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## **Year 2004: Vision for the Future Statement**

Since the mid 1990's, digital technology has been changing the way we work, play and communicate. Hatchling Productions took on the digital challenge in 1995 and has remained at the forefront of new technological advances, seeking innovative ways of telling stories and bringing these stories to new audiences. As a leader in digital video production in the Northern Rivers area, Hatchling Productions is constantly rethinking its role in the region and in the broader context of the national industry.

**Hatchling Productions seeks to embrace the future with optimism.**

**FUTURE DIRECTIONS:** Hatchling Productions is committed to consolidating its reputation as a producer of award winning documentary projects for television, cinema, on-line delivery and DVD. The company will continue to devote its attention to research and development of new technologies, original ways of telling stories, developing alternative formats for producing programs, and innovative ways of achieving competitive advantage in the global marketplace. The company is also expanding its vision to include documentary series, interactive and DVD projects and feature films.

In 2004, Hatchling Productions developed a new model for the operation of its business. This entailed developing a slate of projects using different project teams of outside consultants for each project. The current slate in development consists of two documentaries (one feature length), two documentary series, two feature films and one DVD project. The company will contract external team members (researchers, writers, directors) to develop the projects to submission stage and has employed an office manager to help with the day to day running of the business. This will enable the partners, Cathy Henkel and Jeff Canin, to generate a steadier income for the company and continue to build a valuable knowledge base of the rapidly changing technology on which we depend. The partners will take the role of co-producers on each of the projects in development in order to maintain an overall quality assessment and to keep the projects aligned with the overall goals and standards established by Hatchling Productions over the years. They are also working as writers and directors on some of the projects on the slate.

Hatchling Productions will also develop a DVD Centre for the region and offer DVD conversion of program material to documentary producers and companies around Australia. The company has already successfully produced three DVD programs and has several new large DVD projects in development.

**HISTORY OF THE COMPANY:** **Hatchling Productions** was formed in 1992 to produce video programs on social issues, community and environmental themes. The partnership consisting of **Cathy Henkel** and **Jeff Canin** brought complementary skills to this endeavour. Cathy Henkel worked in community theatre and community development for 12 years and has extensive experience as a film and video writer and director. She has a high success rate in raising money from a variety of sources. Jeff Canin worked for Greenpeace International as a sea turtle campaigner for almost 8 years, and has wide experience working as an environmental consultant, sound recordist, producer and digital technician.

**GOING DIGITAL:** In 1995, Hatchling Productions converted from analogue to digital post-production equipment and was the first to offer digital facilities for hire in the Northern Rivers region. In 1998 the company acquired digital camera equipment, a digital player/recorder and CD-ROM burner. In 2003, the transition to DVD production was undertaken and the company has successfully produced three DVDs and an on-line documentary web site, "Lets Face It".

**PRODUCTIONS:** Between 1992 and 2004, Hatchling Productions has produced 5 documentaries for television, 3 DVDs, 15 commissioned works for the Educational and Training market, 5 self-initiated programs and 2 award winning short films. The company has also provided post-production facilities and editing services to a wide range of film-makers including 4 documentaries for television.

**AWARDS:** The company has won a number of national and international awards, including the Best Feature Documentary Award at the prestigious Tribeca Film Festival in New York, the ATOM Award for Best Documentary, and two short film awards. Cathy Henkel was a finalist in the Independent Spirit Award at the 2003 Lexus IF Awards and Hatchling Productions films were finalists in the Dendy Awards and Cape Town World Cinema Festival Awards. Cathy has been nominated for an AFI Award for Best Achievement in Direction in a Documentary in 2004.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Hatchling Productions has also played an active role in community development in the Northern Rivers region. This includes

- providing programs and facilities for a wide range of community organisations and individuals;
- running training workshops through the local TAFE, North Coast CAMERA and SCREENWORKS;
- running training courses for young people in Byron Bay, Lismore and Clunes;
- conducting a community video project with the German-speaking community in the region funded by the Australia Council;
- instigating the formation of North Coast CAMERA, a community access and training organisation;
- serving on the board of LINC TV and North Coast CAMERA for two years;
- working on the bid for the 2003 International Documentary Conference held in Byron Bay, serving on the National AIDC board and Chair of the local organising committee;
- playing a major role in the founding of Northern Rivers SCREENWORKS, securing funding from Sustainable Regions and serving on the board of Screenworks;
- Conducting the first study into the development of film, video and multi-media industries in the Northern Rivers region and producing "Imagining the Future: strategies for the development of Creative Industries in the Northern Rivers region (2001)
- Undertaking a PhD study on further development of screen industries in the region including a follow-up survey of the industry in 2004.

**ACHIEVEMENTS:** Hatchling Productions has developed a strong reputation as an award winning and high quality producer of content for delivery on a wide range of platforms, including television, cinema, on-line and DVD. Their two most recent productions “Losing Layla” and “The Man who Stole my Mother’s Face” have won numerous national and international awards and sold widely in the international market-place. They have forged strong links with international distributor Jan Rofekamp of Films Transit International (Montreal) and a large number of international broadcasters and buyers.

The company has made programs for international broadcasters including HBO (USA), CBC (Canada), The Sundance Channel (USA), RTE (Ireland), and SABC (South Africa) Hatchling Productions films have been sold in 17 countries including Israel, Denmark, Holland, France and Germany. In Australia they have produced programs for ABC and SBS, and have been screened at festivals in Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney, Perth and Byron Bay. They have also produced an on-line delivery documentary, three DVDs and programs for the Insolvency & Trustee Service Australia and the NSW Attorney General's Department. They have provided post-production facilities for December Films and Film Australia. The company continues to attract work to the Northern Rivers region from the capital cities and offers professional equipment, expertise and services at rates affordable to a wide range of organisations.

In 2002 the partnership became a Proprietary Limited Company and in 2004 employed a part-time bookkeeper and a full-time Office Manager. The company is developing a slate of seven projects with a range of external team members (researchers, writers and directors).

**NEW DIRECTIONS:** Hatchling Productions’ goals for 2004 and beyond are to:

- Produce “Goon but Not Forgotten: the life and legacy of Spike Milligan” for cinema release, international television broadcast, on-line delivery and DVD.
- Develop a slate of compelling and innovative documentaries for delivery on a range of platforms for international audiences.
- Develop two new documentary series for Australian and international markets
- Develop two feature film projects. One of these, “Turtle Tracks” aims to go into production in 2006. The other “Mirror Mirror” is a big-budget production aimed at the international marketplace.
- Develop strategic links and seek new ways of supporting and promoting screen industries in the region. Cathy Henkel is doing a PhD research project through Queensland University of Technology. She is currently conducting a new survey of screen industries in the region and plans to publish “Imagining the Future Part 2” in mid 2005.
- Develop the Hatchling Productions DVD Centre for the region and offer DVD conversion of program material to documentary producers and companies around Australia. DVD take-up in Australia and around the world has met the expectations predicted by the company in its Vision Statement of 2000. Hatchling Productions has succeeded in upgrading its studio to full DVD production capability and has already successfully produced three DVD programs and has several new large DVD projects in development.
- Consolidate Hatchling Productions’ reputation as an award-winning production company creating multi-platform content for the international marketplace and telling stories that are compelling, urgent and uplifting. Whatever the subject matter, the Hatchling Productions approach is to shine light into the darkness, to find new and creative solutions to some of the great concerns of our time, and to tell universal stories than resonate with audiences around the globe.