broadsheet Saturday edition and expanding into Ipswich and Scenic Rim region obviously took courage – but has paid huge dividends with weekly circulation approaching 9000. Congratulations.

AWARD FOR BEST FREE NEWSPAPER:

Comments: More full marks, with seven new publications swelling the entries numbers and providing excellent competition. The joint winners are a cut above – different in style, but impressive publications at the top of this group. The "positiveness" in the Frees was very pleasing, along with a very noticeable trend to more "hard" news and community issues than in previous years.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: SUNNY COAST TIMES
THIRD PLACE: WARWICK/STANTHORPE TODAY
SECOND PLACE : THE EXPRESS, MAREEBA
EQUAL FIRST PLACE: MY WEEKLY PREVIEW

A 51,425 circulation home delivered gloss magazine style weekly on Sunshine Coast. Very high quality in all categories. Morphed into more hard news following closure of the regional daily.

EQUAL FIRST PLACE: HERVEY BAY ADVERTISER

A monster! 80+ pages trimmed tabloid full of great advertising, community news and real estate – and great effort for a new start-up in the wake of News regionals print closures.

BEST ONLINE PUBLICATION:

Comments: The range of entries reflects the growing importance of online news publications. Gone are the days when newspapers dabbled in online new websites. Now readers are able to access comprehensive news sites that bring them news and information as it happens. The entries are mix of non-paywalled and paywalled news sites. This is an emerging category that will have to adapt to changing audience behaviour and trends.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: SUNSHINE VALLEY GAZETTE- www.sunshinevalleygazette.com.au

EQUAL SECOND PLACE: SUNSHINE COAST DAILY- www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au

DAILY MERCURY, MACKAY- www.dailymercury.com.au

FIRST PLACE: MY WEEKLY PREVIEW- www.sunshinecoastnews.com.au

Comments: My Weekly Preview via its Sunshine Coast News website provides the complete package for a community online publication. While it provides a strong local news presence it is more than an online news site. It is simple terms; it is the complete package. Reflecting its printed publication, the online publication features a mix of local news, human interest features, stories about local events and entertainment. The layout is easy to navigate, and the teaser titles and teasers texts (stand firsts) invite the reader to find out more. The layout points the reader to the big story of the page through devices such wide photos and headline or full width layouts for major features



SPECIAL THANKS

Queensland Country Press Association Inc sincerely thanks the judges of this year's QCPA Media Excellence Awards for providing their time, their professional assessments and constructive comments assisting member newspapers improve the quality
And services to readers and advertisers.

SPECIAL APPRECIATION TO OUR SPONSOR PARTNERS

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