



March 2006

Nillumbik HomeBiz Networker

Welcome to the March edition. There are a few great business development programs coming up, read about them in this newsletter.



Ken King was the Connecting Nillumbik Business Excellence winner at the March meeting. Congratulations Ken. If you want to nominate a business person for this award, call Julie for a nomination form on 9433 3315.

We encourage you to submit any interesting business based articles for future HBB newsletters.

Send your articles to julie.french@nillumbik.vic.gov.au

Hone your training skills!

Nillumbik HomeBiz Network member Maeve Clonan is organising a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment program to be run locally. The proposed program will run over 6 weeks commencing early April and will cost \$600 – subject to sufficient numbers. For more information call Maeve on 9844 4877 or email her at syob@aapt.net.au

On the 21 February Nillumbik was visited by Premier Bracks and his Cabinet. Over the day ministers met with various groups and individuals to discuss and listen to community concerns and issues.

One of these meetings was a round table with Andre Haermeyer, Minister for Small Business (as well as Minister for Manufacturing and Export and Minister for the Financial Services Industry). At the round table Minister Haermeyer met with the Nillumbik HomeBiz Network Steering Group who ably represented the local home-based business sector.

There is a growing recognition by governments at all levels of the size, growth and importance of the HBB sector.

Have we got a course for you!

Nillumbik HomeBiz has been very fortunate in being offered a great opportunity for 10 local HBB's to participate in a business development program that can really boost your business.

The program is subsidised by the state government and involves 5 hours of one to one business coaching and 2 full day workshops. It is open to home-based businesses that have been operating for 12 months or more and focuses on developing a practical strategic plan.

The minister acknowledged that at a growth rate of 3.7% per annum, home-based businesses are growing faster than any other small business sector.

The Steering Group raised a number of issues that relate to HBB's including the importance of recognising the professionalism of HBB's, their importance to the local economy and community, difficulties with isolation and the importance of networks. They made the point that the HBB sector need support from all levels of government to assist with the development of networks and to provide business development services such as mentoring and business planning programs tailored to the needs of HBB's.

The cost of the program is \$185 per business (2 people per business can participate). The workshops will be held on the 8th and 15th May at Edendale Farm, Eltham.

The program facilitator is David Vincent. More information is available in the application form – which can be downloaded at www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au > Business and Tourism and follow the links to the HomeBiz Network page.

Hints from the February's Issues Forum



Networkers at work!

One of the questions that came up in the Issues Forum at the February meeting was – how can you transfer large files to clients who don't have the technology to deal with them?

A comment made early in the discussion was that as a customer focused business the first point you need to be clear on is that you need to make it your business to come up with a solution.

Ben Curnow from Equal IT offered these hints:

- Messenger (or other chat program) has an option on the menu to transfer large files to anyone who also has Messenger.
- Both <http://www.streamload.com/Account/Pricing.asp> or www.sendyourfiles.com <<http://www.sendyourfiles.com/>> .

Coming up in 2006

To many business owners and managers, the Internet is more like a web of intrigue, littered with bits, bytes and baffling acronyms. However, the path to online success need not be as difficult as it sounds.

At our March meeting you will be provided with a step-by-step guide as to how your business can harness the internet to promote its products and services, access new markets, act as an alternative sales channel and increase productivity. Best of all – it's in plain English!

Earlybirds, this is for you!

In addition to the monthly network nights, HomeBiz members can also drop into the fortnightly members only breakfast meetings. These meetings are unstructured, provide a forum to talk about current issues in your business in a 'safe' environment and enable members to establish and build relationships for possible business alliances and referrals. The breakfasts happen every 2nd Tuesday at 7am at Alta Vita in Eltham. For more information call Daryl on 0433 948258.

allow you to create an account to store files. They then send an email to the other person with a link so they can download the file. Streamload is good as the basic plan is free.

- Free PDF creator
<http://www.cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp>

Geoff Lee from IWS Designs suggests uploading large files to your server (if you have a website) and giving the client the URL address so they can then download it off the internet. That way it doesn't go through the email system. It is still best to zip the file so it becomes as small as possible.

Geoff also recommended Tango dropbox as a really good little ftp program for uploading files to the server. It can be downloaded for free at <http://www.tangoftp.com/>

Erratum: the February issue of the Networker stated that the 2006 membership fee is \$77 per business. Please note this was incorrect, the membership fee of the Nillumbik HomeBiz Network is \$77 per person. My apologies for any confusion that this may have caused.
Ed (Julie)

Our guest speaker will be Craig Reardon from the E Team. Craig is a popular speaker on internet marketing. He worked in the traditional corporate communications fields of print, audio and video, before moving into the emerging internet and multimedia industries in the mid-90s. In 1996 he joined Yellow Pages to work on their first business website offerings, in so doing making the directory giant's first ever online sale.

The **April** meeting will take a financial focus with speakers from Gensys Wealth Advisers talking about estate planning and insurance.

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