



Photo credit: Oneill Photographics

CASE STUDY

29 MAY 2020
MEALIVE 2019 AWARDS

OVERVIEW

The Australian event industry’s premier awards evening was broadcast live from ICC Sydney Studios on 29 May 2020. The broadcast marked several milestones in the history of Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) with the event being the first time the association had combined both State and National awards ceremonies. It was the first time the industry’s night of nights had been delivered in a virtual format. MEALIVE 2019 was also the first official event for the Australian event industry since the Federal Government’s announcement about restrictions on mass gatherings in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. In a first for ICC Sydney – it was the first time, the team had managed an online awards event.



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“ The MEALIVE Awards 2019 provided a platform to connect and celebrate the companies and people who will assist in the recovery of our industry sector. Planning the event required attention to detail including fully scripting the event, a tightly managed production and programming of presenters, entertainment and acceptance speeches. MEA’s Awards Taskforce created an exceptional event design and program, and the team at ICC Sydney helped realise the vision. The hard work and creativity from ICC Sydney resulted in an extraordinary event that delivered beyond our expectations. ”

Robyn Johnson, CEO, Meetings & Events Australia



**468 tickets
sold pre event**



**386 total registrants
including 101 finalists
logged in**



**Webcast duration: 3
hour live stream**



**30 ICC Sydney team
members delivered event
from various departments
including AV, event
management, floor
management, business
development and
marketing.**



**15 AV production
crew over 2 studios, 1
producer, 1 show caller, 1
stage hand.**

SERVICES

As a principal sponsor of the MEALIVE 2019 Awards, ICC Sydney provided audio visual production, event management, culinary and marketing services as well as the venue space within the fitted out ICC Sydney Studios.

The reimagined format has set a benchmark for award galas presented online, with the full event production being broadcast live from both studio spaces (Parkside Ballroom 2 and Cockle Bay Room 1). The team collaborated closely with the MEA awards committee in the pre-planning phase to understand the brief for the "Oscars" style event; and to drive the production plans.

Set against a challenging backdrop of economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the team aimed to up the creative aspects of the marketing and production which included a multi-step pre-event digital promotion campaign with videos featuring a welcome from Robyn Johnson, Chief Executive Officer of MEA, a virtual red carpet, what to cook, and what to drink sponsor videos.

The webcast utilised Zoom online meetings technology. It was the first time the team had used it to remotely connect more than 5 Zoom callers into one event. This presented a challenge that needed to be thoroughly tested prior to the event as it meant using Zoom in a completely new way to drive multiple breakout rooms for groups of finalists in the one category.

The Zoom platform was used for the finalist viewing the event online that then had to participate in going live on screen as their category was called. Robust technology was vital as the web stream was used also to link both studios to interact and view the other. Rehearsals were imperative and the MEA committee and talent were given a technical walk-through of the event in addition to a full day of content and tech testing; a half day presenter rehearsal as well as a half day dress run.

The night was delivered virtually without a hitch. ICC Sydney's production team mustered over 100 finalists in virtual rooms, so that all viewers could see responses and winners' speeches live. Interstitial messages from event professionals from around the country were also presented as part of the fast-paced 3 hour awards presentation program.

SPECIAL TOUCHES

MARKETING CAMPAIGN

In advance of the event, ICC Sydney produced four promotional videos that were released throughout the two weeks leading up to the awards night.

These videos created engagement for ticket sales and encouraged audience participation by bringing the event to life in their own homes and ensuring they could feel a part of the evening.

➤ BEST DRESSED

The virtual red carpet promotional video for the best dressed competition, starring MEA CEO Robyn Johnson as well as ICC Sydney CEO Geoff Donaghy. The 'Red Carpet' MEA best dressed competition encouraged guests to dress up, take a selfie at home and post it to the MEA Facebook event page using the hashtag #MEABestDressed.

➤ WHAT TO EAT

Tony Panetta, ICC Sydney Executive Chef presented his favourite at-home menu attendees could cook with their family to celebrate the MEALIVE Awards at home.

➤ WHAT TO DRINK

William Wilson, ICC Sydney Beverage & Cellar Manager shared a few mouth-watering New South Wales beverage selections to celebrate the Awards at home.

➤ BEHIND THE SCENES

The behind the scenes video captured the activities happening in the studio as the production team, client and talent rehearsed all the requirements prior to the night.

ICC SYDNEY STUDIO 1

MAIN STAGE/AWARDS

- 10m x 3.5m LED screen for content, branding and graphics
- Camera auto cue on 2 main cameras for script with operator
- 3 studio broadcast cameras and 1 PTZ dome cameras
- 20 laptops to manage Zoom callers, content and graphics
- 22 moving lights for studio colour, effects and award winner ballywoos

ICC SYDNEY STUDIO 2

DJ

- 8m x 3m LED screen for content, branding and graphics
- 3 PTZ dome cameras
- 3 laptops content and graphics
- 10 moving lights for stage colour and effects for DJ



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A NSW Government project, ICC Sydney was delivered in partnership with Darling Harbour Live, comprising Lendlease, Hostplus, First State Super, Capella Capital, ASM Global and Spotless FM.

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