

CELEBRATION FUNCTION — 2006

Speech Transcript

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Contemporary Art (ACCA)

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THIS FUNCTION IS A CELEBRATION AND A THANK YOU!

There are some individuals and organisations, as well as some great achievements for us all to celebrate, and at the end of these words, some great gifts (so please make sure that we have your business card for the draw).

However, first I want to take you back in time — to set the scene for our celebration.

Lets step back 15 years (well almost 15 years) to 1992.

1992

Paul Keating is the Australian Prime Minister and breaks protocol by touching the Queen. Joan Kirner is the Premier of Victoria but loses the election to Jeff Kennett. Spotswood, Romper Stomper and Strictly Ballroom are playing in the cinema, leading to a resurgence of dancing on television that continues to this day.

The Great Southern stand of the MCG is opened. The Olympics are in Barcelona. Collingwood meets Carlton in a 100-year celebration of their first match — Carlton wins of course, by 33 points (*suffer Ben*), — and for the first time, the AFL premiership leaves Victoria to go to the West Coast. Lang Hancock, Peter Allen and Sidney Nolan unfortunately pass away.

This is a milestone year in the world of IT. The Internet Society is formed by Vint Cerf, Bob Kahn and other web luminaries — Cerf later claiming that it was his surname that inspired the phrase 'surfing the web'. The term 'web' is itself coined with the introduction of the World Wide Web to the already existing Internet network. As a result the Internet explodes, with the number of connected computers – servers – doubling every three-months. Windows 3.1 is released by Microsoft. Intel launches the 486 processor and for the 'geeks in the room', inter-connection between databases is standardized with ODBC.

Ironically, or perhaps inevitably, in March 1992 a gentleman named Igor Zambelli starts a business in Melbourne called Smart Works. Smart Works almost from the date of its inception had goals of: transformational communication, technical excellence, innovation and teamwork.

My first thank you is to Igor Zambelli, founder of Smart Works, Komodo CMS and Crunch IT, who set us all on a path, long before any of us knew that we were on it!

This foundation creating an environment where a technology like Komodo CMS could be conceived, born, deployed and stewarded through some difficult periods when other's on similar paths would falter.

To Igor Zambelli, thank you!

OTHER FORCES

Some other external forces were rallying that led many millions of us to become web publishers — by choice, or kicking and screaming — and, ultimately, to this evening.

In 1994, Yahoo was created and the Open Source world saw the creation of both Red Hat Linux and PHP, both fundamental to the Komodo CMS platform today.

In 1995, Netscape listed on the US Stock Market and the Internet boom began in earnest. For the first time in Australia, we were allowed to use the Internet for commercial purposes. Do you realize that ONLY ten years ago, almost none of us had email, none of us banked online, or transacted online in any way, and very few if any of us would have been working for an organisation that had a website — you may not have even heard of the Internet at that stage!

In 1996, the first version of the Google search system was being developed, and Macromedia (now Adobe) released their Flash software. Ben Loke was graduating from Monash Design School — unknowingly about to commence a career in web design. Martin Hughes was project managing and developing database applications, William Jamieson and Rodney Way were tinkering within IT environments, and I had made a career change from corporate finance to publishing and corporate communication — finishing a Bachelor of Arts in English and Sociology that year. None of us had yet met, however I did buy an Apple computer from Igor's business, the predecessor of Crunch IT, at about that time.

The Olympics were in Atlanta. John Howard became Prime Minister. The Port Arthur massacre and the Townsville Black Hawk helicopter crash were some of the dark moments of the year!

THE STAGE IS SET

In 1998, the Google organisation is formed, the open source database 'MySQL' is launched (the database that underpins Komodo CMS). Organisations are working on the Y2K problem, Information Technology is booming and most organisations are going online — usually for the first time, and usually in a tentative manner.

Smart Work's systems department starts building its first IT application — eManager — under the leadership of Amro Ibraheim.

In 2000, we discovered that the 'Y2K bug' really was 'just a little bug', forgotten quickly in this country as we geared up for the Olympics in Sydney. Steve Bracks starts his first full year as Premier of Victoria and 'reality TV' hits our screens. In March 2000, the US economy slips into recession in what will later be known as the start of the 'tech wreck' or end of the 'dot.com era' of the late 1990s.

Of course, in classic 'counter cyclical style', Rodney, William and I all commence work with Smart Works during 2000, with Martin having started the previous year.

Work to 'exit' the eManager application begins in late 2000 and we start thinking about the development of customer maintainable web sites and web applications (before we knew this discipline as web content management).

The seeds of Komodo CMS are sown, so to speak in the middle of the tech bust! Only Smart Works and Apple are increasing investment in technology research and development during this period (OH!, all right, and maybe a handful of other smaller businesses like Google).

In 2001, the future Komodo CMS team is joined by Ben Loke and Tanya Unterberger. Our early pre-product (beta) customers including ...

Multimedia Victoria (Multi-Service Express Portal), the Melbourne Press Club, and Simply Music (USA).

At this point, I would like to thank these early customers, all of whom are still using Komodo CMS today — some five years on — and all of whom played important parts in making the product successful and leading the way for the rest of us to benefit from their early use and forbearance.

THE FOUNDATION TEAM

I would also like to thank the members of the foundation team of Komodo CMS. In late 2001, unfortunately coinciding with the terrible terrorist atrocities of 9-11, we were beginning to plan the building of a full-fledged web content management product — making this evening, in many ways, the fifth anniversary of Komodo CMS.

Most of you know some of the members of the team:

William Jamieson — Development Manager
Rodney Way — Lead Developer

It is true to say that William and Rodney built the underpinnings of Komodo CMS and it owes its existence to their brilliance, hard work, innovation and insight. While I was involved with the Melbourne Business School, studying for my MBA, and the Melbourne University Entrepreneurs Challenge, looking for inspiration for our growing product, I heard it said many times by experienced entrepreneurs and investors that they looked for people not ideas. There were some who said that they looked almost exclusively for what they described as 'leadership twins' — pairs of gifted individuals who inspired each other and pushed each other forward. If Komodo CMS has 'leadership twins', they take the form of William Jamieson and Rodney Way.

Now every team has to have a 'Collingwood Supporter' (unfortunately), and in our case, that person is Ben Loke. In case you haven't noticed, I also like to stir Ben whenever I get the chance, so tonight it is really painful for me to have to be nice! So I'm going to make it quick. Ben has been designing for the Internet since most of us knew there was an Internet. In my opinion, Ben is unquestionably the best web designer in Australia. For all the designers in the audience, and those of us who would like to be, Ben is the reason that Komodo CMS works for you and the reason it is intuitive to use and protective over the brand and image investments of organisations using Komodo CMS.

We are trying to get Ben to do less site design, so that he can make the core product, its interface and supporting design, marketing and instructional elements even better for us all.



THE FOUNDATION TEAM

The foundation team is rounded out by Martin Hughes and Tanya Unterberger who have filled the multitude of functions that Komodo CMS has required, including everything from project management, training, handling legacy systems and input into the development of the Komodo CMS system and supporting software, tools, specifications, and customer support.

All five members of this team have been onboard since before Komodo CMS was a product and are still with the team more than five-years later. We haven't just had 'leadership twins', so to speak, we have had a stable, reliable and gifted core team that has travelled the full journey.

I would like to thank — William, Rodney, Ben, Martin and Tanya — for a combined effort of more than 20 person years to bring Komodo CMS to this wonderful point!

THE OTHER KOMODO CMS TEAM

OK, so between 2001 and 2004, other important customers helped push Komodo CMS forward. They include: Sutton Tools, The Rural Press Club, eHound, Funk Fish, Waterfront City, and the Melbourne Speed Club.

Including our earlier customers, partners and internal websites, we had some twenty installations to refine the key deliverables and technology platform.

KOMODO CMS — VERSION 1 — 2004

Our development team was strengthened by the addition of Paul Iakhontov, already highly experienced with the development of CMS solutions (thanks Paul).

In March 2004, Komodo CMS finally had a name (the process of which is a long story for another time) and a final release version (the full details are also a long story for another time). In May 2004, Komodo CMS was launched to the world at the CeBIT IT trade show in Sydney, remnants of our impressive 6 x 3 metre stand are with us tonight in the entry foyer.

Customers who came onboard with Version 1 included: Ibis Publishing, Australia Pro Arte, Simple Stock Shots, Shedden Uhde, Nova Legal and Advisory, Big Sky Credit Union, Inference Communications, Very Special Kids, and the American Society of Architectural Illustrators. Many of whom are here tonight — thank you all.

In 2004, our branding materials, produced largely by Ben Loke, with significant contributions by Ian Scott, Andrea Rutherford, Paul Smith, Martin Hughes, Alison Alexander and Igor Zambelli won recognition as a finalist in the 'Promotion to the Creative Industry' category at the Australian Graphic Design Association (AGDA) Awards.

KOMODO CMS — VERSION 2 — 2005

Komodo CMS second version was again launched at CeBIT in Sydney in May 2005 (our stand getting a second gig, its third being this celebration tonight).

Customers who came onboard in 2005 included: Ampersand, Multimedia Victoria (this time for their primary domain, IT company database and other subsidiary sites), Scanbrands, Western Chances, Billfinger Berger (for the Royal Women's Hospital redevelopment project), the Melbourne University Entrepreneurs Challenge, Xanana Trust, CMA, the CPA's professional development CD, Bayside Secondary College, Mackay Branson Design, the New York Society of Renderers, the Legal Practitioners Liability Committee, the Cancer in Kids Auxiliary of the Royal Children's Hospital, the Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues, Novation Online Corporate Compliance Solutions, Stuart Wines (for their Buddha's Wine label), and The Natural Source.

KOMODO CMS PARTNERS

Komodo CMS also introduced a value-added business partner channel through creative agencies. One of the things that we are most proud of is that not only is Komodo CMS a world-class web content management system, but in addition, the quality of the deployed sites is world-class, a credit to the design agencies involved and a credit to the quality of the content produced by you, our Komodo CMS users.

KOMODO CMS PARTNERS

I would like to thank our design partners who also strive to deliver quality professional service outcomes to customers in the online space. We would not have achieved half of our success without your support. In alphabetical order, they are: Blue Boat, Huge Studios, Machine Thinking, Mackay Branson Design, Rankin Design, Smart Works, Stuart Pettigrew Design, and Watts Design.

In 2005, we were also actively involved with other partners in the development of related applications. I would like to thank ...

Novation CGS — with whom we are working to build an industry leading online compliance system for the mid-market. Novation has had great success this year, and Novation Director, David Griffiths, is here from Sydney this evening and will say a few words to you shortly.

eHound — who are building a multi-platform (SMS, Voice and Web) location-based search service that utilizes the Komodo CMS platform. Managing Director, Ashley Porter, was unable to join us tonight, as eHound is one of the IT companies heavily involved in the 'Blue Freeway' stock market listing occurring in January.

Inference Communications — Hopefully, if the stars align, Inference, who have an amazing voice technology will be working with Komodo CMS on some web delivered voice functionality in the coming years.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Marie Veneziano, who from 2005 onwards has taken a heavy load of moving new website content into our client's 'shiny new Komodo CMS implementations'. As a result, Marie is possibly the number one user of Komodo CMS with 'thousands of hours' flight experience. Marie was also heavily involved in organising tonight's event and ensuring its success. Thank you Marie.

SO HERE WE ARE IN 2006

We are here celebrating new members of the Komodo CMS family. During 2005 and 2006 Aleksei Trofimichine and Adrian Kencana joined the development team and Catherine Berruer joined the design and design implementation team.

Demonstrating the maturation of Komodo CMS from a technology development project to a stable and growing product, Komodo CMS appointed Berry Driessen to head sales, marketing and business development activities. Berry has had similar roles overseas, including taking a technology start-up through to acquisition by a large US IT organisation. I would like to extend a strong personal thank you to Berry for his professionalism and the difference that he has made to Komodo CMS in such a short time. Thank you very much Berry!

Also joining the Komodo CMS user family were the following organisations during 2006: Computer Power, Macquarie Bank and Leighton's Holdings (with the Melbourne Convention Centre precinct proposal), Agentis Solutions, A E Smith, the Design Business Council, Barry Plant's 90 West development, Defcredit, Vasey RSL Care, AFA Insurance, Sanderson, Fenix Event, International Aviation Software, IP Organisers, the Audit Quality Review Board, the Oxford Business Alumni, Phillips Ormonde & Fitzpatrick Lawyers and Patent Attorneys, Gilmore Girls College, the Royal Women's Hospital, and our venue for tonight, the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA).

As we have heard, ACCA have a great website, however it is also important to note that only last week, the Royal Women's Hospital website went live, our largest implementation in terms of pages and editors to date — another great website. Congratulations to the Royal Women's Hospital project team.

We are celebrating all of the staff, partners (design businesses and technology partners), as well as all of our customers in coming to this point.

2006 has been a very big year for Komodo CMS, we passed 100 installations, had speaking engagements with Open Publish, the Design Business Council, OZeWAI and the Melbourne University Entrepreneurs Challenge launch. We took Version 3 to the largest IT trade fair in the world — CeBIT Hannover — in March this year as one of eight participating companies on the Australian Technology stand and we added some magnificent and well received features and functions to the product, including full multilingual content support.

FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE

Perhaps the biggest change of all was moving from a single license purchase to a subscription-based model for future Komodo CMS releases.

As I have discussed tonight, the web, and IT in general has moved very quickly in the past and it is speeding up, not slowing down. In a timing contrast, Komodo CMS has demonstrated that we keep our relationships with our staff, our customers, our partners and all of our other associated contacts for a very long period of time.

There is no value installing a 'shiny new system' to keep you website content up-to-date and working for your organisation, if within a few short years the tool itself is out-of-date, frustrating and potentially damaging to your communication over the web. In 2006, Komodo CMS moved to a model that matches the longer term relationships that we have with each other, where you help us decide what the product needs, and the whole community benefits from all of the combined installations, all of the development and all of the knowledge of all of the participants. As a result of this model, next year, when we once again take our new version (Version 4) to CeBIT Hannover, all of our subscription clients will receive the combined benefits. In the past, our longest standing customers may have been left with earlier versions, not a desirable outcome for any of us. In addition, patches for changes in browsers, like the recent Internet Explorer 7 and Firefox 2 releases, the upcoming Vista release and other discovered weaknesses are addressed as they occur and our service focus is on this room, our collected Komodo CMS community.

SO WHAT'S INSTORE FOR 2007

In 2007, in version 4, we are aiming to include many of the following items. In our early Access Evenings next year, we will announce the final 'feature line-up' for Version 4 and the features that don't make the cut will ultimately come sometime later, and other features may be added depending on the final development roadmap.

Definitely coming in Version 4 are:

Form builder — allowing you to build visitor feedback, registration and other online forms, including email notification and data export.

Improved reporting — implementation of Google analytics and other related feedback, including link checking.

Interface Enhancements — improved product useability, both subtle and dramatic improvements and the integration of some AJAX code enhancements.

Other priorities include:

Rich Text Editor — for Internet Explorer and Firefox editors to speed the process of entering and editing text into your website(s).

Rich Media — Addition of 'Pod Casting' functionality. You can already post Pod Casting file formats, however we will incorporate some of the syndication and integration with other systems involved in the world of Podcasts.

Email Marketing — You can already take registrations and export HTML pages, however we are looking at tighter integration or delivery of email marketing functionality to improve your online communications and help you address privacy and SPAM related issues.

2007 will be an exciting and rewarding year for us all.

I am now going to hand you over to David Griffiths from Novation Corporate Governance Solutions for a few words, telling you of course how good Komodo CMS is, and something about their great product in the compliance market.

Then we have some door prizes, and after that, please help us celebrate the road we have travelled together and the outlook for a glorious 2007.

Please welcome David from Novation.