

# NetFX Internet



On the road North



On the way to Molloy Island



Northam CMCA Rally



Nullagine



Inside the Trailer - Nullagine



Kalannie

## **COMPANY PROFILE**

Name: NetFX Australia Pty Ltd T/A NetFX Internet  
ABN 74 074 218 278  
Address: PO Box 58  
OSBORNE PARK WA 6917  
Contacts: Terry & Angela Lewis, Directors  
Telephone: 08 9201 1314  
Mobile: 0428 921499  
Email: [terry@netfx.com.au](mailto:terry@netfx.com.au)  
Web: [www.netfx.com.au](http://www.netfx.com.au)

## Where we've come from

NetFX Internet is a Western Australian owned and operated company formed in June 1996 to meet the training needs of the emerging Internet industry. We, Terry & Angela Lewis, could see early on the enormous impact the Internet would have on people's lives and formation of the Company enabled us to combine our extensive training experience with our passion for the Internet.

Although initially operating out of a Training Centre in Leederville, we recognised that people in rural and remote areas were especially disadvantaged in having access to training in the new technologies and since 1999 have been focusing on the needs of communities in regional and remote Western Australia.

## What we've achieved

We have been successful in winning contracts in a competitive tendering environment as well as being proactive in identifying and accessing various sources of Government and non Government funding. Some of our funding partners have included:

- Department of Agriculture
- Dept of Commerce & Trade
- Pilbara Development Commission
- Goldfields/Esperance Development Commission
- South West Development Commission
- Gascoyne Development Commission
- BHP Billiton Communications & Corporate Affairs Department
- BankWest Online Services
- The Small Business Enterprise Culture Program through the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations & Small Business (For this contract, NetFX was one of only 24 approved nationally – and the only one to be funded twice).

Some of our achievements have included:

- Coordinated and delivered Internet Workshops in more than 100 towns throughout Western Australia
- Developed and attained accreditation for the first Internet courses in WA
- Developed 'CyberSeniors' Website as part of Department of Family & Children's services International Year of Older Person's project
- Conducted TeleYOUTH/TeleSENIORS pilot project involving 11 towns in regional WA on behalf of the Department of Commerce & Trade, Telecentre Support Unit
- Provided IT Advisory Service to the whole of the South West over a two year period on behalf of the South West Development Commission
- Delivered 20 eCommerce Workshops for Women in Business in Regional WA through the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, Small Business Enterprise Culture Program
- Delivered 41 "Harvesting the Net" workshops for primary producers across the state on behalf of the Western Australian Department of Agriculture
- Represented OnlineWA at Pastoralists & Graziers Association Conference, 2001, the Albany Seniors Expo, 2001, and the Creating & Sustaining Online Communities (CASOC) Conference, 1999
- Presented at Cape Naturaliste Tourism Association Conference, Busselton, 2000, AgroForestry Expo, Boyup Brook, 1999, ACE/ACROD Conference, 'Liberation in Cyberspace', 1998

## Awards

We have been recognised for our work in Regional WA with the following awards:

- Finalist, WA Information Technology & Telecommunications Award ( Training and Service Delivery Category, 2003
- Winner, 2002 Australia Post Stirling Small Business of the Year (Industry & Commerce Category)
- Winner, WA Information Technology & Telecommunications Award (Regional IT&T Category), 2000
- Special Mention Award, Asia Pacific/Yellow Pages Regional IT&T Awards, 2000
- Regional finalist Telstra/Small Business Development Corporation Small Business of the Year Awards, 1999

## The start of the journey (1999)

In 1999 we won a contract through the Southern Province Projects Group to deliver Internet Awareness workshops to farmers in 31 towns in the Southern half of the State. We leased a motor home to travel around in which gave us greater flexibility so we were not dependent on having to find accommodation and in one town spent a comfortable couple of nights parked in an old hay shed!



The motor home also gave us high visibility and became widely recognised throughout the southern part of WA with its prominent “*Cruisin’ the Superhighway*” signage.

Having capacity to set up a complete on-line ‘training lab’ ensured we were self sufficient. Innovative use of technology enabled us to take



the Local Area Network (LAN) and Internet server that had been used in our training centre and combine it with ten laptop computers<sup>1</sup> to bring a real “hands on” experience to people in remote and rural communities. Using the equipment, all ten laptops were able to connect to the Internet at the same time (without noticeable effect on speed). This was an important factor as in many of the towns we visited it was difficult enough to find a venue with one phone line – it would have been impossible to find one with ten!

Regional community networks were used to market the workshops and local networks used to secure a venue, the only requirement of which was access to one phone point.

This resulted in an ‘interesting’ variety of venues such as Council Chambers, Telecentres, School libraries and playgrounds, large community halls and even a disused Ag Research Station building.



The sheer diversity of the venues in remote areas required a great deal of resourcefulness and flexibility (and sometimes the willingness to get stuck in with a mop and bucket before being able to set up!).

<sup>1</sup> Five laptops sponsored by Wesfarmers Landmark



Even though part of the pre planning process was establishing that an appropriate phone point would be available for Internet connection, the reality was that challenges were presented on the day – in one case we were told the phone point for their Internet connection was next door. ‘Next door’ turned out to be across a paddock, and up through a top window! In another case, we had to wend our way through the salmon gums (appropriately, in a place *called* Salmon Gums!)

With the use of a laptop and mobile phone we were still able to service our other contracts while on the road and it certainly enabled us to operate from some quite unique working environments.

The workshops themselves are aimed at adults and are designed to remove the fear of technology and excite the participants to the possibilities offered by the Internet. With up to 10 laptop computers, the workshops are also practical in nature giving participants the opportunity to have ‘hands on’.

There is no doubt that one of the major reasons for the success of the workshops was the innovation of creating a supporting website ([www.netfx.com.au/countrysite](http://www.netfx.com.au/countrysite)). The last thing we wanted to do was breeze into a town, run the workshops and breeze out again without leaving something behind to provide ongoing support.

The website was developed to be of particular relevance to people in country areas and was used as a demonstration and hands-on tool during the workshop as well as providing a continuing resource afterwards. The site was updated with more and more relevant links and participants were also encouraged to contribute their own suggestions. The site has therefore evolved to be a wonderful ongoing resource not only for people who attended the workshops but to anyone using the Internet and has so far attracted more than 180,000 hits.

As a value added service, we are also trialling an on-line help service for people who have attended workshops.

### **The journey continues (2001/2003)**

In 1999 we were approached by BHP (later to become BHP Billiton) to conduct an Internet Roadshow on their behalf as part of their community programs initiative. The Roadshow provides free Internet training for the general community and for non profit community groups. The initial contract for 2001 and 2002 has since been extended to 2003. Since the contract involved extensive travel throughout the north and south of the state we decided to upgrade vehicles and equipment to meet the more vigorous demands.



We upgraded the motorhome to a 28' Winnebago (which was one of the three vehicle used for the 2000 Sydney Olympics Torch Relay) and designed and built a mobile training room.

The mobile training room carries a small 4WD vehicle while in transit and transforms into an air-conditioned computer training room when required. This means it can also be used at Field Days and Festivals.



So far the WA BHP Billiton Skills.net Roadshow has covered the State from Esperance to Kununurra – and many points in between. This has included remote towns such as Gascoyne Junction; aboriginal communities such as Yandeyarra; and remote pastoral stations like Lyndon Station in the Gascoyne.

In conducting the Internet Roadshow we work closely with the State Library and the Telecentre Network. Another partner in the WA BHP Skills.Net Roadshow is Telstra, who provide mobile telephone and satellite Internet communications.

## Where we've been

<b>1999/2000</b>			
Augusta	Beacon	Lake Grace	Lake King
Bencubbin	Beverley	Laverton	Leinster
Boddington	Boyanup	Leonora	Manjimup
Boyup Brook	Bridgetown	Margaret River	Merredin
Bruce Rock	Bunbury	Minilya	Moora
Capel	Carnarvon	Mt Barker	Mukinbudin
Collie	Coolgardie	Mundijong	Munglinup
Dalwallinu	Denham	Nannup	Newdegate
Denmark	Dowerin	Norseman	Northcliffe
Dunsborough	Esperance	Ongerup	Pemberton
Exmouth	Frankland	Pingrup	Quairading
Gascoyne Junction	Gnowangerup	Ravensthorpe	Salmon Gums
Greenbushes	Harvey	Toodyay	Varley
Hyden	Jerramungup	Wagin	Walpole
Kalannie	Kambalda	Waroona	Wellstead
Katanning	Kendenup	Williams	Wooramel
Kojonup	Kondinin	York	
Koorda	Kulin		
<b>2001/2002</b>			
Albany	Augusta	Karratha	Lyndon Station
Badgingarra	Boyup Brook	Katanning	Margaret River
Brookton	Broome	Marble Bar	Newman
Carnarvon	Cranbrook	Newdegate	Onslow
Dampier	Denmark	Nullagine	Roebourne
Dongara	Donnybrook	Port Hedland	Walpole
Dumbleyung	Esperance	Three Springs	Wooramel
Geraldton	Harvey	Wandering	Jerramungup
<b>2002/2003</b>			
Baldivis	Broome	Wagin	Bruce Rock
Beenup	Capel	West Arthur	Narebeem
Carnarvon	Boyanup	Donnybrook	Newdegate
Corrigin	Derby	Harvey	Ravensthorpe
Dowerin	Exmouth	Onslow	Bremer Bay
Fitzroy Crossing	Gascoyne Junction	Shark Bay	Jerramungup
Geraldton	Halls Creek	Kalbarri	Ongerup
Kalgoorlie	Kununurra	Leeman	Frankland
Karratha	Mallina Station	Lancelin	Bridgetown
Merredin	Moora	York	Nannup
Molloy Island	Northam	Toodyay	Albany
Newman	Port Hedland	Dalwallinu	Yandeyarra
Paraburdoo	Tom Price	Kalannie	Wandering
Quairading	Wyndham	Koorda	Beacon
Dalyellup	Wanneroo		