

Role models embrace Maori culture

by Peter Thornton

Role models for young Maori are raising their profile in many areas with the common message for success: being true to their Maori culture.

Tamaki Tours, a multi-million dollar cultural tourism enterprise based in Rotorua, emerged from humble beginnings.

After being denied several bank loans, Doug Tamaki sold his Harley Davidson to raise the start up costs for Tamaki Tours in partnership with his brother Mike.

"In our business development and strategy, there has been much trial and error to what is popular," says Doug Tamaki.

"We tried all sorts of other packages like adventure tourism and so on but it wasn't us, we were trying to sell a product we didn't identify with."

It became clear the most effective part of the business was the cultural component.

"The marae stay, the hangi and the mythology we offered. Giving real meaning and value to cultural legends were very popular."

"Maori culture is truly unique and people want to experience it in an authentic environment. It proved that expressing our culture and our tikanga was the key to our success."

New Zealand's premier reggae band, Katchafire, also provides an inspirational role model.

Their debut album *Revival* has been a phenomenal success, going double platinum in New Zealand.

The eight piece Hamilton band are all of Maori descent and bring many



CATCHING ON: Reggae band Katchafire are inspirational role models for young Maori.

Maori qualities to their performance.

Many New Zealanders, particularly Maori, love reggae, buying more Bob Marley albums per capita than any other country in the world, says the Katchafire website.

The band puts high emphasis on the whanau. Grenville Bell, who formed the band seven years ago, plays lead guitar. His son Logan is on lead vocals and plays rhythm guitar and another son, Jordan, plays drums, with other family members helping at the door.

Te reo features on their website. "Nga mihi nui ki te whanau e noho ana i reira", which translates as 'Many thanks to all our fans who live

there.' They too believe their success is being true to their culture.

"We are all Maori first, and Katchafire is our product of music. In this we are representing our culture," says Ara Adams Tama-Tea, the band's manager and bass player.

"It's been a long slog, but this last year has felt like overnight success. We all believe its really important recognising our whanau and whakapapa in our journey," he says.

Last year, Ngati Whatua o Orakei, in conjunction with the Special Education Auckland City Maori Focus team, recognised the lack of role models for Maori.

It sought to address the problem

with schemes directed at young Maori with challenging behaviour.

The programme has achieved positive results and has been designed to familiarise young Maori with their culture and its value.

It involves tikanga o te marae (customs of the marae), tikanga o te waka (customs of traditional Maori waka) and te reo.

The key to the programme is mentoring support for Maori youth.

"Their approach is that of a tuakana (older brother) offering advice and support to the teina (younger brother)."

"They learned a lot about the marae, which for some of these boys

was interesting and rewarding because they didn't have a lot of involvement in Maori culture," says Kirsty Marama, a behaviour worker of the programme.

The emphasis is on relationship building and this provides a more personal form of guidance and support for Maori youth, she says.

It is also important to ensure role models are not solely at the elite level of achievement, says Nuku Rapana, chairperson of the Pukapuka Community Group.

"Role models have to be at a level that is realistic. It's unrealistic to use high profile people as role models for ordinary people."

Smokefree focus for healthcare

by Owen Hembry

Fallout from Don Brash's now famous Orewa speech has got South Auckland's largest Maori health provider working harder than ever to get a positive message across.

Jude Manuel, senior team leader at Raukura Hauora O Tainui (peace and wellness for the people of Tainui) based in Otahuhu, says since Don Brash's speech there is a more critical public and media focus on Maori organisations.

"We need to be even more astute than before in the way we perform, the way we do business, in everything we do."

Mrs Manuel says it's important that the organisation, which provides a wide range of primary and social healthcare services, is open to anyone in the community regardless of their ethnicity.

"I think we need to be seen doing positive things. You can't exclude people — you live with everybody."

She says Maori male life expectancy of 69 years compared to Australian Aboriginal expectancy of 59 years shows the positive impact of Maori health providers, but more must be done to close the gap to Pakeha life expectancy of 77 years.

"New Zealand is way ahead of the rest of the world. At least in New Zealand we actually consider indigenous models."

Smoking is a key focus of the organisation because of its impact on health, including asthma, heart disease, and lung cancer.

Mrs Manuel says smoking must be seen in a wider social context as surveys show that 50% of Maori adults smoke, compared to only 20% of non-Maori, contributing to one third of all Maori deaths every year.

"It's the highest preventable cause of death in Maori, but if people are finding it hard to put food on the table they don't worry about smoking."

Mrs Manuel says cultural aware-



SMOKEFREE: Melissa Wong from Raukura Hauora O Tainui, organiser of a 'smokefree' hui at Mangere Bridge in April 2004.

ness, an increasing focus on Maori models of health, and taking healthcare provision out into the community have all encouraged better use of health services.

Executive manager Elaine Preston says the 'Memorandum of Understanding' signed with AUT in December 2003 will improve training, research and understanding of healthcare provision in the Maori community.

"AUT has looked outside the square and said 'What can we do?' Nobody has asked us that before."

University associate professor Dr Mihi Ratima says research and edu-

cation affecting the Maori community will benefit from stronger Maori involvement.

"It's located in a Maori world view. In the past there has been a lot of bad practice and recognition of the need to improve research — there is a real expectation now."

Raukura Hauora O Tainui dates back to the 1930s when Princess Te Puea was instrumental in the creation of a health provider aimed at reducing high Maori mortality rates.

The organisation's philosophy is "mehemea a karekau he matekite ka mate te iwi" (where there is no vision the people will perish).

Maori TV creating great opportunities

by Laura Crooks

Since its launch on March 28, Aotearoa's newest national station has created many new jobs because of the growing need for programmes and advertising in Maori.

The manager of on air promotions at Maori Television, Sheila Byrne, says that she can see a whole new advertising market opening up.

"Certainly with the onslaught of Maori television it's opened up new avenues for people to produce commercials in Maori."

Their first client was The Warehouse, every week the agency is making a spot to promote their weekly sales.

"They also have public service announcements, like 'Don't drink and drive'. They've got those, but with a Maori leaning."

Jason King, the Te Reo me nga Tikanga co-ordinator of Te Ara Poutama, at AUT, has noticed how Maori TV has opened up new jobs for his Bachelor of Maori Development (BMD) students.

"It's very good for my students, it's just really picked them up now that they have another avenue to pursue."

Students have the option of going into multimedia, television, media and business as well as becoming fluent in Maori.

"Our department prides itself on having a 100% employment rate for our students. They go there knowing how to develop the business or organization they're going to go into."

"Te reo is essential because we see it as just another arrow to your quiver."

On the course, students make films that are either entirely in Maori, bilingual or in English but looking at Maori things, Mr King says.

"The opportunity is for our students to come from a Maori perspective."

Not only are students getting experience making Maori-related films in class, Mr King says employers have approached him wanting people with knowledge of te reo.

Mr King says some of his top students are working part-time for production companies using their Maori language skills.

Maori TV has also introduced the need for more translators, he says, and the BMD students are learning the skills necessary for that.

"What we are also tapping into, with software and computer development, is voice-over translation."

"There is a lot of work, good money also, especially with the demand to translate movies and cartoons."

The BMD students who translate these programmes then sell

them to Maori TV. Ms Byrne says that about 85% of Maori TV is voiced in Maori, mostly with English subtitles, which indicates how much work is available for translators.

"We have a close link to Maori Television," says Mr King.

As well as the employment opportunities for his students, Mr King also looks at Maori TV as being an asset for the whole country.

"It makes us better too because there are different ways of doing things, different languages going around. It's awesome to see."

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