



• DIGITAL MEDIA MERIT

Aussie's worldwide Webby

Kate Southam

Kathryn Franco reached a career milestone recently by leading a team that beat a global field to land a Webby Award.

In the world of digital media, the Webby is the equivalent of an Academy Award and Franco will be in New York today for the awards ceremony.

Franco is head of digital media at the Australia Channel, which produces the SkillsOne website and SkillsOne TV to promote trades careers. SkillsOne TV airs for 18 hours a week on Foxtel/Austar.

"Everyone was proud to have won a Webby nine months after

launching. It's a tight team that's achieved a lot," Franco said.

With just 25 people producing large volumes of television and web content weekly, Franco says team members must be able to work in either medium.

"I've worked in many siloed organisations. It costs more and is less innovative, flexible and efficient," she said.

"There is no way we could produce this amount of material at high speed if we had a traditional media environment."

Franco's own career journey includes graduating with first-class honours in fine arts and then landing her first job at Kennedy Miller working for di-

rectors Chris Noonan and George Miller during *Babe*.

"Starting at the bottom is the best place to be in production organisations. You see what gets done, what works, what doesn't," Franco said.

From there she went to the Nine Network on *Sunday* as a researcher.

"From the start, I've found myself working for people who were the best at what they do," she said.

"It showed me a lot about passion, focus and skill. (Executive producer) Stephen Rice was progressive at Nine and were it not for his advice, I may

not have moved to Ninemsn."

By joining Ninemsn in 1997, Franco became one of the founders of digital media in Australia.

Since then she has had several roles, got married, had two children and gained an MBA.

Franco still rates working with great mentors – like her current boss, legendary TV director and Australia Channel pioneer Peter Faiman – above everything else.

"Working with Peter Faiman now is one of the best experiences I've had. He has the MBA on life – I just studied it."

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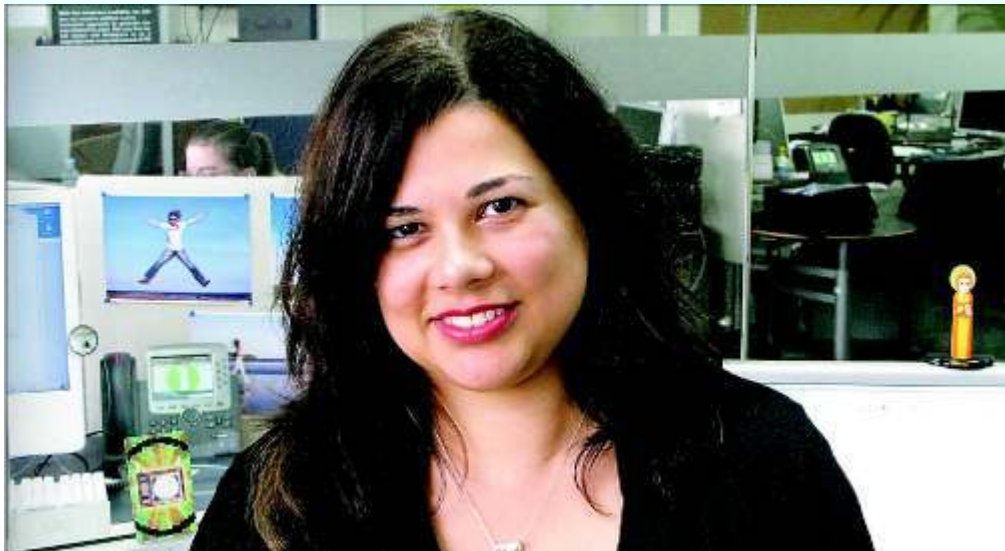
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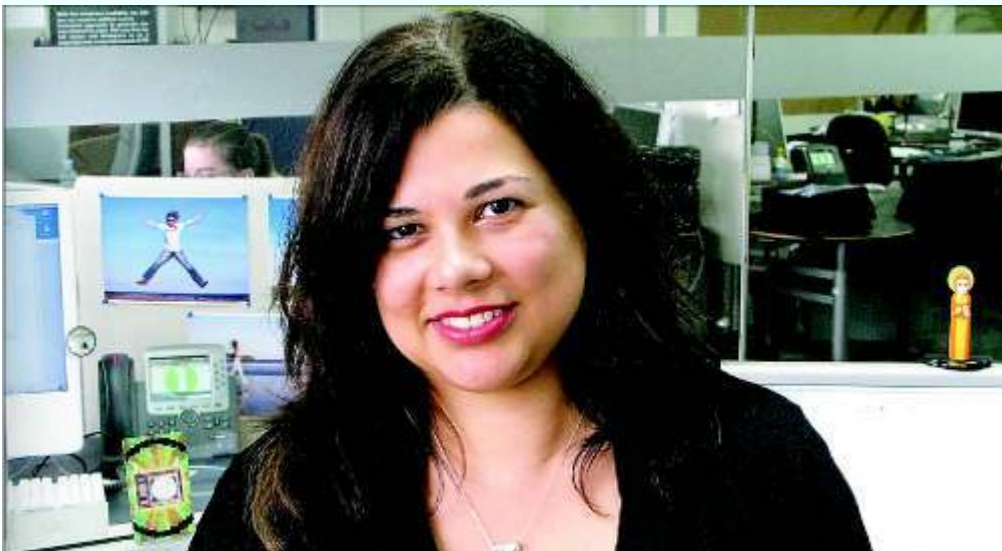
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