



## Change of name is a Sunshine Coast merger

Just like so many other things, the Noosa Creative Alliance has merged with the Sunshine Coast and changed its name to Sunshine Coast Regional Alliance.

But mayor Bob Abbot believes it has so many benefits it should be "taken to the world".

There were congratulations all round when Mr Abbot, Cr Lew Brennan, Alliance members and southern Sunshine Coast business people gathered at Noosa Regional Art Gallery on Friday for the official program handover.

The NCA formed as a partnership in October 2007, between Mark Stockwell Noosa Civic Business Park, Sunshine Coast Regional Council and supported by the Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry.

To kick-start the program, academic Richard Florida delivered a presentation to the Noosa community on the topic, A Creative Economy, in November 2007, and launched the Creative Communities Leadership Program (CCLP).

Mr Abbot recalled there was



**Lew Brennan, left, Mark Stockwell and Marcus Xavier.**

PHOTO: GEOFF POTTER/N23016

plenty of press on the gay index, which was a component of the Florida report, that measured a community's tolerance to gay people.

"Thanks," Mr Abbot said.

"For giving me the best lines of my election."

No doubt he was referring to the radio debate, only days before the election.

In the debate mayoral candidate Joe Natoli attacked Mr Abbot as being "pink".

A huge community backlash

resulted and branded Natoli as anti-gay.

"This was the turning point of the election," Mr Stockwell said.

Mr Stockwell said he was enormously pleased with the program's outcomes which were unashamedly commercial.

Mr Brennan agreed with him.

The NCA was praised as giving the traditional economy a creative alternative.