

Redact – Trade Strand

The nine of us in the trade strand became development editors for the weekend. We were presented with a vague publisher's brief for a book, the main thrust of which was 'make lots of money, quickly'. A fairly realistic publisher's brief, by all accounts, but not necessarily a realistic demand of a book called 'Monuments of Victoria' (the provisional title we were given).

We took this germ of an idea and, led by Paul Watt, we fed it, shaped it and nurtured it until it was a fully fledged book concept ready to take on the harsh publishing world.

Over the three days we thrashed out all aspects of the book in detail. It wasn't always easy. Right from the start it became obvious that the initial topic, monuments of Victoria, was problematic. Who knew there were so many interpretations of the word 'monument'? Even the word 'Victoria' posed problems, as ninety per cent of the examples we brainstormed were limited to Melbourne. Over much discussion and with some quite diverting side-tracks (a favourite being 'Underground: Victoria from Below') we settled on an idea with legs: public art in Victoria.

Once we had the concept we took a thorough look at every conceivable angle of creating a workable, saleable book: market, budget, print run, structure, content, format, design, personnel, marketing and publicity.

By the end of the weekend, we had transformed a badly thought-out notion resulting from a panicked publishing meeting to 'StreetsmART: The Public Art of Victoria', a beautifully photographed, full-colour coffee-table book that encompasses everything from Aboriginal rock art to the yellow peril, and Queen Victoria sculptures to stencil graffiti, with a foreword by Dame Edna (TBC). All on budget and backed up with a clever marketing campaign. A good weekend's work.

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