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Steve Irwin: Crocodile Hunter - An Australian Icon

By James Shenton

Occasionally - just occasionally - there comes along a TV personality whose enthusiasm and charisma engenders almost universal affection with audiences. Environmentalist, naturalist and documentarist Steve Irwin - known the world over as the Crocodile Hunter - was one of those rare personalities.

Born Steven Robert Irwin on 22 September, 1962 in Melbourne, Australia, Steve Irwin was the owner and manager of the Australia Zoo in Beerwah, Queensland. The zoo, originally called the Queensland Reptile and Fauna Park, belonged to his parents, Bob and Lyn.

As a young man Irwin worked as a crocodile trapper in Queensland, catching and removing crocs from populated areas. While he didn't draw a salary, he worked on the condition that he could keep the crocodiles he captured for his parents' zoo.

After taking over management of the zoo in 1991 Irwin met his future wife, American–born veterinarian Terri Raines. Following a whirlwind romance the couple married, and the video footage of their crocodile–trapping honeymoon was aired as the first episode of The Crocodile Hunter, the series that made Irwin an international celebrity.

The success of The Crocodile Hunter led the Discovery Channel and Animal Planet to commission several wildlife series from Irwin, including The Croc Files, The Crocodile Hunter Diaries and New Breed Vets. Known for his expansive personality and boundless enthusiasm, Irwin's documentaries made him an Australian icon - often ridiculed, but just as often praised for his idiosyncrasies.

What made Irwin such a popular figure with audiences the world over was his fearless attitude to wild animals. Often seen chasing snakes, crocs and all sorts of dangerous creatures, audiences tuned in not so much to see the animals as to see Irwin's unbelievable feats of courage and fearlessness. His documentaries gained such a huge audience that they were adapted to the 2002 movie The Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course.

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Irwin's enthusiasm for his subject matter, however, occasionally got the better of him, and his career was fraught with controversy. In an incident in 2004 he took his infant son Bob into the crocodile enclosure during a public show at the Australia Zoo, holding him in one arm while feeding a croc with the other. Irwin, however, refused to apologise for the stunt, insisting that the child was never in any real danger.

Again in 2004 Irwin caused controversy during a trip to Antarctica, facing allegations that he disturbed whales, seals and penguins while filming a documentary.

Irwin's life came to a tragic end on the morning of September 4th, 2006 while filming a documentary on the Great Barrier Reef off the coast of Queensland, Australia. While filming a stingray he approached too close and was hit in the chest by a barb, causing a fatal injury, and was pronounced dead at the scene. He was 44.

Steve Irwin is survived by his wife Terri and his two young children, Bindi Sue and Robert Clarence.

While Irwin always lived life on the edge, we never really expected him to be killed. There was just something about the confidence with which he handled dangerous creatures that made us think that he was invulnerable. His antics weren't quite real - if they had been, we may not have been so quick to laugh.

It came as a surprise, then, for us to wake up to the news that he had been killed. Even more so, considering the manner of his death. After all, Irwin was only the third person to be killed by a stingray in Australia. Rays are usually considered to be relatively docile, and it's even possible to feed them by hand under the right conditions.

Irwin's death, though tragic, can perhaps be viewed as one final act of showmanship. He won our hearts with his death-defying stunts and it seems fitting that he should go out with a bang. While it would be crass to make light of his death, it could perhaps be argued that this is the way he would have wanted to go, while living right on the edge. Maybe that could come as some small consolation for the family of a man who died before his time.

In life, as well as in death, Steve Irwin was an Australian icon: a modern day, real life Crocodile Dundee. He was everything we think of as typically Australian: rugged, adventurous and dangerous, though not without a sense of humor. While Australians were often embarrassed by his antics, thinking of him as a caricature of Australian stereotypes, that's exactly why the rest of the world adored him.

Steve Irwin was a passionate advocate for the environment, a tireless promoter of his country, a great entertainer and a loving husband and father. Often controversial, always entertaining, there will always be a place in our hearts for the Crocodile Hunter. The world is poorer for his absence.

James Shenton is a popular celebrity gossip writer based in New York. If you have found this article informative you can find similar writing -- from the latest TV shows to articles about other TV role models - at

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The True Story Of The Amazing \$27,000 Mars Bars...

By Chris Bloor

The True Story Of The Amazing \$27,000 Mars Bars... by Chris Bloor

The True Story Of The Amazing Twenty Seven Thousand Dollar Mars® Bars... © Chris Bloor 2002

I could hardly believe my eyes. I was sat in the audience at Mal Emery's \$3,000 a head Ultimate Marketing Boot camp in Melbourne, Australia when Mal decided to auction a Mars Bar. The week before I had seen him do the same thing in my hometown of Perth and raise seven thousand dollars in a matter of a few minutes. Mal of www.malemery.com is known as the Australian mail order millionaire.

They were just ordinary Mars bars. What made them special were the extra bonus gifts that Mal included with them.

You see each speaker at the boot camp, myself included, threw in some of our products and services I donated a thousand dollars towards copywriting along with a copy of my new manual 'How to Start an Internet Newsletter & use it to Grow Your Business - Virtually Overnight!' Others gave software, conference tickets, telemarketing services and advertising consultations.

Each speaker in turn donated some of his or her valuable products and services.

All of a sudden everyone in the room saw the Mars Bars in a whole new light...

And in less than ten minutes combined Mal raised \$27,000 by selling just three ordinary Mars Bars!

It was one of the greatest marketing lessons I have ever seen in my life. You see if you make your bonuses your product, you can sell more in ten minutes than most people do in a month.

Stop and think of your products and services... What awesome bonuses can you offer that will make your offers virtually impossible-to-resist?

Try it. If it can sell Mars Bars for \$27,000 just think what it can do for your products and services...

PS The best thing about seeing Mal raise \$27,000 for three ordinary Mars Bars was seeing him donate 100% of it to help kids with cancer!

Chris Bloor the 'Crocodile Hunter' of Ezine Marketing invites you to receive

12 Months worth of his Internet newsletter `Better Marketing Advantage'
<http://www.qualitybusinessinstitute.com/bettermarketingadvantage.html>

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