

## John Aitken

Chief Executive Officer, Brisbane Marketing

As CEO of Brisbane Marketing, the city's official marketing body, John is an industry leader with extensive experience and proven success in leading major events and marketing some iconic Australian projects.

Over the past 27 years, John has delivered more than 1,000 events, raising over \$200 million in revenue via sponsorship, government funding and sales and attracting more than 25 million people to enjoy his work.

His last and most notable role was General Manager Events and Marketing for the Sydney Royal Easter Show (SRES) where he grew corporate investment by 160 per cent and used the funds to reinvigorate the historic event and increase visitor numbers in key target demographics.

In 2007, his leadership and achievements were acknowledged when SRES won the Australian Tourism Award in the Major Festival and Events Category, eclipsing Melbourne's Commonwealth Games and the Gold Coast Indy.

John's experience in major events and in-depth understanding of the tourism industry have been translated into a number of self-authored strategic plans, including the Sydney Olympic Park Authority Event Plan, Tourism Sydney Events Plan and Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, Events and Marketing Plans.

John created the pilot project 'Down by the River' and became the Founding Producer and Creative Director of the inaugural Riverfestival, International Riversymposium and Riverprize, attracting major funding and building it into Queensland's largest annual event and the world's preeminent river celebration and management prize.

Joining Brisbane Marketing in early 2008, John now leads an aspirational marketing organisation that plays a strategic role in Brisbane's tourism and business vision. At the helm of Brisbane's growth, the agency is leading some of the most significant projects the city has ever seen delivering on the vision of building awareness and enhancing the profile of the city.

Since his appointment as CEO of Brisbane Marketing, John has been selected to sit on three prominent Boards, helping to steer Brisbane's economic and sustainable future, including: Australia TradeCoast, Australian Association of Convention Bureau, Green Heart City Smart Advisory Group and Brisbane City Council Sister Cities Advisory Group.

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### Iconic projects include

- Townsville's Coral Sea 92 and VP50 Commemorations, and 2000 Olympic Torch Relay Celebrations
- South Bank Parklands Entertainment Program
- Brisbane Christmas Lights Competition
- World Masters Games Welcome and Ceremony
- Waltzing Matilda Centre Opening Celebrations
- State of Origin Game Day Celebrations
- Gold Coast Indy Carnival Air Show
- Lord Mayor's Carols (Brisbane)
- Brisbane Sky Show

### Areas of expertise

- Corporate investment
- Strategic brand, marketing and media management
- Financial management
- Strategic council
- Sponsorship
- Tourism and destination marketing
- Large scale project management

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### Notable achievements

- Creator, Founding Producer and Creative Director of Brisbane's Riverfestival, Inter. Riversymposium & Riverprize
  - General Manager Events and Marketing for the Sydney Royal Easter Show
  - Author of Sydney Olympic Park Authority Post Olympics Event Plan
  - Author of Tourism Sydney Events Marketing Plan and Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority Event Plan
  - 2007 winner of Major Festival and Events category at the Australian Tourism Awards
  - 2006 winner of Major Festival and Events category at the 2006 NSW Tourism Awards
  - Managing Director John Aitken Productions
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