



VMA takes Industry Leadership Lunch nationwide

By Jan Arreza | 9 February 2026



The Visual Media Association (VMA) is taking its new Industry Leadership Lunch series nationwide, following a highly successful inaugural event in Queensland, which brought together senior industry leaders from across the state's print, packaging, signage and mail sectors.

Supported by Ricoh Australia, the Queensland lunch provided a confidential, high-level forum for business leaders to share insights, discuss emerging challenges and explore opportunities for collaboration and growth.

The strong engagement and quality of discussion reinforced the value of creating dedicated leadership spaces focused on practical outcomes and collective advocacy.

Building on this momentum, the VMA's Industry Leadership Lunch will now be rolled out nationally, creating a consistent platform in every state and territory for senior leaders to connect, exchange ideas and shape priorities for the visual media industry.

The national series will once again be sponsored by Ricoh Australia, whose ongoing support is said to enable the program to scale and reach more businesses across the country.

"We see enormous value in creating spaces where industry leaders can step away from day-to-day pressures and focus on the bigger picture," said Mark Moro, graphic communications national sales manager at Ricoh Australia.

"Strong collaboration, shared insight and practical leadership are critical as the industry evolves, and Ricoh is pleased to support initiatives that help drive those outcomes nationally."

According to Kellie Northwood, chief executive officer of the VMA, the Queensland lunch demonstrated the appetite within industry for deeper, more strategic engagement.

"What we saw in Queensland was a room full of committed leaders who genuinely want to work together on the big issues facing our sector, from workforce and skills, to sustainability, supply chain resilience and government policy," Northwood explained.

"The Industry Leadership Lunch creates space for open, honest conversations and practical next steps. Taking this initiative national will strengthen our collective voice and ensure the priorities of our members are heard at the highest levels."

The lunch was opened by Queensland Board director, Tom Eckersley, and featured a high-level update from the VMA on key national initiatives designed to support members and future-proof the industry.

These included the Association's new HR/IR Portal with industry-specific content; the Inkers – Make Your Mark emerging talent program supporting apprentices and early-career professionals; and Sustainable Green Print and Sign (SGP+S) certification, now linked to globally recognised environmental standards and increasingly referenced in government and corporate procurement.

Discussions at the Queensland lunch highlighted several consistent themes affecting businesses across the state.

Workforce challenges, particularly skills shortages and an ageing workforce, were identified as a major long-term risk, alongside the need to better attract, train and retain younger employees. Supply chain reliability, equipment servicing capacity and freight disruptions were also raised as operational pressures impacting productivity and cost.

Energy costs and broader manufacturing support featured strongly, with participants noting significant price increases and calling for greater government assistance for renewables and on-site generation.

Queensland-specific advocacy priorities, including payroll tax relief, Buy Australian procurement settings and targeted manufacturing support, were also discussed.

The lunch also reinforced the role of the VMA as a central conduit between industry and government. The Association outlined its intensified lobbying and advocacy efforts across packaging reform, illegal logging legislation, industrial relations and mail services, and committed to working more closely with Queensland members to develop a targeted state advocacy agenda.

"These lunches are not talkfests, they are about listening, prioritising and then acting," added Northwood.

"Our role is to take what we hear from industry leaders and turn it into coordinated advocacy, practical resources, and stronger representation. The national rollout of the Industry Leadership Lunch will be a key part of that approach."

The VMA thanked all Queensland attendees for their openness, insight and willingness to contribute to the future of the industry.

The next Industry Leadership Lunch will be held in Sydney on the 5 March followed by Melbourne in April, then Adelaide and Perth in May. Attendance is by invitation, so contact the VMA for more details or to book your spot.



Strategic engagement: Kellie Northwood, chief executive officer of the VMA