



January 2005

# Nillumbik HomeBiz Networker

*Welcome to the first Nillumbik HomeBiz newsletter.*

*We would like to hear from you and encourage you to submit any interesting business based articles.*

A newsletter for local home-based business operators.



*Networking at the Christmas Break Up Party*

*Wishing you a successful year in 2005!*

## Someone's got to do it!

Eight brave souls have volunteered to assist with the development of a Nillumbik HomeBiz Network and a regular program of activities.

They are: Sue Schreiber of Advanced Fireworks, Kim Hider of Hider Health Evaluation & Consulting, Dianne Smith of Adminwise, Chris Livingston of Dinkum Digital, Corrie Heslop of Plain Sailing Consultants, Adrienne Jones of Scribewyse, Catherine Meares of Australian Gift Hampers, and Peter Wilton

of Premium Lifestyle Financial Solutions.

The Working Group is currently working on developing a program of networking nights for 2005, based on the feedback we have received from the Home-based Business Survey carried out in late 2004. We are also investigating funding grants for activities such as a business to business expo for late 2005. Stay tuned.



*Meera Govil addresses the Christmas Break Up network.*

## The Christmas Break Up Party

It's difficult to have a Christmas Break Up Party if you're a typical home-based business, so the Working Group thought they'd throw one for you. And they did!

Over 30 people attended the last network event of the year at Bridges Bar & Restaurant in Hurstbridge. Elf Sneakiebottom (a.k.a. Steve Fioretti of Comic Characters) broke the ice and got people laughing.

Meera Govil from Eltham Bookshop gave an inspiring talk about her business and the passion that has driven it, and still does. Meera spoke very much from the heart but also outlined her very feet on the ground business practices that have ensured the survival of her very special bookshop.

A beautiful Christmas Hamper donated by Australian Gift Hampers was won by new

## The year that was



*Networkers at work!*

The first networking event held in June 2004 for home-based businesses attracted 48 people. It was clear from the response to the night that participants really got value from the opportunity to meet and speak with other home-based businesses.

A second networking night was held in September and participants heard Peter Feeney speak about the development of the very successful Maroondah HomeBiz network in the Croydon area. This network holds monthly network nights attended by 50 or more people, an annual business-to-business expo. It also works

actively with local traders' associations to build the profile of home-based business. Peter must have been inspiring because the Working Group grew out of that meeting.

A survey was distributed to over 120 businesses to gain feedback on the level of interest in developing a regular network, the sorts of activities that were wanted and the times and frequencies of network times. We've had 34 very positive responses to date indicating support for a regular evening networking event. A copy of the survey can be downloaded from Council's website.

## Coming up in 2005

*“Not only is NETWORKING an essential life skill, it is also the most basic business building tool in today's competitive market.” Robyn Henderson, global networking specialist.*

The first network event for 2005 will have as its topic: **SMEs, the Internet and the changing face of advertising**. It will be held on Thursday, 10 February at the Eltham Community & Reception Centre starting at 7:00pm.

A guest speaker from Sensis, will give a presentation which will open with a snapshot of SME online activity using findings from the annual Sensis® eBusiness Report. It will look at how the

Internet is changing the face of advertising and what you can do to benefit from the opportunities created.

Cost for the night will be \$15 and finger food and drinks will be provided to be enjoyed with the networking. To book, please ring Julie on 9433 3315.

Topics coming up for March and April include Using eCommerce Effectively and Financial Planning for Small Businesses.

## Networking Sins to Avoid by Robyn Henderson

The following are excerpts from an article by Robyn. For more networking tips go to her website [www.networkingtowin.com.au](http://www.networkingtowin.com.au)

- Do not 'work' the room. Rather have a small number of quality conversations with the people who cross your path. Leave a positive image with these people and they will spread the word for you.
- Don't treat the ten-second self-introduction as a two-minute commercial. People will switch off and you will leave a negative impression.
- Attend regularly. The more people see you, build rapport with you and start to develop trust with you, the more business you will generate. Don't be an inactive member who never attends events and then complains that the network was a waste of time or money because no business was generated from it.
- Don't forget the golden rule in the networking environment – we earn the right to gain business by doing something for someone else first.



**For more information about the HomeBiz Network call Julie French on 9433 3315**