

2009 started like no other year - as the world held it's breath, economies in crisis, wondering where the bottom would be. It was scary, and - like everyone - we were scared.

Late January we achieved one of our long held objectives - to service 200 NZ Wine Producers, and we were justifiably pleased with that milestone.

But sharply reduced demand for labels in December, January & February meant that we were forced to reduce our workforce. This was very disappointing and certainly not in the plan. Thankfully, from March, the tide turned for us big time; sales momentum in 2009 just grew and grew.

Montana Sparkling won the Rapid Labels Trophy at the Easter Show in March, and we achieved Secondary WSMP status with ACC following a lengthy audit.

Greg won the 2009 Pool Champs in April, claiming home advantage; and in May we were awarded three Gold Medals in the annual Pride in Print Awards. During the year we launched Oamaru laid paper, Floating Foil and Sharkskin Varnish - offering our wine clients extended choice.

Then, as if a global economic meltdown wasn't enough, along came the Swine Flu. We implemented a new set of internal protocols and luckily dodged the 'Swine' almost entirely.

Late June we farewelled Bill Hird, who had transitioned his Hoop clients to Rapid over the previous 12 months. Bill, who needed to return to Formware, was a pleasure to have as one of the crew.

During the year we had staff notching up service milestones - seven doing 5 years (Ace, Greg, Darren, Paul C, Dave, Martin, Ryan), with 10 years for Ma'i, 15 years for Ernie and the stellar performance of 25 years from Mark.

In August we put on a curry dinner at Sangam, which was a good break for our staff who were dealing with the 2009 white wine vintage. Our Prepress Studio deserve a mention, because they worked tirelessly, with one seat down for part of the wine peak - and although some weeks were dire, they never once buckled.

September was a big month for us - the biggest ever actually, as we achieved another key goal - going past \$2mill sales in a single calendar month. Waimea won the Rapid Labels Gewurtz Trophy at the NZ International Wine Show. Then we went past 250 Wine Producer clients, just 9 months after the big 200!

In October we launched a three month celebration of 20 years representing Zebra label printers in New Zealand. We also threw in a Bad Tie Day for light relief, and then hosted a game of Lawn Bowls in early November - which is harder than it looks.

Anne-Marie had the beautiful Tessa Monique in late November, and then we enjoyed a relaxing Christmas lunch out at Westbrook early December - with local reggae band Box Juice.

Thank you for your business and support during what has been another busy and extremely satisfactory year. Please do read the back of this card.

