



Profile - ThinkEvans Pty Ltd

OVERVIEW

ThinkEvans is a boutique management consultancy with particular capabilities in strategic research and options development, business improvement, performance measurement, organisational change management, process modelling and review, logistics strategy and the selective use of eBusiness to accelerate or expand the capability of an organisation.

At the heart of this work is the thoughtful diagnosis of symptoms and definition of problems, in order to devise enduring solutions to what are often knotty, untidy issues that have resisted previous attempts to resolve them.

Clients also use ThinkEvans as an interim means of expanding the capability of their senior team, or for focussing attention on an issue overdue for resolution. Smaller organisations use ThinkEvans for capability building, adding skills in advance of expanding their own teams when warranted by growth, or to leverage their own skills for faster growth.

Founded in 2002, ThinkEvans now has a diversity of clients including governments (State and Federal), private sector businesses and not for profit organisations.

SELECTED PROJECTS

2007/2008

Since January 2005, ThinkEvans has collaborated with the **Australian Business Foundation** to augment their organic capabilities, including advising their Board of Directors on major issues. Most recently, from mid-2007 to late 2008, this centred around providing project leadership for the publication of their book, *Inside the Innovation Matrix: Finding the hidden human dimensions* (refer www.abfoundation.com.au/research_knowledge/research/196, particularly the introduction at www.abfoundation.com.au/research_project_files/47/ITIM_00_Introduction.pdf).

In the course of 2007, ThinkEvans facilitated a step change in the Foundation's stakeholder relationships by delivery of a new online presence and project managing a major event for their 10th Anniversary, while in 2005/2006 principal contributions were to strategic planning and to their intellectual capital on topics such as innovation as a driver of improved productivity and sustained prosperity, and the case for public funding of science and innovation.

June 2008 saw the final delivery of a project in which the ThinkEvans team was deeply immersed for the substantive part of 2007. This called for redesigning a desktop reporting system for the **Office of the Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force**, continuing ThinkEvans' original work on a prototype system designed in 2003/2004 (see later section). The objective is to inform an assessment of military justice outcomes in the Australian Defence Force, with the system underpinning reporting on the health and effectiveness of the military justice system (one of the prime responsibilities of the Inspector General as an independent statutory authority).

Other key projects for 2007 were as divergent as conceptualizing a new governance structure for the Institute of the **Sisters of Mercy in Australia**, digesting the implications of the results of the 2006 Census for **Contiki Holidays** and assisting in the development of a network for women involved in manufacturing for the **NSW Department of State & Regional Development**.

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2005/2006

The pattern in 2006 was for a diversity of strategic analysis work for both public and private sector clients, beginning with a desktop study on globalizing research activities for the **Defence Teaming Centre (South Australia) and the University City Project in the SA Premier's Department**.

In later 2006, **The Nuance Group (Australia)** was digesting the structural changes evident in the fragrance market in Australia, and called for an industry analysis and assessment of market conditions to underpin strategic planning.

For the (then) **Department of the Environment and Heritage**, a major employee survey was conducted online to gauge the leadership skills of team leaders. The approach was to ask team members what skills they had actually seen applied in the workplace by their team leader. Completed by more than 60% of staff in September 2006, this was a key ingredient in redesigning the leadership development program for the Department.

In the context of longer term cultural change and organisational development initiatives, a targeted audit of customer service performance for **CSC Australia** was undertaken in mid-2006. In addition to making this assessment, the ThinkEvans team developed a submission to nominate a service delivery team for an internationally recognised customer service award, which achieved a 'highly commended' from the judges.

Late in 2006, **Railcorp** required a desktop design study for a reporting system to gauge the outcomes of their implementation of the Just Culture cultural change programme, while **IMB Banking and Financial Services Limited** was advised on re-inventing their IT function and **Catholic Healthcare Ltd** needed expertise to consider how best to develop their logistic support policy and functions.

In work ongoing from 2004 to 2006, **CiEvents** (a division of Flight Centre that delivers events for conferences, meetings and incentive programs) retained ThinkEvans as an element of their strategy development and delivery team. The key results in 2006 involved piloting a mentoring programme and developing online tools for assessing client views on the state of the market and the performance of the organisation.

In late 2005, a substantial piece of strategic options development and scenario modelling work was completed for **CSR Building Products** as a major input to key strategic decisions.

2002 - 2004

In 2004, the **Australian Communications Industry Forum** (now the Communications Alliance) retained ThinkEvans to consider the performance of ACIF in terms of achieving effective self-regulation in the telecommunications industry. The result was a package of almost 80 reform recommendations to take ACIF forward over the next phase of its life.

ThinkEvans completed a major project in late 2003 for the **Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force**, involving the measurement of outcomes in the military justice system. This called for the acquisition of data from dozens of sources in Defence, and the blending of this evidence of system performance into a systemic measurement that could be monitored through a prototype "dashboard" display. This was self-evidently a significant undertaking, not the least issue being the need to design dimensions of system performance for the military justice system. ThinkEvans was uniquely well-qualified to achieve a high quality result, bringing to bear a multi-disciplinary team with a wide array of skills, a team that was able to find a novel, workable solution to a complex problem in a complicated environment. Two further engagements were completed following the original project. In the latter stages of this work, a Senate enquiry into military

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justice was launched, delaying further work at the time but ultimately providing a key input to a further major piece underway in mid-2007.

At the other end of the size scale, a small executive recruitment agency, which in 2003 was aiming for expansion, needed a realistic appraisal of their industry, then experiencing waves of consolidation, was paired with a clear-eyed assessment of their company capabilities, in order to develop a new direction for business development. This involved a more structured and self-sufficient marketing program, including a genuine online presence. Ultimately, this led to the expansion of the business, including into a new industry sector. Costs of acquiring and screening candidates have been rationalised through the development of a completely new web facility and the introduction of self-publishing capability into the business (with attendant skills transfer to the team).

Choosing what not to do is sometimes the most important ingredient of future success. ThinkEvans has provided this genre of advice productively in quite divergent scenarios. Some issues are quite subtle, such as diagnosing the actual root cause of underperformance in a telephone call centre which was completed in 2002. The management team had not unreasonably concluded that there were staff issues, but as it turned out, any money invested in hiring more staff or providing more training would have been wasted because of a very well hidden system problem.

Other issues are less subtle to the experienced eye - in start up companies, advising when to cease negotiating on a key deal is fraught with anxiety for all concerned, but essential to not throwing good money after bad when there isn't an abundance of funds in any case! Advice of this genre has been provided to a variety of clients each year since 2002. The government sector also has its share of such issues, such as when to work cooperatively with other government agencies and when to keep going alone, despite the apparent cost savings of a joint solution. Balanced advice that is contextually-appropriate is a hallmark ThinkEvans outcome in this area, and has formed part of the team's portfolio of activities from the outset of the company.

January 2009

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SELECTED REPORTS FOR CLIENTS

October 2008 *Measuring Consensus* A note on determining agreement

Thinkpiece for multiple clients

June 2008 *JADHE* v2 Implementation Report*

*Justice and Discipline Health and Effectiveness

Phase 2 of JADHE v 2: web site for performance measurement

Phase 2 implementation report

Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force

January 2008 *Decision Making for Growth*

Women in Manufacturing Network Operations Plan

New South Wales Department of State and Regional Development

October 2007 *Goodbye Mary Wells*

Marketing Strategy Update: Review of 2006 census and historical data

Contiki Holidays

July 2007 *JADHE v 2 Design Report*

Report on Phase 1 of JADHE v 2: modifications recommended to meet changes to the military justice system and related reporting requirements

Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force

June 2007 *Reconfiguring the Sisters of Mercy:*

Good Governance in the Third Millennium

Institute of the Sisters of Mercy in Australia

March 2007 *On Globalizing Research*

A Discussion Paper to Inform Defence Research Planning

Centre for Defence and Industry Systems Capability and the University City Project, Premier's Department South Australia

February 2007 *Just Culture: Measuring Outcomes of the Initiative to Promote Cultural Change in Railcorp*

Railcorp, NSW Government

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- February 2007** *Evidencing leadership skills in the Department of Environment and Heritage*
Final Report on the Leadership Skills Survey
(then) Department of Environment and Heritage (Federal Government)
- February 2007** *On Supply Strategy*
Report on good governance and supply chain management
Catholic Healthcare Ltd
- February 2007** Client Survey Report
Designing and implementing a comprehensive market research tool
CiEvents (a division of Flight Centres)
- January 2007** *Ready to Grow*
Women in Manufacturing Network Operations Plan for Events
New South Wales Department of State and Regional Development
- December 2006** *Information Technology Staffing Review*
IMB Banking and Financial Services Limited
- October 2006** *Leadership Skills Survey Preliminary Results*
Department of Environment and Heritage
- October 2006** *Stand By Me*
Report on the Pilot of a Mentoring Program
CiEvents (a division of Flight Centres)
- September 2006** *The Future of Fragrance: Australian Experiences*
Analysis of the evolving structure of the market for perfumes in Australia
The Nuance Group (Australia)
- July 2006** *Service Desk Report Card*
Observations on Customer Service
CSC Australia
- June 2006** Blind Interviews Report: *The 'lucky dip' to find an open-minded, positive, well-informed travel agency*
Contiki Holidays

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- June 2006** Award Submission to International Customer Service Professionals
CSC Australia (as a competitor for customers service awards)
- April 2006** *Let's Talk About Y*
Generation Y and the implications for business
ThinkEvans thinkpiece for multiple clients
- October 2004** Strategic Business Plan 2004/2005
CiEvents (a division of Flight Centres)
- September 2004** *Achieving Effective Self-Regulation*
Recommendations for Reform
Australian Communications Industry Forum (now Communications Alliance)
- June 2004** *Military Justice System Performance Measurement v1.2*
Project Update to include Mental Health & Wellbeing Issues
Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force
- May 2004** *Military Justice System Performance Measurement v1.1*
Project Update to include Attitudes Measurement
Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force
- February 2004** *Military Justice System Performance Measurement v1.0*
Project Monograph
Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force
- December 2003** *Military Justice System Performance Measurement v1.0*
Final Report from the Research & Development Project
Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force

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