

# Pacific magazine thriving on that 'feel good' factor

by Peter White

Journalist Innes Logan launched *SPASIFIK* magazine to inspire Pacific Islanders and Maori with success stories from their own cultures.

Four issues on, the magazine is increasing its readership and advertising revenue.

Initially it was Logan's reputation and status as a journalist that convinced the advertising industry that *SPASIFIK* would be a success.

"We had to prove ourselves first, show that people will like the product, will buy it — and we had some good support from people who went on my track record."

"The magazine relies on advertising and it is something that I learnt quickly — that you need someone who can sell advertising," he says.

The Auckland-based magazine was launched in February this year, just in time for Logan's 40th birthday.

Logan wanted to produce a professional magazine that was informative, inspiring, and



INNES LOGAN

"Sometimes publishing a Samoan surname can get people down and depressed. For me there are enough successful people worth celebrating."

He has been asked if he is going to run out of people to write about soon, but he says he has many stories held over at the moment, waiting to be published.

The first edition in March included a story of 40 successful Maori and Pacific Islanders from all walks of society.

Logan wrote: "Without hesitation they can name family and friends who had the talent and the potential to achieve, yet failed to do it. What unites them is a desire to do something about it — to see the bar raised."

Logan thrives on feedback from his readers. He especially likes a recent comment from a Maori radio station in Northland, which said the magazine has a real "feel-good factor".

He enjoyed the comment but says it does not mean *SPASIFIK* will not tackle tougher issues in the future. An example of this is the story on meningitis in the latest issue.

"If we do, we want to give people a sense of hope — that there is an answer."

*SPASIFIK* covers an eclectic range of topics, including politics, sport, art, fashion, business, education, travel, books, music, radio.

Each issue of the magazine features a column from an invited politician.

Logan wants to improve literacy standards among Pacific Islanders and Maori, and sees *SPASIFIK* as an ideal way to help do that.

"I really want to see Maori and Pacific Islanders succeed in a broad range of fields — not just in sport and music."

"Our education standards have to improve and I'm proud that our magazine is a written vehicle."

"That is where we are sorely lacking in terms of our literacy levels. We have to get our people reading."

**"I realised that Pacific Islanders and Maori are the ones who need the most in terms of role models."**

reflected positive aspects of Pacific Island and Maori lifestyles and culture in Aotearoa.

"I realised that Pacific Islanders and Maori are the ones who need the most in terms of role models."

"They need someone to inspire them because when they pick up the paper they see familiar names involved in crime, and poor statistics to do with health and education."

He says many Pacific people believe the media is biased against them, but it is not a subject Logan wants to get into.

"How can you quantify that? They are only reporting facts."

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# Moala upbeat about *Taimi's* future



KALAFI MOALA

by Sudesh Kissun

An Auckland-based publisher will know later this month if he can circulate his newspaper in Tonga.

Kalafi Moala says it would take up to four weeks for Tonga's Chief Justice Robin Webster to make a ruling on *Taimi's* constitutional appeal.

The *Taimi O Tonga* newspaper — the island kingdom's best seller — was banned by the Government.

Moala and his lawyer Dr Rodney Harrison attended a

week-long Supreme Court hearing in Nukualofa last month.

"We are pretty confident of a positive outcome," he says.

"The people of Tonga are also excited about the prospect of *Taimi* returning to the island."

Moala says the sacking of three ministers by the Government just before their case may also help their cause.

Prime Minister Ulukalala Lavaka Ata sacked Police Minister Clive Edwards, Justice Minister Aisea Taumoepeau, and the Minister of Labour, Commerce and Industries

Masasso Paunga.

"The Tongan PM went on TV to say the three ministers gave really poor advice to the government," he says.

"Interestingly he also referred to new legislation relating to media, saying there seemed to be a lot of opposition and the Government had lost court cases relating to the new legislation."

Moala says Edwards and Taumoepeau were the architects of constitutional changes that affected his newspaper.

The Tongan Government decided last year to amend the

constitution and issue licenses to newspapers. *Taimi O Tonga* failed to obtain a licence and is banned from the island.

In his submission, Harrison argued the changes to the constitution affected the Bill of Rights and should never have been tampered with.

The Government argued that the Tongan Parliament had powers to amend the constitution as and when required.

*Taimi O Tonga* is published twice a week out of Penrose and is distributed in Australia and the US.