

Mazda MX-5 Beach Launch Turns Heads

“Tower, helicopter alpha delta bravo airborne and on climb.”

This air traffic control dialogue was what more than 240 event guests heard as they stood on Noosa Main Beach at sunset in August 2015 with a canapé in one hand and a refreshing beverage in the other.

Noosa offers many spectacular sights, but none could top the jaw-dropping reveal event these guests experienced as the all-new Mazda MX-5 was helicopter-landed onto the beach in front of them. Once on the ground, firework fountains lit up around the car as four riders on horseback made their way from the river mouth along the beach, stopping in front of guests to perform a series of spectacular choreographed sequences.

The national dealer launch included not only the helicopter drop but also a barefoot black-tie dinner in a large marquee on the beach. A live performance rounded out the night before a fireworks finale.

Melbourne-based Peter Jones Special Events (PJSE) produced the celebration for Mazda Australia, contracting local off-site specialists, Queensland Signature Events (QSE) to gain Council approval for the extravaganza, organise local elements and suppliers, provide catering and manage the behind-the-scenes beach tasks. In addition to producing two grand events, PJSE also arranged confidential Mazda MX-5 test drives and press conferences at the Sheraton Noosa Resort & Spa (now Sofitel Noosa Pacific Resort) for Australian media outlets.

“The Sunshine Coast provides the ultimate combination for a roadster launch - fabulous weather, amazing roads and stunning landscapes.” - Mazda Australia PR Senior Manager, Karla Leach

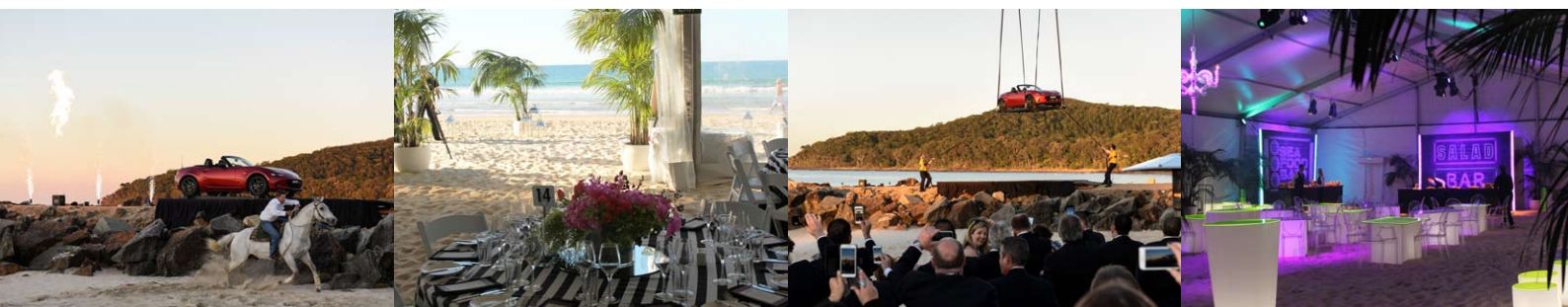
Why the Sunshine Coast?

PJSE and Mazda Australia chose the Sunshine Coast for this important launch because of the creative opportunities it afforded, the variety of landscapes where vehicles could be taken on test drives, and the over-all attractiveness of the destination for both dealers and media.

The Sheraton Noosa Resort & Spa was contracted as the host property on an exclusive-use basis. The hotel’s flexibility, Hastings Street-position and impressive vehicular entrance ticked every box. As part of the media test drives, 32 Mazda MX-5s encircled the resort’s porte cochère before departure into the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

“The Sunshine Coast provides the ultimate combination for an open-top roadster launch - fabulous weather, amazing roads and stunning landscapes. An iconic location for the launch of an iconic roadster,” Mazda Australia Public Relations Senior Manager, Karla Leach, said.

QSE Managing Director Liz Rivers said, “Clients often say that they’ve wanted to hold an event elsewhere in Australia in a totally iconic space, but couldn’t. This doesn’t surprise us because most destinations simply do not allow such events. The Sunshine Coast is different because the Councils welcome events that showcase our stunning iconic spaces, and the opportunity this presents for event organisers is priceless.”





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Hurdles Overcome

Noosa is one of the most prized pieces of seaside real estate in Australia. TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards has rated Noosa Main Beach in the top three beaches in the South Pacific. This popularity generated many challenges with the event managers charged with minimising shared knowledge about this complex event so that it would be a surprise for guests and public curiosity would be curtailed for safety reasons.

One of the most important aspects of producing an event of this complexity is managing risk. The helicopter company liaised with PJSE and authorities and zones with restricted access were established for the helicopter. An in-situ rehearsal of the car drop and horse performances was also scheduled the day before the launch at precisely the same time as the event was to be held. Noosa Council embraced the permit extension to ensure that this critical practice was undertaken.

In fact QSE and Noosa Council worked harmoniously to collectively overcome each and every challenge. Even in the last 24 hours challenges were faced and surmounted, such as landing the car with variable conditions.

What a Success!

However, nothing could dull the success of this spectacular event.

The helicopter touched down safely. The horses performed impeccably. The three-course meal was delicious. The over-water fireworks were stunning. The evening was crystal clear.

Dealers were thrilled. The Mazda MX-5's Program Manager beamed with pride. And everyone raved about the car, about the launch event and about Sunshine Coast's Noosa.

[View an event-related video here.](#)

