



making New Zealand *OURS*

Emma Heke is a Kiwi mum who called on her life and career experiences and a bit of Kiwi ingenuity to produce the OURS® DVD – an educational resource made about and for New Zealand’s treasures.

After 11 years as a secondary school photography and art teacher, Emma began her next didactic endeavour when she became mother, to son Connor, in 2004. The educator soon realised there were amazing book and toy resources available for young children but very little in the way of film media that she would want her child to watch. A seed was planted and Emma went about researching her suspected gap in the market. “I thought I must not be looking in the right places but I kept coming up with the same answer that there really wasn’t much out there in the way of New Zealand educational film media for young children,” she explains. Utilising her diploma in fine arts and diploma in teaching, as well as acquiring a certificate in small business management and a certificate in television production, Emma established Kindle Films Limited trading as Red Heke Productions® in October 2007. Although re-financing her home and a few unexpected legal issues have created bumps along her journey, Emma has stayed firm in her mission to ‘foster a love for our land, creatures and environment’.

Her first project, the OURS® DVD, which she has done everything for from the production and marketing to the voiceover, is just what she felt her son and all Kiwi kids needed. “I’ve always been environmentally aware but having a child changed my whole perspective on life,” she explains. “I really saw, through Connor’s eyes, the amazing beauty and treasures that we have in New Zealand. I became very aware that my child’s future depended on whether we were looking after our environment. I felt a social responsibility to try and make a difference.” The A-Z format of 55 bite-sized introductory topics is designed to capture children’s imaginations while teaching them about the unique flora and fauna for which New Zealand is celebrated. “Young children, particularly between the ages of three and four have a lot of natural empathy and are interested in a lot of things – they’re like sponges. I found that, through the DVD, they’ve cottoned on to environmental concepts like sustainability and care. This is so important to instil before they become jaded by life.”




Starting in November, 18 four-and-a-half-minute-long television adaptations of OURS® will begin screening on TVNZ6 Freeview which can now be watched by Sky Digital viewers as well.

Once again, Emma has provided the voiceover, which she admits was terrifying.

"I was quite concerned to how it would be received as we tend to cringe when we hear New Zealand accents but it's been neat hearing kids say, 'That sounds just like my mum'. We need to normalise the ideas of sustainability and care and make them everyday things and having an everyday mum voice was part of that."

Kindle Films Limited also believes in 'giving back', to the community and the environment. All graphic media promotions and the OURS® DVD slick are printed on elemental chlorine free (ECF) paper with 55 percent recycled content and/or sourced from Well Managed Forests (WMF). The case is slimline and made from recycled plastic and all postage is sent using reused or recycled packaging. Filming was also done with a very small crew and a zero-impact policy.

"We leave places and creatures untouched by our presence. In all aspects of our business (from postage, to power usage, to cleaning the loo) we try to follow sustainable living practices," Emma says.

A portion of OURS® profits is also donated to worthy conservation projects including the Brook Waimarama Sanctuary Trust, Orca Research Trust and the Whangarei Native Bird Recovery Trust or donated to Early Childhood Centres partaking in fundraiser schemes using OURS®.  www.oursdvd.co.nz

Emma's keys to success

1. Family support: Knowing that your child is in safe, loving hands when you are working on your business is essential.
2. Vision and faith: Knowing where you want to go and never letting circumstances stop you and always believing you can fulfil your vision.
3. Research: Fully research your idea and the market to find a real gap and use your unique selling points.
4. Up skill: Recognise your strengths and areas where you need to up skill.
5. Passion, promotion and being proactive: You have to love what you're doing and be really proactive with promotion. Get your product out there!
6. Experts: Learn from experts, you need them. Even though there's a lot you can do yourself, you still need the experience that others can bring to your business.



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