

= The Wiggles Pty Ltd =

The Wiggles Pty Ltd is the business created by the founders of the Australian children 's music group The Wiggles . The group was protective of their brand , and adopted many of the same business practices as The Cockroaches , the former band of Anthony Field and Jeff Fatt , two of their founding members . They remained as independent as possible , and retained full creative control and ownership of every aspect of their business . As Field stated , The Wiggles Pty Ltd was " not your regular ' corporate culture ' . " The group made decisions by consensus and made business decisions based upon their experience as performers and their knowledge of early childhood education . They did not tour with a large troupe of dancers , cast , and crew until the late 1990s , and had high expectations regarding the behaviour and attitude of everyone associated with the group . They made careful decisions regarding their endorsements of toys and other products , and avoided over @-@ extending their brand by only licensing products that correlated with their image .

The Wiggles formally consolidated their business in 2005 , and consistently appeared in Business Review Weekly 's yearly list of Australia 's richest entertainers . They faced difficulty in producing a television show with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation , so they created thirteen episodes of a self @-@ produced television series . By 2002 , they began airing their TV programs exclusively with the ABC and became " the most successful property that the ABC has represented in the pre @-@ school genre " . In 2009 , they partnered with the digital cable channel Sprout to broadcast their TV shows . In 2012 , due to the effects of the worldwide recession , they cut back on much of their international expansions .

Other ventures of The Wiggles Pty Ltd included franchising their concept to South America , Taiwan , and other countries , opening " Wiggles World " sections in theme parks , and online offerings .

= = Business philosophy = =

Despite Anthony Field 's expressed dislike of the term " branding " , preferring to refer to it as " preserving the good name of The Wiggles " , the group has stressed the importance of , and were protective of , their brand . Field , along with bandmate Jeff Fatt and Field 's brothers Paul and John , were in the pop band The Cockroaches in the 1980s ; as Field reported , The Wiggles adopted many of The Cockroaches ' business practices . They chose to remain as independent and self @-@ contained as possible . The four original members retained ownership and creative control over every aspect of their business , and used outside companies to assist them as their business and popularity grew . As Field reported , " ... Our venture developed organically . We weren 't put together in some sort of Hollywood studio executive 's office " . They used Field 's family members and friends in the early years : former Cockroaches such as Field 's brothers and Cockroach drummer Tony Henry (Wiggles character Henry the Octopus was named after him) for musical support ; Field 's nieces and nephews to perform in their inexpensive videos ; their girlfriends to perform as their costumed characters . The wife of founding member Murray Cook made their first costumes . As Fatt reported , " it was very much a cottage industry " . They served as their own roadies and travelled in Fatt 's van , which he drove , towing a trailer with borrowed equipment . Fatt did their bookkeeping on an old computer the first five to six years of the group 's existence . They did their own merchandising , which consisted of selling albums , toys , and t @-@ shirts out of a suitcase set up on the back of a trailer .

Trust your creative and business instincts and maintain control of your destiny " .

Anthony Field 's stated business philosophy , 2012

As Field reported , The Wiggles Pty Ltd was " not your regular ' corporate culture ' . " The four original members made decisions by consensus and would spend more time on creative decisions than on business ones . Field reported that many of their key products were launched " during a brief pause in an Xbox game on our tour bus " . They answered to no one but themselves , with no executive board or shareholders . As Field stated , they made business decisions based upon their experience as performers and their knowledge of early childhood education , " rather than elaborate

, long @-@ term business and strategic plans ". When they ventured into international markets , first to the U.S. and the UK in 1998 , they chose to follow the same practices that were successful in Australia by keeping their stage show simple : inexpensive props and effects , and the four original members , along with their characters , singing and dancing for their audiences . Financing every business venture themselves , they had to bear the consequences when their ventures did not succeed .

The Wiggles became formally consolidated in 2005 . The group 's board of directors consisted of the original three members , Paul Field , who has been general manager of operations since the group was formed and their manager since the mid @-@ 1990s , and Mike Conway , who had worked for Ernst & Young in England and was their general manager responsible for their expansion into international markets from 2001 to 2012 .

In 2012 , The Wiggles cut back much of their international expansion after , like many businesses , experiencing a decrease in their profits after the worldwide recession a few years earlier . Paul Field reported that they would " refocus on what we do best " , which included their live shows , CDs , DVDs , and television productions .

The group has always had a strict code of conduct based on zero tolerance of drug use , drinking , smoking , or bad language by any employee of their organisation . They did not tour with a large troupe of dancers and cast members until the late 1990s , but as Field reported , " We 've been lucky with our cast , our turnover is pretty minimal ? we 've always had great loyalty from , and talent among , the professionals " . By 2005 , they travelled using two 16 @-@ metre (52 ft) trucks , three tour buses , a cast of 13 dancers (called " the Wiggly dancers ") , and 10 permanent crew members . According to Field , they required that the cast and crew of all their productions have a positive and respectful relationship with their audience , both on stage and off .

= = Merchandising = =

The Wiggles recognised that toys were a necessary part of a child 's normal development , especially his or her motor and language skills , so they trod the " fine line between maintaining and promoting early childhood values and operating in the commercial arena " , and as Field put it , " proceeded cautiously " . At first , Cook reviewed every merchandising proposal they received , but turned it over to other companies such as the Toronto @-@ based toy company Spin Master in later years , although Field reported that they continued to " sign off on things " . The group avoided over @-@ extending their brand by only licensing products that correlated with their image , like endorsing healthy foods , and by remaining within the preschool and family markets .

The group was named Australia 's richest entertainers by Business Review Weekly (BRW) for four years in a row (2004 ? 2008) They earned A \$ 45 million in 2009 , when they were third on BRW 's annual list . In 2011 , the worldwide recession hit The Wiggles , as it had many Australian entertainers ; they earned \$ 28 million and had a 28 % decrease in profits , but they still appeared second on the BRW 's list that year . According to BRW , the group restructured The Wiggles Pty Ltd in 2011 when they downsized staff and re @-@ focused on the more profitable aspects of the business , including their music , TV , and DVD ventures . Conway reported that 2011 was " the toughest year I have experienced economically , at [The] Wiggles or anywhere " . They showed negative equity by the end of the year , and in their first loss of profits in over ten years , resulted in a 28 percent decrease in income from the previous year . Conway blamed the poor economy , the group 's decrease in their U.S. tour from twelve weeks to five , difficulties in stocking DVDs at Walmart , and the cost of changing to a new digital format .

By 2012 , founding members Anthony Field , Cook , and Fatt retained 30 % ownership of their brand , and Paul Field and Conway each owned 5 % . Page received a payout of about \$ 20 million when he left the group and the business in 2006 . Also in 2012 , The Wiggles appeared second on BRW 's list , earning \$ 17 @-@ 167 million , despite negative press they received after Page returned and replaced Moran . In early 2013 , Fatt , Cook , and Page retired from the group for medical and personal reasons . They were replaced by former back @-@ up singers Lachlan Gillespie , Simon Pryce , and Emma Watkins , so that the group could continue to develop and

preserve their brand . Although they insisted that they chose Watkins , the group 's first female member , because she was the most qualified for the job , they admitted that it was " a strategy for marketing the Wiggles into the next generation " .

= = Television and DVD production = =

In the early years of the group 's existence , it seemed " logical " to develop a television program that both entertained and conveyed sound and developmentally appropriate values . At the time , according to Field , Australian children 's TV " was an extremely staid and cautious genre " , so it was difficult for them to break into it . They filmed a television pilot for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) because they felt a program on the network would receive the most exposure to the pre @-@ school market , but as The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) reported in 2002 , " the project never got off the ground due to irreconcilable artistic differences " . Also according to the SMH , the ABC told them that they could not communicate with children , and that the members of the group should " not speak , just sing " . The ABC insisted that instead of what the SMH called their " trademark colourful skivvies and black trousers " , they wear shorts and caps . The Wiggles responded to this criticism by creating thirteen episodes of a self @-@ produced television series , The Wiggles , which they funded from their tours and video sales . In this series , and in most of their early series , they cut costs by using two cameras and visually checked the performance of each song ; that way , according to Paul Field , it took them less time to complete a forty @-@ minute video than it took other production companies to complete a three @-@ minute music video .

They sold the program to Australia 's Channel Seven , and then moved it to the ABC in 1998 and to the Disney Channel in 1999 . Paul Field reported that in the early 2000s , a meeting at a New York licensing fair with Grahame Grassby , the ABC 's acting director of enterprises , led to the ABC 's " enthusiastic " agreement to produce The Wiggles ' TV shows . Beginning in 2002 , The Wiggles filmed four seasons worth of shows exclusively with the ABC : Lights , Camera , Action , Wiggles aired on the ABC in 2003 , The Wiggles Show in 2004 and 2005 , and Wiggle and Learn in 2008 . The network called them " the most successful property that the ABC has represented in the pre @-@ school genre " . In 2007 , The Wiggles opened their own recording and film studios in Sydney , called " Hot Potato Studios " . They were the first pre @-@ school production company in Australia to shoot their videos and TV programs in high @-@ definition .

In 2009 , as Cook put it , " to try somewhere else , and to freshen up our brand a bit " , The Wiggles ended their long relationship with the Disney Channel in the U.S. when they entered into a five @-@ year @-@ long partnership with the digital cable channel Sprout . They also aired previous episodes of their show on the channel , created and hosted a three @-@ hour block of programming that aired in the mornings , and created online and on @-@ demand content . Sprout called the partnership " Our biggest acquisition ... that Sprout has ever done " . Cook stated that the move was not " acrimonious " , and although the group owed much of their early success to Disney , that it " was just business " . The first decade of the 21st century ended with The Wiggles expanding their brand by creating new shows , including The Dorothy the Dinosaur Show and Baby Antonio 's Circus in 2009 , a three @-@ minute show that featured Field 's oldest son and acrobatics .

= = Other ventures = =

In 2005 , as a " relatively short @-@ lived " experiment , the group franchised its concept to other countries . They started in Taiwan , because as Cook stated , they thought the country " was a small enough place , in case it didn 't work out " . The Taiwanese group was successful , so they branched out to Latin America , casting Spanish @-@ speaking Australians . The Wiggles ceased to pursue additional franchising when they learned that viewers in other countries preferred the original versions of their songs and programs because they helped children learn English , and according to Cook , when it became too hard for them to control , and when it " did not prove lucrative " . By 2012 , they found that it was easier to simply dub their programs into other languages .

Also in 2005 , Australia 's largest theme park , Dreamworld in Queensland , opened a " Wiggles World " section , which included a Big Red Car ride and a full set for production purposes . The band received licensing rights and sign @-@ off rights for every aspect of the section 's operation . Staff at Dreamworld had to take a " Wiggles boot camp " , to ensure they followed The Wiggles ' code of conduct when dealing with children and their families . Driven by the Dreamworld success , Six Flags opened its first " Wiggles World " section at their largest theme park at Jackson , New Jersey in April 2007 , and planned to open 20 more at its parks across the U.S. in the next decade . The sections emphasised family involvement ; they offered joint rides on which parents and children could equally participate . In 2008 , Six Flags announced their intentions to open parks with Wiggles World sections in Dubai and across the Arab world . In 2010 , after emerging from bankruptcy protection , Six Flags ended their licensing agreements with The Wiggles and other organizations , and changed the themes of their rides and park areas .

In 2005 , The Wiggles opened their first play centre in Sydney , and by 2006 had built other play centres throughout Sydney and in the U.S. For a small price , parents were able to take their children to the centres for unlimited educational and play time , as well as themed party rooms for private birthday parties . The play centres also held a gift shop with Wiggles merchandise and a cafe that served food featured in many of their songs . Three centres in Texas and Sydney were closed as part of their financial restructuring in 2012 .

In 2008 , the group began to sell downloads of Wiggles ringtones and songs , and streaming video on an on @-@ demand website . On 24 April 2009 , the group launched WiggleTime.com , a virtual world website for toddlers and their parents with online games and content , much of which required a pay subscription for premium content . As part of the launch , the company moved the previously free fan club and message board into the subscribed content , but after fan complaints , the free board was reinstated . In 2012 , as part of their cost @-@ cutting measures , The Wiggles closed the subscription portion of their site .