
Boomali Aboriginal Artists Co-Operative Limited

Strategic Plan FY2003

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Organisation Background

Introduction

Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative Limited (Boomalli) is a contemporary arts organisation which was incorporated to promote Aboriginal culture and independence through the visual arts and to facilitate the teaching of arts and arts related activities for self management and control. Boomalli seeks to achieve these objectives by providing a community art gallery for the display of Aboriginal works of art and to give Aboriginal artists an opportunity to promote their art practice. Over the 15 years since Boomalli was incorporated the organisation has achieved many successes including national and international recognition of its member artists and arts workers.

To date Boomalli has been reliant on government funding (from various sources) to pursue its objectives. As the organisation has matured and its sights have been raised by its progressive successes, increased levels of government funding required to meet these higher objectives has not been secured. According to Boomalli, funding for operations has been steadily declining in real terms over recent years resulting in below award wages, cut backs to curatorial and administrative staff and the inability to keep up with technology changes and equipment obsolescence.

Notwithstanding the financial constraints on the organisation, Boomalli has achieved a great deal in its 15 years. It is now located in new premises in 55-59 Flood Street Leichhardt, which offer greatly improved gallery facilities to the previous premises. Many of the founding members of Boomalli are established artists and the organisation has a reputation as an excellent training ground for new artists and arts workers. The challenge for Boomalli is to identify and implement strategies which will enable it to use its assets to take the organisation above and beyond the scale of its annual government funding allowance.

STRENGTHS

- 15 year track record of the organisation
- Artistic reputation both locally and internationally (as perceived by teaching institutions, galleries, the public and other artists)
- Members represent a significant pool of artists
- Uniqueness (the only contemporary artists co-operative in NSW)
- A proven incubator of developing artists and art workers
- An organisation run by artists (artistic skills, understanding of art)
- Established web site
- Permanent gallery in a good location (building in Leichhardt is fully owned, centrally located and reasonably spacious)

Key Strengths	Strategies to Build on Strengths
Reputation/track record	Communicate to customers/sponsors
Pool of artists	Build database of skills, experience, commercial success
Gallery	Promote and market the gallery space, including signage, hiring of the space for functions, use of the gallery by regional arts organisations

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of participation by members
- An organisation run by artists (lack of business and marketing/promotional skills)
- Lack of business resources (admin staff, IT staff, IT and other equipment)
- Lack of training to fully use current resources (including IT, imaging software)
- Web site needs to be upgraded
- Reliance on government funding (not financially independent)
- Reduction of government funding in recent years
- Friends of Boomalli database has not been maintained
- Space constraints expected when new building tenants arrive

Key Weaknesses	Strategies to Address the Weaknesses
Reliance on government funding	Identify other revenue sources i.e. promote member artists, commercial activities, sponsorship
Lack of resources	Maximise the talents of members and Friends of the Co-op, approach other organisations/companies to provide support in terms of expertise, advice and knowledge sharing
Marketing and promotional skills	See above

OPPORTUNITIES

- Education of the public regarding contemporary urban Aboriginal art
- Implementation of "active member" rules
- Exposure and commercial opportunities stemming from better use of the internet
- Commercial revenue generation opportunities (art bank, greeting cards, etc)
- Corporate sponsorship
- Greater utilisation of the gallery - more exhibitions, revenue generation opportunities
- Mobilisation of the Friends of Boomalli to access resources and commercial opportunities
- Operational synergies and promotional opportunities with the other organisations in the building

Key Opportunities	Strategies to Exploit the Opportunities
Commercial revenue generation	Contract a hands-on marketing resource, investigate Art Bank, education market, etc
Corporate sponsorship	Investigate opportunities under the DSRD Budyari Ngalaya program
Friends of Boomalli	Cultivate new Friends and identify opportunities for "in kind" support, particularly in terms of commercial skills transfer

THREATS

- Decline in funding for arts organisations
- Increasing competition for arts funding
- Changes in government policy i.e. the recent trend toward performing over visual arts
- Competition from traditional Aboriginal art
- Lack of public awareness of contemporary Aboriginal art
- Other organisations to share the building (loss of control, unfavourable association, disruptions)

Key Threats	Strategies to Mitigate the Threats
Decline in funding	Identify other revenue sources i.e. promote member artists, commercial activities, sponsorship
Govt support of performing arts	Promote to the government the importance and significance of visual arts, link in with performing arts organisations to "share" funding
Lack of awareness	Marketing and promotion of urban, contemporary Indigenous art

The Boomalli Governing Committee developed the following VISION for the organisation for FY2008:

Staff

- 3 Curatorial
- 3 Admin
- 1 Marketing
- 1 Education coordinator

Membership

- 50 active members with a further 20 non-active members.
- 100 Friends of Boomalli (made up of individuals, corporates, local businesses, similar interest groups, international arts organisations, government)

Revenue Sources

- Sales commissions
- Merchandise *
- Reproductions sales *
- Lectures & gallery tours *
- Education workshops *
- Gallery hire to regional arts organisations
- Commissioned work *
- Art bank *
- Art deliveries *
- Greeting cards *
- Curatorial advice and consulting *
- Government funding
- (* - promote via the Boomalli website)

Information Sources

- Up to date register of member artists and skills

Gallery Facilities

Gallery set up to be "state of the art", specifically in terms of moveable display walls, art storage and lighting.

Operational Facilities

To have access to up to date equipment and technology (digital imaging, storage, etc) and to assist and train members to use the latest technology.

Organisational Awareness & Positioning

To significantly raise the profile of contemporary urban Aboriginal art and to position Boomalli as one of Australia's leading arts organisations in this area.

**LONG TERM VISION
(10 to 15 years)**

To develop an educational arm to train new artists using Boomalli members as coaches and mentors.

Core Competencies

The core competence of an organisation is that "thing" that the organisation does well and which has been at the heart of its past success.

If the current CORE COMPETENCE of the organisation does not match with its stated VISION, the organisation has two alternatives:

1. Change its VISION to accommodate its CORE COMPETENCE
2. Develop a new CORE COMPETENCE to reflect its VISION

It is far more difficult to achieve (2) above, as you are in effect trying to change the very essence of the organisation as it exists today.

Boomalli's CORE COMPETENCE is its ability to speak with a united voice on behalf of a group of artists which has led to the development of a significant range of tangible and intangible assets. This core competence is underpinned by the individual artistic skills of the members of Boomalli.

This ability to effectively represent a group of artists has been at the centre of the organisation's success to date. Continuing to represent the members and identify new revenue sources for the art they produce will be the key to achieving Boomalli's stated VISION.

Vision, Strategies and Plans

STRATEGIES define how the VISION is going to be achieved. IMPLEMENTATION PLANS describe how the STRATEGIES are going to be implemented. A STRATEGY without a PLAN is not complete.

The Governing Committee's strategic workshop and other discussions have focused on developing appropriate STRATEGIES for the organisation in order to achieve its stated VISION. The following elements of the VISION and associated STRATEGIES have been identified:

Vision/Goals	Strategies
<p><u>Increase Membership</u> Grow to 50 active and 20 non active members. 100 Friends of Boomalli.</p>	<p>Implement the new Boomalli rules, cull non-active members where appropriate and inject some new life in the organisation via new, active members. Develop a Friends of Boomalli "product offering" and promote via flyers and other promotional activities.</p>
<p><u>Increase Staffing</u> Increase to 3 curatorial, 3 admin, 1 marketing and 1 educational coordinator.</p>	<p>Generate sufficient revenues to meet the employment costs of these staff. The majority of funding will need to be generated from non-government sources. Implement training and talent identification programs (e.g. traineeships) to attract and retain staff. Succession planning will also need to be undertaken in relation to key senior positions.</p>

Vision/Goals	Strategies
<p><u>Diversify and Increase Revenue Sources</u> Develop new revenue sources, primarily from commercial activities.</p>	<p>Access business, marketing and other commercial skills through external consultants, alliances and networks (i.e. Friends of Boomalli). Consultants MUST be involved in a hands-on role, the priority at this stage being the development and promotion of commercial activities utilising Boomalli's current resources and attributes. Identify a range of commercial opportunities and prioritise in terms of potential benefits versus time and cost to develop and likelihood of success (See Revenue Sources identified on page 14).</p>
<p><u>Improve public awareness/perception of the organisation</u> Raise the profile of contemporary urban Aboriginal art and Boomalli's role in this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote and enhance the web site. - Attend networking functions and establish strategic alliances. - Utilise member, friends of Boomalli and government networks to promote this area of art and the organisation. - Promote the organisation to local business and other organisation in the local Inner West area. - Promote the organisation to like-minded regional organisations.

Service Growth Strategy

The vision for Boomalli anticipates significant growth in commercial activities over the next 5 years.

There are four generic product/service related strategies open to the organisation to achieve this growth:

Growth Strategy	Risk	Description	Objective	Examples
Market penetration	low	selling more of the <u>same products/services in the same markets</u> i.e. growing market share	Maintaining competitive advantage already gained by strong service offering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding more exhibitions
Market expansion	medium	selling the <u>same products/services to new markets</u>	Taking what you are good at and applying the same principles in a new market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic expansion of greeting cards and reproductions sales e.g. into interstate and overseas markets
Service development	medium	developing <u>new products/services</u> and selling them to the <u>existing markets</u>	Capitalising on the needs of the existing customers for your types of products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New merchandise sales • Art bank • Art deliveries • Facilitation of commissions
Market diversification	high	developing <u>new products/services</u> and selling them to <u>new markets</u>	Diversifying risk away from your current organisation by entering a different market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture & gallery tours • Gallery hire

The table below summarises the specific strategies discussed with Boomalli:

		Existing Services		New Services	
Existing Markets		<p><i>Low Risk</i> <u>Market Penetration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic expansion of greeting cards and reproductions sales 	<p><i>Medium Risk</i> <u>Service Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New merchandise sales • Art bank • Art deliveries • Facilitation of commissions • Lecture & gallery tours 		
	New Markets	<p><i>Medium Risk</i> <u>Market Expansion</u></p> <p>Geographic expansion of greeting cards and reproductions sales e.g. into interstate and overseas markets</p>	<p><i>High Risk</i> <u>Market Diversification</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallery hire 		

New Service Development for a Market

Methodology for selecting new services

The process to select potential new services is as follows:

1. Develop the selection criteria and rank their importance.
2. Research the market for products/services that meet the criteria.
3. Rank the services according to the criteria.
4. Select the appropriate products.
5. Phase the implementation of the new services to ensure adequate resources are given to each.

Possible Selection Criteria

- **Target Market:**
Must be appropriate for business target market.
- **Meet the needs of existing customers:**
Must be needed by existing customers. The service may be currently be provided by a competitor who is not offering high service levels, or may be an unfulfilled need.
- **Market Opportunity**
The market size must be sufficient to provide sufficient revenue.
- **Return**
The return (profitability) should be set based the organisation's gross margin requirements.

Potential New Services for the Australian Market

- Reproductions sales
- Art bank
- Art deliveries
- Lectures
- Gallery tours
- Curatorial advice and consulting

Critical Success Factors

The major factors that will determine the organisation's success over the next 5 years are:

1. The ability to identify commercial opportunities
2. Obtaining access to hands-on commercial marketing expertise to implement the various commercial opportunities identified in the plan
3. Adherence to a well thought out plan and structured growth strategy
4. Protecting the **CORE COMPETENCE** by continuing to represent the interests of members and by protecting and developing the resources required to achieve the objects of the co-operative

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