

NZSBA Marketing Plan

2011 - 2012

“NZSBA – It Lives and Breathes”

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Executive Summary

The New Zealand Standardbred Breeders' Association Inc (NZSBA) has a number of marketing objectives to achieve in the 2011/2012 season. The following marketing plan will outline and discuss in detail each stage of the development of the NZSBA.

The NZSBA has shown solid performance since 2008, the national office has been set up in Christchurch and the profile of the organisation has risen.

It is now important to consolidate the work carried out to date, improve upon existing tactics and inject new ideas. This plan is results driven, with achievable tactics set out in a clear format to ensure the end goal is met.

The Marketing Plan outlines eight Marketing Objectives, with two Key Messages that need to be reflected throughout the associations marketing campaign:

ORGANISATION

These objectives are:

- Increase recognition of breeders;
- Increase membership by 10% in 2011/12 season;
- Raise brand awareness of NZSBA, including expanding viewership of website;
- Increase member participation within NZSBA through feedback channels via e-newsletter/surveys/competitions/social media.

HARNESS INDUSTRY

- Promote ownership initiatives;
- Support and encourage industry wide partnerships aimed at increasing participation through all areas by July 2012;
- Increase flow of information to racing and non-racing media – human/horse interest stories, NZ Bred achievements, size of racing industry comparing to other 'more popular' industries i.e. comparing GDP.

The Key messages the NZSBA should portray at all times are:

ORGANISATION MESSAGES

- The NZSBA provides a service specific to the breeder.

HARNESS INDUSTRY

- The NZSBA actively promotes the racing industry.

The following plan will outline the background to our market, what the association is trying to achieve and how this will be carried out.

Current Situation

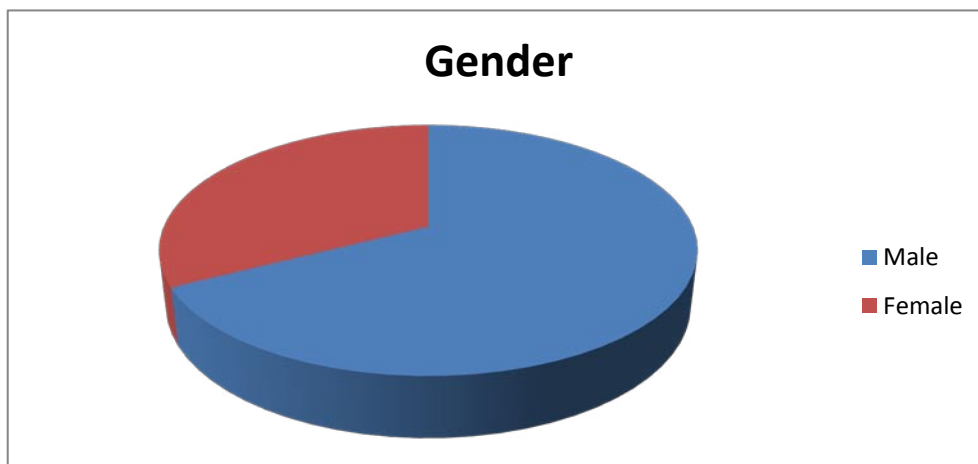
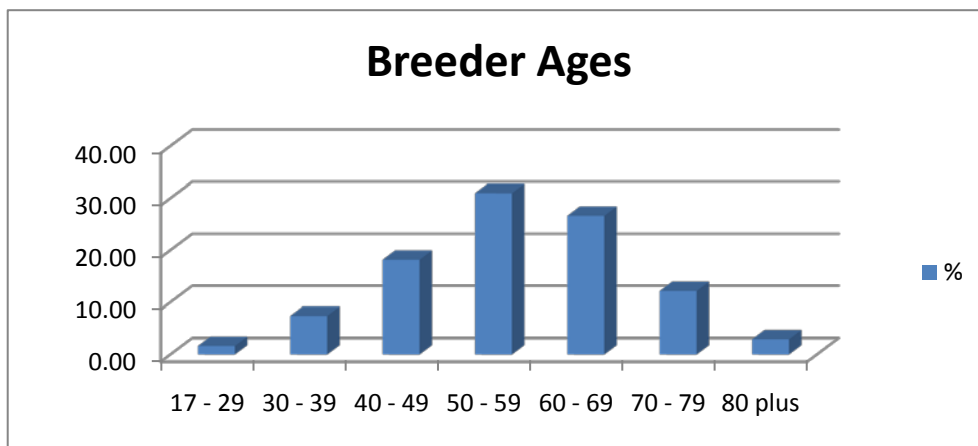
The NZSBA is a national organisation; recent statistical data shows that 76% of breeders are located in the South Island with 24% in the North. The National office is based in Christchurch at the heart of the industry, 42.5% of all breeders live in Canterbury.

The NZSBA membership figures, reflect the geographical spread of breeders, as below:

Region	% all breeders	% members
North Island	24.09%	28%
Canterbury	52.10%	45%
Southland	23.42%	26%

Note: Canterbury % figure covers Canterbury and northern regions – Marlborough, Nelson & West Coast.

Below is a chart of demographics based on 3328 breeders with ages known on the HRNZ infohorse database collated in 2010.



As seen from the above demographics our target audience are male horse breeders aged 50 and above. This demographic colloquially known as the 'baby boomers' (aged 46 – 64) have a number of characteristics that the NZSBA should cater its marketing message towards.

Characteristics of Baby Boomers (Buckland, 2009)_(Kimura)

- Physically vital and emotionally energetic;
- Exhibit a greater degree of resilient optimism;
- Younger, more vibrant, more adventurous;
- Well educated and discerning;
- Wealthy, financial freedom;
- Value personal development;
- Visible rewards and recognition are important;
- Independent thinkers.

INDUSTRY IN GENERAL

The racing industry is facing a number of challenges at present, declining turnover, declining interest and negative publicity from all angles including at a political level.

The NZRB is putting much emphasis is being put on 'cleaning up' racings perception, little is being done to promote the positives of the sport.

Harness racing has seen a slight drop in its domestic share from the NZ Racing Board as the table below shows:

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07
Thoroughbred	55.67%	53.93 %	53.68%	53.66%	54.66%
Harness	30.75%	31.00%	32.14%	32.73%	32.79%
G/hounds	14.38%	14.07%	14.18%	13.61%	12.54%

HRNZ see the main issues facing our industry are the declining interest in racing and offshore betting, reducing domestic turnover.

COMPETITION

The NZSBA does not have a main competitor in relation to membership options within our code. We can however look to the other codes, in particular the New Zealand Thoroughbred Breeders Association (NZTBA). The NZTBA was established in 1948 and has a large and powerful membership base of approximately 2,400 (48% of total breeding participants).

The NZSBA which is still in its re-growth phase has captured 15% of total breeding participants (500 members); there is huge room for growth.

One of the major competitors to the harness industry could be the Greyhounds. They show a relatively low expenditure versus stakes ratio. This could be seen as a favourable industry to participate in. Stakes are lower but relatively more lucrative when comparing to expenditure in all three codes.

In the current economic climate, unless the industry can find a way to reduce expenditure and increase stakes many of our participants may choose to leave the industry or move across to one that has a the perception of more benefits i.e. Greyhounds.

This isn't a problem the NZSBA can solve alone; it will need a united effort by HRNZ, the three kindred bodies and a commitment from the NZRB.

Review of current marketing strategies

Since 2008 the NZSBA has focussed on creating a presence in the industry via the national office in Christchurch and appointment of an Executive Manager. Much emphasis has been put into branding the association, providing a conduit for communication and disseminating information to members and breeders throughout New Zealand.

To better understand what has been accomplished and to improve, a review has been undertaken on the NZSBA initiatives introduced over the last two years.

Advertising

The NZSBA has a minimal budget for advertising. It is maximising the use of 'free' mediums in which to advertise membership services. These being: HRNZ's website – prominent button on the homepage generating 37.31% over the last 12 months (September 2010 – September 2011¹). Industry forums – great tool to advertise services such as Stallion Register online and Foal Alert.

The NZSBA will also subject to funds permitting advertise in the Harness Racing Weekly at such times deemed appropriate i.e Breeders issue, Christmas, Harness Jewels.

E-Newsletter

A new program is being used to generate the E-newsletter. This is a great tool that gives clear insights into who is opening and reading the emails and who is clicking into what links.

A number of members are not opening emails (average 46%) this is an area that has great room for improvement. Interestingly the campaigns that had the highest open rates – were short and to the point emails regarding events and services (such as crosses of gold).

The analysis of these campaigns will be continually monitored and adapted to ensure the maximum open rates.

Facebook/Twitter

The NZSBA has a presence on Facebook and Twitter, we are getting a good following of fans. This medium is not likely to be relevant for our target market, however it is an easy and free way to keep information flowing to those on facebook and twitter who maybe interested in the association.

¹ Source Google Analytics

Foal alert

The 2010/11 season was a quiet one for Foal Alert – we did have success again in matching foster mares to foals. This season a text service has been introduced.

Function

The Cup Eve function was a success in 2010. The 2011 event will be in its fourth year, a review of the event location, duration and content will be undertaken to ensure it stays fresh and current.

The event is still an important tool for the NZSBA to give the recognition sought by our breeders.

National Office

The national office will be moving into HRNZ in November 2011. This will save the NZSBA significant costs in rent and will ensure an even closer working relationship with staff at HRNZ and the NZ Sires Stakes Board.

Publications

Breeding Matters

From the 2011/12 season Breeding Matters has had a change in size and layout. It is still a work in progress but content wise has been a successful issue. The August issue was a bumper 64 pages – the largest yet and contained a good selection of articles and advertisers.

It hasn't quite reached the 'break even' point but is growing in appeal to advertisers and a goal of \$14,000 revenue has been assigned to the October issue. This will meet the publication costs.

Breeding Matters is sent to 3,500 breeders (first names) throughout New Zealand with a small list of overseas readers. One issue per year is members only.

Over the next season, a small selection of ownership stories will be introduced to support partner initiatives with HRNZ, NZRB, NZTOA.

Stallion Register

The Stallion Register is an important information tool for the NZSBA. It is the 'sought' after book for breeders. One long-term goal is to investigate a way for it to be distributed to members only. Currently in order to get the advertising revenue it is available to all registered breeders free of charge.

Regional support

The NZSBA provides support for the three regional associations. In the 2010/11 season, the NZSBA provided Group Certificates for members who have bred a Group winning horse. These were produced for Canterbury and Southland's awards night. The NZSBA national office also provides data on 1.58.0 pin winners and is supplied on an ad-hoc basis as required from the affiliates.

The NZSBA has also produced newsletters for Southland and Canterbury, the printing and mailing is organised by the NZSBA to take advantage of our lower bulk rates negotiated with suppliers.

Sponsorship

The NZSBA has secured four major sponsors since 2008. These are JLT Bloodstock (January 2009), Vetpro (March 2009), Mitavite (Aug 2009) then replaced by NRM (August 2010) and PGG Wrightson (Sept 2009).

The NZSBA receives income of \$13,500 per annum and in return provides each sponsor with:

- Recommended by the NZSBA to its members;
- Linkable logo on the front page of the NZSBA website along with a dedicated page;
- Free colour page advertising in the annual Sires Register and advertising in each issue of Breeding Matters;
- Promotion at all NZSBA events – eg. Yearling Sales, Major Racedays, Seminars, Conferences;
- Invitation to all NZSBA social functions and opportunities to meet with members of the three Affiliates.

Website

The website was developed in 2008, the following statistics show a 12 month period from August 2010 to July 2011, on unique visitors, visits, pages, hits and top 5 referrers.

Graph showing visitors and visits 12 month period

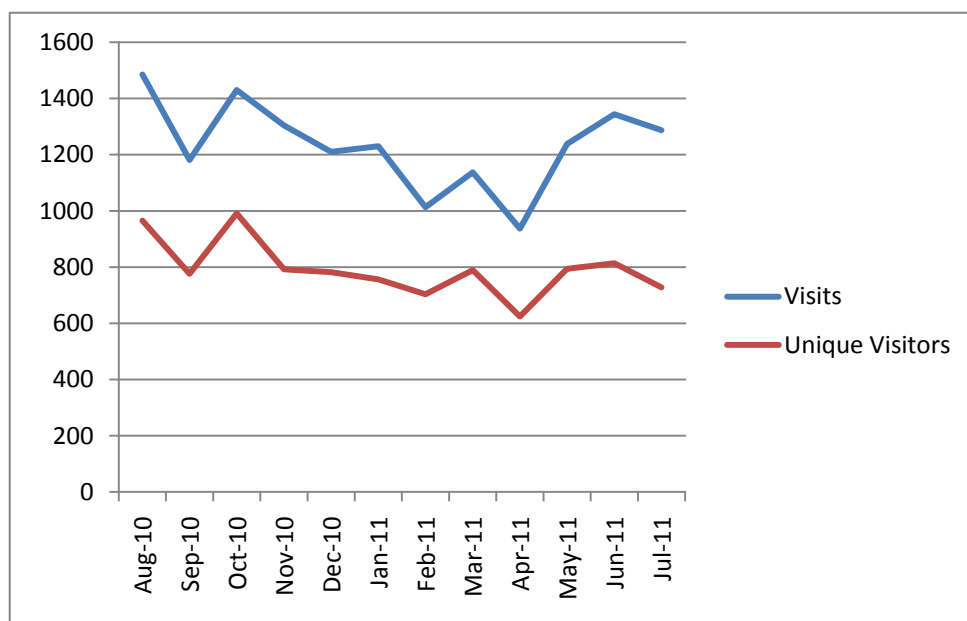


Table showing website statistics – August 2010 – July 2011

Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	% New Visits	Referrer (Top 3)
Aug 2010	965	1485	3797	49.97	HRNZ, Direct, Google
Sep 2010	776	1181	2902	47.76	HRNZ, Google, Direct

Oct 2010	991	1430	3391	49.37	HRNZ, Google, Direct
Nov 2010	1304	792	3124	42.41	HRNZ, Direct, Google
Dec 2010	1210	782	2937	42.89	HRNZ, Direct, Google
Jan 2011	1230	756	3179	40.41	HRNZ, Direct, Google
Feb 2011	1013	703	2942	48.17	HRNZ, Direct, Google
Mar 2011	1137	789	3190	50.66	HRNZ, Direct, Google
Apr 2011	937	624	2677	45.57	Direct, HRNZ, Google
May 2011	1238	794	3787	44.91	HRNZ, Direct, Google
Jun 2011	1344	814	3770	39.58	HRNZ, Direct, Google
Jul 2011	1287	728	3617	38.31	HRNZ, Direct, Google

Marketing Objectives

The NZSBA needs to focus its energy on a small but powerful selection of *Marketing Objectives* and *Key Messages*. With the nature of the organisation, it seems beneficial to split the Marketing Objectives and Key Messages into two Categories – Harness Industry and Organisation. The key messages should be worked into all relevant communication and projects undertaken by the organisation.

OBJECTIVES

ORGANISATION

- Increase recognition of breeders;
- Increase membership by 10% in 2011/12 season;
- Grow corporate membership by 10% in 2011/12 season;
- Increase flow of information to members;
- Raise brand awareness of NZSBA;
- Increase advocacy on behalf of breeders, as highlighted in the 2010 breeders survey.

HARNESS INDUSTRY

- Promote ownership initiatives;
- Support and encourage industry wide partnerships aimed at increasing participation through all areas by July 2011;
- Identify research projects to better understand industry and from results disseminate; information to breeders and develop strategies for improvement. 2011 – 2012;

- Increase flow of information to racing and non-racing media – human/horse interest stories, NZ Bred achievements, size of racing industry comparing to other ‘more popular’ industries i.e. comparing GDP.

KEY MESSAGES

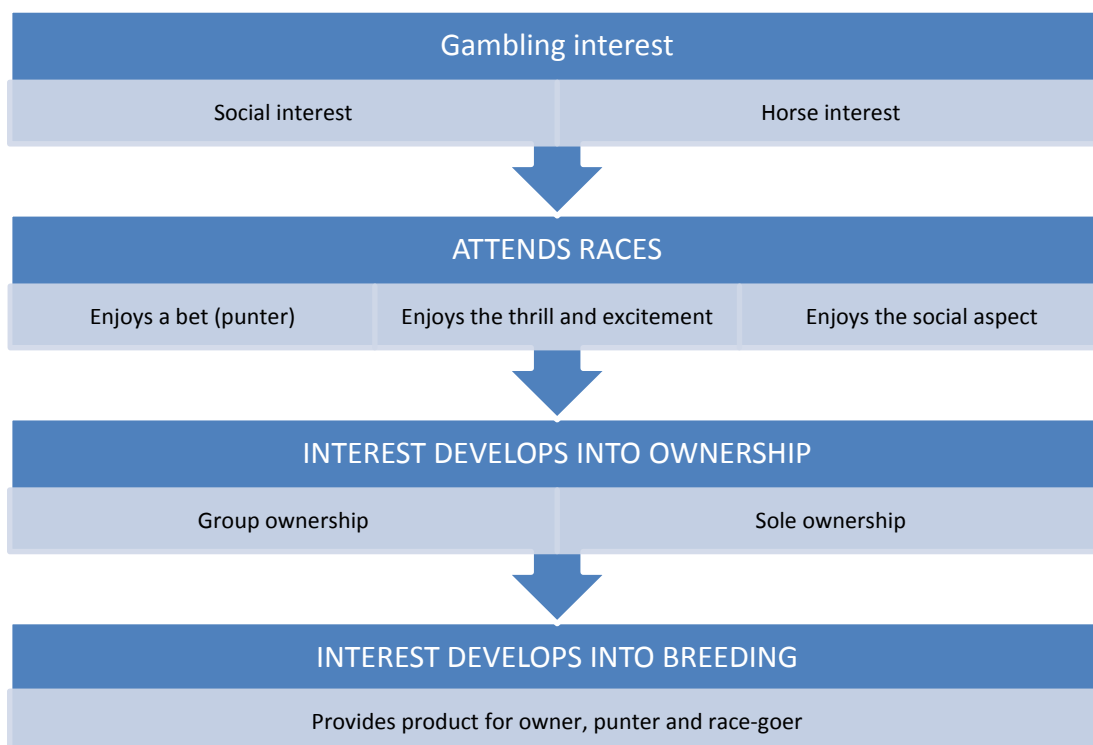
ORGANISATION MESSAGES

- The NZSBA provides a service specific to our members
 - Being the voice;
 - Recognition;
 - Expert information;
 - Promoting industry as a whole;
 - Advocacy.

HARNESS INDUSTRY

- The NZSBA actively promotes the racing industry
 - Encouraging media buy-in;
 - Providing industry information;
 - Working in partnership to hold events.

Process Chart



Marketing strategy

It is clear from the process chart above that unless we encourage non-racing participants to engage positively with our industry, bet and attend races – the flow on effect will not be seen through ownership and then onto breeding.

As we are currently seeing, we are in a declining market. Turnover is down, leading to drop in stakes, ownership participation is reducing along with numbers of mares bred.

The NZSBA needs to strike a balance between membership services and working holistically with the industry to get people back to the track and betting.

Currently the racing board, codes, clubs and kindred bodies are working independently towards the same goal “increase participation”. It is the intention of this marketing strategy to ensure the NZSBA builds on partnership with the NZRB, HRNZ, Clubs and other kindred bodies to ensure we are all working together to effectively make a positive change to our industry.

The flow of information to media outlets is currently haphazard. A strategy needs to be put into place to ensure information is sent to industry participants and media in a timely manner with simple to use facts backing up stories. Eg number of participants, economic impact of industry and positive messages surrounding industry news/events.

On a membership service level, structure now needs to be introduced to ensure that member and all breeders receive information regularly from the National office and regional affiliates. The NZSBA needs to fully engage members to become participants of the association. This can be achieved at a regional and national level.

The results from the Breeders Survey undertaken in December 2010, show that our members and breeders in general want greater advocacy. The NZSBA has an opportunity to ‘make its mark’ in this area with the recommendations that have been released by HRA. To date the NZSBA has sent a strong message on behalf of breeders to HRA and need to continue down this path.

Breeder recognition has been clearly identified as a key message. The NZSBA needs to work with regional associations, NZRB, HRNZ, clubs and kindred bodies to ensure breeder’s efforts are duly rewarded.

Looking internally, the NZSBA must improve on communication channels to the regional affiliates and vice-versa. This can easily be achieved by producing a procedure to communicating internally i.e. monthly report from national office to regions, regional report to national office after meetings with issues and action points.

It is important to stay on top of member needs and breeding issues. The best way to do this is via the regional affiliates who can then filter information to the national office via the Executive. This is currently being achieved in an informal manner. It would be more effective to formalise a plan to outline when and how information is circulated.

Research needs to be encouraged and initiated to better understand our members, industry and participants. Some research has been completed, HRNZ/Canterbury University research, IER Size

and Scope Study and Racing Board racing event research provides the NZSBA with a good source of information. More topics can be identified and research projects actioned (see Tactics)

Tactics and Actions

The following tactics relate to the marketing objectives.

Increase recognition of breeders

The NZSBA as part of its targeted strategy needs to build upon and increase the recognition provided to breeders. This can be achieved in the following way.

- Provide a trophy to the winning breeder(s) of Group racing;
- Work with regional affiliates to increase regional member recognition via gold pins, group certificates, member of the month promotions;
- Include member winners on E-newsletter – contact HRNZ on possibility of a report outlining number of winners by breeder each month;
- Develop media/communication strategy around major racing and carnivals, celebrating and recognising the breeders behind the horses (draft media/communication strategy Appendix 1);
- Continue to host cup eve function.

Increase membership by 10% in 2011/12 season

To be a strong and viable organisation, the NZSBA needs to capture more of the breeding population as members. Currently we are sitting on approximately 500 members. This is only 13% of all breeders. The aim for the next twelve months is to increase membership by 10%:

- The NZSBA has a current database of 3,287 breeders in New Zealand, direct marketing has proven to be the most effective way of getting 'the message' across to our target audience, current breeders;
- Have a presence at all major industry events, including yearling sales – jointly with NISBA host a members/breeders hospitality tent at the parade day;
- Provide membership flyers to clubs and design racebook advert;
- Drive membership via Breeding Matters – call to action, emphasise key messages.

Grow corporate membership by 10% in 2011/12 season

- Redesign strategic partner proposal to include a tiered structure;
- Corporate members will be either strategic partners with added benefits or pay the \$89.95 membership fee.

Increase flow of information to members

- Continue to send monthly E-newsletter, covering regional and national news;
- Identify key racing events and highlight successful breeders, send information to media, website and members;
- Continue to develop Breeding Matters 4 per year;

- Continue producing blog, put (shortened version) of Executive Managers report and any regional news. To be updated fortnightly.

Raise brand awareness of NZSBA

The NZSBA has developed a strong trademarked logo. The NZSBA brand as a whole including the Key Messages, needs to become stronger and more prominent.

- On all publications, websites, press releases and event promotions – the NZSBA logo either black and white mare/foal motive or full logo with rolling green hills to be displayed in a prominent position;
- Greater promotion of website;
- Have NZSBA display stand at all relevant industry events i.e Cup Week (Chch and Auckland).

Increase member participation within NZSBA

As an industry it is sometimes difficult to attract new participants on an administrative level, many not knowing how to get involved. The NZSBA will need to:

- Foster relations with prominent or well connected breeders who show an interest in the administration function of the regional affiliates;
- Work with regional associations to hold social events, invite a member to be ‘interviewed’ on the night. NZSBA to provide interview template (if needed). This will be an informal way to involve the members, highlight the successes and encourage increased participation;
- Annual prize draw for members as successfully trialed at the 2011 Harness Jewels.

Support and encourage industry wide partnerships aimed at increasing participation through all areas by July 2012

As highlighted earlier on in this report, key to improving harness racing’s position in general is working in partnership. This will only be achieved if the NZSBA continues to foster relationships with key partners:

- Develop or build upon relationships with NZRB & HRNZ Marketing and Communications departments, Club CEO’s and Marketing Staff, Kindred Bodies. Identify areas within their marketing plans for joint projects, invite to participate in NZSBA projects;
- Seek club support to provide information on NZSBA and breeders at all racecourses via flyer/posters and/or race book advert. (Leaflet production at NZSBA cost)

Identify research projects to better understand industry and from results disseminate information to breeders and develop strategies for improvement. 2011 – 2012

One question that has arisen during these economic times is – “how many horses do we need to fill fields?” This and many more questions regarding the ‘workings’ of the industry should have answers worked towards. The NZSBA subject to budget could:

- Engage (subject to budget or in partnership) a research company to ascertain the number of horses that are required to be bred each year to fill fields;

- Request statistic information on betting, owners and breeders to gain up-to-date data on the industry and identify any trends.

Increase flow of information to racing and non-racing media

The harness industry is very good at 'preaching to the converted'. The NZSBA gets good pick up from racing media in regards to press releases sent. It is important to continue to impart information to the industry but also look outside and engage with the non-racing public. This can be achieved by:

- Provide human/horse interest stories, NZ Bred achievements plus industry statistics to media outlets (racing and non-racing);
- In partnership with HRNZ and clubs host a 'media' day inviting racing and non-racing media to attend a day at the races.
- Refer to draft media/communication strategy (Appendix 1)

Current Activities

The NZSBA currently carries out a number of day-to-day marketing activities. These will continue to be tasked and are outlined below:

- Website – continue to update with news stories, events and other relative items;
- E-newsletter – Monthly generic; Upcoming Events & foal alert;
- Broodmare of Excellence Award;
- Cup Eve Function;
- Foal Alert – via text, email, websites and forums;
- Lease-a-Filly/Broodmare – working in conjunction with the Harness Racing Weekly and HRNZ website to promote over the months of August – January;
- Sponsorship – continue to foster relationships with sponsors;
- Sires register – continue to improve on each issue, create database for stallions;
- Regional activities – provide support to regional affiliates with their promotions;
- Blog – update fortnightly.

Monitoring

It is important to continuously monitor any activities the NZSBA carries out.

- Web statistics;
- Breeding matters – advertising revenue;
- Formal feedback via emails or web;
- Increase in membership.

Membership statistics 2008 – July 2011

Total Members	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12 projected
Canterbury	99	185	200	220
Southland	99	120	125	137
North Island	94	122	117	128
Total	292	427	442	485