

Great Lakes BUSINESS

[Visit our Website](#) | [Business Assistance](#)

Issue Date: Thursday October 15, 2009

October 2009

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

The winner is the chef who takes the same ingredients as everyone else and produces the best results

Edward De Bono

Upcoming Workshops & Events for you and your business

TOOLS TO BUILD RESPECT WITH GEN Y - Business Breakfast

A professional development presentation for employers by Daniella Folecki from *Adolescent Toolbox*.

This presentation will shed new light on how generations think, feel and act differently and what employers can do about it. This presentation is light, fun and uses humour to put it all in perspective - click [here](#) for further information.

You will not only leave with tools for reducing your own stress but tools to build mutual respect with both colleagues and employees.

WHEN Wednesday, October 21
TIME 7am to 8.30am
WHERE Wallis Lake Room – Forster Tuncurry Memorial Services Club, Forster
COST \$20

To book your place for this workshop contact Pam Fischer at Career Connect no later than Monday, October 19 - pam@careerconnect.net.au or phone 0405 387 266.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS LUNCHEON

An informal luncheon has been organised for all business women across the Great Lakes area. The aim of the lunch is to provide a valuable opportunity for networking and interaction and all women operating or working in a business are invited and encouraged to attend. It is hoped to make the lunches a regular event on the business calendar. There will be a lucky door prize on the day so bring your business cards along.

WHEN Thursday, October 22
TIME From 12pm
WHERE Boxfish Casual Cuisine - Wharf Street, Forster
COST Buy your own drinks and lunch

Contact Yvette Ellis on 6591 7303 or email yvette.ellis@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au no later than Monday 19 October - bookings are essential.

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKSHOP

Fine-tune your customer skills. Repeat business is the easiest business to get. All it takes is good customer service skills. The business that gets customer service right is the business that will be successful.

Do you want your business to delight your customers and exceed their expectations, be a fountain of knowledge about the local community, and ensure your business has a personality and get lots of repeat business? Well this is the workshop for you.

Great Lakes Tourism and the Forster/Tuncurry Community College have created an interactive workshop that covers practical tips and examples of outstanding customer service, how to prepare your staff to deal with valuable customers and how to ensure that your customers have a memorable and pleasant experience.

The facilitator Michael Hilsden has many years experience in working with companies to develop markets, raising their profile and mentoring businesses to maximise their profits.

WHEN Monday, November 2
TIME 9am for 9.30 start to 12.30pm
WHERE Wallis Lake Room, Forster Tuncurry Memorial Services Club, Forster
COST \$30 - Morning Tea included

To book your place email tourism@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au or call 1800 802 692 today!

WORKCOVER OH&S WORKSHOP FOR GLOUCESTER

Gloucester Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with Workcover is conducting an OH & S Workshop next Monday night from 6pm. The workshop will be followed by options to request the Business Advisor to meet businesses at their premise to assess the issues and review current practice. This is a great opportunity for businesses to be aware of what the current requirements are in respect of the current OH & S Legislation.

WHEN Monday, October 19
TIME 6pm
WHERE Senior Citizens Centre, 30 Hume St, Gloucester
COST FREE

To book your place at the workshop phone Gloucester Chamber on 6558 1288 - numbers are limited

RETAIL WORKSHOPS

During November the Hunter Business Centre and local Chambers of Commerce in the Great Lakes area will be rolling out a series of workshops including -

Retail Display & Design
Customer Management
Stock control

Funding from Industry and Investment NSW will allow businesses to attend the workshops at significantly reduced cost and to get a greater understanding of some of the key issues involved in store layout and stock control. The workshops will be conducted in the evening and businesses will then have the opportunity to organise an Audit of their business with the presenter on the following day. Written reports will be provided outlining the key measures suggested to increase customer attractiveness, reduce potential stock

losses and how to better manage store inventory issues.

Dates have not been finalised but information will soon be available on the Great Lakes Business website www.greatlakesbusiness.com.au , in next month's newsletter and in the local press.

GREAT LAKES 2030 - Community Workshops

Great Lakes 2030 will be the community's plan - so it's important that every member of the Great Lakes community has an opportunity to have their say about their future through attending one of the community workshops, or completing an [online survey](#).

The community workshops will be held as follows:

| TOWNSHIP/ VENUE | TIME | DATE |
|---|-------------|-------------------------|
| Forster - Great Lakes Council Chambers | 11am | Tuesday 20 October |
| Forster - Great Lakes Council Chambers | 6pm | Tuesday 20 October |
| Stroud - RSL Hall | 6pm | Thursday 22 October |
| Tea Gardens - Tea Gardens Baptist Hall | 6pm | Monday 26 October |
| Pacific Palms / Smiths Lake - Moby's Retreat | 6pm | Tuesday 27 October |
| Bulahdelah - School of Arts Hall | 6pm | Wednesday 28 October |
| Nabiac - Showground Hall | 6pm | Wednesday 4 November |

For more information about *Great Lakes 2030*, please see the article below.

COMMUNITY RETAIL WORKSHOPS - Wingham COC

Wingham Chamber of Commerce is hosting two Community Retail Workshops which will be open to all businesses. The workshop presenter, Linda Hailey, is one of Australia's leading experts on marketing and the small business expert on Australia's Small Business television program and has a passion for sharing her expertise in regional areas. The workshops will be held on Wednesday 21 and Thursday 22 of October - for more information and to book your place contact Donna Carrier - phone - 0419 490 312 or email donna.carrier@bigpond.com

Great Lakes 2030 - Your Say

The community is being asked to think about what will be important in terms of building a strong and vibrant Great Lakes over the next 20 years under the following themes.

- Ø **Our Environment**
- Ø **Tourism**
- Ø **Services and Infrastructure**
- Ø **Employment, Education and Training Opportunities**
- Ø **Community and Culture**

How do I participate in consultation activities?

Throughout October and November, a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy will be underway through the Great Lakes, with community workshops, specialist forums, information stalls, and a community survey planned.

What if I cannot attend a workshop?

Every member of the Great Lakes community has a crucial role to play in the Community Strategic Planning process - even if they cannot attend one of the workshops.

Complete a Community Survey

A community survey has been developed to make sure everyone has an opportunity to have a say on the future of the Great Lakes. For your convenience, you can now complete the [Great Lakes 2030 Community Survey](#) online.

For further information and a copy of a Discussion Paper, go to [Great Lakes Council](#) website.

Helping your business to export

For those businesses that are committed to exporting but don't know how, the New Export Opportunities program (Export Development) may give you the right skills and tools to achieve your export goals.

Export Development helps businesses to undertake export preparation and develop export market entry strategies. It provides export-ready small business operators assistance to enter overseas markets to build profits and jobs.

Supported projects may include such things as overseas market research, export preparation activities, export market planning and market entry strategies. Limited financial assistance is available to eligible companies. For more information, please contact dean.irwin@business.nsw.gov.au or visit www.business.nsw.gov.au.

Talking tax online with the ATO

The ATO has established an interactive online community portal to allow SMEs to raise issues and obtain answers to questions. The SME online Tax Forum is described by the ATO as being an opportunity to 'discuss business and tax issues, participate in polls or surveys, and join live chats with senior Tax Office executives.'

The ATO says that it is 'using feedback from forum participants to better understand the issues SME business operators face when managing tax affairs.'

Forum members will receive regular updates from the ATO, to be known as the SME Communicator - about important issues affecting SMEs. It will be available later this month.

To join the SME Online Tax Forum visit www.smetaxforum.com.au

Australia Day Awards for 2010

Nominations for the above awards are open and close 30 November 2009. There are three categories this year:

- Citizen of the year 28 years and over
- Young citizen of the year over 16 and under 28 years of age

- Sportperson of the year open age.

If you would like a nomination form for someone you know deserves recognition for what they do for the community, contact Sue Bookallil sue.bookallil@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au or go to council's website www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au

9 Ways to improve your direct mail brochure

Sure, the letter is the most important element in any direct mail package. But don't forget the brochure. It's important too!

Whether you call it a brochure, circular, or flyer, make sure it's doing its job -- laying out all of the features and benefits of your product or service and giving the prospect compelling reasons to order IMMEDIATELY. Here are nine ways to improve the pulling power of YOUR next brochure:

1. Keep the cover simple.

Forget about trying to do too much on the front cover. All you need on that surface is one clean, clear concept that positions the material that's about to follow. Stay away from the cliches that everybody else is cranking out. Please. No more "committed to service", "dedicated to meeting your needs", etc.

2. Tell the whole story.

The brochure's the place to do a total selling job. You simply can't do it in the letter. There just isn't room unless you're willing to go with a really long letter, and these days letters rarely exceed two page. The brochure is the place to explain the product in detail, overcome objections and ask for the sale.

3. Restate the offer.

Don't worry about being repetitious. You can't be certain which piece will be read first, no matter how everything is nested and comes out of the envelope. That's why you want to tell the whole story on each and every piece in the package, even on the Business Reply Card. (Readers often grab the BRC first because they figure they'll get to the punch line faster and not have to wade through your entire letter.)

4. Make certain your headline, subheadlines or snipe refers to the offer you're making.

Don't get cute. Just make your offer crystal clear and you'll laugh all the way to the bank. Presumably you're making a terrific offer that will benefit the prospect. Then don't hide it. Put it up where it will get noticed.

5. Don't forget the subheadlines.

They're a great way to break up copy and give the reader a chance to see where you're headed -- even if they don't want to read every single word of body copy. A subheadline can make an emphatic statement, ask a question and be as playful or serious as the situation requires.

6. Use a box for added impact.

Everything doesn't have to flow in long columns of type. It's often nice to drop some important information (like a Question & Answer section) into a one-point, fine-ruled box. It gives the piece some extra visual interest. Use a dropped-in box to highlight material. Maybe it's the perfect place to put your testimonials.

7. Make sure the brochure's "look" is a match for the target audience.

It's an obvious point, but one that is often overlooked. If you're selling a low-end drawing program to a casual computer user, your brochure will look different than if you're selling a high-priced diagnostic tool to an MIS manager. The important point: Each brochure must capture the personality of the product.

8. Use graphics the right way.

Make sure your photography shows the product to its best advantage. If you're selling software, don't settle for shots of the box or the screen. Instead, humanize your piece with some photos of people using the product.

9. Don't forget the "extras" that make brochures interesting.

Why not add testimonials, rave reviews, awards or a Questions & Answers section that deals with the prospects' concerns? Research proves that customers LOVE Q & A's and read them with a great deal of interest.

Don't forget that although your sales letter is the most important part of any direct mail package, your brochure is a close second. Don't rush it through production or settle for something as-is, just because it's sitting on your shelf. Do a solid, comprehensive job that really explains and sells your product and you'll DRAMATICALLY improve response rates.

Ivan Levison - <http://www.levison.com>

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 with anything you think would suit.

For past editions of the newsletter please visit www.greatlakesbusiness.com.au

*Sue Druce - Hunter Business Centre - Ph 6539 3966 sue@businesscentre.com.au

*Mike Hilsden - Business Facilitator - Hunter Business Centre (Great Lakes each Thursday) Ph - (02) 6539 3966 mike@businesscentre.com.au

*Deb Tuckerman - Economic Development Manager (Great Lakes Council) Ph - (02) 6591 7390
deb.tuckerman@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au

*Geoff Marshall - Business Facilitator & Great Lakes Small Business Diagnostic Program - Hunter Business Centre (Great Lakes & Gloucester areas) Ph (02) 6539 39 66 geoff@businesscentre.com.au

*Suzette Gaff - Business Development Manager, Hunter (Industry & Investment NSW) Ph - (02) 4908 7333
suzette.gaff@business.nsw.gov.au

*Susan Rowe - Community Economic Development Manager, Hunter (Industry & Investment NSW) Ph - (02) 4908 7333
susan.rowe@business.nsw.gov.au

Disclaimer: This message and any attachments are confidential, for the exclusive use of the addressee and may be legally privileged. Any other distribution, use or reproduction is unauthorized and prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the message from your system. Hunter Business Advisory Service and its affiliates strive to provide the most up-to-date advice and information but accept no responsibility for any action taken based on the contents of this newsletter.