

## EXAMPLE STORY

Heart of the Community  
**The Local Express Newsletter**  
Milton Ulladulla ExServos Club



WINNER 2017

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### **Outline your unique story/project/program**

The Milton Ulladulla ExServos Club is submitting the Local Express newsletter for the ClubsNSW Heart of the Community Awards as we believe that the Local Express newsletter encompasses the very definition of providing a unique contribution to benefit the community.

The Local Express provides a free fortnightly local news resource that promotes local sporting and community groups, festivals, live shows, local charities, fundraisers, not-for-profit organisations, and group and individual achievements.

### **Why was this story/project/program addressed as a priority?**

The Local Express newsletter was first published in July 2016 in response to feedback received from local sporting and community groups that indicated that the local newspaper was no longer able to meet their publishing needs and many of their achievements were left unrecognised by the wider community.

The Milton Ulladulla ExServos Club Management Team conducted a number of planning sessions to address concerns and solutions that would not only benefit the sporting and community groups that we sponsor, but groups, charities, fundraisers and programs in the greater community.

The idea for a free local publication was well received and developed into the Local Express newsletter, which provides another avenue of recognition for local groups, events and businesses as well as encouraging community support.

### **Tell us what was contributed toward this story/project/program?**

Originally, eight local businesses were secured as advertisers in the Local Express in an effort to offset the cost of publication as well as a substantial \$50,000 contribution by the Milton Ulladulla ExServos Club which included the recruitment of a Publications Coordinator three days a week and a Graphic Designer.

Initial advertisers included Big4 Bungalow Park on Burrill Lake, BSP Advisory, South Coast Business & Financial Solutions Pty Ltd, Ken Matthews Auto Pro, Milton Ulladulla Funeral Services, Raine & Horne Real Estate, South Coast Limos & Hire Cars, Tony Ireland Eye Q Optometrists, Ulladulla Printing Services and Ulladulla Toyota.

The positive response and growing success of the newsletter within the local community has resulted in further enquiries from other local businesses wishing to advertise in the Local Express as well as an influx of community group submissions.

## **What was the measureable difference that the support made?**

During the initial stages of developing the Local Express newsletter, The Milton Ulladulla ExServos Club met with delegates from both sponsored and non-sponsored local community and sporting groups to discuss content submission.

Each group confirmed their willingness to submit articles and photographs fortnightly. The first issue of the Local Express consisted of 11 community interest articles and has grown to an average of 20-22 interest articles.

The current distribution of the Local Express is 8,000 newsletters. 6,300 newsletters are distributed to the community via mail box drop, including Bawley Point, Bendalong, Burrill Lake, Lake Conjola, Dolphin Point, Kings Point, Manyana, Mollymook, Mollymook Beach, Narrawallee, Milton and Ulladulla.

Additional points of distribution include a number of local Newsagencies throughout the area, advertiser retailer spaces and office's, The Milton Ulladulla ExServos Club, community group meetings, sports fields, caravan parks and motels, the Sandbar and Café, Libraries, the Resource Centre as well as the Ulladulla Information Centre at the Civic Centre.

Due to the sheer volume of content received, we also offer an online version of the Local Express through FlipSnack which incorporates additional articles.

In addition to sporting and community groups and local accomplishments, the Local Express promotes local initiatives such as Take 3 for the Sea, the Ulladulla Local Aboriginal Land Council NAIDOC Festival, the Blessing of the Fleet, Escape ARTFest, and the U.G.L.Y Bartender to name just a few.

Feedback received from the local community indicates that the Local Express newsletter has increased awareness and participation in local fundraising events like Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, An Evening in Tuscany and the World's Greatest Shave.

Not only does the Local Express provide a reliable resource for the community, it brings the community closer together, providing news that directly relates to the achievements of friends, neighbours, family and co-workers. The Local Express newsletter promotes local initiatives which also includes ClubGRANTS participation by the Milton Ulladulla ExServos Club and other local Clubs, not only recognising the Clubs involved and the \$50,000 donated to the community, but recognising the groups who have applied.

Two ClubGRANT recipients were interviewed and published in the Local Express providing the community with insight into what the funds are used for. One group in particular also required volunteers and once published, received the response they were after by the way of two volunteers.

Another successful example from the Local Express, is the Gondwana Coast Fossil Walk. After publishing an article in the newsletter, participation at the free local tours provided at Gondwana Coast Fossil Walk more than doubled.

The Local Express is designed to provide the community with great news and achievements, but it is also designed to bring us closer together. The use of the Community Calendar is a simple, yet effective tool in communicating important dates to the community. Groups such as Pigeon House RSL Day Club, VIEW Clubs, Probus Clubs and many more have expressed their gratitude for the community calendar as many of their members are elderly and not familiar with today's technology.

**Do you have long-term plans/goals for this story/project/program?**

In July 2017, the Local Express newsletter will double in size from 16 pages, to 32 pages due to the positive response from the community and advertiser enquiries. The newsletter will be in production for another year before it is again reviewed for the July 2018 anniversary.

Over the past year, the Milton Ulladulla ExServos Club has published 24 free fortnightly newsletters, with anywhere up to 22 articles per issue. From July 2017, article's will increase in size and volume bringing our community closer together.

The Local Express newsletter will continue to nurture the community and sporting groups as well as events, fundraisers and individual achievements through the use of the newsletter, providing our town with a sense of inclusion and opportunities for socialising.

Many elderly patrons of the Club have mentioned reading the Local Express newsletter and finding groups in which they join to socialise with people their own age and engage in activities.

It is stories like this that drives the Local Express newsletter. With the increase in pages and distribution by Australian Post in July 2017, opposed to mailbox drop, the recognition these groups will receive will widen further.