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Jamie Lambert, Breakaway Newcastle.

PUBLISHED BY:

Hunter Business Publications Pty Ltd
 ABN: 15 112 838 945
 265 King Street
 Newcastle NSW 2300
 PO Box 853, Hamilton NSW 2303
 Phone: (02) 4925 7760
 Fax: (02) 4925 2570

PUBLISHER and EDITOR:

Garry Hardie
 Mob: 0414 463 125
 garry@HBRmag.com.au

ART DIRECTOR:

Sandie Collie
 sandie@HBRmag.com.au

CONTENT MANAGER:

Jason Duncan
 jason@HBRmag.com.au

ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT:

Sharyn Hungerford
 sharyn@HBRmag.com.au

PRINTING:

NCP Printing
 Phone: (02) 4926 1300
 sales@ncp.com.au
 www.ncp.com.au

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The 2017 Federal Budget seemed to make few ripples in most media outlets, with it almost disappearing from view within a day or two.

It has been largely well-received by business, with the continuation of the instant write-off for small business,

the commencement of company tax cuts and measures to help cut red tape being notable points.

The lack of funding for some major local infrastructure was disappointing, particularly the M1 to Raymond Terrace link and the next stage of the Lake Macquarie Transport Interchange. Hopefully these will be revisited once there is further movement from the NSW Government.

The claim of the budget moving into surplus by 2020-21 looks very optimistic unless the Australian economy has significantly higher economic growth than expected.

Talking to local business people, the general comment seems that of almost indifference to the Budget, with most measures already known and few surprises.

Indeed, the response has reinforced my perception that business (and the general community) is becoming less and less engaged with politics. Instead of looking towards our politicians for leadership as we have done in the past, businesses and relevant organisations are largely taking a firmer grip of issues themselves.

With the lack of vision and slow reactions of most of our politicians, this is no doubt a good thing as we face the challenges of an incredibly rapidly changing world.

We need to breed and encourage businesspeople who face change front on, minimising the negatives and grasping the multitude of opportunities, many of which have a very small window of opportunity.

Our politicians seem unable to exhibit the vision and the nimble actions required to meet today's volatile world. The best we can seem to currently hope for is that they will not create too many roadblocks for the business leaders that can build Australia's future prosperity.

Garry Hardie
Publisher & Editor

COMING ISSUES

July

- Insurance & Risk Management
- Leadership & HR
- Newcastle Renewal

August

- Hunter Business Function Guide
- Business Technology

September

- Business & Environment
- Mining & Energy Update
- Health & Wellbeing



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HBR is essential reading for anyone wanting to stay informed on local **business news** and **issues** that affect business.

Boeing and CSIRO launch \$35 m research program

CSIRO has signed a new, \$35 million research agreement with the world's largest aerospace company, Boeing.

Over the next five years the organisations will work together on a broad range of areas of mutual interest including space sciences, advanced materials and manufacturing.

It's the latest step in a 28-year partnership between CSIRO and Boeing that has provided a huge boost for Australia in the global aviation industry.

CSIRO Chief Executive Larry Marshall announced the new funding agreement at the American Chamber of Commerce in Australia's G'day to Aussie innovation event in Sydney on 28 April 2017.

"With almost three decades of ground-breaking research that has created jobs and growth for Australia and the US, it's hard to overstate the impact that our relationship with Boeing has had," Dr Marshall said.

"Adopting a global outlook for national benefit is a key pillar of CSIRO's Strategy 2020, and it's an approach that has yielded enormous benefits through our relationship with Boeing."

Earlier in April, Boeing named CSIRO as a 2016 Supplier of the Year.



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Leah Jay reaches summit of Mount Everest

Property management pioneer, Leah Jay, completed a climbing expedition to the summit of Mount Everest on 22 May.

The climb marks another victory in her attempt to climb the 'seven summits' – the highest peaks on each of the seven continents. Mount Everest, which stands at 8,848 metres high, is the world's tallest mountain. This is the sixth summit that Leah has achieved, she will now set her sights on summiting Denali in Alaska.

Leah was in Nepal since the beginning of April, completing a rigorous acclimatisation process with an expedition team. The team completed several journeys back and forth between Base Camp and the four camps above, before weather eventually permitted a summit attempt just before dawn on Monday 22 May.

The attempt was successful and the team reached the peak of Mount Everest at 4:40 am local time (8:55 am AEST time) after more than eight hours of climbing over night.

As well as being the highest peak in the world, Everest is a dangerous and challenging mountain for climbers. The Lhotse face which follows most of the Everest climbing route, makes for a steep and treacherous climb. The notorious Khumbu Icefall is also extremely perilous, causing Leah some anxiety whenever she had to ascend it.

"It is beautiful, but also extremely harsh and unforgiving," Leah says of the Everest experience. Nevertheless, she is pleased to have been able to endure and surpass the many challenges presented by the mountain.

"I am thrilled with my efforts, and would have been whether we reached the summit or not," Leah says. "I am ever so grateful for the experience and the amazing people I encountered along the way."

For Leah, the climb was both a test of her physical and mental strength and an achievement in memory of her late son, Elliot. Elliot passed away in 2008, at the age of just nineteen, after a twelve-month battle with Motor Neurone Disease.

Leah is a passionate advocate for raising awareness and funds for Motor Neurone Disease Australia. Not one to shy away from a challenge – even after a climb to at 8,848 metres – she also plans to participate in the Newcastle Big Freeze event in June.

The Big Freeze sees local personalities taking a giant slide into a pool of ice water, all in the name of raising funds and awareness to fight MND.

Leah, along with each of the nine other 'sliders', has committed to raising a minimum of \$5000 before the event. These funds will contribute to much-needed MND research, as well as support for individuals living with MND.



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Hunter Valley Wine Industry Living Legend

The who's who of the Hunter Valley food and wine world came together on 25 May at the Cypress Lakes Ballroom for a gala event celebrating the announcement of the 2017 Hunter Valley Wine Industry Living Legend. Now in its 11th year, the prestigious honour is awarded to a winemaker who has been contributing significantly to the Hunter Valley Wine Industry for at least 30 years.

This year, 'Living Legend' status was given to Ian Tinkler, who has been growing grapes and producing premium quality wines on his Pokolbin family properties for more than 35 years. Ian is also the 2009 Hunter Valley Viticulturist of the Year, an award recognising vineyards as reaching iconic status under the quality care of the recipient. As a Living Legend, Tinkler is in prestigious company, with past winners including Ian Scarborough, Brian McGuigan, Bruce Tyrrell and Jay Tulloch.

Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Association Chairman George Souris said 'Hunter Valley Wine Country - right on the doorstep of the gateway to Sydney - has gained international recognition as a premier wine and food destination thanks to the hard work, research and caretaking by industry stalwarts like Ian and we thank him for that.'

"The Hunter Valley is the oldest and most visited wine region in Australia by overseas tourists, supporting almost 3000 jobs and contributing \$594 million annually to the local economy. It certainly has a lot to boast about."

Other award winners on the night were:

- **Rising Star of the Year** - Rauri Donkin (Bimbadgen Estate)
- **Viticulturist of the Year** - Andrew Pengilly (Tyrrell's Wines)
- **Cellar Door of the Year** - Thomas Wines
- **Winemaker of the Year** - Mark Richardson (Tyrrell's Wines)
- **Heritage Awards** - Rothbury Cemetery
- **HV Award for Excellence** - Bruce Tyrrell (Tyrrell's Wines)

Planning Excellence award for Lake Macquarie City Council

On the 3 May Lake Macquarie City Council received the highest planning accolade, with its pioneering approach to managing future sea level rise recognised with a 2017 PIA National Awards for Planning Excellence.

Council's Manager Integrated Planning, Sharon Pope said the award-winning process saw Council collaborate with local residents over three years to produce a long-term strategy and 10-year Action Plan to help manage the effects of future sea level rise on their communities.

"We are now working alongside local residents and key stakeholders to implement the adaptation plan. Council recently passed changes to development controls, including building heights, filling and adaptable housing," Ms Pope said.

"We also completed foreshore protection works in Village Bay Close that allowed for future lake level rises, and have completed a model of the drainage system in the area, so we can assess what would occur if we alter drains or fill land in different locations."

The Marks Point and Belmont South Local Adaptation Plan is a leading model for climate change adaptation and is included as one of several 'best practice' case studies in the Federal Government's online coastal planning guide, CoastAdapt.

"The plan allows people to live in and enjoy these areas, even as sea and lake levels continue to rise. Council is currently working with residents of Pelican and Blacksmiths to develop a similar plan, and over the coming years Council will continue to develop plans to help manage sea level rise in all low-lying lakeside communities of Lake Macquarie City."



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Port Stephens Council supports \$3m koala hospital

Port Stephens Council has unanimously backed a plan to build and operate a \$3 million koala hospital and tourism facility at Treescape Holiday Park, One Mile Beach. This one-of-a-kind facility is a joint initiative between Council and Port Stephens Koalas in response to challenges facing the region's koala population.

Glenn Bunney, Council's Property Services Section Manager, says Council is taking a proactive approach to declining koala populations.

"Port Stephens has one of the last remaining koala populations on the east coast of Australia, so this facility is a way for us to ensure their survival long into the future," Mr. Bunney said.

"This is just one element of a wider Port Stephens Koala Strategy, which is currently being developed by Council.

"The hospital, which will be run by Port Stephens Koalas, will take in koalas from as far north as Port Macquarie, and as far south as Sydney," he said.

Mr. Bunney says the tourism component of the facility will be run by Council.

"Not only will this facility help treat sick and injured koalas, it will also boost the region's economy by creating a unique tourism destination for locals and visitors alike.

"There will also be an opportunity for an education and training component of the facility, where local veterinary students can come to learn about our local koalas," he said.

Port Stephens Council predicts the facility will generate \$1 million in revenue per year, including \$675,000 from tourism and an uptake in accommodation of \$345,000. Council has applied for grant funding to cover part of the initial cost of the facility.

Renew Australia scoping study for Maitland

Maitland City Council has engaged Renew Australia to conduct a scoping study to determine the feasibility of an urban renewal program in Maitland.

Renew Australia works with communities and property owners to take otherwise empty shops, offices, and commercial and public buildings and make them available on a short term basis for use by artists, creative projects and community initiatives.

Council's City Economy Officer Andrew Brown says, "The focus of the program is Central Maitland, but other sites throughout the city will be assessed as part of the scoping study. We are going to be working with Renew Australia and with other key stakeholders to assess the viability of the Renew model in Maitland."

A feasibility program would aim to reduce vacant tenancies, increase the diversity of goods and services in Maitland, and stimulate business activity and entrepreneurship. The program would also draw key stakeholders together to create an initiative that will help contribute to the revitalisation of Central Maitland and the establishment of The Levee as the city's premier lifestyle precinct.

At the conclusion of the scoping study and dependent on the outcome, it will be Council's and Renew Australia's aim to have commitment from property owners to license their properties for Renew Maitland. Provided there is enough interest in the program and it is financially viable, Council will make a formal public announcement and call for Expressions of Interest from the local community.

NEWi Awards 2017 entries open

The Lunaticks Society is calling for entries to the 2017 NEWi Awards for Digital Creativity. The closing date is 18 August. The NEWi Awards celebrates the work of regional innovators, creatives and entrepreneurs. Winners receive a thong (flip flop) shaped award, better known as "The NEWi". In the past six years, the NEWi Awards has quickly grown to become the leading digital awards program for regional Australia.

With this success, The Lunaticks Society has signed a multi-year deal to host the NEWi Awards ceremony at Foghorn Brewhouse, Newcastle, and for the third year running Newcastle-based digital artist, Chuck Groth has been commissioned to design a digital display to light up the evening. And for the fourth year, Steve Babic weaved his magic to design the Awards artwork.

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Technology Optimisation team formed

Diamond ICTs Technology Optimisation (TechOps) team has been developed and refined out of the need to ensure business networks are running smoothly without disruption, through alignment to industry best practice on an on-going basis. This continuous improvement process, architected by TechOps team leader Dan Prowse, breaks away from the traditional model provided by Managed Service Providers today - Maintenance, Monitoring and Support.

Unique to Diamond ICT, this industry first process is designed to continuously enhance businesses IT systems and mitigate against potential risks such as the recent "WannaCry" malware strain.

"Creating the Technology Optimisation team reinforces our commitment to our customers to help them succeed through providing proactive IT services second to none," said Diamond ICT Founder and Director Robert Buck.

"By ensuring their systems are secure and running smoothly, we provide our customers peace of mind so they are able to focus on other areas of their business such as strategic planning, business productivity and growth," said Robert.

"Within the IT industry, particularly around security, best practice is constantly changing – new operating systems, new technologies and new threats all impact these standards," commented Dan.

"Better technology alignment can reduce the impact and risks from growing threats such as Ransomware."

Small to Medium Businesses generally do not have time to stay on top of emerging technologies and security threats. Dan and his TechOps team proactively review customer's networks to identify areas of weakness and concern and work closely with them to develop a technology roadmap that will provide guidance for businesses IT and that will gain the most value from their technology investment.

"Exposure to varied technologies and business challenges is one of the benefits of working for an MSP like Diamond ICT, whether aligning infrastructure to best practices, reacting to a new security threat, or supporting a user request, each day is unique" said Dan.

"One of my favourite activities in TechOps is to meet our business customers face to face. Behind all the infrastructure and applications are people who rely on the quality of our services in order to excel in their own roles" he added.

Diamond ICT provides a free online security assessment that allows businesses to gauge how vulnerable their network may be at www.diamondgroup.net.au/security



*The Technology Optimisation (TechOps) Team:
Cody Barton, Dan Prowse and David Vernon*

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THE ART OF PERFORMANCE

Hunter region brewers successful at beer awards

Breweries from all corners of the country and around the world are celebrating after the results of the 2017 Australian International Beer Awards (AIBA) were announced on 18 May in Melbourne.

The largest annual beer competition in the world judging both draught and packaged beer, the AIBA celebrated 25 years of recognising the world's best beers this year, attracting record participation with over 1890 entries across the beer categories. Close to another 200 entries were also received in the design and media categories.

Five of the Hunter regions boutique breweries were featured in these awards. These were FogHorn Brewhouse, Murray's Craft Brewing Co, Hunter Beer Co., Grainfed Brewery and Lovedale Brewery.

The Foghorn Brewhouse awards included:

- **Best Stout:** Major trophies - *Sligo Extra Stout, Draught*
- **American Style (Best IPA):** Gold Medal - *Young Americans IPA, Draught*
- **Other Stout (Best Stout):** Gold Medal - *Sligo Extra Stout, Draught*
- **Dark Strong (Best Belgian / French Style Ale):** Bronze Medal - *Monk Magic, Draught*
- **Saison (Best Belgian / French Style Ale):** Bronze Medal - *4 Seasons In One Day, Draught*

Murray's Craft Brewing Co won awards for:

- **English Summer (Best British-Style Ale):** Gold Medal - *Moon Boy Golden Ale, Draught*
- **American Strong Style (Best International-Style Pale Ale):** Silver Medal - *Fred IPA, Draught*
- **American Style (Best International-Style Pale Ale):** Bronze Medal - *AngryMan Pale Ale,*

Hunter Beer Co. came home with:

- **German Style Bock (Best Amber / Dark Lager):** Silver Medal - *Hunter Bock, Draught*
- **Regular / Brown Porter (Best Porter):** Bronze Medal - *Hunter Porter, Draught*
- **Imperial Stout (Best Stout):** Bronze Medal - *Big Stout (2017), Packaged*
- **Herb & Spice (Best Specialty Beer):** Bronze Medal - *Slaked Magpie, Draught*



Grainfed Brewing Company was awarded for:

- **American Style (Best International-Style Pale Ale):** Silver Medal - *Grainfed East Coast Pale, Draught*
- **Other Specialty Beer (Best Specialty Beer):** Bronze Medal - *Grainfed Quiet One, Draught*

Lovedale Brewery/Sydney Brewery had success taking out:

- **Munich Style Helles (Best European-Style Lager):** Silver Medal - *Lovedale Lager, Draught*
- **Other Specialty Beer (Best Specialty Beer):** Silver Medal - *Pymont Rye IPA, Draught*
- **Other International Style Lager (Best International Lager):** Bronze medal - *Glamarama Summer Ale, Draught*
- **German Style Schwarzbier (Best Amber / Dark Lager):** Bronze Medal - *Darlo Dark, Draught*
- **Bohemian Style Pilsner (Best Pilsner):** Silver medal - *Surry Hills Pils, Draught*

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Business conditions remain positive

The latest NSW Business Chamber survey of more than 1,000 respondents across the state shows that businesses remain confident about their prospects for the future.

The most recent Business Conditions survey, for the first quarter of this calendar year, painted a positive picture for businesses across NSW with more than 83% of organisations expecting the performance of the state economy to improve or at least remain the same.

Hunter Business Chamber CEO Bob Hawes said that observations here in the Hunter for local businesses are similar.

"We saw a similar proportion of businesses here in the Hunter expecting the economy to improve or at least remain the same. More than 63% of the businesses surveyed here said they hired new staff between January and March," Bob said.

Although confidence remains strong, businesses are focused on reducing costs.

"Almost half of businesses here said they experienced an increase in the cost of doing business in the past three months, and more expect costs to increase or remain the same in the near future. A majority of these businesses want to focus their cost reduction priorities on inefficiencies and unproductive work. These findings are similar in other parts of New South Wales.

"This should serve as a reminder that there is work to be done in continually pushing the envelope in making New South Wales the most competitive place to do business. One way to do this would be to increase the payroll tax threshold to \$1 million.

"The upcoming Budget on 20 June will provide a further opportunity for the NSW Government to embrace the NSW Business Chamber's positive agenda outlined in the organisation's pre-NSW Budget submission," Bob said.

Prosperity boosts Queensland presence

Roger Ng & Co – a specialist SME Brisbane-based Accounting & Tax practice has joined the Hunter based, Prosperity Advisers Group.

A key client group for both Prosperity Advisers and Roger Ng & Co, the SME sector features prominently in Prosperity's growth plans. Joining forces means greater access for Roger Ng & Co clients to an expanded group of services and is a boost to Prosperity's SME and private client network.

Combining the long history of both firms in delivering quality accounting, tax and advisory services made a lot of sense for Prosperity Advisers' Founder & CEO Allan McKeown, "We've experienced double digit growth at our Brisbane practice in each of the last four years including 12% year to date, so when the opportunity arose to merge with Roger Ng & Co we were excited by the prospect."

"Many Hunter businesses have operations and investments in Queensland. There is a natural connectivity through the resources and tourism sectors. Having a fully resourced team there has enabled us to gain early insights into growth opportunities for our NSW based clients."

"Being a progressive firm was attractive to Roger Ng & Co and we welcome the more than 120 client groups and the team, from Roger Ng & Co that have joined Prosperity," says McKeown.

"We are pleased that both Karen Ng and her father, Roger will continue with our firm. Their specialist SME knowledge will be invaluable in assisting Prosperity to cater for a market that is often not well served by its advisers; many of whom are trapped on the compliance treadmill."

The merger brings the Brisbane office complement to 35 and over 150 for the Prosperity Group.

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Powerful MidCoast Business Chamber formed

MidCoast Business Chamber has been formed following the new MidCoast Council taking economic development back in house. Formerly Greater Taree City Council had an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Economic Development (ED) with Manning Valley Business Chamber whereby they were contracted to run ED in the area instead of Council having an internal position.

Manning Valley Chamber saw this as an opportunity to work closer with all other business groups in the Local Government Area and potentially form a stronger group that could partner with council on ED.

Following initial discussions with other Chambers it was agreed to proceed with the formation of MidCoast Business Chamber. This is the overarching Board that is purely focussed on Economic Development within the LGA.

MidCoast Business Chamber has eight founding members being: Bulahdelah Chamber of Commerce, Forster Tuncurry Business Chamber, Gloucester Chamber of Commerce, Harrington Chamber of Commerce, Myall Coast Business Chamber, Old Bar Manning Point Chamber of Commerce, Taree Business Chamber and Wingham Business Chamber.

Each 'zone' chamber continues to operate at grassroots level and focus on local issues plus networking etc. However, they provide one member to represent them on the MidCoast Board to discuss economically beneficial projects over the entire LGA.

The formation MidCoast Business Chamber is seen as a very positive step for growth in the MidCoast economy. All zone presidents agreed that this is mutually beneficial as a major project in one area will have economic spin off in each. Being able to speak on behalf of thousands of members business instead of a few hundred has considerably more clout when seeking funding or favourable outcomes with various levels of government.

A new MOU with MidCoast Council is being formed that will see a new ED Partnership board set up between Council and business.

MidCoast Business Chamber is working through the initial strategy documents at the moment but kicked off with then MidCoast Business Awards on 5 May at Tuncurry Beach Bowling Club.

Nearly 260 business people from all points of MidCoast Local Government Area attended with Milligans Shower Screens taking out Business of the Year closely followed by Lumpys Nursery & Landscape Yard.

Mario Tomlin of MidCoast Automotive was a popular winner of the Business leader with Denise Haynes of Stroud based Real Estate Agency R & R Property highly commended. It was a good night for R & R Property who were joint winners in the Excellence in Small Business category with Sunrise Supported Living.

Linga Longa Farm of Wingham was named Peoples Choice and Croaker Oars were inducted in the Hall of Fame.



Deborah Atkins of Milligans Shower Screens with Jenny and Jeff Roddick of Lumpys Nursery and Landscape Yard



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Innovative technology used to help emergency management

The continuing advances in Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and associated sensor technologies has produced a broad spectrum of useful tools for civilian applications. To take advantage of this technology and diversify its market, PLEXSYS Interface Products Inc, a defence contractor, created a product to meet the needs of civilian Emergency Management, Search & Rescue (SAR) as well as First Responders and Wildfire Fighters. PLEXSYS Australia has a local office at Williamstown.

PLEXSYS leveraged decades of experience with Command & Control (C2) displays to create OnScene Commander (OSC). OSC merges data from a variety of sources for display on a Common Operating Picture (COP), which provides a graphical representation of beacon equipped ground crews and UAVs in real time, on an easy to read map display.

For the past three years, OSC has been employed by West Point Military Academy to ensure cadet safety during training competitions and cadet annual summer field training. During these events, OSC has tracked over 400 cadets simultaneously in extremely mountainous terrain. Army leadership relies upon OSC for monitoring participants and provides the information necessary to make decisions in the best interest of safety and mission accomplishment.

Emergency Management and Law Enforcement agencies have used OSC's Video Distribution And Recording System (VDARS) to enhance SAR and suspect surveillance operations. In July, 2016 OSC VDARS was used to search for a skydiving accident victim. The victim fell out of her parachute harness upon chute deployment at five thousand feet. On day one of the search, only the parachute was located. Prior to the commencement of searching on day two, a UAV team located the victim's body during a review of the previous days VDARS recordings. The body was situated in dense grass over 6 feet high, making it virtually undetectable to ground crews or manned aircraft. Only the UAV flying at an altitude of 300 feet was able to locate the victim during post mission analysis.

OSC provided reconnaissance of a murder suspect. In December 2016 law enforcement officials used a UAV equipped with an IR sensor to verify that a suspect was unarmed and alone prior to apprehension. Video from the UAV was relayed in real time to agents in the field, giving them a birds-eye view of the situation prior to and during the arrest. The OSC VDARS video record was archived for legal purposes and will be admissible as evidence.

Firm of the Year award for Pitcher Partners

Pitcher Partners was named the Firm of the Year at this year's Accounting Awards, held in Sydney on 26 May.

"This award belongs to all our staff across Australia who work tirelessly in the best interests of clients," Managing Partner of Pitcher Partners Newcastle, Michael Minter, said.

"Our values are based on a culture of caring, for staff and clients, and it is always rewarding to see that others in the industry appreciate and value our efforts in this regard."

The Accountants Daily Australian Accounting Awards recognise excellence across the entire accounting industry, making them the premier industry awards.

In announcing the Award, the judges highlighted the four key aspects that placed Pitcher Partners above the other nominees, namely:

- A positive working environment
- Demonstrated ways in which added value is brought to clients
- Ability to solve client problems innovatively
- Improve competitive advantage

Pitcher Partners also took home the Awards for Professional Development Program and Accounting Student of the Year, received by Arlen Dabinett from Pitcher Partners South Australia.

NSW Pitchfest Finalists announced

Australia Post Regional Pitchfest is pleased to announce that five talented New South Wales finalists will present their pitches on stage in Dubbo on 5 July, to a live audience and judging panel.

There are five NSW finalists, including two from the Hunter: Luke De Bono of Elite Robotics in Newcastle and Lochie Burke of JAR Aerospace Pty Ltd in Brightwaters.

In partnership with the University of Melbourne's Melbourne Accelerator Program, Australia Post Regional Pitchfest will see State and Territory finalists compete for a share in \$100,000 worth of prizes, with winners heading to the national final in Wagga Wagga on 18 August.

Australia Post General Manager Small Business, Rebecca Burrows, said the quality of entrants was inspiring.

"This is the first national Australia Post Regional Pitchfest and we are thrilled with the calibre of finalists who are going through to the next stage. The ideas and innovation across technology, products and services reinforces the strength and resourcefulness.

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Hunter Water – University research partnership

Hunter Water has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Newcastle (UON) to launch a research partnership that will shape the region's future.

With an extra 240,000 people expected to make the Hunter home over the next 20 years, the partners will work to understand how tomorrow's communities will want to live, and how social and technological innovation will contribute to a more integrated and sustainable future.

Hunter Water Managing Director Jim Bentley said the Hunter is at a crucial point of growth and development, and building

partnerships to learn how innovation can support future communities was essential to Hunter Water's planning.

"This year Hunter Water turns 125, and as we celebrate our past we need to look to the future, so as the decisions we make today enable a better tomorrow.

"The Hunter is at one of the most crucial points in its history, with the NSW Government projecting our population to swell to 862,000 by 2036, supported by an additional 61,500 new jobs and a diversified local economy.

"A growing population and advances in technology will change how communities of tomorrow will want to live. In the coming years Hunter Water needs to make significant decisions that will impact the way we deliver services, and it's critical that this decision making considers the community of today, as well as the community of the future.

"The University of Newcastle partnership is broad reaching and will take advantage of local research not only in engineering, but also in fields like social science, the environment, and information technology. This research can then feed improvements in how we operate and support the future development of our communities.

"Hunter Water will also be sharing with the University our own knowledge and resources, plus the expertise of international experts working with our organisation in the fields of resilience, economics and learning.

"From Grahamstown Dam which has staved off a new water supply for more than 50 years, to Burwood Wastewater Treatment Works which keeps our beaches the cleanest in the State, Hunter Water has a 125 year track record of making good decisions that enable a thriving region. This partnership will help us maintain that record with a sustainable, secure and liveable future."

UON's Vice-Chancellor Professor Caroline McMillen said the partnership highlighted how the University can work collaboratively with local business and industry in research, innovation and education to build the capacity and sustainability of the region.

"Hunter Water has been a great supporter of our University for many years, particularly in providing work experience opportunities for our students. We are delighted that today's announcement builds on this long relationship, and establishes the University as its primary research partner.

"Our University is committed to working with partners to develop solutions and ideas that will secure a better future for our region. This exciting research collaboration provides a significant opportunity to draw on our talented researchers' knowledge and skills, and work with Hunter Water to safeguard a vital resource for our community."

HBR

Hunter Business Review

"Raine & Horne Commercial Newcastle has nothing but praise for the HBR Magazine. Newcastle and Hunter regions are significant contributors to the National and State economies and as such have a vibrant and diverse business community which is showcased through the publication of the HBR. The HBR magazine is a well styled magazine that is on point, easily mixing it with other coffee table publications in the receptions of Newcastle and Hunter business houses."



Steven Dick
Director
Raine & Horne Commercial
Newcastle

<http://www.rhnewcastle.com.au/>

Contact **HBR** today to find out how to participate in the next issue



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Let's Talk With.....

1. In a few words tell us about your current role.

I am "living the dream" actively involved in being a part of the revitalisation of Newcastle as a centre for innovation and start-up businesses. As Chair of Eighteen04 Incorporated I am excited to work with start-up businesses every day. Our first challenge is to make a permanent home for ourselves and we have been very fortunate to find a historic building on the TAFE Campus at Hamilton which we will renovate with the assistance of a grant from Jobs for NSW. We have a queue of innovative companies ready to join us and we are looking forward to creating great things in CleanTech and SmartCity business. In my other work, I co-founded a consultancy "Gender Matters" and we consult throughout Australia to many organisations including universities and large engineering organisations. Our work is focussed on my lifelong passion to support gender equity in business, particularly in engineering and other science and technology dominated workplaces. Technology is a strong driver of the age that we live in and the changes in our society and workplaces – my vision is to see an equal contribution by all genders in the future world that we make. My calling has been to work in strategic governance and have contributed at board level in several volunteer boards including Engineers Australia, and Engineers Media and I continue at Australian Science Innovation (ASI). With ASI I have had the privilege and honour to support selection and training of Australia's science Olympians and meet with Nobel laureates and scientists from around the world.

2. How have you reached this point in your professional life?

In many ways, my professional life has come full-circle as when I studied Electrical Engineering at UNSW my focus was on renewable energy (wind power) and then my first job was at BP Solar which was one of the first manufacturers of solar panels. Now we see enormous changes in the way that we will generate, distribute and use energy and many of these are driven by solar energy which has reached a tipping point in Australia with solar installations quadrupling between 2011 and 2016. I have always had an interest in start-ups, innovation and Angel investing and now all the lessons I have learned can contribute to the start-up ecosystem in Newcastle in a very exciting and challenging time for our energy future. As an engineer I embrace and create change, and this has not only impacted my professional 'technical' career but also as a female engineer, and my parallel career in gender equity. I want to see more women take up the opportunities that engineering and science careers offer and thus have worked with primary schools to corporate boardrooms to effect change. This is a very complex problem and we all need to understand and take responsibility if we want to see equal rights and opportunities for all. Gender Matter's focus is to facilitate and support women and men to change the systems that are holding women and some men back.

3. When you're not at work, where can we find you?

My life-long passion has been food and cooking ever since I learnt to cook for my family in my teenage years. I miss having a young family at home to cook for and am always keen to have friends and family over for big dinners. I continue to practice my mother's Swedish recipes and enjoy foods from all over the world. On the weekend, you will normally find me rowing, cycling or at the cinema and on holidays skiing or swimming. This year I will complete a third "Swimtrek", swimming with a group between and around the islands in the Adriatic Sea off the coast of Croatia.

4. Where do you find inspiration?

I find inspiration all around me. Everyone I meet inspires me in some way, as we are all unique. I have found much of my inspiration and motivation from my family. Firstly from my parents who were brave enough to allow me to make decisions for myself from an early age and being such interesting and generous people and to my husband and children who challenge me to be the best I can be and amaze me every day with their thinking and achievements. I have also had many mentors and teachers in my life that have given of their time and experience and I am very appreciative of everything that they have taught me.

5. What advice would you give to someone just starting out in your field?

Find the reason why. It is the hardest question to answer but when you have the answer you have a powerful motivator for



Gunilla Burrowes

getting through the tough times that come with any profession, job or calling. I think it is essential to have a love of learning and to have a growth mindset that helps develop resilience. An important instrument in this is to learn to reframe negative situations so that they become positive opportunities for development. The advice that I wished I had been given as a young professional would be to ask for what you want. Don't assume the motivations of others or their lack of action relating to your career.

6. What's something most people don't know about you?

My early primary school was in Fiji where I spent five years living in Suva when my family who moved there for work. We had an idyllic lifestyle on "Nagumo Point", surrounded by water on three sides with swimming, coral reefs and fishing for entertainment in the days before TV arrived in Fiji. In my gap year, I travelled and stayed in Sweden, the home of my mother. While I was there I learnt Swedish in a school for immigrants and met many people who were traumatised by the war in the Middle East at that time. It affected me deeply and I realised in a very real way how lucky we are in Australia for our freedoms from oppression, aggression and our opportunities to live in peace.

7. How would you like to see the Hunter evolve over the next decade?

The Hunter will be a major centre for CleanTech and Smart Cities for SE Asia and I am very excited about our future and Eighteen04's role in it. We have the luxury of only a few hours travel from the global centre of Sydney and the advantage of a "Goldilocks" city that is small enough to get to know each other quite well personally and care about each other, but big enough to have a marketplace for products and services. The Hunter of the future will be a place of high-tech, innovative companies with satisfying jobs worked by people with an enviable lifestyle. We will be creators, manufacturers and makers. My family and I came to the Hunter in 1994 and we liked the city so much we started our company, The BlueZone Group, to stay here – now I would like to see the same opportunity for many other people.

8. What's your favourite Hunter restaurant/café/bar?

That's a hard one, because we are so lucky to have so many good ones. From my Swedish background, I love smorgasbords and I love to trust the chef, so degustation's are a favourite at Subo or sharing at Talulah. But I also love simple healthy rustic meals that are cooked from the heart.

9. Do you have a favourite sport or team?

St Petersham Rugby Union Football Club – my son's team! And the Wallabies.

10. What's the best line from a film you've ever heard?

"Did your mother not like you?" Kelly McGillis (Charlie) to Tom Cruise (Maverick) Top Gun 1986



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Scott Douglas
Sidcor Chartered Accountants

Have you ever heard the saying if “you’re not growing you’re dying?”

I heard Tony Robbins say this whilst attending his Unleash the Power Within event a number of years ago. However, what did he mean by growing? I have a sense that a lot of people equate growing to having more success, and invariably define that success through the amount of money they earn, or the things they acquire along the way.

For me though, growth is not a judgement on my business success, a nicer car, bigger house or how many zeroes appear in my bank balance. Growth for me is about moving along on my journey to be the person that I want to be. It’s about applying today the lessons that I’ve learnt in the past, to move me towards that person I want to be in the future.

We only ever live in the present, yet many of us spend too much time either judging a past we can’t change or being anxious about our future that has not yet occurred. Have you ever done something you would now consider to be pretty dumb? Of course you have, and the thing about that dumb decision is that it probably seemed like a spectacular idea at the time. That is why you did it!

So why beat yourself up now with the hindsight you have? Own the space that you are always doing the best you can with the awareness that you have at the time. The key to your growth though is to not only have those experiences, but

to learn from them. Our beliefs are shaped by our past, yet we have a choice to get stuck in them and repeat the same behaviour, or learn from them and continue to grow.

Embrace the past as a learning opportunity. It will lead to you growing in ways far beyond anything money can buy.

For further information contact SiDCOR on 1300 743 267, email scott@sidcor.com.au or www.sidcor.com.au



Scott Douglas, the CEO at SiDCOR Chartered Accountants, has over 20 years’ experience in accounting and taxation, having begun his career with international accounting firm KPMG. With extensive experience in a variety of industries and with all types of businesses from local entrepreneurs to national organisations, Scott is perfectly suited to provide solutions needed to minimise tax and maximise wealth. Scott has a Bachelor of Commerce from Newcastle University and is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.



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My 'real' team

Lyndell Fogarty
performHR

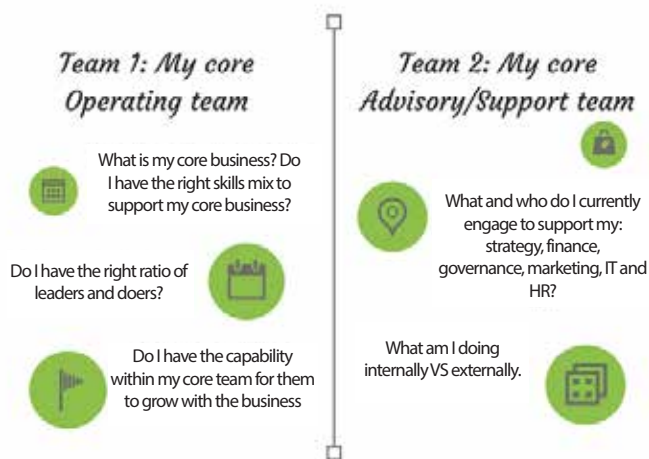
Many of you will have read Jim Collins' book 'Good to Great'. You will recall the "bus analogy" in which Jim argues that before you talk about where you are going you need to consider who you are taking with you. Do you have the right people on the bus? Are they in the right seats? And should a few actually depart the bus before the journey begins?

As an HR Professional, I know how important this is, and would even argue that without getting your bus sorted first, it is unlikely that you are going to be able to achieve your vision for your business let alone its true potential. And it is important to keep in mind that this is not only the right employees, it is also the right partners.

However as a business owner, I know how difficult this can actually be. When things are going well, it is easy to ignore the tiny rattle, or the crumbs starting to appear on the seats – it's not always an easy thing to accept that some people (and partners) are no longer a good fit (or perhaps, never really were).

My recommendation for you is to look at your organisation as the two key teams of resources you need. You need two teams, only two teams, both with your strategy at the forefront of their minds but each with different expectations. Team 1 are those that are on your payroll, team 2 are those that are not.

Take a piece of paper and draw the following – rate how well your teams are currently going against an axis of current performance versus potential. What do you notice?



At each stage of the business life cycle, you need a different mix in both teams. Working with a trusted partner to help you determine the right mix is key to your ongoing success. To take a 'gloves off' look at what you currently have internally and how well your key advisors are supporting your business is just smart business practice – we do it every year, minimum, and every year there are some changes. What I needed (and could afford) when we got started in my co-founders dining room to fast-forward, 8 years, over 30 employees and 100's of clients are vastly different – some of my key partners have remained because they could evolve and expand with me, however, some have not.

Like Albert Einstein once said "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over but expecting a different result". If you like the result, potentially change nothing, if you don't like the result, evaluate why you are getting it.

"The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over but expecting a different result". If you like the result, potentially change nothing, if you don't like the result, evaluate why you are getting it."

Albert Einstein

For further information contact performHR on 1300 406 005, email lyndell@performhr.com.au or visit www.performhr.com.au



Lyndell Fogarty is the founder and CEO of performHR. With over 20 years in both internal HR and consultancy roles, Lyndell has a wealth of knowledge and experience for her team and clients to draw on.

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Are you eligible for the reduced corporate tax rate?

Have you assessed when you may be eligible for the new corporate tax rate and the consequences of transitioning to such a change?

On 19 May 2017, legislation received Royal Assent to enact corporate tax rate reductions. This measure is consistent with the 2016-17 federal budget.

What are the corporate tax rate changes?

The new legislation reduces the corporate tax rate for companies that are carrying on a business with aggregated turnover below the relevant threshold for the applicable income year (worked out at the end of the income year). The turnover thresholds and the applicable income year are outlined in the following table.

Income year	Annual aggregated turnover threshold	Company tax rate (%)
2016-17	\$10 million	27.5
2017-18	\$25 million	27.5
2018-19	\$50 million	27.5
2024-25	\$50 million	27
2025-26	\$50 million	26
2026-27 and later income years	\$50 million	25

What is aggregated turnover?

Generally speaking, the aggregated turnover only includes total ordinary income that the company derives in the income year in the ordinary course of carrying on a business. Therefore, passive income (unrelated to a business) can generally be excluded. The measure also groups turnover received by affiliates and connected entities, but excludes certain intra-group transactions.

Impact on franking (loss of 2.5%)?

A company will frank its dividends based on the prior year aggregated turnover, rather than the current year aggregated turnover. This can result in companies having a different tax rate as compared to their franking rate (and may result in franking errors – see below). This may impact companies that transition to a new (lower) tax rate and have retained earnings that have already been taxed at a higher rate.

The following table provides an example of the potential impact of the reduction in the corporate tax rate on franked distributions.

Retained earnings before change	Franking account balance before change	100% franked distribution at the lower rate (27.5%)	Loss of potential franking credits (additional tax payable)
700,000	300,000	265,517	34,483
2,000,000	857,143	758,621	98,522
25,000,000	10,714,286	9,482,759	1,231,527

Can a company accidentally over-frank or under-frank?

Yes. This will especially be the case for the 30 June 2017 income year, where legislation has only recently been passed.

It may be mistakenly thought that a company is able to frank a dividend at the 30% tax rate in circumstances where the maximum franking credit is actually only 27.5%. This is because the current year tax rate is calculated on the current year turnover, while the franking percentage is calculated on the prior year threshold. This may result in over-franking or under-franking by 2.5%.

Can a corporate beneficiary apply the lower tax rate?

This depends. The change in tax rate will only apply to entities that carry on a business with aggregated turnover below the relevant threshold. If a corporate beneficiary does not carry on an active business, it will continue to be taxed at 30%.

What is the impact if you are operating through a trust?

If you operate through a trust (and distribute to a corporate beneficiary) future profits derived by the trust will likely be taxed at the 30% tax rate. However, whether the corporate tax rate changes provide a material difference will depend on the circumstances. The benefits associated with the corporate tax rate cut would prima facie amount to 2.5% of future taxable income retained by the company.

However, to the extent that the company pays a dividend, this difference can effectively be reversed through a lower franking percentage (and lower franking credits), resulting in a higher amount of tax being paid at the individual shareholder level. By way of example, if only \$200,000 of before tax profits is retained in the company, then this would amount to a tax saving of only \$5,000 at the lower corporate tax rate of 27.5%. This benefit would only be temporary until a dividend is paid by the company to an individual.

Should a trust restructure to a corporate vehicle?

If the corporate tax rate changes provide a material benefit, restructuring a group to access the lower corporate tax rate may be an option. However, any restructure should accommodate the broader strategies of the group. This requires consideration of a number of issues, such as (but not limited to): the tax implications on restructuring (including income tax, stamp duty, and GST); asset protection; the ongoing operations of the business; the ability to access tax losses within the group; and the impact of moving to a corporate structure on the disposal of business assets (including goodwill).

What options are available to restructure?

There are a number of ways to implement a restructure from a trust to a company. An effective restructure for many groups may be as simple as incorporating a services entity within a group of trusts or moving the business to a company through tax concessions and rollovers available. It is important to consider all of the possible options to determine the best structure for your group.

Do you need to restructure by 30 June 2017?

It may not be necessary to restructure by 30 June 2017, especially if the reduction in tax rate does not have a significant impact on the total amount of tax expected to be paid. However, it is important to properly consider the many issues associated with a restructure to ensure that adverse tax consequences are not inadvertently triggered by a rush to restructure by 30 June.

Are there other things you should consider before 30 June?

You may need to consider whether you establish a new corporate beneficiary before 30 June 2017 (for example, if profits are to be quarantined outside of the operating group).

What about groups with aggregated turnover in excess of \$50 million?

There is currently a bill before the House of Representatives which reduces the corporate tax rate for entities with aggregated turnover in excess of \$50 million. There is some doubt as to whether this proposed change will pass. As this is not yet law, there is no immediate action required by groups with turnover greater than \$50 million. However please be aware of the future application of the tax rate cut, particularly for entities with significant after-tax retained earnings.

For further information please contact Pitcher Partners on (02) 4911 2000, email newcastle@pitcherpartners.com.au or visit www.pitcherpartners.com.au



ALLIANCE LABOUR SOLUTIONS

Ebony Sayers, who has spent the past 7 years working in the travel industry, has joined the Alliance team and is charged with coordinating the planning and mobilisation of their NSW employees. Ebony is very passionate about helping local people achieve their employment goals.



PROPERTY COUNCIL OF AUST.

CKDS Architecture's Senior Associate **Murray Wood** has been selected to Hunter Chapter Committee which represents a wide spread of expertise in both public and private sectors within the region's industry. With a career spanning 30 years, Murray believes it is important for architects to be represented on the committee to inspire and drive fresh ideas and help create change for the better.



NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL

Jeremy Bath has accepted the role of interim Chief Executive Officer at Newcastle City Council and commenced on 15 May. Many Newcastle and Hunter residents will be familiar with Mr Bath through his previous role as Hunter Water Interim Chief Executive Officer. Prior to that 12-month role, he was a member of Hunter Water's executive management team for several years.



CSIRO

Dr Peter Mayfield has been appointed Executive Director for Environment, Energy and Resources (EER) at CSIRO. The EER Group spans atmosphere and climate, biodiversity, land and water, solar and alternative energy, coal and gas production research. Based in Newcastle, Dr Mayfield has overseen CSIRO research including more greenhouse effective ways to use fossil fuels, the development and integration of renewable technologies such as solar and wind as well more efficient ways to generate, distribute and use energy.



SHAW GIDLEY

Luka Pilipovic has joined the Shaw Gidley Newcastle team. Luka joins Shaw Gidley as a Supervisor Insolvency Accountant. With 6+ years insolvency experience in Sydney firms including Hall Chadwick, Luka has varied exposure to both corporate and personal insolvency appointments. Luka holds a Master of Laws, Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) and admitted to practice as a solicitor in NSW. Luka is also finalising studies towards his CPA.



STARR PARTNERS

Brendan Sarroff has joined Starr Partners Maitland as Commercial Sales & Leasing Executive. Brendan has extensive experience in the commercial and industrial property markets, most recently at Mainstreet Commercial in the Sydney metro and Inner West areas, where he held the role of Sales Manager across the commercial and residential divisions. Prior to that Brendan held various commercial roles with PRD Nationwide and Universal Strata Management.



NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK

After 12 months championing the National Australia Bank's regional Commercial Broker division followed by two years leading the Business Banking team in the Hunter Valley from Beresfield to Scone, Senior Banker **Craig Barnes** has returned to Newcastle Business Banking. Craig has been a NAB representative in the Lake Macquarie, Newcastle and Hunter region for 20 years. He will focus on major clients and property development whilst being an active member of the Hunter Business Community.



PROPERTY COUNCIL OF AUST.

CKDS Associate, and founder of the Emerging Architects and Graduates Network (EMAGN) in Newcastle, **Cherry Parsons** has joined the Hunter Future Directions Committee. The committee supports aspiring future leaders in the property industry and aims to guide networking and professional development for young professionals.



ALLIANCE LABOUR SOLUTIONS

A Hunter Valley local with a strong sales background, **Kaitlin Petersen** joined the Alliance team to initially coordinate the planning and mobilisation of their NSW employees, but has quickly progressed to take on Alliance's largest employee base in Western Australia. Kaitlin has also been instrumental in facilitating their candidate care program which has been a great success.

HBR

Hunter Business Review

How to lease a building

Steve Dick

Raine & Horne Commercial Newcastle

It's come to that point in your business, you have out grown your premises and whether the business is yours or the boss taps you on the shoulder. The job ends up in your lap to find and negotiate a lease on a new premises. What do you do next? After 29 years of leasing property I'm still amazed at how little is known or understood.

First and foremost communicate with your staff, take on board their needs and desires – they are about to come on this journey too. Don't forget these guys and gals hold your IP so be inclusive.

After finding your property, at Raine and Horne Commercial the process is this;

1. We'll talk you through the zoning (Local Councils requirements) may be even refer you to a Town Planner if your businesses usage is ambiguous (doesn't quite fit the zoning). Sometimes you should avoid the Council unless you've engaged a planner as semantics can trip you up. What's the difference between a business undertaking rehabilitation of injured people and a business offering strength and conditioning gym sessions for injured people? Nothing they are the same but one was rejected and the other approved in a light industrial zone.
2. We'll talk to you about the owner's expectations on rent, and lease length.
3. If (Points 1 and 2) are satisfactory we'll ask you to complete a tenancy application form where you'll be asked:
 - a. To provide business references
 - b. Full details of the company or person whose name will be on the lease
 - c. Details of your solicitor
 - d. Your intended use
4. Based on this we will prepare a Heads of Agreement (sometimes called a Letter of Offer). This will form the instructions to the owners solicitor on how to prepare the lease and will include;
 - a. The owners details (known as the lessor or landlord) and their solicitor
 - b. Your details (you'll be known as the lessee or tenant) and your solicitor
 - c. The address and title of the property
 - d. The area in square metres being leased
 - e. The rent which has been agreed to
 - f. The outgoings to be paid by the tenant such as:
 - i. Council and water rates
 - ii. Building insurance
 - iii. Land Tax
 - iv. Management
 - v. Maintenance
 - vi. Body Corporate fees and charges
 - g. Rental Increases – how will the rent increase each year such as:
 - i. Consumer Price Index (CPI)
 - ii. Fixed percentage increases
 - iii. Market increases
 - h. Lease Term – How long are you intending to stay
 - i. Commencement date of the lease
 - j. Option Period – After the first term of the lease is completed do you want to ask for an extension of the lease?
 - k. Hours of Trade
 - l. Car parking if any
 - m. Special Conditions e.g. Approval to do fit out works or if the owner is going to do something for you then that is spelled out here
 - n. Rent free period or rental abatement if any



- o. Details of your Public Liability Insurance
- p. Details of the Guarantees such as;
 - i. Directors
 - ii. Security Bond
 - iii. Bank Guarantee
- q. Lease Deposit – This is an amount usually equivalent to two months' rent, outgoings and GST paid as a show of good will to the landlord.
 - i. A lease will not be prepared until this has been paid
 - ii. It is usual that if pull out you will be at risk of losing this deposit
 - iii. However once you sign the lease it then goes to your rental account
- r. Lease preparation cost – whose paying for the lease to be prepared – usually the tenant
5. Once the Heads of Agreement is signed off by both the lessor and the lessee and the lease deposit paid the lessors solicitor is instructed to prepare a lease in the terms agreed. After the lease is prepared and it takes varying times to do so depending on the urgency the two solicitors usually to and fro making sure each of their clients' interests are being served.

The process is a little more complicated than just finding a building and deciding it's time to move. The move as I found out last month is a whole new ball game of costs. Just remember put someone in charge and be inclusive with your senior staff.

For further information contact Steve Dick on 0425 302 771, email steve@rhplus.com.au or visit www.rhplus.com.au



Steven Dick has had a varied background with experiences in geotechnical engineering to hospitality and catering. He also represented at NBL Level Basketball. His expertise, experience and analytical skills have seen him involved with a number of companies at board level. He has also attained the highest level of recognition in the LJ Hooker and Raine & Horne Commercial Organisations.

RECENT SALES



164 Hunter Street, Newcastle **\$3.275 million**
The property comprises a freestanding, three storey freehold building featuring high ceilings on each level and abundant natural light throughout.
BUYER: N/A
SOLD BY: Colliers International - Newcastle



1A Beresford Ave, Beresfield **N/A**
The property boasts a double brick construction, great front street frontage and a well appointed interior.
BUYER: Local businessman
SOLD BY: Michael Maffey - Starr Partners Maitland



172 King Street, Newcastle **\$1 million**
The property comprises a charming, three level inner city terrace building occupied by Popolo Artisan Gelateria.
BUYER: N/A
SOLD BY: Colliers International - Newcastle



12 Power Street, Islington **\$702,000 + GST**
Former industrial office building is a unique offering that is the perfect canvas for residential conversion.
BUYER: N/A
SOLD BY: Raine & Horne Commercial Newcastle



55 Thomas Street, Edgeworth **\$2,900,000**
Price reflects DA approval and benefit accruing from Lake Macquarie Transport Interchange
BUYER: N/A
SOLD BY: McNamara Adams



9 Enterprise Drive, Tomago
Sold by Public Auction: \$1,120,000
Fabrication warehouse with tenant
BUYER: Sydney investor
SOLD BY: Steven Dick - Raine & Horne Commercial Newcastle



Lot 1, 259 King Street, Newcastle **\$890,000 + GST**
Positioned within the university & law court precinct, property's existing fitout comprises a commercial grade kitchen with large open plan work area and perimeter offices.
BUYER: N/A
SOLD BY: Colliers International - Newcastle



Suite 2/400 Hunter Street, Newcastle
Leased for \$55,219.82pa + OGs + GST
Ground floor office suite opposite new law court
BUYER: Local solicitor
SOLD BY: Steven Dick - Raine & Horne Commercial Newcastle



77 Maitland Road, Branxton **N/A**
This property consists of a showroom, office area, warehouse and a workshop area with a total land size of 1987m²
BUYER: Local investor / developer
SOLD BY: Michael Maffey - Starr Partners Maitland



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Hydro Aluminium Kurri Kurri announces demolition contractor

Hydro has appointed CMA Contracting to demolish the smelter infrastructure, a 2-3 year project that is a significant step towards future redevelopment of the site.

Following the closure of its Kurri Kurri smelter, Hydro Aluminium is continuing to prepare the Kurri Kurri smelter site and buffer zone for redevelopment that will ultimately provide increased economic activity and employment in the local area. A key part of this work is in the demolition and remediation of the smelter site to allow for future business and industrial development.

Hydro Kurri Kurri Managing Director, Richard Brown, is pleased with the announcement.

"The tendering process for this part of the project has taken around 18 months, with key criteria being [safety standards, experience with similar large projects, and environmental management, as well as commercial considerations. We have taken some time to review proposals from a number of organisations, as we believe that safety and environmental management are key to this work". He said.

"CMA will mobilise with a specialist demolition working crew which includes locally based personnel. There is opportunity for this local involvement to grow throughout the course of the Project, with the use of additional labour and / or subcontractors for specific work elements both on and off site."

The first stage of demolition, includes most of the buildings on site, apart from those still being used, but does not include the tall chimney stacks and water towers.

Hydro is applying to have the Stage 2 demolition approved under a separate Development Application with Cessnock City Council. This includes other major infrastructure onsite such as the stacks and underground infrastructure, and would reduce downtime between demolition stages, and also speed up this part of the project. If this is approved, CMA expects to be planning the removal of the stacks in around 18 months' time in Q4 2018.

While a significant part of the ReGrowth Kurri Kurri project, the demolition of the smelter site is just one of several activities being undertaken.

Other activities include:

- The early clean up and remediation around the smelter buffer zone is well underway.
- Rezoning applications have received endorsement from both Cessnock and Maitland councils. Gateway Determination requires several issues to be resolved before the rezoning can be approved, such as the completion of biodiversity certification and a flood study being conducted by Maitland City Council. The councils will then exhibit the rezoning plans and seek feedback from the community. This includes rezoning for business and industrial development on and around the smelter site, and rezoning for residential development along Cessnock road near Clifftleigh and Gillieston Heights.
- Biodiversity certification for around 85%

of the buffer zone is underway. This will see around 1250 hectares of land conserved, and a significant portion will be an offset area for clearing in the rezoned residential and business zoned land.

- Hydro has committed to the reuse or recycling of all materials from the site where feasible. Aluminium, steel, oil and various other materials are being recycled as part of the current demolition process, and recycling options are being assessed for the spent pot lining material that is presently stored on site. Hydro is working towards a three-to-four-year timeline to have the spent pot lining recycled.

Developers and investors called for multi-million dollar housing project

Leading Hunter-based community housing provider Compass Housing is seeking developers, investors and builders to help it to deliver 600 new homes for social and affordable tenants across the Hunter and Central Coast over the next three years.

Compass Group Chief Corporate Services Officer Lyndall Robertshaw said the project will create approximately \$200 million worth of construction activity and support hundreds of local jobs. The HIA estimates that the economic multiplier for housing construction is around five to one which puts the full economic impact of the project in the Hunter and Central Coast regions at around \$1 billion.

Ms Robertshaw said Compass wants to work with local businesses and investors to maximise the benefits of this exciting and highly beneficial project for the region's business sector, economy and Hunter people. She said Compass has already had significant interest in the project.

Compass was awarded a NSW Government Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) contract this year. Compass will manage the delivery of its 600 dwellings and provide ongoing property management and tenant support services for up to 25 years. The majority of homes will be one and two bedroom units with a small number of three bedroom units earmarked for development.

"Involvement in the project is an attractive investment because Compass will lease the properties for a period of 23-25 years and handle all tenancy and property management," Ms Robertshaw said.

"Payment of rent for 52 weeks a year with no vacancies, with an annual CPI based adjustment, is guaranteed," she said.

"Compass is a well-managed, financially strong award winning housing provider and we are keen to hear from developers, investors and builders."

SAHF is the first initiative of its kind for the social housing sector and is a key component of the Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW strategy to provide more social and affordable housing dwellings linked to tailored support, to help households gain independence. She said the projects will help address shortfalls of housing which are driving affordability issues for the disadvantaged as well as key workers and low income working families.



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P: 4933 6299 W: starrpartners.com.au

Local 'legends' needed to support learning pathways

The region's leading provider of community based adult learning WEA Hunter is offering a unique business and community partnership program for those who might not currently have the means to study or learn.

WEA Hunter Foundation's WEA 200: Legends of Learning offers a \$200 education scholarship to people with a desire to learn new skills, grow confidence, gain qualifications and reconnect with education.

Foundation Manager Wendy Ratcliffe says the initiative is a life changer for those who have difficulties accessing education.

"With support from businesses or individuals who believe in the value on ongoing learning for all, we can really help someone who may need upskilling, for example in computer or business skills, to transition back to work," Ms Ratcliffe said.

"Legends of Learning is not only about providing supported access but also engaging people to inspire and achieve more."

All contributions are tax-deductible and interested businesses or individuals can find out more by calling 4925 4200 or visit www.weahunter.edu.au

WEA Hunter Foundation was launched in 2014 to provide ongoing support for innovative educational programs that are making a real difference to people's lives. Other Foundation supported programs include the successful Alesco Senior College program for young people aspiring to complete high school studies, and 'The Village' initiative that provides special educational support for teenage mums.

WEA Hunter (Workers Educational Association Hunter) is the fifth largest provider of community based adult learning in NSW. It is also one of the sector's most diverse education providers offering government contract training, vocational education training and youth education. Best known for its lifestyle programs, WEA Hunter is also a registered RTO delivering specialist skills and VET courses.

Hunter's first water education centre opened

Minister for Energy and Utilities Don Harwin officially opened the \$1 million Hunter Water Centre for Education and announced it is free for local school tours. Minister Harwin said the region's first purpose-built water education centre will help prepare the Hunter and its next generation for a more sustainable future.

"The \$1 million Hunter Water Centre for Education is an investment in the Hunter's water security. This will provide local kids with a greater appreciation for water and I believe the knowledge they gain will make for more efficient use," Mr Harwin said.

"The facility is the first of its kind in the region and allows students to learn in a hands-on environment with experiments, interactive games and working models. The tour program is tailored to the curriculum, which means teachers have access to a ready-made and high-quality learning resource at no cost.

"Water is our most precious resource and through the unique locally focused learning experience provided by Hunter Water experts, students will learn about where their water comes from and why it's so vital to conserve it," he said.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter and Central Coast Scot MacDonald said the centre will be a valuable asset for thousands of students expected to visit every year.

"With the Hunter's population expected to reach 862,000 by 2036, educating our young ones about smarter water use will help reduce pressure on our local water supply and make for a more secure and sustainable future," Mr MacDonald said.

"The Centre for Education will give students important lessons on the sewage system, an essential but not often talked about area where better education can prevent problems like the 'fatberg' blockages plaguing pipes across Australia."



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Leaders of tomorrow recognised at annual TAFE NSW awards

The achievements of TAFE NSW's brightest students and the contribution of its alumni have been recognised at the 2017 TAFE NSW Hunter and Central Coast Student Excellence Awards.

35 students and three Alumni have been recognised as part of the annual Awards at Noah's on the Beach on Friday 5 May in front of a crowd of more than 180 students, employers, business and community leaders.

The Awards, which are supported by 20 industry and business partners, included the announcement of Building and Construction graduate, Matthew Hurley as winner of the 2017 Student of the Year and Medal of Excellence for TAFE NSW Hunter and Central Coast.

"Our award winners are the future industry leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs and small business owners of tomorrow. The awards represent the diversity and breadth of skills learning, educational pathways and career opportunities that are possible through TAFE NSW,"

TAFE NSW Regional General Manager North, Elizabeth McGregor

Matthew Hurley is a builder with Chris Wade Constructions on the Central Coast and has completed both his trade level Certificate III in Carpentry and Certificate IV in Building and Construction qualifications at TAFE NSW, Ourimbah.



Matthew's refined skill and passion for the building industry, in particular bespoke architectural projects, has seen him compete in WorldSkills Australia competitions at both regional and national level. Dubbed as the 'Trade Olympics', Matthew won Silver at the WorldSkills Australia National Competition in Melbourne last October and was then selected to receive a prestigious BBM Skilled Futures Scholarship. The Scholarship provides an invaluable opportunity for career development that will see him travel to the UK later this month to undertake a two-week leadership program and work experience with a leading architectural building company.

Singleton Diggers was recognised with the 2017 Industry Partnership Award for its 20 years of collaboration with TAFE NSW to deliver customised industry training for its staff. The training program provides the opportunity for all staff to gain Certificate IV in Hospitality qualifications delivered through an on-the-job traineeship and has resulted in a 90% employee retention rate.



Leadership Velocity Program

Invest your training dollars before the end of the financial year

The Leadership Velocity Program provides new ways to lead and respond to businesses' evolving needs.

The program strengthens the individual's leadership skills that help develop team support and stability as well as stronger outcomes for the business and its community.

It's a one-day workshop supported by two months of follow-up coaching sessions to help transfer the knowledge into everyday behaviour.

For more information contact Geraldine Moran on info@centreforhope.com or **0438 466 029**.

Winners of the 2017 Alumni Awards were:

- **Contribution to Business Award -**
Troy Rhoades-Brown, Head Chef and Owner of Muse Restaurant and Muse Kitchen;
- **Contribution to Community Award -**
Luciane Sperling, author of 'Touched by Love, Turning Crisis into a Blessing' and Founder of My Inner Light;
- **Emerging Talent Award -**
Thomas Goodwin, Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) student at The University of Newcastle.

TAFE NSW Regional General Manager North, Elizabeth McGregor, said that the 2017 Awards highlighted the value of industry relevant vocational education and training in skilling the workforce of tomorrow.

"Our award winners are the future industry leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs and small business owners of tomorrow. The awards represent the diversity and breadth of skills learning, educational pathways and career opportunities that are possible through TAFE NSW," Ms McGregor said.

"Importantly these awards also recognise the skills our graduates have developed through practical, hands-on and industry relevant training. This training prepares students for the jobs that will support the growth of existing and new industries across the Hunter and Central Coast regions."



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We focus heavily on offering high quality training courses to help produce Safe and Skilled Work Place Role Models. We achieve this by training on realistic, to-scale equipment replicating real life working environments.

Unlike other training providers, who will just train you to pass the final assessment – we train beyond the Unit of Competency, so that every person can enter their worksites equipped with the confidence and competence to perform their jobs safely.

Training Wheels have won the 2017 & 2016 Hunter Safety Award for Best WHS Training Course.



Training Wheels are Innovators of High Risk Work Licensing – not imitators.





Hunter high achievers take out local awards

Three Hunter apprentices achieved top honours at the 2017 HVTC Excellence Awards held at Noah's on the Beach in Newcastle.

Singleton local, Samuel Russell, was awarded Registered Training Organisation (RTO) Student of the Year for the consistently high quality of his practical work and admirable attitude to theory.

The 28 year old electrical apprentice is employed by Glencore, Ravensworth and participated in their Cross Skilling Work Readiness Program at the HVTC Skills Centre in Rutherford.

During the Engineering - Mechanical Trade training he displayed an exemplary attitude to work, safety and attendance, and his leadership qualities saw him take on a mentoring role with others in his group.

Sam's inquisitive, methodical approach to work also led to him representing Glencore's NSW mines in Queensland at the Glencore Apprentice Skills Challenge where he was a standout performer.

"I think my previous employment set me up for success in my new career path. I've been able to adapt some of the lessons learnt from other situations to assist with my approach to tasks and learning opportunities. This helps me to make the most of the trade experiences provided by Glencore and HVTC.

"Making a life change such as becoming a mature age apprentice can be a challenge but I have been able to achieve some good grades and outcomes, in no small part due to the support of my wife and young family at home. Their continued encouragement will help me make a successful career in a field I am enjoying very much," he said.

Another Singleton resident, Emma Gibson, won the Woman in Non-traditional Trade Apprentice of the Year category.

In the fourth year of her Certificate III Engineering – Mechanical Trade, Emma has excelled in the area of machining and loves the challenge of the fine detailed work it provides. She also shone in the theory and practical components of fitting whilst completing her studies at the HVTC Skills Centre.

Hosted by Select Plant Hire in Telarah, Emma has been an ambassador for women in trades winning the 2016 Hunter Manufacturing Awards' Apprentice of the Year, and a Tradesperson Scholarship at the 2015 National Association of Women in Construction Awards.

The prestigious Apprentice of the Year Award was won by 25 year old Ben McDonald from Cessnock.

Now in the final year of his Certificate III Electrotechnology - Electrician training, Ben has performed above expectations throughout his apprenticeship. Also a student at the HVTC Skills Centre, Ben believes that his RTO and host employer's shared emphasis on quality and safety prepared him well.

No stranger to recognition, Ben has previously been awarded a Hunter TAFE Encouragement Award, Cessnock City Council

Mayoral Scholarship, and was invited to attend the national Today's Skills: Tomorrow's Leaders Program in Canberra.

Winners in the ten Excellence Award categories were selected from finalists across HVTC's ten regional branches located throughout New South Wales.

The RTO Student of the Year Award was sponsored by Days Machinery Centre, the Woman in Non-traditional Trade Apprentice of the Year Award was sponsored by Viatek, and the Apprentice of the Year Award was sponsored by Howden Australia.

Aged care training in China

Newcastle training organisation Novaskill (HGT Australia) has responded to the Chinese Government's aspiration to provide a workforce of 10 million aged carers by 2020 through its innovative partnership in Shanghai.

The Shanghai Pharmaceutical School is recognised as a "model" Vocational School and through its partnership with Novaskill is leading the way by implementing "Aged Care Management" as a subject major for its students.

In May, the school's leadership (through the Shanghai Ministry of Education) released a large number of its key staff to undertake a week of intensive training in the Australian VET and Elderly Care systems.

"The teachers are the best in their field and have already demonstrated their commitment to quality training for their students," said Mr Phillip Reed, Quality and Compliance Manager from HGT Australia.

Mr Reed flew to Shanghai to personally deliver the training required to qualify the SPS staff to deliver nationally recognised training in China.

"Each participant has been challenged by the training" Mr Reed said, "but they are passionate about their students' learning and have impressed their colleagues with their understanding and commitment."

"Australia and China have a strong history of collaboration in educational initiatives, but this is something completely new for everyone. We are not just supporting the development of training programs; we are actively supporting the emergence of a new system and standard of care in China," said HGT's General Manager, John Liddicoat.

This is one of many programs getting off the ground right across China in response to the emerging demand for more highly skilled Aged Care professionals. HGT Australia has entered into formal cooperation agreements with schools, hospitals, public and private care providers across numerous locations including Shanghai, Guangzhou, Nanjing, and Chengdu since 2015.

After 36 years of successful operation in Australia, expansion into China is a significant strategic priority for HGT Australia and has proven that Australia can play an active and important role in helping shape the future of China's health and aged care industry.



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Multicultural Small Business Program

Twenty aspiring businesspeople from 10 different countries have graduated from a small business skills course run by Newcastle City Council. Graduates of the Multicultural Small Business Program gathered at Newcastle Museum to celebrate the prospect of running their own business.

With the support of Council, Navitas English, Northern Settlement Services and volunteer mentors, The Business Centre hosted a 10-week course to familiarise participants with Australian business regulations in classes taught in English and Arabic.

"I am so proud to congratulate the migrants and refugees who completed the course in its first year," Lord Mayor Nuatali Nemes said.

"The aim was to familiarise aspiring business people with Australian regulations and customs and help fast track financial independence for them and their families.

"Many of the participants had successful careers back in the countries they came from, and the lessons they've gained in business planning, financial management and marketing will help them prosper here in Newcastle."

The inaugural 10-week program included workshops, business advisory sessions, networking opportunities and access to mentors from the local migrant business community.

Participants, among them aspiring restaurateurs and a tailor, learned how to set up a business, meet legal requirements and included basic instruction in marketing, financial planning, budgeting, taxation and entitlements.

Hospitality-focused members of the class put their new skills to use by lodging quotes with council for the right to cater for the event.

Much to the pleasure of attendees, the menu included delicious African and Middle Eastern fare: Samosa, Baklava and a refreshing hibiscus drink.

The Multicultural Small Business Program follows another initiative by Council last year to teach Syrian refugees how to bicycle safely in Australia.

Newcastle City Council teamed up with CatholicCare and other support agencies to teach refugees how to ride on local streets.



Lord Mayor Nuatali Nemes, Business Centre CEO Pierre Malou and a graduate

Virtual reality to advance human health

Giving birth has been the foundation of the human race since the start of humanity, but the primal practice is set to benefit from groundbreaking advances in virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) at the University of Newcastle (UON).

Through the use of digital headsets, VR and AR allow users to be transported into alternate worlds, giving them the ability to adjust their surroundings and experience something that feels real, but is in fact a simulated environment. Utilising the Samsung GearVR and HTC Vive (VR) and HoloLens (AR) headsets, UON students will be among the first in the world to learn key anatomy and birthing techniques through virtual and augmented simulation.

The technological advance, securing UON as a leader in the field, is likely to have significant impact on the future of education around the world, as well as substantial benefits for industry.

A collaboration between UON's School of Nursing & Midwifery and Innovation Team, the first of the new VR projects simulates a real-world delivery room, providing midwifery students with a virtual emergency neonatal resuscitation scene. Students are required to undertake a series of steps to pass the time-critical scenario, which can be undertaken with a virtual 'helper' in a practice mode, or individually in a formal test.

Run via an app developed for PC, iOS and Android, the technology allows students to train outside the classroom at their own pace.

In addition to the neonatal resuscitation simulation, UON's Innovation Team has developed a new AR resource to assist with education in anatomy and physiology. The intricate field of study requires extensive detailed knowledge of the human body, its makeup and functions.

Utilising a HoloLens headset, which projects a hologram into the users' actual surroundings, the team has developed a gender-changeable human form with interactive 'layers' which expose the different working functions of the body.

With the predicted success of the new resources, UON's Innovation Team is already nearing completion on its next project – another partnership with the School of Nursing and Midwifery.

The implications of UON's advances in VR and AR are set to have wide spread impact on the broader community and industry, both locally and internationally.

With industry partnerships already on the table, Deputy Program Convenor of Midwifery and co-project leader of the neonatal resuscitation scenario, Mr Donovan Jones, said he is confident the VR and AR breakthroughs will translate into real-world solutions.



Midwifery student Erin Bonett experiences VR simulation

Two little words that will lead you to greater business success

Jason Bartlett
DFK Crosbie

How to use your own live data for successful business planning and strategy.

As a small to medium business owner, chances are you want to grow your business to achieve your goals and ultimately enjoy the fruits of your labour. Technology is certainly on your side. Today's accounting software makes the financial tedium of running a business a walk in the park compared to even a few years ago.

But have you caught on to the power of using your live data to influence your business planning and strategy?

Live data is the raw information that's fed into your accounting system on a daily basis. It includes all of your incoming and outgoing banking transactions along with your trade liabilities. Your live data gives you an up-to-date overview. There's no more waiting around, putting off decisions or changes until your financials are complete for last year or last quarter. Any problems or inefficiencies in your business are identified early rather than being left to fester for months, or even worse a full year. You can look ahead rather than always playing catch up and that strategic approach is what will help you reach your business goals.

If you're not already in the groove of using today's accounting technology to benefit to your business, this is certainly your starting point. Get your business advisor to steer you in the right direction. Once you and your team settle into things, you'll be marvelling over the ease-of-use and time saved. Be assured these systems are a wonderful tool for any small to medium enterprise.

Next you need to make sure your business has a regular health check, otherwise known as management reporting. This is simply the information you need to run your business better, factoring in your live data and every other accounting insight. If you're already a successful business owner, you'll know this isn't something that happens once a year at tax time. It's a strategic, quarterly exercise—at the very least half yearly—that allows you to look at your business from the outside in. Your systems, profits and goals can be assessed and adapted if need be, remembering that your business and personal goals cannot be completely separated.

One usually funds the other!

The peace of mind that's wrapped up in regular management reporting is far too valuable to ignore. People often tell me it allows them to sleep at night because they're not left wondering how their business is tracking. And they have a proper strategic plan that covers off potential cash flow pressures, resourcing issues and market fluctuations.

As a key part of your reporting process those two little words—live data—become a no-brainer once you understand what they offer you and your business.

For further information contact DFK Crosbie on (02) 4923 4000, email jason.b@dfkcrosbie.com.au or visit www.dfkcrosbie.com.au



Jason Bartlett is a chartered accountant, strategic business advisor and Partner at DFK Crosbie, based in Newcastle. For more than 25 years Jason has been helping business owners succeed in reaching their goals. He specialises in large building and construction businesses, and unique businesses in non-typical industries.

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Five reasons why smart companies have shareholders agreements

Kym Butler
Butlers Business and Law

When forming a new company, choosing to put a shareholders agreement in place is a smart business strategy. A shareholders agreement can be adapted to fit the needs of your business and may cover important information such as who can be a shareholder, who can serve on the board of directors and the value of shares of stock. While there is no legal requirement for a company to have a written shareholders agreement, the document is an effective business strategy used to prevent costly disputes when disagreements arise.

There are five key reasons why shareholders agreements are an effective business strategy for smart companies:

1. Management

The way a company is to be managed should be set out by a shareholders agreement during the formation of a new business. The agreement should outline the responsibilities of members or directors so that they understand what is expected in this role. This may include required productivity levels expected from members or directors and the amount of non-chargeable work allowed during work hours. This prevents disagreements as to the expected level of commitment to the company.

2. Directors appointments

A shareholders agreement should specify the shareholder's right to appoint a director and how they can lose this right. For example, an agreement may specify that the right will be lost when the shareholder's shareholding drops below a specified percentage. More importantly, the agreement may also include provisions so that shareholders may not remove another shareholder's appointed director. This is an important business strategy for preventing uncertainty regarding the lawful appointment and removal of a new director.

3. Decision making

The agreement should also outline the amount of votes required to pass certain types of decisions. Importantly, it may provide methods for resolving disputes where a deadlock occurs during the voting process. This may include provisions such as put and call options or possibly the forced ending of a company.

4. Preventing investment in rival businesses

A shareholders agreement may also contain a non-compete clause to prevent members from investing in rival businesses. This will usually contain a description of the business of the company and how company resources may be used. This is crucial for protecting your business and supporting the financial interests of shareholders in a company.

5. Exit strategy

The agreement should also outline an exit strategy for members, which may include a buy-out, listing or sale of business. This is important for preventing disputes as to the value at which certain shareholders may exit.

Considering the needs of your business

Depending on the needs of your business, a good shareholders agreement may also consider:

- The share split and types of shares;
- Valuation of shares;
- Actions that require the consent of shareholders;
- Allocation of new shares; and/or
- The liability of shareholders when the company is in debt.

Finally, it is important to seek legal advice before finalising the agreement to ensure your business is protected when disagreements arise.

For further information call (02) 4929 7002, email contact@butlers.net.au or visit www.butlers.net.au



Kym Butler is the founder of Butlers Business and Law. He has decades of experience both as a legal practitioner and chartered accountant. He is an expert in business structuring, asset protection and taxation.

How to get clarity on your planning priorities

Aaron Day
The3rdgear

Knowing where to focus can be one of the biggest challenges in running your own business. There's so much that needs your attention and so many messages and mixed advice coming from all directions for business owners and managers.

However, there's a simple way to cut through some of the clutter and get clear about where your time and energy would best be spent. By understanding where your business is in its lifecycle you can simplify your priorities and focus on the areas that matter.

A good starting point is to understand that all businesses tend to follow a basic three phase cycle:

- Start-up
- Established and Growing
- Mature

In the Start-up phase everything is new, and it can be overwhelming, so the trick is to keep it simple. When you get to the core of it, the things that matter most when you're starting out are usually about how to generate new business opportunities, how to convert those opportunities into paying customers, getting your basic money management processes in place, and finally getting your basic operating process under control so you can keep your customers happy.

Good places to look for outside help in this first stage are marketing consultants, website and graphic designers, book-keepers and a business coach.

In the Established and Growing phase, things start becoming complicated as you add people to your team. In this phase many of the things you've been doing yourself, need to be delegated. This is one of the trickiest phases in business; and it's the reason many small businesses stay small.

The only way to delegate key operational tasks effectively is to build management systems into your business. In this second phase, your company structure, role descriptions, performance management, operational processes and training all become critical. These basic systems and the way they're built are the fundamental keys to continuing your business' growth. This is where your energy should be focused.

In this phase good resources for outside help include specialised small business consultants with expertise in

building management structures and systems, and a 'hands-on' accountant.

In the final phase the business has solid operating systems and should be comfortably profitable. Now it's time to move to a purely strategic role, stepping back from daily operations and focusing on the improvement of key areas such as revenue, profitability, quality, team performance and management systems. This can be a difficult transition for many business owners because their sense of meaning and identity is often closely tied into the daily habits that helped them get the business started in the early days.

In this phase, you might look for external assistance from quality and management systems consultants, business brokers, wealth management advisors, and more regular formal consultations with your company accountant.

The key thing to realise is that if you don't shift the way you think about your role in the business through each one the three phases, the business will not progress to the next phase. Most importantly don't try to do it all on your own, there's just too much to do and one of the most important lessons in business is learning when and how to let go so you can move forward. Getting good quality outside help should provide you with many times the return on your investment.

For further information contact Aaron Day on 0400 809 888, email aaron@the3rdgear.com.au or visit www.the3rdgear.com.au



Aaron Day is the Managing Director of The3rdgear Business Consultants and specialises in small business performance improvement. He is also the author of Management Trinity – How to Manage Any Business Without Having an MBA, the inventor of The3rdgears' patented small business management software system. He has a degree in Change Management from the AGSM, and has been working with businesses in the Hunter Region for more than 18 years.

Cash indeed is king, but bookkeeping is the queen!

Karen Harris
Kountable

As business owners, you will be familiar with the saying Cash is King. As part of the cash management strategy for your business it is important that you can readily access (and do so regularly) your cashflow status. For example, is your business generating a cash surplus currently or is there a cash drop due to recently spending money on equipment? Are these questions you can accurately and efficiently answer right away?

One of the key principles that we must remind ourselves about, is that if we are in business then we need to be making money! Yes, there are other reasons as well as to why we may go in to business, and they are just as valid. But if a business is NOT generating a sustainable profit then this needs to be analysed, Profit is different from turnover/revenue, and it is different from cashflow – terms which I have seen in my work with clients that are often confused by these terms.

Profit is sales less expenses. Turnover/revenue is the sales a business has each year. A business could have high sales, but if the expenses are disproportionately high to those sales or the cash is managed poorly, then a business will find itself in financial strife. Further, a business could have an excellent profit - but if half the debtors and invoices are not managed well, then there is going to be minimal cash sitting in the bank account.

As a bookkeeper, my experience with clients has shown that when it comes to analysing the financial aspects of the business, this is not an activity of choice! But if you take up the challenge to start looking at your numbers, you will reap the rewards in your business.

Start first with your business expenses; what expenses are variable expenses and what are fixed expenses? Rather than just looking at the dollar value of the expenses, consider the percentage of the various expenses as a proportion of turnover/sales. Are there some expenses you could cut down on or is there another supplier you could use that could offer you better rates? Do you, for instance, send your invoices out by snail mail, whereas it would be more cost effective to email the invoices electronically?

Once you have done some analysis of your expenses, turn now to your business revenue. Did you meet turnover targets in the last six months? Are there particular times of the year when sales are higher and if so, what do you do to maximise turnover in those peak periods of the business?

Cash indeed is King, but every great King needs a Queen beside him – don't you agree? Who is that Queen? The Queen is an accurate and efficient bookkeeping system in your business. With an excellent Queen at work, thorough cashflow analysis becomes so much easier and as a result the 'King-dom' expands: cash will increase and that is something we all want for our business.

For further information contact Kountable on (02) 4982 4996, email karen@kountable.com.au or visit www.kountable.com.au



Karen Harris and her team have been servicing Newcastle, Port Stephens and the Hunter Valley for over 17 years. Karen embraces the latest cloud technologies and is always looking at improving systems to expand and grow her business."

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Six simple steps to a better business

Chad Russell
PKF

Local accountants and business advisory firm, PKF, believe that a change of focus can help business owners improve business and see success.

Business owners are focusing on the “sexy” topics like attracting new customers, corporate image or customer satisfaction when thinking about growing the value and profitability of a business. These topics are extremely important but what often gets overlooked, at least initially, is truly challenging what’s already in our own backyard.

The starting point is to ask yourself three questions:

1. How profitable is your business?
2. How can you improve the return on the investment you have already made?
3. Can you achieve a better result from the resources you have already deployed?

It’s a common myth that the only way to grow profit is to grow sales. But, if the issues that cause underperformance aren’t addressed, the problem will only get worse if you grow customer numbers – you’re simply masking the problem.

The good news is that this is an opportunity. Attracting new sales can be expensive – improving what you already have is usually an investment of your time, and the rewards can be substantial.

1. Get your starting point

The first step to getting a better result is to understand where you’re starting from. You need to identify some measurable efficiency indicators so that you can work this out. This can be a daunting exercise as you may not like how the numbers come out, but in order to make the shift, you need to be honest with yourself and truly understand where you are right now.

There are countless indicators out there, but some examples that might be relevant for you might include – job turnaround time, average hourly rate, profit per person, inventory turnover, response time, units per day, build time and retention rate.

2. Identify strategies

Once you have identified the indicators that are relevant to your business, you’ll need to do some brainstorming. Have a think about strategies that you could implement that would have a positive effect on your business’s performance. For example, if your efficiency indicator was profit per person, what could you do in your business to increase this? If it was job turnaround time, how could you make it quicker?

The more strategies you come up with at this stage, the better placed you’ll be. This part is all about collating ideas which can be refined later.

3. Set some new targets

Now that you know where you are, and have some ideas as to what you can do, it’s time to think about what you need to be happy. It’s good to have someone external help with this process as they are not as emotionally attached to the business and are better positioned to challenge the thinking around what is possible.

Don’t limit the targets based on prior performance – it’s really important to challenge yourself. Ideally the targets should be a stretch but still achievable and if you think there would be a benefit to breaking them down into smaller pieces, set some milestones along the way.

4. Work out the upside

The fourth step is the most important. Take your new targets and overlay them into your business forecast. Without this step you will never know the direct impact on cash flow, profit and value. What are you currently leaving on the table?

This is the ‘slap in the face moment’ where you will see the truth. What appears to be a highly profitable business could be a whole lot better, or it could be that a loss making business could be making a significant profit with a few changes. This is where you’ll get motivated to make these changes.

5. The action plan

Refine, prioritise, allocate and set timeframes on your identified strategies – develop an action plan. Make sure someone is accountable for every action and that they truly understand what it is that they are responsible for, why they are doing it and when it needs to be done by.

6. Implementation

This is the critical step that will determine if you take your business to bigger and better things, or if you’ll open up the doors tomorrow and do the same thing you did today. It’s time to implement.

If you want to see results, you need to take your action plan and begin implementing the strategies that you have identified.

If you need help from the people around you to make it happen, ask for it. If it makes sense to offer incentives to team members to get them implementing for you, offer them. If you need external help to get it done, pick up the phone.

Now is not the time to run away from the plan, make excuses or say you’re too busy – this is where the change happens.

A lot of strategies that come out of this type of exercise will be based around your systems and processes and making sure that they are not only structured in a way that gets you the best outcome, but also updated as appropriate and consistently enforced. A process that is not enforced might as well not exist – do you have any of those processes in your business?

Not all of the benefits will be seen immediately in your bottom line. The thing about efficiency improvements is that rather than producing additional profit, they create additional capacity. From there, we can revisit the sexy stuff to work out how to fill that capacity and get a supercharged result.

For further information contact PKF on (02) 4962 2688, email crussell@pkf.com.au or visit www.pkf.com.au



Chad Russell is a Director at PKF Australia with more than 15 years of experience in accounting and business advisory. He works within our Business Advisory team. Chad’s expertise includes business growth, strategic planning, governance and structure, succession and exit, estate planning, cash flow planning, business reporting and tax.

Don't sit down until the pain goes

If you have concerns about your posture, or are experiencing back pain, neck pain or headaches, you are not alone. The culprit could be the chair you are sitting on as you read this.

We all spend a lot of time sitting, whether it is at a desk, in a car, or in front of a screen, and research indicates extended periods of sitting can have harmful effects on our wellbeing.

Director of Healing Wave Chiropractic, Daniel Smith, says our bodies are not designed to sit for prolonged periods.

"This type of repetitive action places a lot of strain on the spine and the nervous system it supports," Mr Smith says. "Aside from daily discomfort such as back pain, nerve pain and headaches, people should be aware that excessive sitting could be causing significant long-term damage to the spine and nervous system."



This may contribute to other health problems as we age."

Healing Wave's team of chiropractors works with thousands of people across Newcastle and the Hunter, addressing the impact of prolonged sitting and poor posture.

"Our focus is to increase understanding of the spine," Mr Smith says. "We can also help people improve habits at home and at work while providing some procedures that can mitigate effects. We also work with individuals to address the short and long-term impacts of sitting and help prevent further deterioration of spinal function."

Solutions can include altering workstation configurations to improve posture, or adding low-impact exercises or other movement to daily routines. Consulting a chiropractor for professional advice on maintaining optimal spinal health is a

sound option, and Healing Wave provides flexible appointment times to suit your busy lifestyle.

As a society, Australians are becoming more sedentary, and Healing Wave encourages us to think about the effects on our bodies. In fact, one in six Australians* are experiencing pain and discomfort associated with the lower back, neck and shoulders. This represents 16% of the total population.

* 1 in 6 Australian have chronic back pain (AIHW) Aihw.gov.au.2017. Web

Inter-disciplinary GPs added local health care team

There is a new wave of healthcare that is starting to gain significant attraction all over the world - integrated healthcare. Research published in November 2016 has demonstrated the significant benefits that integrated care yields on clinical outcomes.

A local health centre, ATUNE, has announced the addition of their first team of inter-disciplinary general practitioners to its already comprehensive team. ATUNE comprises of 13 health disciplines (35 professionals) ranging from allied health, complimentary medicine, mental health and medical specialist services.

The inclusion of an interdisciplinary GP team completes a significant milestone in the integrated services provided at ATUNE and establishes a full complement of services.

Dr Michael Ireson has taken the role of lead interdisciplinary GP at ATUNE joining this business after working in various hospitals and private practices in the Hunter New England Area.

"I'm delighted to be working as part of a team of practitioners who all desire to work together professionally for their clients to see positive changes in health outcomes in all domains of life. There is a shared understanding at ATUNE that the best health care can only be achieved by addressing all of these areas and understanding their impact on each other," he said.

Simon Ashley, the director of ATUNE Health Centres believes that the nature of medical care is changing.

"There is a shifting mindset in the community when it comes to health care. Many are seeking a different model of service with longer appointment times, integration between disciplines, reduced waiting times and care that is client focused rather than disease driven, with an emphasis on preventative medicine."

ATUNE is the first of its type in the Hunter, and may well become the benchmark model to be exported to the rest of the nation, showcasing the region's capacity for an innovative and creative response to the changing face of healthcare.

Are you experiencing headaches, neck or back pain?
Are you worried about your posture?

Healing Wave Chiropractic

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www.healingwave.com.au

A lunch time walk is good for you in more ways than one

Jason Duncan

Hunter Business Review

Everybody knows that going for a walk at lunch is a great way to gain some much needed exercise especially if you work in an office.

A lunch time walk has also been proven to be a great way to destress and overcome afternoon lack of focus.

I was reading an old article from the New York Times¹ that explained a study published back in 2015 in the Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in Sports², which looked into the short term effects of a lunch time walk rather than the long term like weight loss and fitness.

The study was undertaken in the UK where researchers asked sedentary office workers to volunteer to take a 30 minute walk during their lunch break for three of the days of their working week for 10 weeks. At the start of the test the volunteers undertook a series of health, fitness and mood tests showing that they were all out of shape but generally healthy physically and emotionally.

All the volunteers downloaded an app to their phone which had questions for them to answer in the morning and afternoon each day for the 10 weeks. These answers were used by the researchers to determine how the volunteers were feeling about life and work, as well as stress, fatigue and motivation.

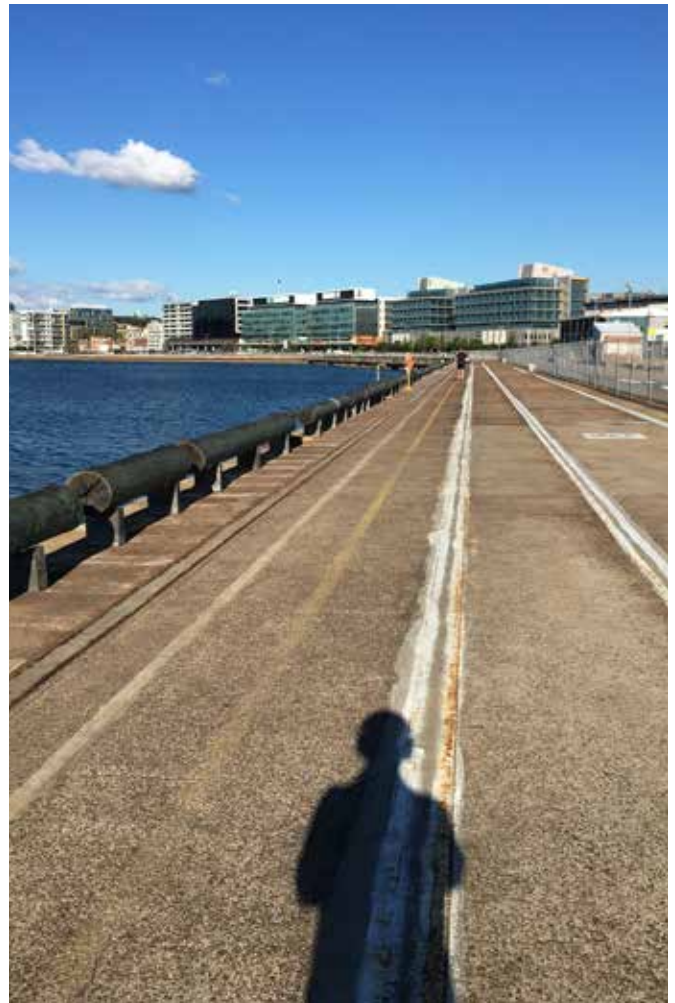
After the 10 weeks the researchers noticed that the question results were substantially different when people had been on a lunch time walk compared to the days they hadn't. After a walk people seem more enthusiastic, less tense, had a more relaxed mood and were more able to cope with the afternoon.

I find that a lunch time walk is also a great time to reflect, get away from the computer screen, take in your surroundings, listen to music or catch up on a podcast.

It is also a great opportunity to invite colleagues to join you and get to know them better. Also if you have a walking partner you are more likely to keep up with your lunch time walks.

¹New York Times Article - https://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/21/stressed-at-work-try-a-lunchtime-walk/?_r=0

²Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in sport - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25559067>



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Employees want work health programs

A recent survey of train commuters has found most want their bosses to provide health checks and programs to get them more active during the day.

The survey, conducted by the NSW Government's Get Healthy at Work Program, asked 1,500 train commuters whether their workplace could benefit from health checks and strategies to get them moving more at work.

Almost two thirds of respondents said their workplace could benefit from a workplace health program that included health checks and advice on healthy eating and ways to get more active in the workplace.

The Get Healthy at Work Program is the NSW Government's free workplace health service that provides businesses with tools and support on healthy eating, weight and physical activity which includes free confidential health checks for workers.

Professor Chris Rissel, NSW Office of Preventive Health urged bosses to consider the program which has already helped more than 2,000 businesses statewide to get healthier.

"The Get Healthy at Work Program gives workplaces resources to help improve workers' health," Mr Rissel said.

"Businesses receive support from accredited service providers who assist in developing a health program tailored to their workplace and confidential health checks for workers.

"The findings of this survey show that workers want their employers to provide health programs that help them make healthier eating choices, manage their weight better and improve their physical fitness."

Mr Rissel added that being healthy at work can help reduce the prevalence of lifestyle-related chronic disease such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

"Get Healthy at Work research has found businesses with unhealthy staff are two and a half times more likely to experience high rates of absenteeism, which can add \$50,000 to a business's costs over five years," Mr Rissel said.

"There is also mounting evidence to support the benefits of workplace health programs, including increased staff recruitment and retention, reduced sick days and greater productivity."


Lido Group is one business that has used Get Healthy at Work as part of its recruitment and retention strategy and has seen a 70% reduction in staff turnover in the twelve months since it began the program.

"You need to ensure that Get Healthy at Work becomes a part of the business, part of your staff development, retention and development and staff attraction program," Lido CEO Steve Mackenzie said.

The 2017 Get Healthy at Work commuter survey results included:


- 62% agreed their colleagues could benefit from a free workplace health program
- 60% agreed their workplace could benefit from having individual health checks
- 68% agreed they should be more active during the work day
- 44% agreed their workplace could benefit from enabling staff to make healthier meal choices
- 47% agreed their workplace could benefit from workplace health policies






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It's a little known fact that on Hillsborough Road Warners Bay is an incubator for the latest in innovative thought and design catering to the health and wellbeing of children, women and families.

Inspired by owner and developer James Harris, The Warners Bay Place is nestled behind Swim Mart and Wattle Paints and is between Bibina Groceries and Mitre 10 Hardware.

James's father opened Sentas Slate on the site more than 30 years ago and it has been in the family ever since.

James said, "It's been a dream of my mum and myself, to develop dad's 1.4 hectare site for many years – and two years ago we started to put it into reality."

Stage One at Warners Bay Place is almost fully tenanted and operational. It comprises two Little Beginnings childcare centres with 95 places in each, a paediatric chiropractic practice led by Dr Jacey Pryjma, along with Red Frog, an occupational therapy practice. There is also a hairdressing salon, café, a hot yoga studio and a general medical practice is in the pipeline.

Stage Two at The Warners Bay Place will see the establishments of a ballet school, Physiotherapy Practice and a Pilate's centre. The existing businesses Swim Mart and CBI Blinds will be moving into the brand new development.

The last remnants of the old metal clad buildings will soon be gone and commuters travelling along Hillsborough Road will see the full vision of the wide central driveway with parking either side, according to James. Another little known fact about The Warners Bay Place is that it's well served for parking with about 195 car spaces on site.

"All the suites, shops and offices face onto the car parks. We've designed the development so parking is handy and close to where you want to go – and there's no stairs – everything is pram-friendly with covered walk ways."

The Warners Bay Place is becoming a haven for likeminded businesses in health and family service.

"We are creating a place where businesses help and refer to one another," said James.

That said, Warners Bay Place is not only catering to health focussed operations, but see's the advantages of small legal practices, financial advisors and accountants anything that can benefit add to the other businesses whilst assisting families.

Businesses locating in The Warners Bay Place have choices. James, as a successful builder has the skills to undertake any form of fit out and "that's where we differ" James said.

"There are a range of sizes in the suites still available to choose. I then sit down with you, often by visiting your current premises, so we can design the perfect internal layout for your business. We design into your space, the number of, look and style of offices and consult rooms you need. We along with you design your kitchen and staff areas, reception and storage space."

As a tenant you get to choose the finishes such as floor coverings (carpet, linoleum, tiles), paint colours, lighting and electrical plan. James then lodges an application with council and works through the approval process. In the end, all businesses have to do is move in their furniture, put up their shingles and they are open for business.

Making decisions about how to customise a space can lead to some initial confusion for a small business. Owners generally never have to make these decisions. Small businesses usually have to put up with slotting themselves into someone else's space, and adjusting how they work to suit the space. The Warners Bay Place allows business owners to choose a suitable work environment and by doing so, the fitout/layout is optimised, saving you space and rental dollars.

The Warners Bay Place is a location where health and family professionals can work and grow in a safe friendly and convenient environment.

New business alliance formed to help workplace posture

Recently Dr James Cobb of Total Balance Chiropractic and Paul Wildschut of Experienced Office Furniture joined forces in a business alliance.

The idea came about between these fellow Hunter Business Chamber members as they both have a passion for improving the lives and postural health of people in the workplace.

Research is showing 'sitting is now the new smoking' and is having a detrimental effect on those who work predominantly in a sedentary role. This combined with the time spent sitting travelling to and from work and at home sitting on the lounge watching TV or in front of a laptop and mobile phone can have a significant impact on posture as well as overall health and wellbeing.

"While conducting our free 'Healthy Posture' Presentations in the workplace for our corporate clients, we realised there was a ground swell of interest in understanding the benefits of 'Sit/Stand Workstations'", said Dr James Cobb.

"Our clients' feedback from their workers is they feel less tired and more productive just by adjusting their work practices after learning some tips we share in our workshop.

"Those who are using 'Sit/Stand Workstations' are experiencing even better results.

"So it made sense for us to approach Paul at Experienced Office Furniture about how we can work together in providing an even better customer service experience for our clients," said James.

The business alliance held a 'Sit to Stand' event at Experienced Office Furniture on 23 May and plan to expand their activities further to help promote better postural health for people in Hunter workplaces.



James Cobb and Paul Wildschut

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Clever electronic inks rewriting energy future

Australia's position as a global leader in printed solar has surged, following the unveiling of its first printed solar demonstration site at the University of Newcastle (UON) on 15 May.

Printed solar creator, UON's Professor Paul Dastoor said that at 100 sqm in size, there were only two other comparable sites worldwide.

"There are just three demonstration sites at this scale that we know of anywhere in the world, so Australia has joined quite an elite group of global leaders poised to make this technology a commercial reality," said Professor Dastoor.

Professor Dastoor said the material could be rapidly manufactured, enabling accelerated deployment into the marketplace.

"No other renewable energy solution can be manufactured as quickly. On our lab-scale printer we can easily produce hundreds of metres of material per day, on a commercial-scale printer this would increase to kilometres. If you had just ten of these printers operating around the clock we could print enough material to deliver power to 1000 homes per day," said Professor Dastoor.

"The low-cost and speed at which this technology can be deployed is exciting, particularly in the current Australian energy context where we need to find solutions, and quickly, to reduce demand on base-load power."

Professor Dastoor said the demonstration site enabled final phase testing and modifications of the system before the renewable energy technology could be made available to the public.

"This installation brings us closer than we have ever been to making this technology a reality. It will help to determine the lifespan of the material and provide half-hourly feedback on the performance of the system," said Professor Dastoor.

UON engineers a solution to mining waste

The University of Newcastle (UON) has attracted \$1 million in funding to test a new technology that will boost efficiency across the minerals processing industry by reducing the amount of valuable resources currently being lost in extraction processes.

Renowned chemical engineer, Laureate Professor Kevin Galvin, and colleague Dr Jamie Dickinson are behind the development of the Reflux Flotation Cell (RFC), which is designed to recover valuable mineral particles from mining waste streams that would otherwise be sent to tailings dams.

"The RFC has immediate application in processing material currently being sent to tailings dams."

Laureate Professor Kevin Galvin

"Following mining, valuable minerals are mixed up with low-value minerals that need to be separated, via either a gravity or flotation process," explained Professor Galvin.

"The RFC has immediate application in processing material currently being sent to tailings dams," he added.

The RFC can process materials 5 to 10 times quicker than current technologies, providing the industry with an economically viable solution, for example to separate fine coal from tailings waste.

"One of our units about two metres in diameter would process the equivalent of 15 domestic swimming pools per hour (1000 m³/h), extracting the desired materials. Conventional systems would require up to 10 of these units to manage the same volumetric flowrate. The RFC also generates a much cleaner product. This additional product is then dewatered and combined with the other product from the plant," explained Professor Galvin.

Two full-scale RFC units will be installed at a Hunter Valley mine site this year, following six years of fundamental research and pilot trials carried out by the University of Newcastle researchers and industry partners.

Professor Galvin's related technology, the Reflux Classifier, has already been deployed worldwide, delivering major benefits to the Australian Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS) industry sector worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

UON was one of nine grant recipients announced under the Global Innovation Linkages programme supporting the development of products that address a range of industry challenges.



Resources for Regions program

Applications for funding from the Resources for Regions program are open to mining communities in local government areas outside of Sydney.

Launched in 2012, the funding gives mining communities the opportunity to upgrade:

- education
- health facilities
- cultural facilities
- roads and rail
- community services.

The additional \$50 million in funding has brought the total funding under the program to \$305 million.

"Mining supports more than 100,000 jobs, but the benefits can place extra pressure on community resources, such as the conditions of local roads," Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW John Barilaro said.

"It's important that communities that contribute so much to the state receive their fair share of funding."



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Our bulk bins and compactors provide an efficient solution for managing large volumes of waste and recycling.

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- Reduces traffic movement onsite
- Automatic tarping system fitted to vehicles and where required to individual bins.

Bulk bin applications

- For large volumes of commercial, industrial and building wastes
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- Suitable for both recyclable and non-recyclable waste
- Suits businesses with enough space to store the bin onsite





“The people who work here at Port Waratah don’t just move coal. We’re also involved in our local community.”

Being a sustainable business is about improving performance across every aspect of our business. Essential to this is contributing to the region. Since many of us at Port Waratah live, work and play in the Hunter, we are passionate about contributing to the region because it’s our community too.

We support our employee’s participation in the community in events like the Variety Bash, raising money for less fortunate kids. It’s just one of the many charities or local community organisations we support.

From social and economic benefits, to health, safety, environment and the community, you can discover more on how we’re working towards our strategic goals in our 2016 Sustainable Development Report. View it online at www.pwcs.com.au

Contributing to a smart, sustainable and vibrant Newcastle – **It’s who we are.**



PORT WARATAH
COAL SERVICES

Pioneering Through Partnership

Malabar Coal to acquire Drayton assets

Malabar Coal has announced an agreement to acquire the Anglo American plc group's 88.17% interest in the Drayton mine assets. This includes the recently closed Drayton mine and Exploration Licence 5460 known as Drayton South.

The Drayton assets provide infrastructure suitable for use by Malabar Coal's Spur Hill Underground Coking Coal Project (Spur Hill). This includes a coal preparation plant, coal stockpiling facilities, a rail loop, administration offices, workshops and other services. The purchase of this infrastructure significantly reduces the capital cost required to bring Spur Hill into production and avoids the need to construct major new infrastructure.

Malabar Coal's Chairman, Wayne Seabrook, said that by using the existing infrastructure the company can realise efficiencies and, most importantly, reduce the impact of its operations on the local community, neighbours and the environment. It is also Malabar's intent to use reject stone and rock from washing underground coal from Spur Hill to fill open cut voids remaining at Drayton, subject to regulatory approval. This would greatly improve the final rehabilitated landforms at Drayton.

In the coming months, Malabar Coal will commence detailed technical studies to prepare a development application which incorporates the acquisition of the Drayton assets.

"While this transaction delivers substantial efficiencies and environmental benefits for Malabar's Spur Hill operation, there may also be an opportunity in future to develop an underground mine within EL 5460."

"There is a lot of technical work that must be completed before a firm development plan can be produced, but the local community should be in no doubt that any development

within EL 5460 would reflect recent community concerns and perspectives. In particular, Malabar confirms our commitment to investigate solely an underground mine. To reinforce this commitment, we will accept conditions imposed on EL5460 that prevent any open-cut development. We are also willing to relinquish that portion of the EL that is south of the Golden Highway.

As part of the acquisition, Malabar Coal will replace Anglo American's environmental bond and will take full responsibility for rehabilitating the former Drayton mine site. Malabar Coal is fully funded to meet these obligations.



Roadmap to drive growth for Australian METS

CSIRO has released a technology roadmap to underpin growth in Australia's \$90 billion mining equipment, technology and services (METS) sector, urging companies to take action to unlock five key opportunities.

The Mining Equipment, Technology and Services Roadmap highlights the vital role that the METS sector will play in the nation's innovation ecosystem in order to drive change to meet future global mining challenges and metal supplies.

It was developed in collaboration with the METS Ignited Industry Growth Centre, as well as government, industry and researchers.

"This roadmap is a great example of Strategy 2020's Customer First work, which aligns our science to Australia's needs," CSIRO Chief Executive Dr Larry Marshall said.

"In a sense we use science to anticipate the future and help us navigate to a better outcome.

"METS is an important Australian sector and a global leader, but it can't rely on past successes in a rapidly changing global landscape.

"The sector must continue to innovate and take advantage of enabling technologies and new business models which are causing disruption across industries."

The Roadmap identified five key growth opportunities to support the continued success of the METS sector, these are:

- Data driven mining decisions
- Social and environmental sustainability
- Exploration under cover
- Advanced extraction
- Mining automation and robotics.

Underpinning the success of each of these opportunities is a raft of new technology developments, as well as critical changes to people, skills, culture, collaboration, processes and business models.

"This roadmap is a great example of Strategy 2020's Customer First work, which aligns our science to Australia's needs"

CSIRO Chief Executive Dr Larry Marshall

In addition to this Roadmap, CSIRO has collaborated with METS Ignited on the METS Sector Competitiveness Plan – a complementary piece of work that outlines the strategic foundations for success over the next decade.



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First-year mining apprentices celebrated

The bright futures of 27 young apprentices were celebrated at the TAFE NSW 2017 Mining Skills Final Presentation evening at Muswellbrook RSL on 25 May.

More than 100 guests from the region's mining, business and education communities attended the event to recognise the success of the graduates. In its 12th consecutive year of operation the program experienced a 16% increase in enrolments and welcomed new employer partner, Hitachi Construction Machinery.

Designed for first-year apprentices in partnership with the mining industry, the 15-week program places a strong emphasis on safety awareness to prepare them for work on-site. The course delivered by TAFE NSW Muswellbrook covers training in basic hand tool skills across four different trades including electrical, fitting and machining, metal fabrication and welding, and automotive.

TAFE NSW Regional General Manager North Elizabeth McGregor said the Mining Skills Centre program is a wonderful example of collaboration with council, industry and the wider community delivering great employment and education outcomes for the Upper Hunter.

MIGAS plant mechanic apprentice Christopher Scriven was recognised on the evening with the Highest Achiever Award for his dedication to work at Bengalla Mine, approach to study, and attaining the highest overall grade throughout the program.

Plant mechanic apprentices Jessica Bonnici and Jackson Hopkins were both presented with Outstanding Student awards for their application to their studies. Jessica is an apprentice with Programmed and employed by Coal & Allied, whilst Jackson is employed as an apprentice at BHP Mt Arthur Coal.

The evening included the presentation of the annual MEMMES Scholarships awarded to BHP Mt Arthur Coal electrical apprentice Blake Pickham and plant mechanic Bradley Kirkwood. Both tradesmen have ambitions to pursue further study with TAFE NSW to enhance their skills and knowledge and advance their careers in the Upper Hunter's mining industry.

The scholarship was established by the Mining Electrical and Mining Mechanical Engineering Society and provides financial assistance to past Mining Skills Program graduates who are pursuing post-trade qualifications in order to advance their careers in the industry.

Qualified electrician Eila Mills was awarded a highly commended for her commitment to education and training. The 23-year-old is in the third year of her apprenticeship and has already committed to undertaking post trade qualifications, having commenced her Certificate IV in Industrial Electronics and Control this year.



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NSW Minerals Council Exploration Forum

Over 100 explorers, geologists, industry professionals and government representatives attended the 2017 NSW Mining Exploration Forum 'The Rocks and Beyond' at NSW Parliament House in May.

NSW Resources Minister Don Harwin also attended to support explorers and deliver a ministerial address.

The Minister said that, "Since this Government came to power in 2011, 60 new mining projects or expansions to existing operations have been approved, which has realised close to \$8 billion in new capital expenditure for regional NSW...I can assure you that, as Resources Minister, I am very alive to the importance your industry plays in regional NSW, underlining why exploration and a pipeline of future projects is so important."

The Minister outlined recent improvements in exploration activity, telling the Forum that, "According to ABS statistics, NSW's share of national mineral exploration expenditure in 2016 was \$122.4 million - 8.6% of Australia's total and the highest in a decade."

Outlining his support for the Co-operative Drilling program, the Minister said "This is an initiative that promotes the NSW Government's acquisition and delivery of pre-competitive geoscience. The Cooperative Drilling grants program targets gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, diamond, ruby, sapphire, lead, and even graphite and mineral sands. The government will invest \$1.85 million in grants to mineral explorers and provide up to 100 per cent of per metre drilling costs, capped at \$200,000 for individual projects."

During the industry panel session, NSW Land and Water Commissioner, Jock Laurie, discussed the importance of managing community expectations.

"It's really important for us to have sensitivity when dealing with people, as exploration could sometimes lead to something or it leads to nothing. Not knowing what to do or expect, it could create a lot of angst in the community. However the industry itself really understands the importance of making sure they've got a very strong relationship dealing with people in a fair and reasonable manner," Mr Laurie said

New gas pipeline to Newcastle MoU signed

Hunter Gas Pipeline and Jemena have reached a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Jemena to build and operate a \$500 million pipeline from Narrabri to Newcastle.

The pipeline has a NSW Development Approval and is ready to build. It will be privately financed and is conditional on the development of the Santos Narrabri Gas Project, commercial offtake agreements with customers, landholder agreements and minor permits and approvals.

Jemena General Manager of Business Development, David Green, said, "Jemena has a strong track record in pipeline development, construction and operation in Australia, and we are very excited about the potential of this project. The project will be a boost for construction, operations and maintenance jobs and businesses in the local area."

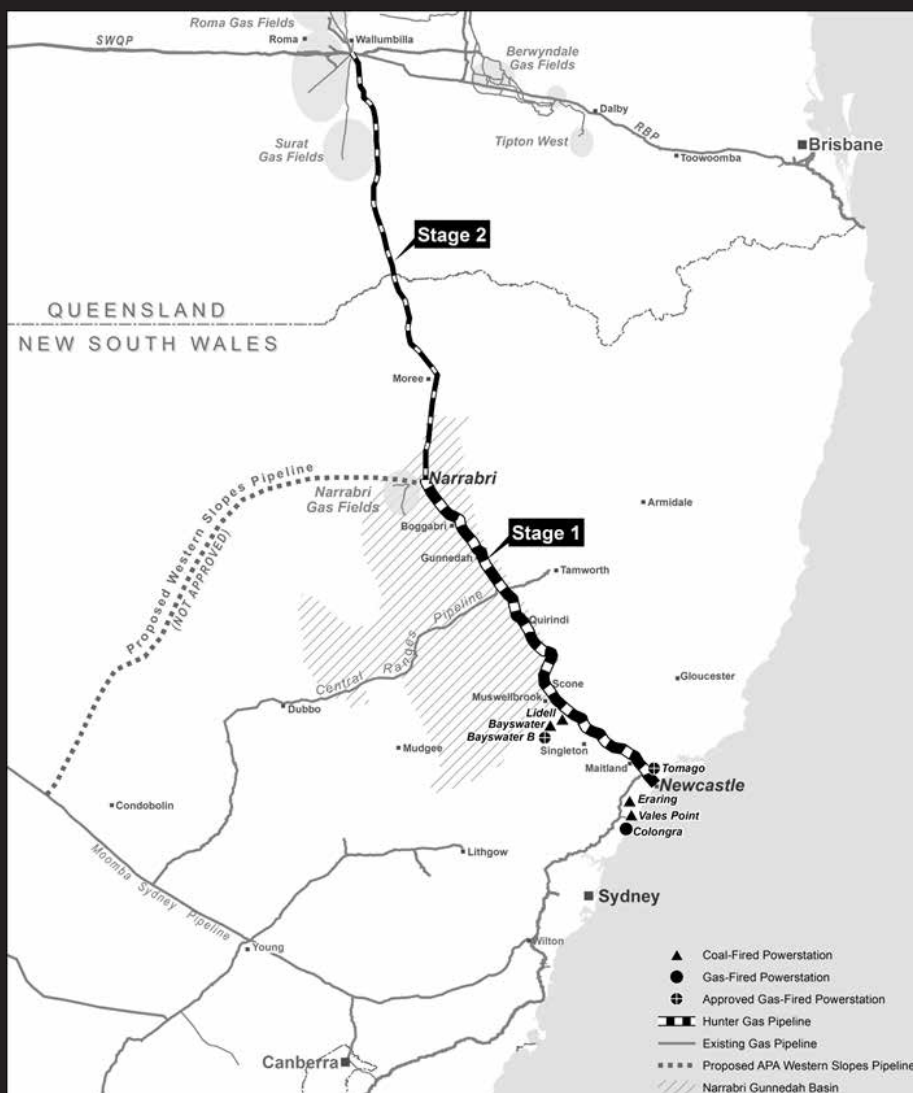
Hunter Gas Pipeline Managing Director, Garbis Simonian, said, "NSW gas users are now being asked to pay more for Australian natural gas than customers in Japan, China, Malaysia, and Korea. Queensland LNG projects are hoovering up gas to preserve their own capital and shifting the commercial risk of their investments to Australian gas customers. They created this problem and they are not expanding gas production for the domestic market fast enough. That is just not acceptable."

The Narrabri Gas Project could supply up to 50% of NSW natural gas needs and must be approved, developed and brought to Newcastle so gas is guaranteed for the NSW domestic market, as a matter of urgency.

The NSW Government estimates the top 500 industrial gas users

provide more than 300,000 jobs which rely on an affordable, secure supply of natural gas.

Mr Simonian warned, "Those 300,000 NSW jobs in gas-reliant manufacturing are at risk without fast-tracked development of affordable domestic gas."



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A man wasn't feeling well so he went to the doctor. After examining him the doctor took his wife aside, and said, "Your husband has a very sensitive heart. I am afraid he's not going to make it, unless you treat him like a king, which means you are at his every beck and call, 24 hours a day and that he doesn't have to do anything himself."

On the way home the husband asked with a note of concern "what did he say?"

"Well", the lady responded, "he said it looks like you probably won't make it."



On a long evening flight, the lead flight attendant came on the intercom and made the following announcement:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I'm very sorry to inform you that there has been a terrible mix up by our catering service. There were to be 105 meals onboard for all of our passengers, but alas, only 40 were placed in the gantry."

Once all the muttering of the hungry passengers died down a little, she continued with, "Anyone who is kind enough to give up their meal to someone else so they can eat, will be given unlimited free drinks for the remainder of the flight."

The next announcement came about 2 hours later...

"Attention passengers, if anyone is hungry, there are still 40 dinners available."



"Make me one with everything," says the Buddhist to the tofu hot dog vendor.

Then, after getting his tofu hot dog, the Buddhist hands the vendor a twenty dollar bill.

The vendor takes the money and begins helping the next customer. The Buddhist looks puzzled and asks the vendor,

"Where is my change?"

The vendor replies, "Change comes from within."



A man died and went to The Judgment, they told him, "Before you meet with God, I should tell you — we've looked over your life, and to be honest you really didn't do anything particularly good or bad. We're not really sure what to do with you. Can you tell us anything you did that can help us make a decision?"

The newly arrived soul thought for a moment and replied,

"Yeah, once I was driving along and came upon a person who was being harassed by a group of thugs. So I pulled over, got out a bat, and went up to the leader of the thugs. He was a big, muscular guy with a ring pierced through his lip. Well, I tore the ring out of his lip, and told him he and his gang had better stop bothering this guy or they would have to deal with me!"

Wow that's impressive. When did this happen?" "About three minutes ago," came the reply.



Bobby was sitting on the porch talking to his Grandpa when he innocently asked, "Grandpa, do you know how to make animal sounds?"

"I sure do" Grandpa replied. "What sort of animal sound would you like to hear?"

"How about a toad? Do you know how to sound like a toad?"

"Sure", said Grandpa, cupping his hand to his mouth, "croaaak croaaak, how did you like that?!"

"Yipee!" screamed Bobby jumping up and down, "We are going to Disneyland!"

"Huh?" Questioned Grandpa. "Why's that?"

"Because Grandma said so," Bobby patiently explained, "she said that after you croak we'll all go to Disneyland!"



A lady went to a doctor's office where she was seen by a doctor. A few minutes into the examination, screeching could be heard from the room, and then the lady burst out of the room as if running for her life.

After much effort a nurse finally managed to calm her down enough to tell her story.

The nurse barged into the office of the Doctor and screamed, "Shame on you, Mrs. Smith is 82 years old, and you told her she's pregnant!"

The Doctor continued writing calmly and barely looking up said, "does she still have the hiccups?"

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Plan for what is difficult while it is easy, do what is great while it is small."

- Sun Tzu



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