



February 2007

Nillumbik HomeBiz Networker

This project is supported by funding from the Australian Government under its Regional Partnerships program.

*Welcome to the
February 2007
edition of the
Networker*

*If you would like to
contribute any
interesting business
based articles for
future HBB
newsletters, please
let us know.*

Send your articles to
lucinda.flynn@nillumbik.vic.gov.au

From the President

Hello everyone and welcome to the first Nillumbik HomeBiz Network newsletter for 2007.

This is a big year for us. We have incorporation coming up in April (please have your say by voting on February 15th), and we will then proceed under our own budgets and plans as a new legal entity.

Through 2007 you will see the results of a number of member working groups. It is fantastic that so many members want to throw their enthusiasm behind these activities that we will all benefit from. We will have some inspired marketing for the network, professional development programs specially designed for us, and events of the same high standard you are use to. We also have a group working whose focus is on ensuring new members get a friendly welcome and are quickly included. We have struggled with this in the past so I hope you all can get behind this and feel responsible for welcoming new members at every event. It's our network and we make it what it is! See you all at the coming events!

On behalf of the Interim Committee, I wish all members success, satisfaction and fun for 2007.

Kind Regards,
Daryl Brooke
President, Interim Committee, Nillumbik HomeBiz Network

Reminder: *HomeBiz Network sponsor receives Australia day award*

**February Network
Night, Thurs 15th
Feb.**

Topic: Sustainability & the
home based business

Guest speaker: Doug
McMillan from 'Stepping
Lightly'

*** we will also be voting
on Incorporating the
Network***

**For further details and to
register, go to
www.hbb.org.au**

2007 Business/Community Group of the Year: Bendigo Bank
(from the Nillumbik Shire Council website)

The Hurstbridge and Diamond Creek branches of the Bendigo Bank support numerous community groups with funding and sponsorship programs.

They foster the development of community spirit with financial support for local events such as the Hurstbridge Wattle Festival, the Diamond Creek Rotary Town Fair and Eltham Jazz & Blues Heritage Festival. They reward excellence in our schools and promote leadership and wellbeing through a Schools Assistance Program.

The Bank encourages residents to be active with sponsorship of a range of sporting clubs & associations including football, gymnastics, cricket, bowling & horse riding. They honour our history by sponsoring the Diamond Creek War Memorial, and they demonstrate a commitment to the environment through the Hurstbridge Traders Association plastic bag reduction scheme. They support cooperative initiatives such as the Nillumbik HomeBiz Network, the Hurstbridge Traders Association and the Diamond Creek Association. They are also proud sponsors of the Nillumbik Tourism Association.

Throughout 2006 Bendigo Bank contributed well over \$100,000 into local community and business initiatives, as well as significant in-kind support from staff. We are pleased to recognise their important contribution to the community by awarding them the 2007 Nillumbik Business/Community Group of the Year.

Winning business philosophies

Change the rules of the game.

Don't play by the established rules; look for ways you can differentiate yourself from the rest. Look outside the box for innovative ideas. The development of your 'unique selling proposition' should be a continuous process.

*'Reinforce
the features
unique to
your
business at
every
opportunity'*

BDSi Biz Tips...

UNIQUE BUSINESS DIFFERENCE – How to stand out from your competitors!

Customers will usually choose one supplier over another because they believe, rightly or wrongly, that their preferred supplier is significantly different to the rest of the market place. Your responsibility is to use every opportunity to foster that belief in the minds of your customers and your prospects. To help you, keep the following things in mind:

- ◆ If things such as price, convenience, levels of service and stock on hand are all equal, what features and benefits of your business can you identify that differentiate you from your competitors?
- ◆ Be aware that if you do not manufacture a unique difference about your business you will always compete on the common denominator – PRICE!
- ◆ Once you genuinely identify your 'unique features' (ask those you trust for their honest opinion), you need to make sure you are emphasising them in your advertising, promotional and point of sale material.

- ◆ Customers place great faith in guarantees and extended warranties – are your differences the sort of things on which you would be prepared to offer a guarantee? Remember that a product or service with a guarantee is perceived as being of higher quality than one without – and this in turn could be sufficient justification for a higher price than is the market average.
- ◆ Use every opportunity during the prospecting, sales, delivery and after sales period to reinforce in the customer's mind the unique differences about your product. After all, these were the reasons why they decided to buy from you in the first place. Make it easy for them to continue to choose to do so!

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Our first HomeBiz baby!!

In the wee hours of January 9th this year, Nadia and Rafael (Living Energy Australia, HomeBiz members) welcomed their beautiful new baby boy - Dante Rafael Merino - into the world.

We would like to extend our heartiest welcome to him too, as the very first baby born into the HomeBiz Network!!

The delightful Dante's current hobbies are scoffing breast milk as fast as possible, sleeping, creating amazingly loud noises in his nappy and pulling countless different faces. However, we expect that before long he will be analysing his best marketing and promotional opportunities, attending strategic planning workshops and creating his own website.

In the meantime, he has uploaded some pictures of himself onto his parent's website so you can start to get to know him.

<http://www.living-energy.com.au/?page=babyphotos>

Look forward to meeting you at one of our meetings Dante!

HomeBiz Breakfast meetings offer members a chance to discuss ideas and issues in a more intimate setting...



February breakfast meeting dates:

Tues 6th & 20th Feb

(photo by Chris Livingstone of Dinkum Digital)

Official HomeBiz Network launch :

On April 19th, 2007, the HomeBiz Network will be officially launched by the Hon Fran Bailey MP

At a special celebratory evening for all HomeBiz members, the honourable Fran Bailey will officially launch the Nillumbik HomeBiz Network as a newly independent Incorporated Association.

In addition to being the Minister for Small Business and Tourism, Fran Bailey is our local member, who supported and advocated for our grant application to the Dept. of Transport and Regional Services, the receipt of which has supported us to follow our goal of incorporating.

Other special guests that will be invited are state politicians, local councillors, and presidents of the 6 local business associations (Hurstbridge Traders Association, Diamond Creek Traders Association, Eltham Chamber of Commerce, Nillumbik Tourism Association, and Eltham and Diamond Creek Rotary Clubs)

HomeBiz members are welcome to invite guests; at a cost of \$25 per head (night is free to members).

Come and celebrate the journey we have been on and our vision for the future!

Business training programs coming your way...

Next week the HomeBiz Network will release its new calendar of events for Feb-Aug 2007. As well as listing all upcoming HomeBiz Events, it will contain details on a number of excellent programs for the small & home based business owner, including:

- **Strategic business planning for home based businesses**
- **Take the next step**, a 7 week course designed to empower small business operators to consider the growth and employment potential of the businesses.
- **Livewire e-business program**: the user friendly, convenient way to learn

about and keep up with developments in the e-business world.

• **Under new management program**: assisting small business owners and those going into business with an integrated package of information, education and networking to help them manage their business more efficiently and effectively.

For more details on any of these programs, check the HomeBiz Events Calendar out next week, or email Lucinda on

Lucinda.flynn@nillumbik.vic.gov.au

Sponsorship opportunity

Glen Katherine Primary School Fete - Sunday 25th March 2007

Unique opportunity to advertise your business

As one of the leading and larger schools in the area, we invite you to be a part of our fun and exciting family day through sponsorship or donation.

Sponsorship From \$200, with prominent signage on the day, acknowledgement in all Fete material and priority advertising provided in our school's newsletter.

Please contact Sandra Davies (Fete Organiser) to obtain more details on 9439 0323 or sandra.davies@bigpond.com