

PROFESSIONAL MAGICIAN **MATT HOLLYWOOD**
CREDITS BARTECARD WITH LAUNCHING HIS
CAREER INTO THE BIG TIME.



magic for business

Since joining Bartercard in 2002, Australia's master magician has been bewitched by the benefits.

When Matt Hollywood enters the room you know that showbiz has arrived. As Australia's Champion of Magic, he has wowed audiences of every shape and size, including celebrities and other notable individuals such as Robbie Williams, Jimmy Barnes and former PM John Howard.

At the beginning of 2000, Matt committed himself to a full time professional career as a magician and it's been a spectacular roller coaster ride ever since. Luckily, the track has been on an upward trajectory all the way.

The start of this year saw Matt performing before his biggest ever crowd at the International Scouts Jamboree held in Victoria, alongside business partner and *Big Brother Up Late* presenter Mike Goldman. "It was really fantastic to be out there in front of 11,000 people," says Matt. "It gave us a chance to do magic on a bigger scale.

"A normal show is usually in front of between 30 and 300 people. It starts off with the MC saying, 'And here is your entertainer, please welcome Matt Hollywood', and then I run up on stage and by the time I'm in front of the audience, I've got someone's watch, someone else's wallet is on fire and they're all totally blown away. It's a great feeling to be able to make people go 'Ooooh, how did he do that?' while they're killing themselves laughing at the same time.

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"But performing in front of 11,000 meant we could get into really fun, David Copperfield-style tricks. We were sawing people in half, had them disappearing in a cloud of smoke, and we even got the scouts levitating. It was awesome."

With his effervescent persona, highlights in his hair, and beaming smile, Matt is the embodiment of all things showbiz. He even has a magical story about his path to becoming a magician and illusionist. In fact, you could say it was his destiny.

There is a sincere note of pride in his voice when Matt recalls that his grandfather was also a master magician. "I remember watching him performing at Christmas parties and thinking, 'Wow, that magic must be real.' He was always pulling coins out from behind my ears and I couldn't understand how he did it. I just thought he was amazing.

Sadly, he passed away when I was only eleven years old but he left me all these boxes full of his magic stuff. Of course for years I didn't know what any of it was or how it worked. Recently I've managed to work some of it out but certainly not everything," he says.

After his grandfather died, Matt discovered that as a young man he had worked and performed with the great magician and illusionist Harry Houdini when he visited Melbourne in 1910. Realising that he had a link back to the world's most famous magic man, the seed for Matt's future career was sown. With his grandfather as inspiration, Matt developed his tricks and honed his skills into a professional, polished and laugh out loud show that has audience members fit to burst – if he doesn't saw them in half first.

After years of dedication and hard work, Matt has now established himself as Australia's premier magician and a supreme comedian.



“ Matt credits Bartercard with helping him launch his career into the big time. ”

Alongside regular TV appearances on 'The Footy Show' and Channel 10's 'Big Brother', Matt loves to perform everywhere from corporate functions and festivals through to private events. But it's taken a lot of effort to be able to make a living out of having fun.

Matt credits Bartercard with helping him to launch his career into the big time.

Around the time he joined Bartercard in 2002, Matt decided to give being a professional magician and entertainer "a real good go." He knew his show was a winner so the next step was to secure the services of an effective publicist who could raise his profile. After all, it's no good having a great show if your customers don't get to see it.

Knowing that good publicists are seldom cheap, Matt decided to pull a solution out of his box of tricks.

"I made a proposal to a publicist that I hoped they wouldn't refuse," he recalls. "Basically they weren't a Bartercard member so I asked them to think of something they wanted to the equivalent value of the services I was asking them to provide me. The publicist said she wanted a boat and sure enough we found one on Bartercard, which I was able to buy and give to her.

"So effectively I used Bartercard to pay for the publicist. It really was an incredible turning point because what she did was to get me on the *Footy Show*, *Rove Live* and do a heap of other great shows that translated into cash jobs."

"Bartercard is a beautiful thing once you begin to work out how to use it," says Matt, "I believe that all business owners can really benefit if they take the time to think about the things in their business life and in their personal life that can be purchased on Bartercard.

"The system really is as simple as it sounds. If you want to reduce cashflow, say you have a heap of purchases to make or you decide you want to spend a few thousand cash dollars less per month, then you open the Directory and you'll find ways to spend less. Whether it's stuff like telephones, which you can now pay for on trade, or, like my wife, you're always buying kid's clothes, Bartercard is a solution. Anything you can think of I bet you'll find it somewhere on Bartercard, either in the Directory or on the Auction site," says Matt.

For those who are racking their brains for ideas about how to make the most out of Bartercard, you can take a short cut and speak to your Trade Co-ordinator. "These guys are like a secret weapon," says Matt. "They really understand the Bartercard system and the beauty is they are paid to help your business. I reckon they are Bartercard's best kept secret and I would encourage anyone to use this brilliant resource."

Even though he has confidence and success exuding from every pore, Matt admits that achievement in business doesn't always come easy.



In fact, Matt says that hiring a business coach two and a half years ago has probably been his greatest asset in terms of being able to look at and evaluate strategies that can build his business and his brand. "My business coach is paid for using Trade Dollars and if I hadn't been a member it's possible I would never have looked into this service," says Matt.

As well as giving him the option of trying new services, like that provided by his business coach, Matt believes Bartercard has been an essential marketing device for his business.

"As a member, Bartercard advertises you in the Directory and then it markets you through its newsletter (and *b.savvy!*). Next you might get an enquiry call and before you know it, you have a job when before you had nothing. Bartercard really does work like magic – where previously there was an empty space in your diary, suddenly, thanks to Bartercard, it's been filled with a new job. It's brilliant," he says. ■

