

Round Up from the Top

This has been a very busy year for ENC – a year of development and changes. It is shaping up to be a challenging one for our local businesses.

New Zealand is in a recession. This we know; but North Canterbury businesses are resilient and have survived recessions before. This is in part due to North Canterbury having a diverse economy including farming, viticulture, forestry, tourism, manufacturing, retail and professional services. These long standing historically strong businesses, remain at the foundation of our economy. (It's worth noting here that ENC will once again, be facilitating and organising the 2009 North Canterbury Business Awards).

Now is a better time than ever to celebrate good news stories and examples of best practice of exceptional businesses in North Canterbury.

To gain a greater understanding of the critical issues arising from the current economic situation, Enterprise North Canterbury is currently surveying around 80 local businesses. The results (due in the next few weeks) will allow us to compile a current snapshot of North Canterbury business confidence, along with labour market and business trends in the coming twelve months. This information also assists ENC to advocate on behalf of businesses in North Canterbury.

North Canterbury is fortunate to have its own economic development agency (Enterprise North Canterbury). I encourage you make use of our professional and capable team and the programmes on offer to North Canterbury businesses.

Heather
Heather Miller
General Manager



B LOYAL Youth Programme

An exciting new programme to support youth employment in North Canterbury was officially launched at a function in Kaiapoi on 11 February: the B LOYAL Youth Programme (Businesses Linking Our Youth and promoting Local opportunities).

B LOYAL Coordinator Denise Wiggins says the project's primary purpose is to connect local youth with local jobs. The programme, which has been under development since early June 2008, originated from the North Canterbury Market Strategy 2008-2013 in which youth employment was highlighted as a priority.

Over 50 local businesses have signed up to support the B LOYAL programme and are committed to providing field trips, industry taster days, work experience, Gateway placements, apprenticeships and employment opportunities for our local youth.

Considerable skills shortages have been identified across a range of industries in North Canterbury. It is hoped the B LOYAL programme will help plug those gaps, assisting both business growth and local employment.

Rick Smith, Operations Manager of Evacut: Patience & Nicholson at the launch spoke of the benefits of working closely with their local high school and taking students on work experience placements. He noted the company had backed the concept over many years and was heavily committed to training and developing their staff.

Kaiapoi High School Careers Advisor Marj Baird said that work experience was invaluable in shaping the career development of older students, by giving them practical skills. Work experience could also act as a motivator for some students. For Gateway students, there were opportunities to gain study credits. Some students could

also link in with Kaiapoi High's new Youth Apprenticeship scheme. Kaiapoi High student Heather Scott-Smith spoke of her positive experience of working in a local travel agency and that it reinforced it was a career she wanted to explore more by doing a Gateway placement this coming year.

Other events which have taken place as part of the B LOYAL programme include a Principals Day Out on 18 February where five of our local principals were taken around a selection of industries in North Canterbury, which included Rayonier (forestry management business), North Canterbury Community College (local training provider), Waimakariri District Council, Vine Care (viticulture business) and Nor'Wester Café (hospitality business.) Several principals commented on how valuable they found the day out for gaining a greater understanding of the wide range of jobs that are available in our two districts.

A Careers Advisors and Gateway Coordinators Day Out was held on 25 February when the Hurunui District Council, Mudhouse Winery (hospitality business) and NZ Vineyard Estate (viticulture business), North Canterbury Community College, Rangiora New World (retail business) and MainPower (electricity supply business) provided information on the wide range of jobs available within their organisations. Several gateway coordinators commented on how interesting they found it that even tertiary qualified students still had to start on the bottom rung and work their way up, hard work and determination is required in every job regardless of the profession.

Businesses that have not already signed up for the B LOYAL programme, and are interested, can contact Denise Wiggins on (03) 310 6860 or email denise@enterprisenc.co.nz



Claremont Country Estate Named Andrew Harper Hideaway Grand

Congratulations to Richard and Rosie Goord! Claremont Country Estate & Nature Reserve claimed the Grand Award title in the highly coveted Andrew Harper's Hideaway Report for 2008 (USA). The only New Zealand award winner named in 2008, Claremont joins a prestigious past winner line up which includes exclusive New Zealand luxury lodges such as Huka Lodge, Wharekauhau Country Estate, Treetops Lodge and Wilderness Estate and Kauri Cliffs.

The list is compiled just once per year and singles out properties who have demonstrated a strong individual personality coupled with devotion to personal service. "The accolade is prestigious the Andrew

Harper Grand title separates those properties that are merely good from those who are truly enchanting".

"Claremont provides luxury lodge accommodation with an unequalled geological experience and is an excellent hub from which to explore Christchurch and Canterbury. The 1866 heritage homestead is set on the edge of the Waipara Gorge, 45 minutes from Christchurch airport, and close to over 80 Waipara wineries. Situated on a 2,400 acre working deer and sheep high country station (ranch), the historic property lies on the edge of the Waipara River amongst manicured, mature gardens, with a backdrop of the Southern Alps".

90-day trial period for small businesses

At a recent seminar, hosted by Enterprise North Canterbury, an advisor from the Small Business Information Unit (Department of Labour) introduced the new "90 Day Trial Period" legislation to North Canterbury businesses.

- From March 1st 2009, businesses that employ 19 or fewer employees will be able to offer new employees a trial period of up to 90 days.
- The trial period must be recorded in a written employment agreement at the beginning of the employment relationship.

- An employee cannot pursue a personal grievance for unjustified dismissal if he or she is given notice during the trial period.

The Small Business Information Unit works with business networks, industry groups, support agencies and small business associations to educate and enable business groups to become more productive employers and avoid costly mistakes especially managing employment and relations and health & safety matters.

For more information on the new law visit www.dol.govt.nz/90-days.

Key Tourism Statistics - what are you basing your future plans on?

The latest Ministry of Tourism forecasts (Tourism forecasts, 2008-2014) provide a set of expectations on the future tourism demand in New Zealand. The forecasts are intended to assist the tourism sector decision-making and planning.

Domestic Tourism refers to international visitors who arrive in New Zealand intending to stay for a short-term period of less than 12 months.

Statistics are from passenger Arrival Cards collected at various NZ international airports and seaports. Data is processed by Statistics New Zealand and is partly sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism.

The Domestic Travel Survey (DTS) is conducted by The Nielsen Company for the Ministry of Tourism.

The survey covers an annual sample of 15,000 NZ residents aged 15 years or over who are interviewed via telephone about their travel experience within New Zealand. Data collected include - traveller demographics, day and overnight trips, places visited, tourism activities undertaken and expenditure. DTS statistics are released quarterly.

For more detailed information on Inbound Tourism visit www.tourismresearch.govt.nz

For full information visit: www.tourism.govt.nz

Cariboo is about to Storm into the UK

On February 26th, Cariboo held a launch party to celebrate the completion of a range of Cariboo Product that they will be exporting to the UK.

For them, it's the right time to expand into the UK, even though there is a recession ("which Cariboo won't take part in!"), their focus is to build the Cariboo brand and get some good product placements.

Cariboo are relocating two key staff to help Jill Holland (European Manager) set up Cariboo. They are doing their own distribution, so there will be a lot to learn, but, by the time the market turns, Jill says "we will be well established. It's all about taking advantage of the market when it's down which means our competitors will not be able to react as fast".

Carol McGeady says "the last 6 months have been hectic! As March approached, we have developed a new range of clothing to sell along side the sought after furniture that is so popular in New Zealand, Australia and the USA".



Cariboo will be one of the main features at the Harrogate Nursery Fair on March 22nd. Cariboo Fern uses only organic cotton and New Zealand Merino.



Pictured from left to right: Carol McGeady - Owner and designer of Cariboo, John Paton - UK Trade and Investment, Amanda McGeady - International Sales relocating to the UK, John Sansom - International Sales relocating to the UK, Jill Holland - European Manager

Free Employer Injury Management service

Effective management of your employees who are off work due to an injury or illness does not just happen; it is a process or system that is a necessary part of your business planning.

In order to help businesses develop structures for the challenging job of managing injury and illness in the workplace, the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) offers a free Employer Injury Management service.

The objective of an injury management system is to ensure injured or ill staff return to work/productivity in a safe and timely manner using a consistent and systematic approach. Work and non work place injuries that result in lost productivity can have significant repercussions for employers and employees alike. It is therefore in the interest of employers and employees to facilitate a return to work as soon as safely possible. Staff retention, productivity and absenteeism is likely to improve if there is a clear, concise and robust process that has been put in place to help staff who are away from work due to injury or illness.

ACC's Employer Injury Management Team works with employers of any size to help develop systems such as:

- Improving recruitment outcomes – identifying the demands of jobs which will help you get a good job fit
- Return to Work Policy – development and delivery
- Occupational risk management and managing a return to work plan
- Using ACC funded initiatives/providers early
- Develop your capability and confidence to manage your staff back to work beginning on day one
- Provide easy to use templates for informed consent, return to work plans, communication with providers and ACC
- Establish a practical system that is tailored to suit your organisational requirements

To contact a consultant in your area email: ReturnToWork@acc.co.nz

North Canterbury Business to Business Networking

Our first business networking event of the year not only brings you together with other North Canterbury business people, but will bring expert speakers to you to overview important issues for your business regarding *Staffing in Tougher Times* during the current economic climate.

PETER TOWNSEND, Chief Executive, Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce, will discuss strategies for staffing changes, including national policy, the recent Job Summit and its implications.

MATT GUTSHLAG of the Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce, will present Employment Law Fundamentals around strategies such as restructuring, job sharing, redundancies and compulsory holidays.

CAROL TAPLIN of Enterprise North Canterbury has the Women in Business Forum and North Canterbury Business Awards to introduce.

Thanks to CECC and our Sponsor Businesses, attendance is Free (and includes refreshments). We're proud to be partnering with our March Business Update Sponsor Businesses, Oxford Promotions Action Committee and Seagars on Oxford.

Date: Wednesday 1st April 2009

Time: 5:30pm to 7:30pm

Venue: Town Hall, Main Street, Oxford

RSVP: by Friday 27 March 2009 to Tracy at Enterprise North Canterbury
Telephone: (03) 310 6860 E: office@enterprisenc.co.nz

Note: If your business is based in Hurunui and you would like to partner ENC as a Sponsor Business and host North Canterbury onto your premises in late July, please contact Carol Taplin on 03 310 6860 to discuss.

STAR Training

On 20-21 November 08, Carol Taplin (ENC's STAR advisor) attended the STAR Advisor Training Workshop at the Ministry of Tourism. STAR stands for Sustainable Tourism Advisors in Regions and has been developed using the learnings from the Sustainable Tourism Charter project.

STAR will provide tourism operators with tools and advice to improve their sustainable business practices in nine New Zealand regions. The nine regions participating in the STAR programme are: Auckland, Central Otago, Coromandel, Hawke's Bay, Marlborough, North Canterbury, Queenstown, Wairarapa and Wellington.

The Advisor Training Workshop was a valuable opportunity to meet the new STAR advisors as well as staff from The Ministry of Tourism, Ministry for the Environment and Tourism NZ. Those present were given a detailed update on Qualmark Green from Qualmark's communications manager. Advisors from the Charter project, led the group on a site visit and following brainstorming session to identify current good practices and opportunities for improvement within the business visited as a case study. For more information on STAR and sustainability visit www.tourism.govt.nz/info-for-businesses/sustainability.

BUSINESS CHECK-LIST FOR SURVIVAL

The Economic Development Association of New Zealand has put together a simple recession survival checklist for businesses:

1. Mind your cash flow – what are your finances really telling you?
2. Cut your costs – look for savings in every part of your business.
3. Credit check new customers to reduce risk.
4. Focus on retaining customers.
5. Provide outstanding customer service.
6. Increase your marketing.
7. Concentrate on products and services that sell.
8. Train your staff.
9. Streamline your operation – consider moving to smaller premises or subletting your existing space.
10. Talk to your local economic development agency.

New Qualmark monitoring tools

Following feedback and consultation with industry operators, Qualmark have now made several additional monitoring tools available via their website. The intention of these new tools is to make the process of recording and monitoring aspects such as electricity, water, gas and fuel simpler for tourism businesses. Please note that these tools are only available to Qualmark license holders. To have a look at the new monitoring tools, log on to your Qualmark account.

Half price energy audits available for TIA members

TIA has partnered with the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority to offer half price energy audits for TIA members. Twelve tourism businesses completed audits last year and the results were so successful that the programme has been extended into 2009. 14 half price audit slots were available this year under TIA's Tourism Energy Efficiency Programme (TEEP). Some of the 14 available slots are still available. If you are interested in considering a discount audit for your business email TIA Strategic Communications and Policy Manager Sarah Berry (E: sarah.berry@tiaz.org.nz). All audits must be completed before June 2009 and places are strictly limited.



Small-business Relief Package

On February 4th 2009, Prime Minister John Key unveiled the Government's small-business relief package to help lighten the load on the small and medium-sized businesses which employ many New Zealanders. The package has five parts: a suite of 11 tax changes costing \$480 million, an expansion to the export credit scheme, extended jurisdiction for the Disputes Tribunal, expansion of business advice services, and a prompt-payment requirement for government agencies.

Business advice services have been expanded to include an extended 0800 service, an initial business seminar leading to enterprise training and a free business health check available at www.bizhealth.co.nz and through www.business.govt.nz. These initiatives are the result of close collaboration between NZTE, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Agencies of New Zealand, delivered under the biz banner. (P.S. Enterprise North Canterbury is your district biz agency).

Bizchat - <http://www.bizchat.co.nz>

www.bizchat.co.nz an initiative that is seeking to provide a platform for online support and informal "chat" for NZ SME's

Bizchat is an independent and neutral website seeking to recreate the peer-to-peer business conversations that happen over a BBQ or a beer.

Businesses will have access to free resources (aggregated from sites around NZ), news (collected via newsfeeds) and advice.

More information? Check out the website, join the community, leap into the forums!

For your friends and family visiting the region...

Kaipoi Visitor Information Center

Open 364 days (closed Christmas Day)

Hours Monday – Friday: 9.30am – 5pm.

Weekends 10 – 4pm

Kaipoi Wharf, Charles Street, Kaipoi

P: 03 327 3134

E: info@kaipoivisitorcentre.co.nz

Do you know a small business owner looking for their first office?

Here at Enterprise North Canterbury, we have a professional office available for rent;

\$118.00 + GST includes office, power and car park. Register your interest by sending your business and contact details to

office@enterprisenc.co.nz

Subject line: 'Office for Rent', before March 23rd. Heather Miller will be in touch with you after then to organize a viewing.

Marketing in the credit crunch

Australian marketing consultancy Marketing Nous, which specializes in sales and marketing for service businesses, has come up with four key areas to successful marketing during the economic crisis.

- *Marketing in the Credit Crunch* is a 24 minute audio visual presentation that includes:
- Should you reduce, or increase, your marketing budget?
- Lessons from some top global brands
- Actionable tips for your business.

Type <http://www.marketingnous.com.au/crunch.htm> into your address bar to go straight to the video.

WDC Regional Induction Tour

On one particular Wednesday late in February (the 25th to be precise), a certain bus was spotted lurking around certain Waimakariri Council utilities.

It was spotted from Oxford to Pegasus, Woodend to Kaiapoi, Ohoka to Rangiora.

It was carrying the latest additions to the Waimakariri District council staff on their regional induction tour.

Carol and Cat from ENC were invited to join in (neither of us had any idea just how many pump stations there are in Waimakariri!)

(Thanks to Dave Robertson, PIM Officer, Waimakariri District Council, for the photo).



If you are a North Cantabrian Women in Business, do diary in the 3rd **Women in Business Forum** Wednesday June 17th (8.30am to 5.00pm) at the Kaiapoi Club.

Watch out for more information as it comes to hand.

Business Gems is produced by Enterprise North Canterbury.

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