



# The right brand attracts the right people



WITH a boom on the horizon and associated skills and labour shortages looming in Western Australia, branding becomes an integral part of attracting and retaining staff for many companies.

Developing a company that people want to work for is integral if a company wants to attract the best staff; so what makes a company the best employer brand?

This year the perennially strong employer brand Wesfarmers was again recognised in *WA Business News'* brand survey of marketing and advertising professionals for being exciting, progressive and for caring for and rewarding its staff.

It sits alongside WA-grown internet service provider iiNet, mining giant Woodside, Wesfarmers subsidiary Bunnings, insurance company RAC, health group HBF and Andrew Forrest's Fortescue Metals Group as WA's strongest employer brands.

Wesfarmers is well known for its brand equity; in previous years' surveys the company was recognised for its values, which help to maintain its strong culture and to attract staff.

Marketing communications director Nic Hayes said, "while it (Wesfarmers) has diversified and has a very strong eastern states presence

you never forget its roots".

Michael Malone's iiNet rated alongside Wesfarmers on the 2010 survey, with industry heads saying it's creative drive communicates iiNet's personality. Many recognise the impact Mr Malone's personal brand has on the employer brand.

"Michael is the brains and visionary behind what will soon be one of Australia's largest communications carrier. When he talks people listen. His commitment to service and best practice is a just a way of life at iiNet," Mr Hayes said.

"iiNets outstanding brand and reputation is reflected by its staff enthusiasm and support."

Woodside, which is one of the state's largest employers, was recognised in the survey as a company that is modern and progressive in an industry many are trying to crack.

Mr Hayes said Woodside is "not at the level of prominence it has once had but the big WA energy brand powers along while the focus has been on the mining industry."

Bunnings was recognised as a personable brand, with some noting its anti-discrimination employment policy as one of the company's most attractive qualities.

"It remains a solid, customer

focused brand that delivers on its core price promise," Mills Wilson Communications director Marie Mills said.

According to RAC, its members are happier; and according to the companies surveyed, so are the motoring and insurance group's employees.

Bankwest's marketing manager Paul Vivian said "an employer brand is getting that colleague value proposition right in terms of what it is you're offering to a colleague to come and work for you ... what makes it a good place to work above and beyond the salary you take home".

RAC has evidently got this right, with the creative industry recognising it as a company that is a strong advocate in the 'helpful authority' space and leaders in social media as evidenced during the devastating March hailstorm.

HBF was also recognised for its socially aware, holistic, friendly and recognisable brand; with FMG highlighted for Mr Forrest's vision and dynamic nature.

Semiotics director David Cobbolt simply said FMG is "in the image of its maker".

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