

## Brainstorming business options grants performing arts troupe ability to soar

**[Brainstorm Productions](#), Australia's most respected theatre in education, specialises in performance tours for schools that deliver bullying education and cyber bullying programs.**

With 30 years' experience researching, developing and producing a variety of live education performances and programs, owner Jenny Johnson took her role just as rigorously when appointing a new accountant.

Jenny took particular care to audition several potential accountants and found that they varied in personality and style.

During that process Jenny met Collins Hume and [Peter Fowler](#) whom, she believed, dispensed business advice much like a good doctor; he listened, explained theory in ways she could fully understand, and who seemed to be onto things.

That was five years ago and in that time Jenny, working collaboratively with Collins Hume, has crammed in a number of key projects which have benefited her business.

Jenny had been thinking about updating her website as a way of enhancing the marketing. Peter Fowler flagged government grant funding as a way to expedite her marketing efforts which was subsequently obtained to employ a marketing expert to prepare a brief for a web designer to integrate SEO and online marketing strategies into the new website. Additionally, Jenny received funds to have her database system overhauled so she could mine data to increase efficiency and streamline the marketing to new and existing customers.

Part of Jenny's funding package also allowed for a business review to determine where further efficiencies could be made, where productivity and turnover increases might be achieved.

"It was positioned at a grass roots level and allowed me to tap into some fantastic resources to make it happen," says Jenny. "I have since employed someone out of this project to do our marketing, which is fantastic."

More recently, Jenny attended Collins Hume's Super Smart Seminar, "A lot of things I can do, I am doing already," says Jenny. "I had an existing fund but Collins Hume put me in contact with their wealth advisers who were on the same page as me."

Business and succession planning is the final piece in the puzzle, but Jenny has 12 months to use her grant funding so will schedule it at a more suitable time when she plans to tap into Peter's expertise in this area.

"Sometimes things arise, even if there's a problem, so it's nice to use Collins Hume as a sounding board and know that it'll be confidential. Their feedback gives me reassurance to get on with things."



"Collins Hume are always looking at my tax to find ways to manage income sensibly and prepare for the future," says Jenny. "They help with my cash flow as far as adjusting for tax and covering any spikes throughout the year. Most times Peter does it over the phone and from his desk, and then we meet each May to outline the plan for my super, spending and tax."

"Peter gets me and respects my position and perspective on matters. He always makes suggestions and then says, "Whatever you're comfortable with" in terms of reaching a decision. He puts forward the many approaches we can take, explains the risks and understands that I'm cautious so encourages me to make a compromise to reach the best outcome all round. I never feel rail-roaded by this approach. We are very much on equal footing and have shared mutual respect from the word go."

"Peter lives and breathes his profession and is really focussed – it is clear that he loves his job and is across all the issues, however still maintains a good balance which is a sound reminder to me as a business owner."