

Media Release

For Release: 12 February 2008

ANZ sponsors Broadway's "WICKED" in Australia

ANZ today announced it would be Presenting Sponsor of the hit Broadway musical "WICKED" for its Australian premiere season beginning in mid 2008.

The \$1 million sponsorship investment will be the largest of its kind in Australian theatre history.

WICKED will run for an open-ended season at Melbourne's Regent Theatre kicking off on opening night 12 July.

ANZ Group Managing Director, Personal Division, Mr Brian Hartzler, announced the musical's premiere season, supporting cast members and revealed the new logo today at the Regent Theatre with Australian WICKED producer, Mr John Frost and Melbourne comedian Mr Adam Hills. WICKED female leads, Ms Amanda Harrison and Ms Lucy Durack, performed three of the show's biggest hits.

"ANZ is pleased to be supporting WICKED, one of the world's most successful musicals in recent years," Mr Hartzler said.

"WICKED has been the highest grossing show in Broadway history, it has broken 18 house records and as it approaches its fifth year, continues to sell out performances. Globally, it has grossed more than \$800 million and has been seen by more than ten million people.

"It's an opportunity for us to be involved in an award-winning production that has been extremely popular with audiences in the United States and other major countries around the world and we look forward to its continuing success.

"This sponsorship reflects ANZ's ongoing commitment to the community by supporting the thriving arts sector and complements our other sponsorships including the Sydney Festival, the ANZ Championship, ANZ Stadium and the ANZ Ladies Masters," Mr Hartzler said.

Mr Hartzler also said from today, ANZ customers would be able to purchase tickets before they went on sale to the general public on 25 February, as part of the WICKED pre-sale offer.

Australian WICKED producer, Mr John Frost said he was delighted to have ANZ on board as Presenting Sponsor of WICKED.

"I believe that never before has Australian theatre seen such generous support from a single sponsor and we look forward to a long and successful premiere Australian season," Mr Frost said. "Not since *Phantom of the Opera* has a musical been so popular and WICKED's broad appeal has seen it become a smash hit in the United States and across the world."

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