

YOUR SHOWGIRL
COORDINATOR

CAN SECURE YOUR SHOW'S
FUTURE!



PRESENTATION BY LAUREN ELKINS



WHAT IS THE SHOWGIRL COMPETITION ALL ABOUT?

HISTORY

- The aim of the Showgirl Competition is to find a young rural ambassador for rural and regional NSW.
- The Showgirl Competition has been running for 56 years and is one of the oldest competitions of its type in Australia.
- The Showgirl competition was born in 1962 as a way of the Royal Agriculture Society of NSW to network with the various show societies throughout the state.
- The competition has always been about promoting young women from rural and regional communities across the state. It is interesting to know, that except for the addition of the community involvement section, the judging criteria has not changed in the past 56 years – this is testament that these values and skills are just as important in today's society as they were half a century ago.
- Nowadays, the showgirl competition has an average of over 500 entrants annually throughout the state.

RELEVANCE OF THE COMPETITION TODAY

- With the average age of a farmer now 65 years old, it has never been more important to promote youth involvement in ag and create opportunities for them to build networks in our industry.
- In a world that is on the verge of a food crisis, at a time of the most severe drought in decades and with an aging population, it has never been more important to showcase agriculture and promote participation in rural communities.
- Agriculture is still in many cases a male dominated industry, the competition gives women a voice and a platform to be heard. The Showgirl Competition is just as much of a self development journey as it is a competition. It provides the opportunity for young women to advance their skill sets, teach them entrepreneurial skills, and broaden their networks within our communities.
- It challenges our female youth to strive to succeed and to contribute to their rural communities.
- These women act as ambassadors not just for their districts, but in particular they play a role in ensuring Australia's urban population understands the role of agriculture in their lives. Reconnecting urban and rural populations is a critical process in ensuring the future of our agricultural industry.
- Promotes involvement of youth in the country show movement and encourages participation of both young men and women in their local show societies and agricultural youth groups.



WHAT IS THE SHOWGIRL COMPETITION ALL ABOUT?

WHO ENTERS THE COMPETITION

- The diversity of women who enter the competition is vast and great – we see Doctors, Agronomists, Stock and Station Agents, Beauticians, Physiotherapists, Veterinarians, Nurses, Teachers, Farm Managers, Students, Lawyers, Paramedics, Miners, Electricians, Hairdressers, Engineers – You name it, the fact is women of all walks of life enter – there is no ‘typical showgirl’ they are all unique.

- The competition attracts highly motivated individuals who are involved in their community, that want to advance their skill sets, broaden their networks, and become more involved with their show societies.

- The competition attracts young women who want to succeed, who want to make a difference and want to challenge themselves.

- There is one common attribute amongst the women who participate in the Showgirl Competition – PASSION- they have a passion for their community, for their show and for Agriculture.



BENEFITS OF ENTERING THE SHOWGIRL COMPETITION FOR YOUNG WOMEN

- Opportunity for personal and professional development.
- Meet like-minded people and expand your networks in your local community.
- Opportunity to get involved with your show and be the 'face of your show' for the year.
- Opportunity to promote and represent your community and your show.
- Opportunity to promote Agriculture and educate the wider community.
- Opportunity to make a difference in your community and to be heard.
- Opportunity to put yourself out of your comfort zone in an environment where you are supported to succeed.
- Opportunity to promote yourself and increase your exposure to the wider community.
- Opportunity to learn new skills that not just character building but that will assist you in every facet of your life whether that personally or professionally.
- Opportunity to have fun, make new friends and further your involvement in your community.





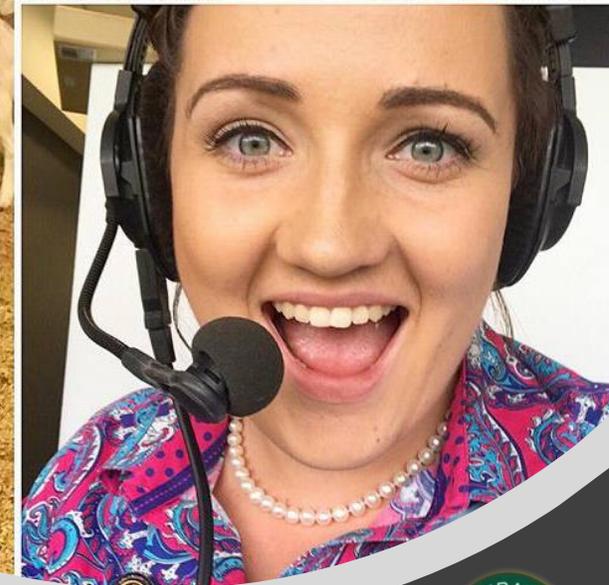
HOW A SHOW BENEFITS FROM HAVING A SHOWGIRL COMPETITION?

- Enhance community awareness of your show.
- Enhance community involvement with your show outside show time.
- Creates pathways for youth to get involved with your show.
- Keeps Shows modern and 'In Touch'
- Creates new sponsorship opportunities, media exposure and P.R - new avenues for sponsors that might not sponsor your show currently. Don't approach your traditional sponsors – look outside.
- Creates new and different exposure and networking opportunities for your show.
- Promotes your region to greater NSW.



HOW A SHOW BENEFITS FROM HAVING A SHOWGIRL COMPETITION?

- Opportunity to have access to professional young rural women with skill sets that will inevitably assist in various facets of your show.
- Showcases excellence and the diversity in Agriculture and gives opportunity to promote it's importance to those who are not exposed to it outside of show time.
- Opportunity to give back to the community that supports your show by mentoring engaging with these women, teaching them valuable life and leadership skills that will breath life into your rural and regional communities.
- Succession planning - Opportunity to then retain these women and their networks and develop their valued skills sets which will ultimately keep your show alive for many more years to come.





ROLE OF THE SHOWGIRL CO-ORDINATOR

- Take charge of the competition, and adhere to the rules and regulations.
- Put together a good committee to support you and the entrants – it's almost impossible to do it alone successfully.
- Create networks in your community, network with other show societies and the ASC. These networks come in very handy not just for you but for your entrants.
- Keep your show society up to date on what's happening, don't underestimate keeping your committee involved, their support is vital.
- Create community ownership of the competition, that it's not just to do with the show, it's a community event, the entrants are leaders in your community.
- Seek sponsors and prizes for the girls, some people are motivated by this, some aren't but either way it makes it more prestigious and attractive to entrants.
- Recruit entrants to the competition.
- Mentor the entrants and prepare them for the competition, the zone finals, and possibly the state final.
- Organise the judging day
- Organise the judges
- Organise the announcement of winners – it's good to split it from the show if possible as it gives you another event outside of your show which could also be a good fund raiser for your show. Keeps the show alive outside of show time in your community.

ROLE OF THE SHOWGIRL COORDINATOR

- Retain the girls not just the winner and place getters, all of them and if you can, keep them involved in your show.
- Find opportunities outside of the show for the entrants to get involved in – i.e. community events, speaking opportunities, rotary, cwa, etc
- Provide information and encourage your showgirls to attend at least one of the professional development / showgirl workshops that are held throughout the state – Nowra, Dubbo & Glen Ines.
- Educate them on what rural youth networks are out there – i.e. Next Gen, Young Farmers, RAS Youth Group, etc.
- Encourage your showgirls to find entrants for the following year, share their stories and assist in the mentoring process.
- Try and keep the same person in the role of coordinator for a while, this creates continuity and the more experience and knowledge, the better it is for the entrants.
- It is a fact that the majority of showgirls who succeed in not just the competition, but the women who stay involved with their show, have proactive and involved showgirl coordinators.
- Having a supportive and proactive Showgirl Coordinator and Committee results in the entrants enjoying the competition more, they get much more out of it and are more likely to share their positive experience with their networks and peers.
- Know your NOT ALONE, the role can be daunting at times but use your resources, use your committee, use the ASC - Nicky is here to help and she can put you in touch with people who also help. The ASC recognizes the importance of youth engagement, we want you to succeed, we want to help you - PLEASE, don't be afraid to ask for help!





HOW TO RUN A SHOWGIRL COMPETITION – TIPS & TRICKS

ATTRACTING YOUNG WOMEN TO THE COMPETITION

- Educate the community and your networks on what a showgirl is, abolish any misconceptions, share stories of past showgirls, write your own press releases, use social media, use previous showgirls – spread the word on how great the Showgirl comp is, traditional forms – print media, posters in shops, Website etc.
- Promote the benefits of the competition for young women and how much fun they will have!
- If you use the word quest or miss in your advertising, ... ditch it, it does you no favors! The competition called The Land Sydney Royal Showgirl Competition, it's a very prestigious highly respected competition, not a pageant. Using the correct name will keep attract the right entrants.
- Access your data base of members and followers on social media, contact those women who fit the requirements and contact them personally, sometimes young women need to be encouraged to step out of their comfort zone.
- Create a sense of FOMO 'fear of missing out'.
- Engage with people in your community that are influencers and have a large network following – i.e. radio personalities, local members, youth leaders, to help promote the showgirl movement.
- Get your sponsors involved, do they have a young woman who may fit the requirements working for them, do they know someone, would they like to sponsor the competition and find a girl to represent them.. Create good rivalry amongst businesses in your community.

HOW TO RUN A SHOWGIRL COMPETITION – TIPS & TRICKS

PREPARE & EDUCATE THE ENTRANTS

- The importance of preparing the entrants cannot be stressed enough. Entrants without support and preparation are less likely to succeed, less likely to stay involved, and less likely to enjoy the experience.
- Educate them on the showgirl process, what's required of them and what the role of a showgirl is.
- Educate them about your show, the history, traditions, why your show is the best show in the state.
- Give them access to mentors, such as members of your committee, past showgirls and other young show members.
- If you can, organize an informal lunch prior to the competition for the entrants to meet each other, ask questions and seek advice, opportunity for you to give the entrants the 'run down' of the day and what to expect, dress code, it's also a good opportunity to take photos of the entrants for your booklet and the media.



HOW TO RUN A SHOWGIRL COMPETITION - TIPS & TRICKS

JUDGING PROCESS

JUDGE SELECTION

- **EXTREMELY IMPORANT** – Your judges need to have a good understanding of the competition, agriculture and what it takes to succeed in the competition. Three judges and a gender mix is essential. Your judges need to be impartial and not have any relation and preferably do not know the entrants. If you can, try to have an past showgirl on your panel, it not only assists the entrants but it is a beneficial resource for the other judges on your panel. Picking judges can also be a good networking opportunity for you and your society as well, the judge selection should be one of the most important decisions you make.
- Having well informed judges will result in them selecting the best candidate and ambassador for your region.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR JUDGES

- Give them all relevant information to the running of the event well in advance.
- Send them all the girls resumes and form b's at least one week prior to the competition.
- Use the opportunity to promote your community to the judges by providing information about your region and promotional material. This will also assist the judges in preparing their questions for the competition.
- Your judges will prepare their own questions, please don't ask for these questions prior to the event or don't write questions for the judges. The questions are up to the judges discretion.

JUDGING DAY FORMAT

- If you can and have the resources available, try to mimic the judging format of a zone final by having an interview, luncheon and presentation evening – doing this will familiarise your showgirl with the process which will help settle her nerves for the next step in the competition.
- An interview and luncheon are essential to be able to judge the entrants according to the judging criteria.





HOW TO RUN A SHOWGIRL COMPETITION TIPS & TRICKS

FUNDING THE COMPETITION – SPONSORSHIP IDEAS

- Sell your sash
- Business rivalry and involvement
- In kind sponsorship
- Discounts
- Look for sponsors that don't currently sponsor your show that would benefit from the competition.

IF YOU WANT YOUR SHOW TO SURVIVE FOR MANY MORE YEARS TO COME....

- Invest in youth and educate them to carry on the amazing work you do. Without your wisdom and knowledge and the injection of youth with new ideas ensure the show won't go on into the future.
- Use the skills sets of our younger generation to your advantage.
- Bring your show into the future to meet the expectations of your community.
- Open up different markets, sponsorship opportunities and networks that you weren't previously engaged with.
- Use competitions such as the Showgirl Competition as a way of engaging and retaining young people.
- Don't discount how things were done in the past, that has built a strong foundation for your show, the showgirl competition enables you to build on that foundation.



QUESTION TIME

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