



SYDNEY
LIVING
MUSEUMS

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Testimonial – Deanna Varga

Sydney Living Museums (SLM) appointed Deanna Varga to a six (6) month contract in April 2012, following a major organisation restructure in 2011. A new Commercial Services team had been created as part of this restructure and it required specialist business planning support for its commercial venue hire, leaseholds (cafes) and retail business operations across twelve (12) of Sydney's most important museums including Elizabeth Bay House, Hyde Park Barracks Museums, Justice & Police Museum, Museum of Sydney, The Mint, and Vaucluse House.

SLM Commercial Services operates within the complex cultural sector. Detailed business planning was required to develop the organisations first Commercial Strategy with a core focus to significantly increase self-generated revenue. Having 'grown up' with Deanna Varga in the meetings and events, and tourism sectors over the last 15 years, I immediately recognised Deanna's strong and varied skill base for both strategic and analytical thinking which naturally evolved from a diverse employment history enriched by other professional industry networks and relationships.

Deanna's broad business experience, and industry insight, augmented the new Commercial Services team structure; the development of multiple business plans to inform an overarching organisation strategy; provided a clear pathway for the new team structure to meet its annual targets; a need to work stronger with business partners, and industry; and most of all to embrace new opportunities and concepts. Deanna pushed SLM Commercial Services to 'think outside the square'.

Deanna's versatility in being able to meet complex commercial business needs; a focus on implementing best communication practices and the importance of relationship development and management; a structured approach to always meeting tight deadlines, greatly supported SLM Commercial Services in increasing its net profitability by 13% in 2012-13.

Damian Poole
Head of Commercial Services