

# Great Lakes BUSINESS

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**This newsletter is a joint initiative of Great Lakes Council and  
Hunter Business Centre.**

The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary - Unknown

## Regional Women in Business program - Update

Earlier in the year interest was called in running DSRD's Regional Women in Business Program in the Great Lakes. It was hoped the program would run from July - September to fit in between school holidays and the busy summer season. Unfortunately the next round of applications to enable us to host the program is not due to be announced until later in the year. We will keep you posted on developments, however, for all women in business, mark your diaries for a special event to take place in the Great Lakes on 20<sup>th</sup> August!

## Business Planning Workshop & the Business Planning process

After the success of the Hunter Business Centre's "Building your Business Plan Workshop" held on Thursday the 9th of July in the Great Lakes area, a follow up session has been organised to assist businesses develop ideas that will help them with the structure of their business plan. Whether you attended the first session or not you will find the guidance offered in this next workshop invaluable in formulating exactly what you want to say about you and your business as you continue to create your business plan outline.

### **The Business Planning Process**

**Thursday, 23rd July 2009 - 5.30pm to 7.30pm**

**Great Lakes Council - Large Committee Room - Breese Parade, Forster**

**The session will be run by Geoff Marshall of the Hunter Business Centre and will be FREE of charge.**

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### **Gloucester Workshop**

For those who missed out on the first "Building your Business Plan Workshop" in the Great Lakes area, another session is planned in Gloucester on Thursday the 30th of July - 5.30pm to 8.30pm at the Gloucester Senior Citizens Centre, Hume Street, Gloucester - \$20 per head including light refreshments.

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### **Bookings**

To make your booking for either session please contact the Hunter Business Centre as soon as possible by phoning 6539 3966

or email [reception@businesscentre.com.au](mailto:reception@businesscentre.com.au) or [geoff@businesscentre.com.au](mailto:geoff@businesscentre.com.au)

### **Future Workshops**

It is also planned to hold ongoing sessions on marketing, sales and finance in this building blocks series - to express your interest in any of these workshops please also contact the above.

### **Small Chambers of Commerce Fund - 2nd round open**

The second round of the Department of State and Regional Development's Small Chambers of Commerce Fund is now open and closes on September 1, 2009.

Grants of between \$2,000 and \$5,000 are available for established chambers of commerce and business development organisations in communities with a population of up to 5,000.

This fund helps small communities undertake projects that support individual businesses and the local business community as a whole.

Projects funded in the first round included community website upgrades that promote local businesses, shop local campaigns, business directories and workshops for retailers.

If a community is looking to apply for something like a town sign/banners/information boards/murals, written confirmation from the RTA and/or Council will probably be required with the application, so it is a good idea to discuss your project idea with the relevant authority as soon as possible.

Potential applicants should contact DSRD's community economic development manager for the Hunter region, Susan Rowe, to discuss the project before submitting an application. Phone - 4908 7341.

For more information on the Department of State and Regional Development's programs, go to [www.business.nsw.gov.au](http://www.business.nsw.gov.au)

[Application Form](#)

### **Stroud \$uccess**

The Stroud Valley Promotional Group, under the auspice of Great Lakes Tourism, has been successful in securing funding from DSRD for their Stroud Long Weekend Project.

The project is centred on the Stroud Valley and highlights the unique history of the local area, its produce, craft and attractions, in turn providing an incentive to visitors to stop through a mix of events, signage and marketing. Adjacent to the project is the promotion of the Stroud Valley as a day trip destination.

The project will be managed by a newly appointed coordinator and starts later this month with a public meeting to create a community driven framework and start work on the October Long weekend event.

For more information on the Stroud Valley Long Weekend Project contact Shona Hunter Howarth on 0423 806 490 or Richard Old, Manager, Tourism & Marketing 0428 605 301.

### **Great Lakes Tourism**

Tourism is our largest industry generating over \$245 million each year. This equates to \$28,000 an hour! It is everybody's business. The economic climate, evolving visitor behaviour and the rapidly changing domestic tourism market means it has never been more critical for all businesses and the community to keep up to date with the latest opportunities and work cooperatively to promote the Great Lakes and in turn capture a greater share of the tourism dollar!

The Great Lakes Tourism Partners Program is the best way for a business to stay in touch with tourism, maximise the potential benefits, secure a marketing advantage and support

the local community. The strength and success of the Great Lakes is dependent upon a strong cooperative business community. Participation in the program will ensure the continued growth of the Great Lakes tourism industry and in turn your business.

For information contact Great Lakes Tourism on 1800 802 692 or visit [www.greatlakes.org.au](http://www.greatlakes.org.au)

## Heart of Wisconsin

Representatives of local business groups including the Buladelah Chamber of Commerce, Myall Coast Chamber and Forster Waterside were present at the latest meeting of the Great Lakes Economic Development Committee to hear a special presentation by Ms Connie Loden, President/CEO of the Heart of Wisconsin Business Alliance.

Ms Loden talked of her local community's steps to take charge of their future following the loss of major industries and her organisation's approach to creating a positive business culture. The approach has resulted in a jump in investment, business inquiries and employment creation, amongst many other positive outcomes. Wisconsin has a population of 40,000 with the largest community of 18,000 – not dissimilar to the Great Lakes. Ms Loden especially emphasised the importance of a positive community culture to business attraction and start up, emphasising that everyone has a role to play.

[For further information](#)

## New IR Legislation

This week two key bills passed through Parliament which will ensure a smooth transition to Australia's new workplace relations system:

- The Fair Work (Transitional Provisions and Consequential Amendments) Bill 2009 - which repeals the current Workplace Relations Act 1996 and sets out transitional provisions for the movement of employers and employees into the new system
- The Fair Work (State Referral and Consequential and Other Amendments) Bill 2009 - deals with amendments to other Commonwealth legislation resulting from the Fair Work Act

Employers and employees who operate within the federal workplace relations system will be covered by the new laws from 1 July 2009. Of specific interest to all businesses are four issues:

- New Unfair Dismissal Laws are now in place with no companies exempt from the new provisions. For further details click on link below.
- The bill introduces a comprehensive and far reaching regime of general employment protections. Although these are derived from the freedom of association and unlawful termination provisions in the current act, in the bill they are collected together and significantly expanded. The general protections part is intended to protect a person's "workplace rights", their freedom of association, to prevent workplace discrimination, and provide remedies where the protections have been contravened.
- Union rights of entry, and
- Provisions for the transfer of business.

The National Employment Standards and Modern Awards will come into operation from 1 January 2010. Should you require any further information it is freely available at the Chamber or on the IR advice line 13 29 59.

[For further information](#)

## Beyond the financial crisis - 10 tips to maintain or increase market share

Good business practices and strategies to manage risk and capture emerging opportunities will help see Australian businesses through the current downturn and beyond. Below are ten tips to help businesses to maintain market share and position for future growth.

1. Focus on retaining existing customers – in difficult times loyalty matters, so keep in touch with your customer base and continue to deliver great service.
2. Look out for new opportunities and growth sectors emerging from changed market conditions.
3. Watch for opportunities to target new customers – for instance those of businesses exiting the market.
4. Rethink your marketing message – a creative message that suits the current business environment may win business at a time when competitors are cutting marketing costs.
5. Consider e-marketing or pooling marketing resources with other companies providing complementary products or services, for instance at trade shows.
6. Minimise risk with a balanced spread across a broad customer base, without stretching your resources too far.
7. Watch your cash flow by closely monitoring working capital and cutting unnecessary costs, without affecting the quality of your service to customers.
8. Maintain a good dialogue with your bank.
9. Look after your core high-performing staff.
10. Keep your eye on your long-term business plan but also build in contingency plans.

[For further information](#)

## Useful contacts

Comments and feedback on the Newsletter's content is always appreciated. You might also like to suggest a topic or share some ideas or tips for future editions - good news stories are also welcome - email Sue Druce of the Hunter Business Advisory Service to do so. For past editions of the newsletter please visit

[www.greatlakesbusiness.com.au](http://www.greatlakesbusiness.com.au)

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