

choice

ANNUAL REVIEW 2014-15

A new strategy

The biggest priority of the Board and management through 2014-15 was setting the future direction of CHOICE, through a new three-year strategy

We are acutely conscious of our responsibility to ensure this organisation, which has been fearlessly representing the interests of Australian consumers for 56 years, remains relevant and sustainable into the future.

To work out how to achieve this we started with data – analysing what we knew about how consumer needs were changing, how well CHOICE was performing, how our members felt, and what new businesses had emerged as competitors. This analysis told us that while we are still well known for our traditional work in helping consumers choose appliances, we have been too slow to respond to the problems consumers face when making decisions about services like energy, mortgages and superannuation.

It also highlighted that while we have had some success in attracting younger consumers, there is still more we need



Nicole Rich, Chair

to do to encourage them to support CHOICE, through campaigning on the issues they care about, and providing services that better meet their needs.

The new strategy that emerged from this work has four key goals:

- **DRIVE** change in areas where we can have a significant impact for



Alan Kirkland, CEO

consumers, which will require us to take a more coordinated approach to the big problems facing consumers, through aligning our campaigns, investigations, testing and services for consumers.

- **EXPAND** through innovation to assist consumers and grow revenue outside our existing business model.

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DRIVE
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LIVE up
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of others

This will involve developing new ways of helping consumers, especially when they're making decisions about services.

- **IMPROVE and grow our existing business to ensure our long-term financial sustainability**, through a constant focus on enhancing what we currently do, so we can attract more members and encourage them to stay with us longer, as well as growing revenue from other sources like CHOICE Recommended.
- **LIVE up to the standards we expect of others**, which will include ensuring our practices around privacy and data meet high standards, and working to increase our social impact and decrease our environmental impact.

It's an ambitious strategy supported by strong targets and we are confident that if we can deliver upon it, CHOICE will be a much stronger organisation in three years' time.

Finances

Financially, we posted a surplus of \$3.8m. This was distorted by a grant of \$2.8m for activities to assist consumers in the travel market. Although this will be used over five years, we were required under the accounting standards to recognise all of the income in 2014-15. Without the effect of this grant, the surplus would have been \$1.36m. This result reflects our efforts to generate increases in revenue accompanied by careful control of expenditure growth.

The Board now feels that we have built CHOICE's cash reserves to a level that should give us the ability to invest in new initiatives and the time to respond to any external factors that affect our future revenue. As a result, we have budgeted to increase operating expenditure to support this strategy, particularly in relation to innovation. We will also commit capital expenditure to improving our facilities and our building's energy efficiency.



Campaigns

As we developed relationships with the federal government and the new Senate, we saw some important wins for consumers. Highlights included:

- The successful campaign to stop the repeal of financial advice consumer protection laws.
- The federal government's decision to improve labelling of the country of origin of packaged food.
- The agreement of consumer affairs ministers to draft a national information standard on the labelling of free-range eggs.

Our influence on these issues was assisted by our community of online campaign supporters, which grew from 30,000 to more than 64,000 across the year.

Engaging voting members

We also continued to grow and engage voting members. Our call for new voting members saw this group grow to more than 5800. We provided a briefing to

member forum in Perth in July 2014, and following this with a forum in Adelaide early in 2015-16.

Governance

We continued our process of governance improvement, overseen by the Board's Governance Committee. We adopted a new Board Charter, reviewed Board professional development requirements and introduced a new risk management framework. Having identified the need for a Board member with digital marketing skills, we co-opted Robert Southerton to the Board for a three-year term from September 2014.

Rob Antulov stepped down from the Board at the 2014 Annual General Meeting and was replaced by Helen Wiseman, who was selected on the basis of her skills in financial governance. This allowed Helen to replace Ian Spight when he stepped down from the role of Chair of the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee from May 2015.

Our influence on these issues was assisted by our community of online campaign supporters

voting members after each Board meeting and sought their views on the priorities in our new strategy before it was finalised.

Recognising the value of direct engagement, we explored new ways of involving voting members. At the 2014 Annual General Meeting, we enabled voting members to participate via webcast for the first time.

We also hit the road, holding a voting

Another casual vacancy, created by the earlier resignation of Peter Fray, was filled by Jennifer Zanich, who was selected for her skills in developing digital business models.

We have entered the 2015-16 year with a diverse and highly skilled Board that has the ability to guide our new strategy and to ensure CHOICE lives up to its history and reputation as a strong and fearless consumer advocate.



Bottom line

A healthy surplus allowed CHOICE to invest in change

Our total revenue increased by more than \$3.5m, mostly due to the one-off grant of \$2.8m to assist consumers in the travel market (see page 2). Our membership revenue grew by 2.2% for the year, mainly due to a price rise introduced late in 2013-14. The strongest area of revenue growth was our CHOICE Recommended licensing scheme, for which revenue almost doubled, although this is still a small percentage of total revenue. This highlights the potential for further growth in this area. Income from external test research also showed a positive increase of over 10% on last year.

Renegotiated contracts for packaging and posting of magazines, along with a slight reduction in magazine circulation, meant that our direct costs reduced.

These outcomes allowed us to further invest in new ways to help consumers, especially online, with our new website



launched in March 2015. Our operating expenditure increased by more than \$700,000, mainly due to salary increases, an expansion of our Campaigns team and increases in costs attributable to the new website including software licence fees and depreciation.

A strong surplus of \$3.8m (or \$1.36m once the impact of the travel grant is disregarded) will let us continue to improve our products and services for consumers and continue our strong

campaigning work in the coming year.

Consistent with our surplus, the operating cash flow was very strong, with a cash surplus of \$3.1m resulting in our cash (and cash equivalent) balance increasing to \$8.7m at 30 June 2015 (of which \$2.4m relates to the travel grant) and our total assets increasing to \$22.6m. As at 30 June, we had a surplus of assets over liabilities of \$16.6m.

George Perry,
Director, Commercial and Finance

	YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015 (\$)	YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014 (\$)
Revenue	16,854,310	16,106,364
Less: Direct Costs	(1,558,360)	(1,717,709)
Less: Operating Costs	(14,557,803)	(13,835,926)
Plus: Non-operating Revenue	3,152,931	326,436
Plus/(Less): Non-operating Items	(89,072)	(90,101)
Net Surplus	3,802,006	789,064
Current assets	13,502,708	8,652,672
Non-current assets	9,145,228	9,798,197
Current liabilities	(5,805,060)	(5,432,152)
Non-current liabilities	(264,376)	(242,223)
Net Equity	16,578,500	12,776,494

Listening to our members

In 2014-15 we continued to enhance the benefits that people derive from CHOICE membership

Members continued to be highly engaged with CHOICE. We conducted a Customer Feedback survey of 5051 members in November 2014. In it, 94% of members said they feel CHOICE is trusted, 94% that we're helpful and 89% that we're unbiased. Also, 74% of members feel good about our advocacy role, a sentiment that strengthens with length of membership.

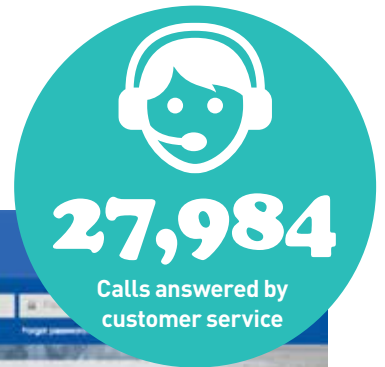
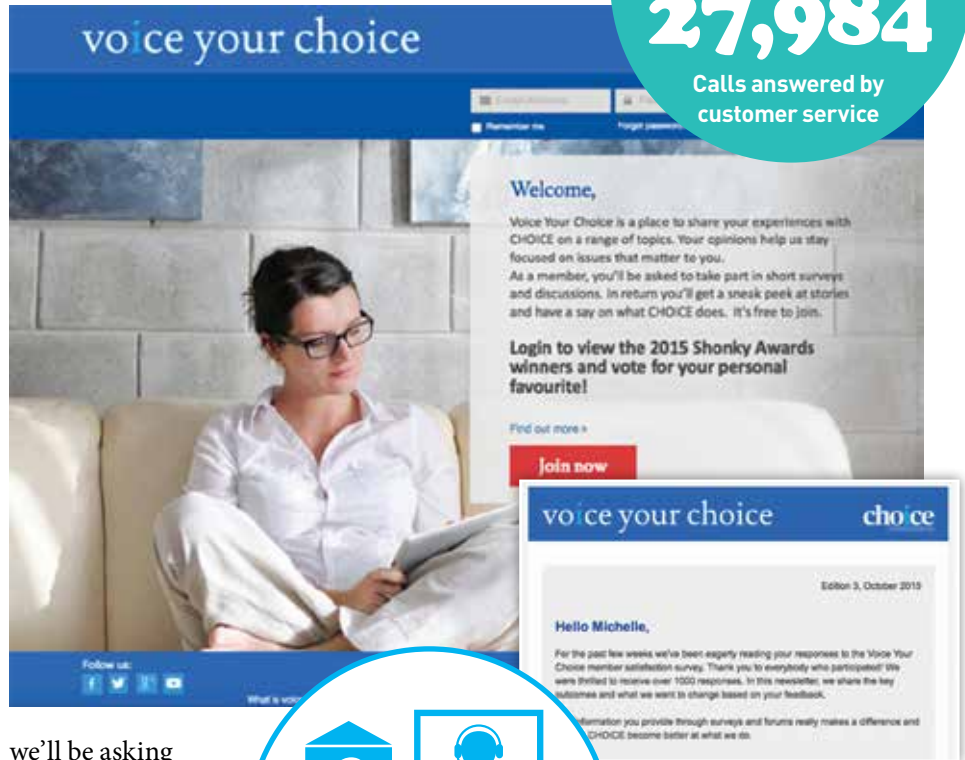
While these results are pleasing, there are always opportunities to improve. We determined our top priority areas and focused on improving them.

Members said they wanted to hear from us more regularly, so we increased the frequency of our Insider email from monthly to fortnightly, including fresh news and investigations in each communication.

Members continue to be engaged by our more frequent contacts, with 47% of members now reading and 17% clicking through each time we send them. And 67% of members told us they wanted to hear more about our advocacy role, so we incorporated more of this into our email communications.

Members also told us they were satisfied with phone interactions with us, but less satisfied with the way we're dealing with queries via website comments and emails. We have since established stronger internal processes to help improve the speed and quality of responses.

We have also been improving our internal data management to give us better insights about how members are using our services. Over the coming financial year,



we'll be asking members to volunteer feedback more regularly, so we can faster address issues.

We were excited to launch our online member research community, called *Voice Your Choice*, in January 2015. The community helps us to tap into

our members' collective experience to inform our news, investigations and testing plans and output. Since launch, we've conducted 25 surveys, helping to deliver dozens of stories and tests. Members interact with other members in an online portal and receive the insights generated via periodic *Voice Your Choice* newsletters. The community has more than 4000 active members and is continuing to grow. Feedback from participating members



has been very positive.

We made significant changes to choice.com.au in March 2015. Around 1000 members had comments and questions on how to use our new website. We were grateful to receive this level of engagement and have been using it to improve the website experience.

Our annual Brand Health research survey of 1598 representative Australians in February 2015 showed the CHOICE brand had strengthened considerably over the previous year.

We were pleased to see we had a five per cent growth in brand awareness, matched by a five per cent increase in usage of our services over the previous year. Nine per cent of Australians told us they visited our website monthly, up from six per cent.

We have challenging and exciting plans for the year ahead and look forward to working towards improving member experience.

Michelle Rappaport, Director, Marketing and Customer Experience



Reaching out online

Connecting with consumers through our new website

Throughout 2014-15, we have continued to invest in improving our digital offering. Building on last year's launch of iPad and Android versions of *CHOICE* and *CHOICE Computer* magazines, one of the major milestones from this year was the launch of our new website in March 2015.

A key objective of the new website was to make our information, tools and guides accessible from all kinds of devices.

With an increasing number of members now accessing choice.com.au from mobile phones (representing nearly one-third of all of our traffic), we needed to ensure the user experience was as good on a mobile as it was on a desktop.

Some of the key elements of the new website include:

- Online price comparisons for a range of products through an agreement with eBay.
- The introduction of buying guides for major product categories to help consumers know what to look for when making their purchases.



41m

Page views in 2014-15

- Pages for individual products to give consumers more information about a specific product, including detailed specifications and more images.
- The introduction of peer reviews, where members and guests can leave user reviews to complement the work done by our expert testers and researchers.

In addition to providing more depth

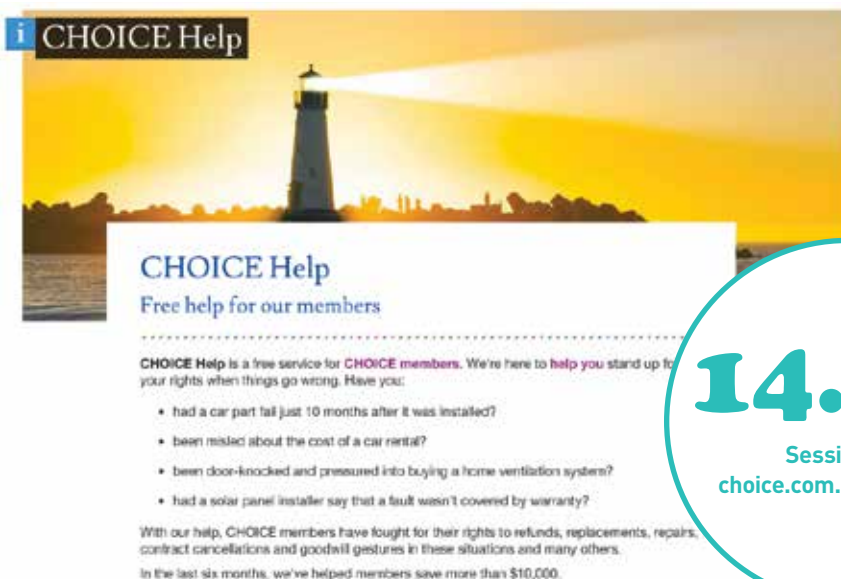
to reviews of products and services, we've designed the homepage to highlight more of CHOICE's offerings, including a section on our Campaigns, increased profiles of our testers and journalists, and testimonials from members who have used our CHOICE Help service.

While the launch of the website was a key milestone, our aim is to continue to improve the experience for the almost one million unique visitors to our website each month.

The feedback we received from members and other consumers indicated that while there were some things they loved about the new website, some features were not up to the standard they expect of CHOICE.

We are now focused on a program of continuous improvements, to ensure that we live up to CHOICE's reputation as a trusted and valuable source of information for consumers.

**George Perry, Director,
Commercial and Finance**



14.1m

Sessions on
choice.com.au in 2014-15

Telling it like it is

News, reviews and investigations to keep consumers up to date

Throughout 2014-15, our News, Investigations and Technology teams kept our members and Australian consumers across the biggest issues affecting them, with some innovative content, rigorous home-grown testing and outstanding results. And we tackled more stories and issues than ever before.

In July 2014 we researched and busted the myths surrounding the 'health lifesaver' chia and ruled it more of a superfad than a superfood. We also delivered a heavy-hitting piece close to the hearts of our members on what foods you shouldn't eat if you're taking certain prescribed medications.

Consumers' hip pockets were key to our 'Till debt do us part' shadow shop which focused on planning a wedding and why prices skyrocket whenever you mention the 'W' word.

In December we announced our new CHOICE Travel project and dovetailed this with a timely piece about your rights if your travel agency goes bust. And it wouldn't be Christmas without the CHOICE roundup of the best barbecues for a sizzling summer

and our traditional festive taste test – focusing on the not-so-humble fruit mince pie.

As 2015 rolled around we delved into the dodgy world of Isagenix, a highly successful business that promises users that they can lose weight, gain energy and make money all at the same time. The resulting investigation delivered high traffic to choice.com.au, attracted and engaged new readers and performed extremely well on social media. In addition the article was republished in full on the homepage of smh.com.au and age.com.au and was covered in an extensive segment on *A Current Affair* and ABC News 24.

Netflix became a real option for Australians in March. We provided a detailed round-up of all the services

15m

mince pies are sold in Australia every Christmas



now available to digital lounge rooms around the country, and continued to update it as new providers and additional features came onto the market.

In May, CHOICE had experts in the federal budget lock-up in Canberra to help decode the budget for Australian consumers.

Also in May we unveiled the results of our mortgage brokers shadow shop. A damning report on the mortgage broker industry based on the real experiences of people looking to secure a mortgage, this in-the-field shadow shop and expert review sparked debate among industry and consumer stakeholders.

June saw the release of our 2015 Supermarket Price Survey results – a national investigation based on original CHOICE research. Food prices are foremost in consumers' minds, and this story provided very useful information for shoppers looking to save.

Through the year, we published the results of our new quarterly Consumer Pulse survey, which measured how Australian households were responding to financial pressures in a period of income stagnation.

And on TV, we continued our collaboration with ABC TV's *The Checkout*, helping us to engage new audiences in the importance of consumer rights.

Claire Gould,
Head of Content

1.6m

Aussies use TV streaming services



Pushing through the products

More products tested than ever before

We managed to test another bumper crop of products in 2014-15, up 100 products from last year.

We use a variety of labs to test the products we purchase. There are many products we can test in-house, using our NATA-accredited labs for testing laundry products, our thermal labs for fridges, and our other labs for many other standard products you'll find in any home.

We also use a number of other environments, such as our Mazda 2 on Sydney roads for GPS navigation tests, a turf farm in Queensland for lawn mowers and a racecourse in Warwick for tyre testing.

We test jointly with the International Consumer Research and Testing (ICRT) for some universally standard products such as cameras, tablets, smartphones and printers. This tends to make testing more cost effective, as costs are shared between a number of consumer organisations.

We also partner with our sister organisation, Consumer New Zealand (CNZ), on many tests, which helps to offset our costs.

On a commercial basis, we offer testing for government contracts, manufacturers and standards development processes. This provides income, as well as opportunities to learn about the development of products, standards and how other organisations work. In particular, we took part in the development of the International Standard for fridges,

Vale Chris

We were shocked to learn of our colleague, Chris Ruggles, being diagnosed with cancer in mid-2015, and we are very saddened by his passing. We will miss his immense contribution to CHOICE and other organisations such as Standards Australia.



\$580k+

The amount our buying team spent this year on test goods

2400

The number of product models tested this year

which is expected to be released by 2020. CHOICE has been at the forefront of pushing for more realistic testing of products for many years, and having input into this process has been invaluable.

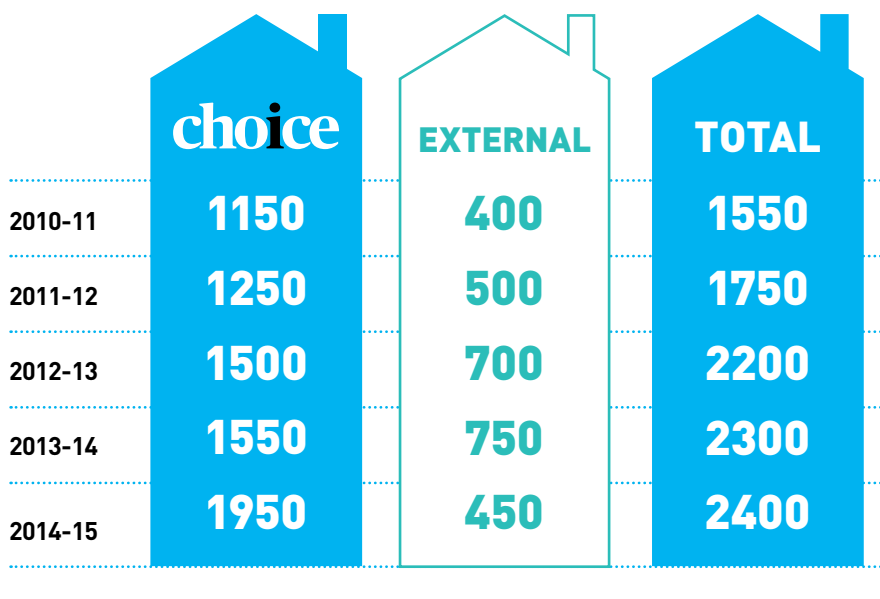
In the future we are looking

forward to taking part in the International Standard for Dishwashers and Clothes Dryers testing, which is being assessed as a replacement for the current Australian Standard.

Michael Hohl, Director, Product Content and Testing

Number of models tested

Figures rounded to the nearest 50



Bigger, better and bolder than ever

Our campaigns achieved wins for consumers in food labelling, financial advice and free-range eggs

CHOICE is working with more people than ever to make positive change for consumers, with 64,406 campaign supporters working with us by June 2015 and more than a quarter of all supporters taking action on two or more campaigns in the year.

Campaign supporters have helped achieve some impressive victories. After supporters wrote to food manufacturers, Kellogg's announced it would implement Health Star Ratings on its products. Our quickest win occurred after our CHOICE Help service found a pet insurance company was continuing to charge premiums after a pet dies. A CHOICE campaign convinced the company to remove the unfair clause in just four days.

The CHOICE campaign to save the Future of Financial Advice (FoFA) legislation was successful in November 2014, when senators overturned controversial new rules and the government agreed to maintain essential consumer protections. The decision was greatly influenced by the CHOICE campaign, which included a petition signed by more than 1000 supporters, lobbying, and coordinated action with

other organisations like National Seniors and COTA Australia. CHOICE has since been working with government and industry on further lifting standards in the financial advice industry.

CHOICE made its mark on the online consumer protections

debate through ongoing policy, research and campaign actions.

Supporters donated more than \$10,000 to help us produce a TV ad explaining the risks of anti-consumer copyright measures. The ad was shown 70 times on free-to-air Canberra TV during a parliamentary sitting week, and has been viewed more than 60,000 times on YouTube.

Our Country of Origin Labelling campaign has been our largest and most successful public action yet. A total of 26,310 people emailed Minister for Agriculture Barnaby Joyce in February calling for better information about where their food comes from. Minister Joyce sent a personal thank-you video to our campaign supporters and announced positive reforms to Country of Origin Labelling to be implemented later in 2015.

64,000+

CHOICE campaign supporters

\$11,135

Amount raised for copyright TV ad



June saw a major victory on free-range eggs. A CHOICE report found there was no correlation between quality of free-range eggs and price, and that at least 213 million eggs were sold as free range in 2014 that didn't meet consumers' expectations. More than 10,000 people called on consumer affairs ministers to make free range meaningful, leading to an agreement to work towards a standard for real free-range eggs.

The Campaigns team continues to work behind-the-scenes and through formal inquiry processes to influence debates that matter to consumers. The final reports of the Competition Policy Review and Financial System Inquiry picked up a number of CHOICE recommendations, strongly supporting calls to increase consumer access to their own data, protect consumer interests in trade agreements and increase consumer protections in the financial sector.

**Matt Levey, Director,
Campaigns and Communications**



Media matters

Our growing online profile means we are heard by more people than ever before

During 2014-15 CHOICE's media messages and commentary reached Australians on more than 317 million occasions, with notable growth in our profile across online media and with younger consumers. Our new approach to social media shone a light on our internal expertise, and engaged more consumers across our social channels. The strategy saw us reach an average of 1 million people monthly on Facebook alone and our combined social community as of 30 June 2015 was 105,608.

Supermarkets & food labelling

Our supermarket price survey became our most widely reported story in the mainstream media, with a combined audience of 9.36 million and reaching 48,900 people on Facebook. The original CHOICE research was announced to the national media in our kitchen lab.

In the wake of the Patties frozen berries recall, we led a national debate around country of origin food labelling, prompting federal government intervention, as reported on page 8. The story reached 9.35 million consumers and 1.8 million people on Facebook. Meanwhile our free-range egg 'Give a cluck' campaign reached a combined audience of 8.7 million and 298,000 people on Facebook. Food-related posts

dominated our social feeds with our soft drink sugar comparison infographic becoming our biggest ever Facebook post, reaching almost 3 million.

Health & travel

Our investigations into health insurance, pain pill labelling, dodgy diets and toddler formula generated national news coverage, as did our support of the Health Star ratings campaign that reached over 5.6 million consumers. The pain pill story was the most popular on social media, reaching more than 238,000 people. We also generated numerous national news stories on travel-related issues, a highlight being a media partnership with News Limited and Seven to raise awareness of consumer travel issues throughout the peak holiday period.

Consumer rights & testing

We raised awareness of CHOICE's expert product testing with Seven's *Sunrise* live crosses from the CHOICE test labs and Nine's *A Current Affair* behind the scenes look at CHOICE.

We also put consumer rights on the agenda with a focus on refund rights, extended warranties, and warnings around various recalled products, including Samsung top loader washing machines.

SUGAR OVERLOAD



19.5k+
Growth in our Twitter followers

Better banking & finance

Helping consumers make informed financial decisions was a key theme, as we raised awareness of the Future of Financial Advice (FoFA) debate, along with credit card surcharges and late payment fees.

Digital rights & trade agreements

We sought to reframe the piracy debate by highlighting the real causes of – and solutions to – online infringement. We engaged consumers with numerous Facebook posts on movie and streaming price comparisons, reaching over 730,000 people. Our campaign calling on the government to release the text of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) was also widely reported.

Cost of living

Giving advice on how to reduce cost of living pressures was a priority for CHOICE during the financial year. We launched three surveys of quarterly cost-of-living data, and held a cost-of-living forum in Perth broadcast by ABC radio.

Shonky Awards

The 2014 Shonky Awards was another media highlight, generating 297 stories and reaching 9.2 million consumers across TV, radio and online news and the #Shonkys hashtag trended in Sydney and Melbourne on the day.

Matt Levey, Director, Campaigns and Communications

43k+
Growth in our Facebook community



Meet our Board

CHOICE's board brings a broad range of skills



Nicole Rich (Chair)

Nicole is Executive Director - Family, Youth and Children's Law Services at Victoria Legal Aid and was previously its Director - Research and Communications. She has considerable experience developing legal research and policy and leading consumer campaigns, including

most recently as Director - Policy and Campaigns at the Consumer Action Law Centre from 2007 to 2011. Nicole is committed to ensuring that the consumer interest is represented in policy debates and that consumers, particularly disadvantaged or vulnerable consumers, are given a voice on issues that affect them. Nicole holds a BA along with LLB (Honours). Nicole was appointed to the CHOICE Board in 2008 and is Chair of the Board and Chair of the Governance Committee.



Bill Davidson (Deputy Chair)

Bill is Managing Director of Australian Hearing, the nation's leading hearing specialist and largest provider of Government-funded hearing services. Previously, Bill has operated at senior management levels in the Managed Services industry, both within the private and public sectors. He has extensive

experience in the delivery of contracted, outsourced services here in Australia, and overseas in the UK and South East Asia. Bill was also the interim CEO of CHOICE in 2008 while we sought a new CEO. Bill is passionate about finding ways to provide fair competition and deliver a better deal for the Australian Consumer. Bill served on the CHOICE Board from November 2006 until August 2008. Following the appointment of Nick Stace in February 2009, Bill was co-opted onto the Board in November 2009, and then elected to the Board in November 2010. He is Deputy Chair of the CHOICE Board and member of the Finance, Risk & Audit and Business Innovation Committees.



Helen Wiseman

Helen is a chartered accountant, businesswoman and former KPMG tax partner with over 25 years business experience across a range of industries including financial services, manufacturing and distribution, energy and natural resources and pharmaceuticals. She is currently a founding

director of Imalia, a for-purpose business she established to empower women financially. Helen sits on a number of boards including Shine for Kids (Chair), the Sydney Community Foundation, the War Widows Guild of Australia (NSW) and Advisory Board of the Sydney Women's Fund. She also chairs the Bidvest Foodservice Division Audit Committee. Helen has a strong interest in seeing women adequately represented in consumer advocacy. She joined the CHOICE Board in November 2014 and is Chair of the Finance, Risk & Audit Committee.



Allan Asher

Allan has been a consumer policy maker, advocate, regulator and representative in Australia and overseas, working for a fairer society and a better deal for consumers for nearly 40 years. He has been a senior executive at CHOICE as well as its UK counterpart Which?,

Campaigns Director of Consumers International, Deputy Chair of the ACCC (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission) and Commonwealth Ombudsman. He is currently a Visitor at the Australian National University, Regulatory Institutions Network. Allan was appointed to the CHOICE Board in November 2013 and is a member of the Finance, Risk & Audit, Campaigns & Advocacy and Governance Committees.



Ian Spight

Ian was Managing Director of Thomas Cook's Australasian businesses and previously a Corporate Finance Director of Midland Bank (now HSBC). In his corporate career with Thomas Cook and Midland Bank, Ian held posts in London, Paris, San Francisco, New York and

Sydney. Ian is now the Managing Director of a family company which operates travel agency and currency exchange services in NSW. He is a former Trustee of the Travel Compensation Fund, former Director of the Australian Federation of Travel Agents and former non-Executive Director of Travelex Australia Pty Limited. Ian was appointed to the CHOICE Board in 2006, and was Chair of the Finance, Risk & Audit Committee until May 2015.



Frank Muller

Frank is an experienced independent director with a 40-year career in public policy in Australia and the United States in government, universities, private consulting and the community sector. He recently completed a 5 1/2 year term as Commissioner of the National Transport Commission. Frank's career has

spanned a wide range of policy and management areas, including environment, energy, transport, climate change, urban planning, consumer affairs, employment and local government. He holds a Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University, a Science degree from ANU and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Frank was elected to the CHOICE Board in 2007, and is Chair of the Campaigns & Advocacy Committee and member of the Finance, Risk & Audit Committee.



Sandra Davey

Sandra is an experienced digital media and Internet executive. Her most recent position has been as General Manager for Netgem, specialists in IPTV and Connected Home solutions and providers of Telstra's T-Box. Her specialty lies in bringing new internet and media-based products

to emerging and/or established markets. She led the end to end consumer product suite for Australia's first 4G network, managed the rollout and ongoing operations of cross-platform services for Telstra's multi-million dollar and Award-winning digital sports assets and was integral in the core team responsible for launching TiVo in the Australian market. Sandra plays an active role in the Tech/Digital Media industry having served as a Director as well as National President of the Australian Interactive Media Industry Association. She was one of the co-founders and inaugural Directors of the Australian Domain Name Authority (auDA) and worked closely with the Internet Industry Association on Accessibility issues. Sandra joined the Board in 2012 and is Chair of the Business Innovation Committee.



Jennifer Zanich

Jennifer is a senior corporate executive and start-up CEO with a strong entrepreneurial background. Her most recent role was co-founder of Paloma Mobile, offering services to new users of smartphones predominantly in the developing world. Prior to Paloma, Jennifer

spent 10 years in the US where she successfully started and funded companies including SeeSaw Networks and Xumii (later acquired by Myriad Group), and was CEO of Wedgetail Communications. She is also experienced in corporate operations, strategy and marketing, having spent eight years as Microsoft's Marketing Director in Australia and Asia Pacific. Jennifer is a strong advocate for the start-up community in Australia and their potential as contributors to the knowledge economy and GDP. She is an experienced Board member, holding several advisory and board roles in Australia and the US including Bullpen Capital, The Australian Venture Capital Committee and Sirca Technology. Jennifer was appointed to the Board in February 2015 and is a member of the Business Innovation Committee.



Ben Slade

Ben is Managing Principal of the NSW practice of Maurice Blackburn, a national plaintiff and union law firm, where he specialises in consumer and other class actions. Before this, he worked at the Redfern Legal Centre and Legal Aid NSW. He's spent 30 years in the

consumer movement in Australia involved in community education, consultation, media, lobbying and litigation. He has a passion for consumer rights and he recognises the need to adopt a range of strategies to achieve positive outcomes for consumers. Ben was appointed to the CHOICE Board in November 2013 and is a member of both the Governance and Campaigns & Advocacy Committees.



Robert Southerton

Robert is an experienced professional in marketing, digital, analytics and statistics. He has a broad range of experience across IT, telecommunications, finance and biotechnology industries, having worked for companies including BT Financial Group, ING Direct and

Unwired. He has a strong interest in data driven decision making, and holds qualifications in statistics and operations research. He is currently the General Manager, and a Director, of Gondwana Genomics. Robert joined the Board in September 2014 and is a member of the Business Innovation Committee.