

NEWSLETTER

Dry Season Edition 2022

On the horizon

- > Supporting NT Christian Schools to deliver a new website
- > Delivering a number of annual reports for existing and new clients
- > Continuing to deliver stakeholder engagement support for Airservices Australia's PFAS characterisation program
- > Supporting the Tiger Brennan Drive overpass for the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
- > Providing public relations support for the Darwin Street Art Festival.

OVERVIEW

At the start of 2022 we were excited to have the team back in the office, after spending months working on a rotation to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Not long after that we welcomed three new staff members... and Frank the Siamese fighting fish. Our office is lively and dynamic again (just how we like it), with Frank's feeding roster the only one we need to worry about!

We are very pleased to have Senior Consultants Sheree Jeeves and Jill Martin, and Associate Consultant Sarah Coburn part of the team. Sheree, Jill and Sarah bring a diverse set of skills and expertise and we are very excited to have them on board.

This year Managing Consultant Hollie Young and her family welcomed daughter Olive, who is a younger sister for Jonti. Hollie, Olive and the family are doing well with Hollie set to return to work in late 2022.

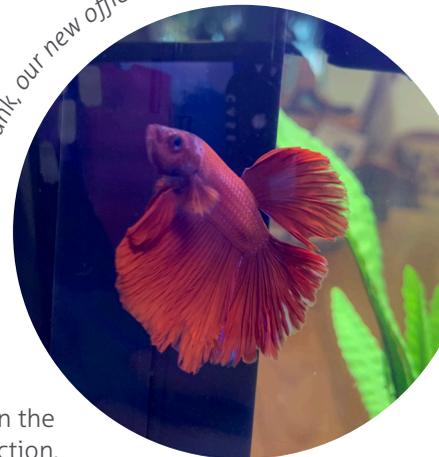
The celebrations keep coming at True North, as Senior Consultants Penny Baxter and Claire Butler both reached a 10-year milestone this year. You can read their thoughts on the past decade in their article below.

Going into the second half of 2022, we find ourselves with a new federal government following the recent election.



The arrival of the beautiful dry season has brought a number of exciting new projects to the Territory, particularly in the infrastructure space. We look forward to a busy second half of 2022.

Frank, our new office fish



True North was pleased to again provide media support for the **Australian Electoral Commission** in the Territory in the lead up to and during the election.

Other continuing and new work included leading community consultation for **City of Darwin's** Bagot Park Master Plan, developing and implementing social media strategies for **Darwin Cycling Club** and **Willing Distillery**, ongoing communication and stakeholder engagement support for **Core Lithium** and supporting **Somerville Community Services** to deliver their annual report.

As part of our association with the Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce, we recently hosted a Business at Sunset event. We would like to thank everyone who enjoyed the evening and our congratulations go to those who won the door prizes, including free access to the new *Clarity in a Crisis* online course, delivered by The Clear Writing Coach in partnership with True North.

STAFF PROFILE

Sheree joined True North earlier this year after leading community engagement at the City of Darwin for 6 years.

Sheree brings a wealth of local government knowledge to the team and has extensive experience in corporate communication, community and stakeholder engagement and strategic writing.

Since joining True North, Sheree has been busy providing strategic writing services to a range of clients and working on a number of projects with the Northern Territory Government.

“What I’m enjoying most about working at True North is being part of a fun, positive and highly skilled team to learn from and bounce ideas around with,” Sheree said.

“It’s also great to work on a variety of projects and across a broad range of sectors.”

Sheree has lived in the Territory for 13 years and spends her free time with her toddler Wilson, camping, going to the gym and spending time with friends.



SHEREE JEEVES

Three questions with Sheree



- > **Favourite food from the markets:**
Chicken noodle soup from Parap Markets
- > **Best restaurant/café recommendation:**
Charcoal chicken on Friday nights at Laksa House
- > **The last show you binge-watched:**
The Last Kingdom

DID YOU KNOW..



According to the revised Australian Government Style Manual the general rule when writing content is to use numerals for number ‘2’ and above, while you should write the numbers ‘zero’ and ‘one’ in words.

CASE STUDY



COMMUNICATING ACROSS NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

As our name suggests, True North works across northern Australia, with staff based in Darwin and Cairns.

Claire – who is based in Cairns – and Penny recently worked on a project with the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF) to tell stories about the local benefits and outcomes of projects in northern Australia that have received NAIF support.

We were perfectly positioned to provide communication support to NAIF for this project as it required local knowledge and on-the-ground support in both Darwin and Cairns.

The major projects supported by NAIF provide numerous economic benefits, employment and opportunities across northern Australia, but sometimes it's the local stories behind the statistics that really help to convey the benefits.

One of the stories for the project involved True North working with Genex Power Limited, Hinterland Aviation, NAIF and local Cairns content creators eMotion, to tell the story of how a \$777 million renewable energy project in North Queensland kept a local airline flying through the COVID-19 pandemic.



Above: Nicole Clarke from Hinterland Aviation

In Cairns, Claire sourced local content providers, coordinated security clearances at Cairns Airport and project managed the photo and video shoots onsite at the airport as well as the complex approvals process for a large multi-stakeholder project.

We created a package of communication materials including social media and website content, a media article, 30-second and 90-second videos and professional images for NAIF to use in publications, social media, media, NAIF website, newsletters and at events.

Visit the NAIF website to read the story and watch the video: <https://naif.gov.au/media-releases/naif-support-for-genex-project-sees-airline-fly-high/>

A LOT OF CHANGE IN 10 YEARS

This year we celebrated a 10 year milestone for Penny Baxter and Claire Butler, who have worked with True North since it was Michels Warren Munday, from 2006 and 2008.

Claire and Penny reflected on the past 10 years at True North and share their thoughts on what has changed in the industry and at True North over this time:



1. Social media 📱

The rise of social media has been the most obvious change over the past 10 years. While social media existed 10 years ago, the widespread use and influence it has in society now has transformed the way we work. Like all workplaces, we have adapted and social media is a key aspect of our work, whether it's developing a social media strategy, creating content for social media posts, or incorporating social media into marketing strategies.



2. Community engagement 🏰

There has been a huge shift in the desire to engage with the community about projects, programs and policies. Ten years ago, True North was forging the way for community engagement for local businesses and governments at every level – local, Northern Territory and Australian. Now it is entrenched in planning and developing most of our major projects, giving Territorians a chance to have a say on what impacts them. We have developed a high level of expertise and experience in community engagement across a broad range of projects and industries and are always looking for ways to engage in different and innovative ways.

3. The reputation of communication 📣

We believe in communicating in a way that respects the audience and creates connections. In the past, communication was often perceived as 'spin', but honest and transparent communication is increasingly being valued by business leaders and executives, which has led to a shift in the way people perceive communication. True North has stayed true to our commitment to help clients build trust with audiences through authentic, respectful and relevant communication.

4. Unlike Claire and Penny, our printer is now semi-retired 🖨️ 📄

Like most offices, we had numerous filing cabinets, the printer hummed along working overtime and our desks were piled high with project folders full of paper. The rise of the digital workplace has changed how we work and the work we do. Now our written content is mainly for digital or online use and marketing has expanded from traditional printed materials to include online platforms. This change has been gradual but over 10 years it has created a more user friendly and succinct communication style to suit our audiences.

5. Changes to the media landscape 📰 📺

Between 2002 and 2018, newspaper revenues in Australia fell \$1.4 billion as people consumed news in different ways. We want constant access to new news, more often and in bite-size grabs you can read while doing other things. The demand for quick, digital news in a busy world impacts our work in many ways. Using images and online videos to capture attention is a must and written content needs to grab the reader by their virtual shoulders to get them to listen. Working with media organisations and understanding what these changes mean for them and how they operate is an even more essential skill to pitching a story.

6. You're on mute 🚫 📺 🙄

The move to online meetings and working from home has affected the whole world and is a significant change to how workplaces operate. Although these arrangements are not so new at True North, as Claire has worked remotely from Nhulunbuy and Cairns since 2008, we now regularly use Zoom, Teams and Slack to meet online. Working remotely is more widely accepted, along with online conferences and training, and thankfully pyjama pants.

7. Greater awareness of social and global issues 🌍

Increased access to online information, usually via social media, means people are generally more socially aware. This changes how we help clients manage issues and crises, the need for clients to communicate their values and ethics and has led to True North expanding into social impact assessment. Assessing social impacts involves understanding how a project, such as a new mine or program could impact people and communities, while working with the client to manage those impacts for the benefit of the communities.

8. After work drinks anyone? 🍷 🍷 🍷

We're not sure if this reflects a change in the industry, us personally or in society in general, but after work these days the gyms are busier than a lot of the bars. Ten years ago, we were more likely to go to the bar for drinks after work than we were to hit the gym and follow up with a health drink.

9. Using emojis 😍

You may have noticed, using cute little graphics in place of words is a new habit that we love! It brightens up content but also needs to be used in context and set the right tone for that perfect social media post.

10. Our lives have changed 🏠☕🐕🐱

While at True North, Penny and Claire have had between them:

- 6 children
- 3 new houses
- At least 7,300 cups of coffee
- A lot of wine
- 7 cats
- 19 dogs (including 15 puppies) – actually these are all Penny's!

We also noticed there are some things that haven't changed at all in 10 years:

1. Clear messaging

The simple fundamentals of writing in plain English to clearly communicate messages are as relevant and crucial today as they were 10 years ago.

2. Values and ethics

Our values and ethics at True North have remained the same – *integrity, professional, collaboration, clever thinking* and *passion*. These values are behind everything we do.

3. People are at the centre of all communication

Whether it is a marketing strategy, community engagement project, social media stories, media

releases or corporate communication documents, people continue to be central to our work. It is vital to ensure that we keep people and their needs as the focus for everything we do.

4. The deadline is still yesterday

Yes, we still often operate to tight deadlines and clients need things at a moment's notice, but we have systems in place and a big, supportive and complementary team so things continue to run smoothly when we get busy.

5. Coffee continues to play an important role

We still love our morning coffee or 3 10 years on!

CLARITY IN A CRISIS

HOW TO COMMUNICATE WHEN THINGS GET MESSY

True North is proud to partner with The Clear Writing Coach Sam McCue, to distil some of our most important crisis communication tips in one easy to follow online package.

In less than half an hour, the video package goes through the basics of how to keep things on track and communicate with confidence when business as usual is derailed.



The Clear
Writing Coach

Elena and Sam combined their professional knowledge of clear writing and good communication practices with real life experience of managing crises to develop this package, which is suitable for any organisation, big or small.

Enrol or find out more: [Theclearwritingcoach.com](https://theclearwritingcoach.com)



OUR BUSINESS AT SUNSET EVENT



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