



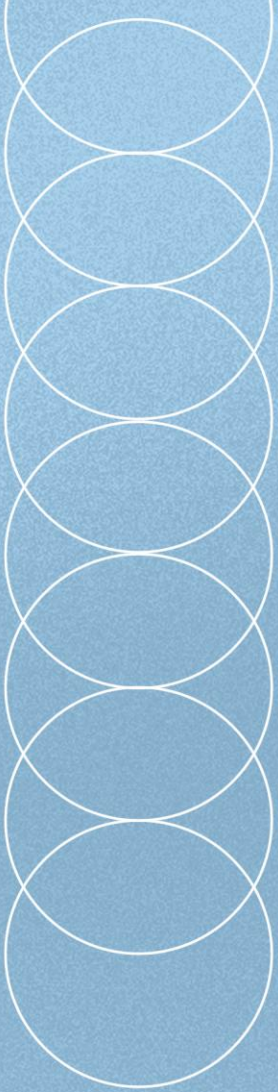
FIA Conference 2023

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CONFERENCE



Reactivating Major Fundraising Events Post COVID

COMMUNITY & EVENTS

BEN PRITCHARD

MS PLUS

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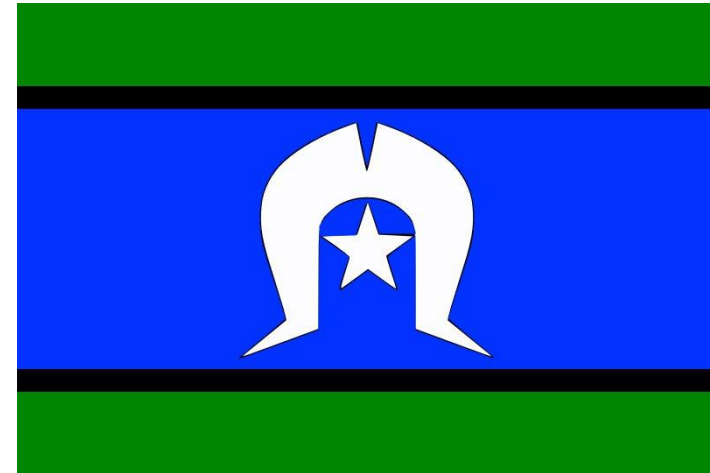


CONFERENCE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNRTY

I would like begin today by acknowledging the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the land on which we are gathered today.

I pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the first people of Australia, and extend that respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here with us today



WHO AM I



Ben Pritchard (He/They)

Event Marketing and Campaign Manager
MS Plus

Ben has spent the last 10 years working throughout the events, marketing and sports sectors seeing the community impact of events. Now the Event Marketing and Campaign Manager at MS Plus, Ben is using his skills to develop and grow the event portfolio to reach greater fundraising impact at MS Plus.

MS PLUS



Based in Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania and the ACT, we have over 60 years of insight into how to live well with MS. We pride ourselves on being trusted experts in MS, while supporting a broader range of neurological conditions.

As one of Australia's leading not-for-profits, we also work tirelessly to fund research into the causes and treatments for MS and ultimately a cure.

We offer a wide range of emotional and practical support, from allied health, employment services and NDIS services to expert advice, wellbeing programs and peer support.

*formally MS Limited or MSL

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25,600

people in Australia
have MS



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2019 PRE COVID



**KEEP
CALM
AND
GROW**

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OUR EVENTS – PRIOR TO COVID 19



8,616 Participants
\$1,060,658 Fundraising



3,874 Participants
\$628,871 Fundraising



10,000 Participants
\$2.8million Fundraising



2,892 Participants
\$738,533 Fundraising

Together, unlimited.

MS WALK & FUN RUN

The MS Walk + Fun Run is a significant fundraising event for MS Plus focusing on the MS Community

In 2019, the event exceeded its overall target for Participation numbers and Income, as well as exceeding the previous year's totals

Fundraising increased by 7.5% in 2019 and participation by 8%



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MS CYCLE + HALF MARATHON

The MS Melbourne Cycle started in 2007

In 2018 a Half Marathon/10km/5km run was added to the event, \$108,116 was raised by 742 run participants

In 2019 we experienced tremendous growth of the run component, with a total of \$267,035.46 raised by 1672 participants



MS SYDNEY TO THE GONG

The MS Sydney to the Gong Ride is Australia's largest fundraising recreational bike ride, fundraising money to support people living Multiple Sclerosis

The event has a long and successful history and celebrated its 38th year in 2019

The 2019 MS Gong Ride launched on Thursday 23 May 2019 and sold out (10,000 riders) in 95 days on 25 August 2019

In 2019, amongst some significant technology factors the event raised over \$2.8 Million Dollars



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MS MEGA SWIM PORTFOLIO

The MS Mega Swim started in 2001. In 2019 celebrated its 19th year

The event saw a significant decrease in participants and fundraising between 2015-18

An increased focus in 2019 on understanding our audience better to engage them appropriately saw participation and fundraising numbers stabilise

Squash and Racquetball events performed well and were experiencing a similar stabilisation of participation and fundraising

Portfolio encompassed 26 individual events, one every fortnight

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2019 IN NUMBERS

MS WALK & FUN RUN

8,616 Participants

\$1,060,658 Fundraising



MS CYCLE + HALF MARATHON

3,874 Participants

\$628,871 Fundraising



MS SYDNEY TO THE GONG

10,000 Participants

\$2.8million Fundraising



MS MEGA SWIM PORTFOLIO

26 Events

2,892 Participants

\$738,533 Fundraising

Together, unlimited.

26762

people fundraised **\$5,714,176**
for MSL across all major events

9494

kms were swam at the **MS 24**
Hour Mega Swim, the distance
from Melbourne to Beijing



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2020 - 2021 COVID



**KEEP
CALM
AND
WEAR A MASK**

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MARCH 2020

- On Thursday 12 March the WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic
- On Friday 13 March Australia had 198 cases of COVID-19
- On Friday 13 March The Australian Grand Prix was Cancelled
- On Friday 13 March the MS Plus team took the difficult decision to cancel 13 events
- Over 9700 participants were contacted regarding the cancellations
- On Thursday 19 March the 'virtual Melbourne Cycle + Half Marathon was pivoted to a virtual event

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EVENT CANCELLATION

It is with regret that Multiple Sclerosis Limited (MSL) is announcing the taking place on has been cancelled.

While this decision has been made in an environment of global uncertainty, the health of members of the MS Community, volunteers, event participants and staff is the priority for MSL.

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EVENT CANCELLATION

MS CYCLE + HALF MARATHON

- The 2020 MS Cycle + Half Marathon was just one week away from rolling out when cancelled due to covid
- By this point in the campaign we had over 3,000 registrations
- On Thursday 19 March 2020 – the event was changed to the Virtual MS Melbourne Cycle + Half Marathon



MS Melbourne Cycle & Half Marathon
cancelled due to Covid-19

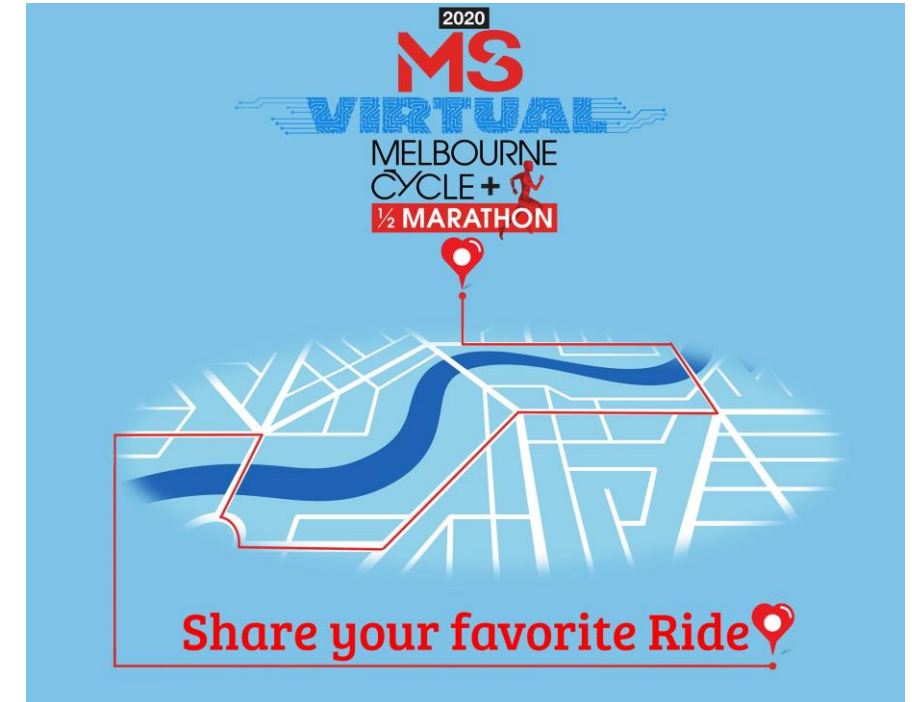


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COMMUNICATIONS AND RESPONSES

MS CYCLE + HALF MARATHON

Registration Fees	#	%
1. Take no action	130	11.25%
2. Rollover my registration to next year!	217	18.77%
3. Convert my registration to a donation!	402	34.78%
4. Refund my registration	407	35.21%
	1,156	

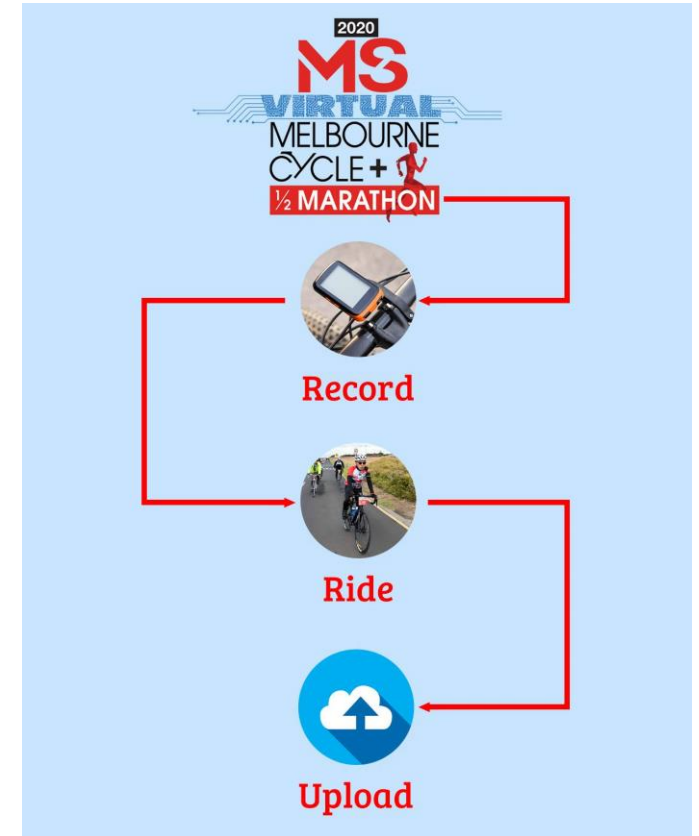


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VIRTUAL EVENTS

MS CYCLE + HALF MARATHON




- **1. Complete your run or ride this weekend!**
Get moving any time this weekend on Saturday 21 March or Sunday 22 March 2020.
- **2. Submit your results in the form below!**
We'll send out your finisher's medal to everyone who completes an event.
- **3. Show off your achievement!**
Shout about it on social media and email, and of course don't forget to link to your fundraising page!
- **4. Show some love to your sponsors!**
Thank your supporters with a feel-good message.



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EVENT POSTPONMENTS

Postponement plans information	Sent
Melbourne Walk Run + Roll	20/03/2020
Mega Swims	20/03/2020
Mega S&R	20/03/2020
Mega Badminton	20/03/2020

Event Status Update		
  		
Event Name	Status	Date
Bairnsdale - MS 24 Hour Mega Squash & Racquetball	RESCHEDULED	10 & 11 October, 2020
Altona - MS 24 Hour Mega Badminton	RESCHEDULED	21 & 22 November, 2020
Canberra - MS 24 Hour Mega Swim	RESCHEDULED	5 & 6 December, 2020
Melbourne - MS 24 Hour Mega Squash & Racquetball	RESCHEDULED	12 & 13 December, 2020
Melbourne - MS 24 Hour Mega Swim	POSTPONED	To Be Confirmed
Wodonga - MS 24 Hour Mega Squash & Racquetball	POSTPONED	To Be Confirmed
Sunshine - MS 12 Hour Mega Swim	POSTPONED	To Be Confirmed
Sydney - MS 24 Hour Mega Swim	CANCELLED	N/A
Launceston - MS 24 Hour Mega Swim	CANCELLED	N/A
www.msmegachallenge.org.au		

- Melbourne Walk Run + Roll communications were sent to participants already signed up regarding postponing the event to 2021
- Mega events were initially communicated as cancelled – Friday 13 March
- Communications amended to postponed on Thursday 20 March

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IMPACT

FY 2019/20

MS WALK & FUN RUN

8,616 Participants
\$1,060,658 Fundraising



FY 2020/21

MS WALK & FUN RUN

2,387 Participants
\$348,093 Fundraising

MS CYCLE + HALF MARATHON

3,874 Participants
\$628,871 Fundraising



MS CYCLE + HALF MARATHON (Virtual)

745 Participants
\$347,301 Fundraising

MS SYDNEY TO THE GONG

10,000 Participants
\$2.8million Fundraising



MS SYDNEY TO THE GONG (Virtual)

1,700 registrations
\$781,543 Fundraising

MS MEGA SWIM PORTFOLIO

26 Events
2,892 Participants
\$738,533 Fundraising



MS MEGA SWIM PORTFOLIO

2 Events
2,892 Participants
\$160,150 Fundraising

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78%

Decrease in
participants

34%

Decrease in
fundraising

TIME FOR IMPROVEMENTS!

REBRANDING



New Fundraising platform



2022 COVID



**KEEP
CALM
AND**

REVAMP EVERYTHING!

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INVEST IN BRANDING

- Investing in rebranding all of the events in the portfolio
- Investing time into reviewing audiences, media consumption, tone of communications
- Spending time on the public facing tactics of all our campaigns to ensure communications, media, PR and websites are all producing the same look and feel for messaging
- Tie in the cause in every single aspect of the campaign for every event
- Without the cause we have no brand!



2022 MS WALK RUN + ROLL

- Originally launched in February 2022 – three months later than usual, for four May events on 29 May
- New event became fully inclusive across all four states
- Investing time in creating a look and feel that matches the community focus of the event in both acquisition, fundraising and event experience
- Response to the events was overwhelmingly positive and fundraising hit pre covid levels even though this was the first major event series back



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REDESIGN, REVAMP AND FOCUS ON CREATIVE

REVAMPING COMMUNICATIONS

- Retention rates across the entire events portfolio took a massive hit post covid
- Audiences were so cold we needed to revamp the communications in both messaging, cause inclusion and look and feel
- The events team spent hours and days trawling through all our stand alone and journey communications to rewrite, redesign and roll out updated comms across all campaigns
- Pleasingly we are seeing retention rates in our 2023 events jump back to pre covid levels



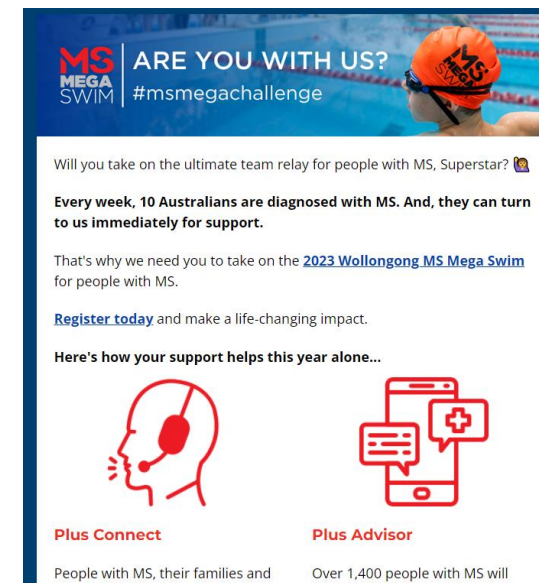
Are you with me?

Share, share, share!

I've got you covered with ready to use templates for emailing friends and sharing on social.

Get social

Announce that your MS Mega Challenge is just around the corner. Use the template below to share on social media, or [jazz it up with one of our cool social media tiles](#). Don't forget to use [#msmegachallenge](#) – I love seeing your posts!

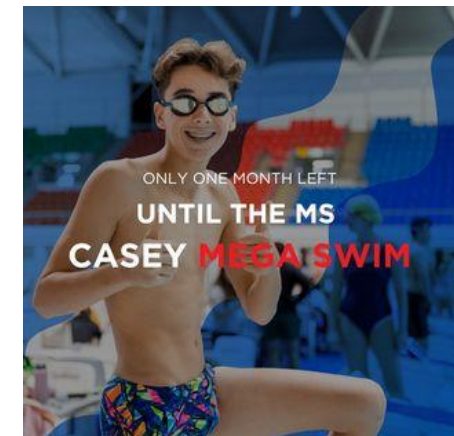
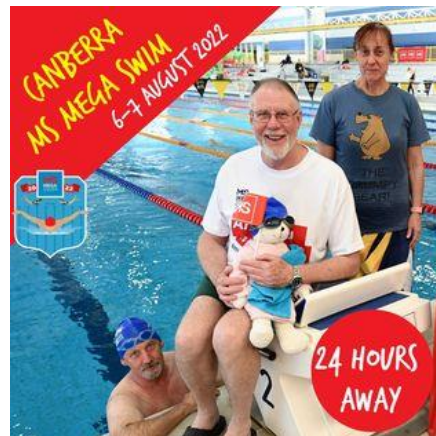


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MS MEGA CHALLENGE

- Community engagement lies at the heart of the MS Mega Challenge
- Through 2 years of pandemic restrictions and lockdowns the mega challenge portfolio community hosts had taken a step back from many Mega events
- Through the MS Plus events team's relationship management we managed to get back from two mega events in 2021 to an almost full calendar of 14 events in 2022
- Raising over \$520,000 in FY 22



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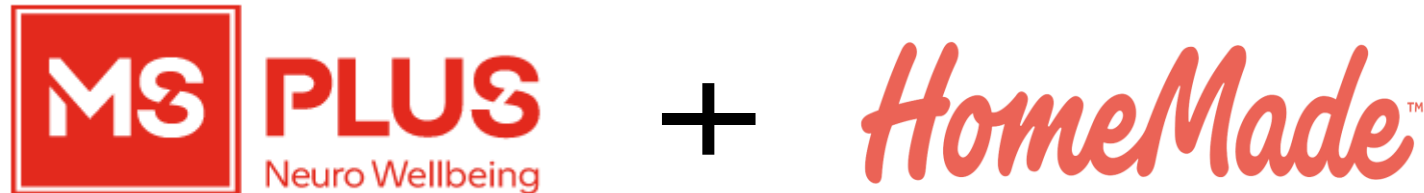
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COMMUNICATIONS IMPROVEMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WORKING WITH AGENCIES

- Opening up the organisation to the influence, experience and expertise of marketing and fundraising agencies
- Co-working for so long across the Ms Gong Ride campaign Homemade became an extension of the MS Plus team
- Focusing on communications and social media advertising to drive registrations and fundraising income
- Took a number of learnings from the agency to not only internal workings on the MS gong ride, but also other campaigns.



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PUBLIC RELATIONS

Brand exposure through public relations

- Brand recognition is how well the target, and potential customers, can recall the company's brand and identity.
- Loyal customers spend more money (donate more) to our business.
- Brand exposure for MS Plus through event is not only about events
 - It's about the public googling what MS Plus does
 - It's about people establishing a connection through people they know with MS and MS plus
 - It's about the 37,000 radio listeners who may react in 2023 (Register for an event, donate to the organization, volunteer with us) because they heard about the Gong Ride in 2022

Exposure > Recognition > Action

Coverage in 2022 > see ads in 2023 and remember > Register, donate or Volunteer

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Ken Jessop's ready to rack up another MS Gong Ride

By Janine Graham
Updated October 4 2022 - 9:18am, first published October 3 2022 - 2:00am | 0 Comments



Ken Jessop (white) and his friend Wayne Sergeant (green) turn their legs over. Ken has ridden all 40 of the MS Gong Rides. picture by Adam McLean.

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40TH MS GONG RIDE

- Originally launched in May 2021 for a November 2021 event – capped at 5,000 entries
- COVID numbers, government advice and restrictions meant postponing the event until May 2022
- Extreme weather in NSW in early 2022 meaning that the May postponement was then postponed until November 2022
- Event finally occurred on Sunday 6 November 2022, after **530** days in campaign

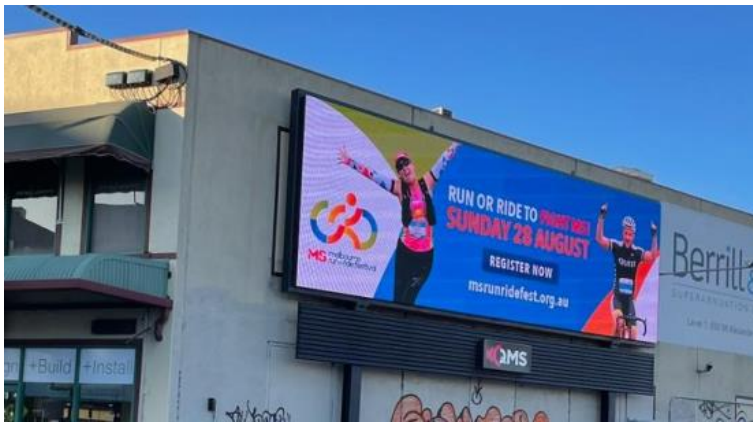
Week	(1) MAY 21 – AUG 21 Registrations	(2) NOV 21 - APR22 Registrations	(3) MAY 22 – NOV 22 Registrations
Original Event Sign up	Nov-21	May-22	Nov-22
Number of Active Riders (7/10/2022)	4810	3016	1882
Total	\$88,305.90	\$25,789.78	\$167,966.59
Average	\$18.36	\$8.55	\$89.25
% drop to cohort 3 average	-79%	-90%	



PUBLIC RELATIONS AND AGENCY EXPERIENCE

TRADITIONAL MEDIA AND MARKETING

- Working with pure marketing agencies, to keep the 'finger on the pulse' of best practise in this space
- Mixing digital activity with strategic ATL and traditional marketing tactics
- Out of home advertising used to drive search and website views for retargeting
- Strong creative on outdoor advertising to grab attention and push people to the website
- Took a number of learnings from the agency to not only internal workings on the MS gong ride, but also other campaigns.



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2022 MELBOURNE RUN + RIDE FESTIVAL

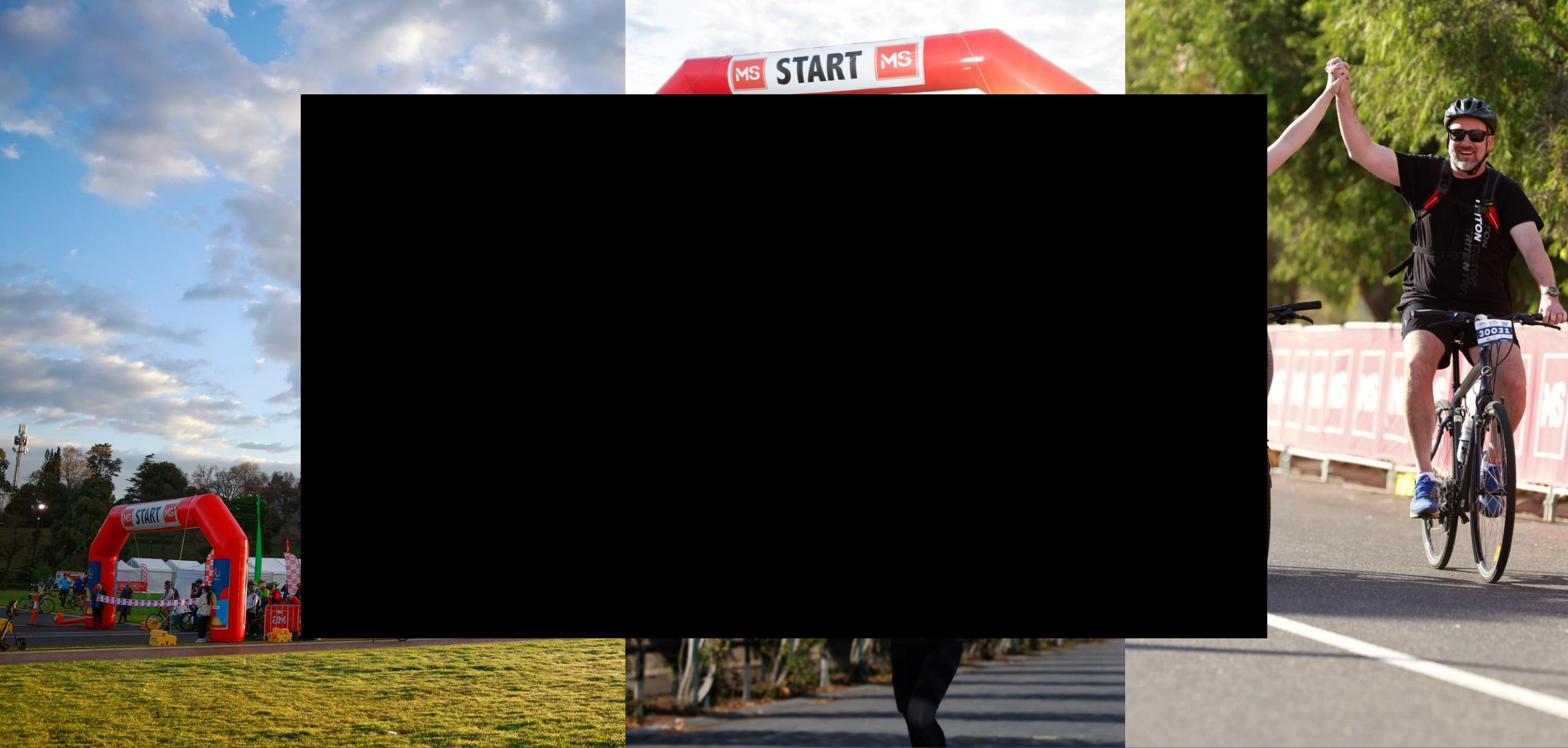
- Last event was held in March 2019 – since then we had a new name a new brand and two years worth of rollovers – a challenge
- An overwhelming number of responses to calls from the MS Plus supporter engagement team showed the main barrier for participation from participants not having been training for two years due to covid, or still feeling the effects of the virus
- After two years of rollover entries the Melbourne Run + Ride Festival finally occurred on Sunday 28 August 2022

KPI	Target	Actuals	Variance
Registrations	4,300	2,224	2,076
Retention	40%	7.6%	-32.4%
Reactivation	-	4%	+4%
New Market	60%	88.40%	+22.4%

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PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE AND TRADITIONAL MEDIA

IMPACT FY 2020/21

MS WALK & FUN RUN

2,387 Participants
\$348,093 Fundraising



MS CYCLE + HALF MARATHON (Virtual)

745 Participants
\$347,301 Fundraising



MS SYDNEY TO THE GONG (Virtual)

1,700 registrations
\$781,543 Fundraising



MS MEGA SWIM PORTFOLIO

2 Events
718 Participants
\$160,150 Fundraising



Together, unlimited.

FY 2021/22

MS WALK RUN + ROLL

6,075 Participants
\$879,786 Fundraising

MS MELBOURNE RUN + RIDE FESTIVAL

2,076 Participants
\$334,895 Fundraising

40TH MS GONG RIDE

10,000 registrations
\$2,784,320 Fundraising

MS MEGA CHALLENGE

14 Events
1,636 Participants
\$529,587 Fundraising

256%

Increase in
participants

40%

increase in
fundraising

IMPACT

Fitzroy MS Mega Swim

2019 441 Participants \$113,612 Fundraising	➔	2020 509 Participants \$139,751 Fundraising	➔	2021 384 Participants \$127,249 Fundraising	➔	2022 390 Participants \$131,729.87 Fundraising	➔	2023 477 Participants \$172,041 Fundraising
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2020 - 2022 COVID



**KEEP
CALM
AND
GROW (AGAIN)**

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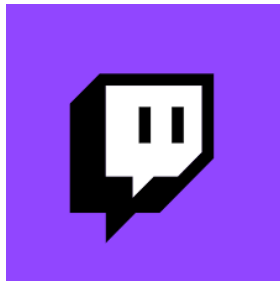
CONFERENCE

THE FUTURE

INTERNAL

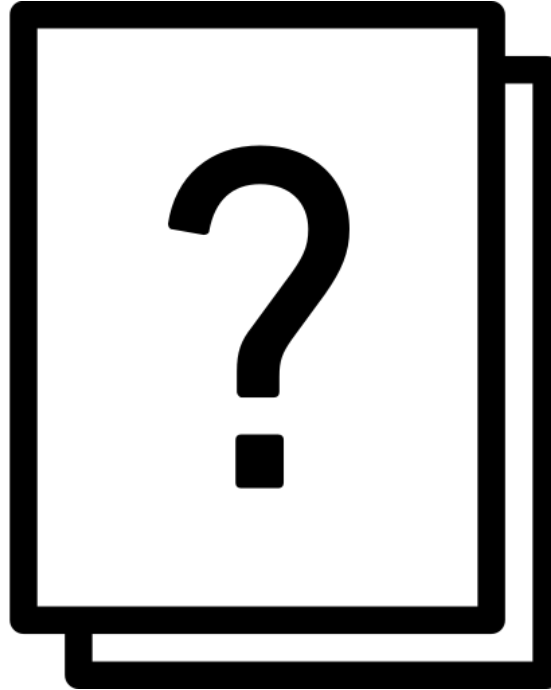


EXTERNAL



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QUESTIONS



Together, unlimited.

Contact Details

Ben Pritchard (He/they)
Event Marketing and Campaign Manager
MS Plus
ben.pritchard@ms.org.au



Ben Pritchard on LinkedIn



Thank you

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