

MEDIA RELEASE

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Handmade's Virtual Market was a win for small businesses

Handmade are happy to report that their Virtual Market last weekend was a success. After having to cancel their usual market held at EPIC at short notice, the Handmade team sprang into action to create an online market for the traders who were scheduled to appear at the EPIC market. “We just couldn’t cancel the market and walk away”, says Managing Director Julie Nichols, “so many small businesses were losing a fantastic opportunity to earn an income, and many of them had already been affected by the bushfires”.

With 24,000 visits to the site across the weekend, and many traders reporting fantastic sales, the Virtual Market made the usually Canberra-based market accessible to anyone, anywhere. “There was a lot of excitement from interstate and overseas shoppers” says Nichols.

The Handmade team says the success of the market is a testament to their loyal customers and the adaptability of both customers and traders. “People really got behind it”, said Nichols, “we saw some people having mini Virtual Market parties at home and we saw friends scheduling in a 'shopping trip' together and shopping together over the phone!”.

They also received many heartfelt messages of thanks from their traders. “The overwhelming sentiment was that they appreciated the opportunity to make sales and felt supported by our efforts” said Nichols.

With their sights now set firmly on continuing to support the small businesses they work with, as well connecting their loyal customers with the design and produce they know and love, the Handmade team are already working on a plan. They encourage all makers of handmade, Australian made products and produce to sign up to their newsletter to be kept in the loop about future plans.

“We’re pleased we could adapt and overcome in light of recent events” said Nichols, “and we’ll be doing all we can to continue to keep the creative economy alive and well”. With Mother’s Day approaching, Handmade hopes to continue to share the love. “Watch this space” says Nichols.

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ABOUT HANDMADE

Handmade Canberra is Canberra’s largest indoor market. It’s held 4 times a year at Exhibition Park in Canberra (EPIC), with 270 stallholders selling handmade products and produce ranging from homewares, fashion, jewellery, art, design, food and beverages. Attracting 120,000 visitors a year and generating an estimated \$15 million, the market is a large contributor to the Canberra economy. The market also supports local charities, raising an estimated \$80,000 dollars per year through market entry donations.

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