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Union VS Council in garbage battle

By Iliana Stillitano

WASTE services staff at Cumberland Council face an uncertain future with fears the garbage collection will be privatised.

The United Services Union, which represents local government employees, has called on the council administrator to put a halt to any plans to outsourcing services until a new council is elected next year.

Union organiser Holly Murrell, who has started a Change.org petition, said the outsourcing of waste services would not only impact on staff but decrease services to the community.

The move towards privatisation was mooted in a waste service rationalisation report commissioned by administrator Viv May and tabled at the October 6 council meeting.

That report found the current garbage service needed immediate improvement to remain viable – either through the purchase of eight garbage compactors for the in-house service or by contracting out the entire service from November 2017.

Former Holroyd mayor Greg Cummings has been a vocal opponent of outsourcing, describing it as a bid to “corporatis local government”.

“They fail to see that local government is service driven not profit driven,” he said.

“As long as the community feels it’s getting a fair deal, why would you want to reduce the entitlements of locals?”

The report says 17 full time waste services staff would be offered voluntary redundancies or alternative positions while some would retire. Others would be offered assistance to transfer to the successful contractor.

The cost to ratepayers in redundancy and transfer payments would be more than $1.1 million, not including long service and annual leave entitlements.

The report says privatising the kerbside collection would save the council 20 per cent but conceals such a move could leave the council open to industrial action.

General manager Malcolm Ryan said employees’ jobs would be protected.

“Council must consider how we can provide a service to residents that provides the best value for money to ratepayers and delivers high quality outcomes,” he said.

The prospect of privatising the waste collection service has raised the ire of many residents. At a recent council meeting, resident Luke Ahern used the public forum to ask whether there would be an increase in waste collection costs to rate-payers as a result of privatisation.

Mr May responded: “I am not going through all this pain to increase costs.”

Others used the online petition to share their opinion, including one who said: “I think we should let the community who pay the rates decide how we want our services to be managed.”

Mr Cummings said the former Holroyd Council had received awards for its waste service and it shouldn’t be tampered with. He said he feared the administration would not stop at just outsourcing waste services and could turn its attention to other council delivered services like childcare.

“These decisions should be left up to the people who have been elected by the community. I would rather see them bring the election forward,” he said.

A working group, comprising council staff and the United Services Union, has been formed to assess the options outlined in the report. The results of that review are expected by the end of November.

The matter is due to go before the December 21 meeting of council.

Hotel buyer has big plans for redeveloping the sites

AQUISITION

By Red Dwyer

THIE ASX-listed Lantern Hotels Group has added $65.6 million to its coffers through the sale of hotels in Mt Druitt and Amber- vale.

The Lantern Group sold the Uncle Bucks Hotel in Mount Druitt, for $25.3 million to the family-operated De Angelis Group, which owns number of hotels in Western Sydney.

The hotel sits on a 5640 square metres site between the Mt Druitt shopping centre and the hospital, and has redevelopment prospects.

“We have big plans for it, we identified it as under-valued and underdone six months ago,” said Peter De Angelis.

“We’ll sit down and masterplan the whole site, adjust the hotel offering and look at how the retail components work, considering the height and FSH benefits.”

“The Lantern Group sold the Amberville Hotel on a 7200 square metre site within minutes of Campbelltown CBD and Macarthur Square, for $31.2 million to private hotel interests.

The hotel is close to the Greater Macarthur Priority Growth Area, which is expected to deliver up to 33,000 new homes via a staged land release in the surrounding areas of Mount Gilbard, Menangle and Appin.

CBRE Hotels’ Daniel Dragicevich, who was involved in both sales, the two sales had been timed to capitalise on current market conditions and the unprecedented undersupply of quality freehold gaming hotels in Sydney.
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What new super changes mean

SUPERANNUATION
What you should be doing in 2017

By Bart Portelli
SMSF Specialist

AFTER months of Government deliberation, public outcry and political backflips the largest superannuation reform legislation in almost 10 years finally passed both houses of parliament on November 22, 2016.

Though these superannuation changes have been marketed by the government as some kind of Robin Hood approach to a seemingly flawed system, the impact and significance of these changes will be felt by all those saving for retirement especially the wider middle class Australians and not just those considered wealthy.

A bit of background
The Government’s superannuation reforms were first unveiled by Treasurer Scott Morrison in the May budget amid a wave of uproar from experts, the superannuation industry and the general public alike due to the extent and timeline for the introduction of the reforms.

The legislation has undergone a number of changes since the original proposals, the Government’s changes are aimed at reducing the benefits of superannuation to “fairer and sustainable” in the long term by making Australia’s superannuation system “fairer and sustainable” in the long term by reducing the benefits of superannuation to high wealth individuals.

The key changes
• Concessional Contribution cap reduced from $30,000-$35,000 to $25,000.
  The cap on concessional contributions will no longer be determined by age and instead will be $25,000 for everyone.
  • Removal of 10% income tax on deductible personal contributions. The requirement that less than 10% of taxable income must come from wages/salaries has been removed and now anyone can claim a personal deduction for contributions subject to the above caps.
  • Div 293 Tax Income Threshold reduced from $300,000 to $250,000. Taxpayers with personal taxable income more than $250,000 will now need to pay an additional 15% in contribution tax on their concessional contributions.
  • Ability to catch-up on concessional super contributions for those with balances less than $1.6M. Individuals will be able to make additional concessional contributions where they have not used up their cap in the previous 5 years if their balance does not exceed $500,000.

• Ability to make non-concessional super contributions limited to those with balances less than $1.6M. Individuals can no longer make non-concessional contributions once their balance exceeds $1.6 mil.

• Non-concessional contribution cap lowered from $130,000 to $100,000. The ability to bring forward the cap of an additional 2 years’ worth of non-concessional contributions will still be available to those under the age of 65. Those who trigger them bring forward rules in the 2016 or 2017 years and not use up the existing cap by 30 June 2017 will have the remaining cap adjusted down in line with the new cap.

• Low Income Superannuation Tax Offset available to those with low individual taxable income. The current low income super contribution will be replaced with a tax offset for the same amount to those with personal taxable income of less than $37,001.

• Temporary CGT relief available to funds where there is a gain resulting from the $1.6 mil cap. Assets that are moved into accumulation due to the new $1.6 mil cap will be able to have their cost base reset to their 1 July 2017 value to reduce CGT implications in the future.

What should you be doing?
A few things worth thinking about before July 1, 2017 rolls around and most of the changes come into effect are:
• Utilising the $540,000 bring forward non-concessional cap before it drops to only $300,000.
• Starting a transition to retirement pension for the remainder of 2017 financial year while earnings on them are tax free
• Obtaining market valuations on various assets to have their cost base reset and thus benefit from the CGT relief.

These changes, whilst wide reaching, do provide opportunities but only if you act before June 30 2017. CIB Accountants & Advisers will be holding a free seminar on December 6 to further explain the ramifications of these changes. For more information contact Krystina Wildman on (02) 9683 5999 or visit www.cibaccountants.com.au.
West losing to Victoria

By Michelle Pozo

FOCUS on rezoning and servicing industrial land in Western Sydney would curb the loss of business to other states, and ensure NSW was best able to capitalise on the developing Western Sydney Airport, according to an industry expert.

Head of Industry at Mirvac, Stuart Penklis, said there was a “significant decrease of available industrial land in Western Sydney”, and has urged both the State and Federal governments to acknowledge the shortage and to act.

“We have been seeing industrial users located in more traditional areas like Auburn and Silverwater looking to relocate to the west and having problems finding appropriate available land,” he said.

The Employment Lands Development Program 2015 Report indicates that undeveloped serviced land within the Western Sydney Employment Area (WSEA) has declined from 454.7 hectares in 2010 to 66.1 hectares in 2015 - a decline of more than 85 per cent.

Mr Penklis said the take-up of new employment land within the WSEA had averaged 60 hectares per annum since 2008, which meant there was only about a one-year supply of land available for immediate release.

He said this had led to increasing prices and intense competition among buyers and tenants, pushing businesses out of the Sydney market to other states.

“Victoria has an abundance of industrial land supply. We are starting to see industrial users who want to relocate to Western Sydney, looking at Victoria as an opportunity because land is cheaper and more available.

“From a rental perspective, rents are half the cost in Victoria compared to NSW,” said Mr Penklis.

Knight Frank Managing Director - Sydney West, David Morris, said there was “plenty of land available” but agreed there was a shortage of serviced industrial land.

He said the 2200 hectare Western Sydney Employment Area, taking in Eastern Creek and Erskine Park, still had about 1300 hectares available for development.

Mr Morris said businesses would migrate west along the M2, M4 and M5 corridors - mopping up a lot of the vacant land out west - for a few cycles before they would move interstate.

Mr Penklis said the proposed airport was fantastic but it was critical that more land be released in the region to ensure supply could cater for the demand it would bring.

Driving business

Problem: Shortage of serviced, industrial land in Western Sydney could drive business interstate.

Solution: Rezoning and service industrial land, and give the private sector more clarity as to the timing of infrastructure roll out.

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Start-Up

Business in Heels launches chapters

One of the world’s leading women’s business groups is launching in Western Sydney.

Local business woman, Desiree Taylor is launching the Western Sydney and Sydney Penrith branches of Business in Heels (BIH).

BIH is a successful global networking operation where women can exchange business with their trusted network: turning passion into profit.

“I want to create an environment where women entrepreneurs can come along to our event evenings, take something of value home with them to implement into their businesses, connect with other like-minded women and leave feeling completely inspired and supported,” says Desiree Taylor.

Desiree says there are 668,670 women operating a small business in Australia, more than 39.7% of small businesses will fail in their first three years of operation (ABS report 2013). BIH currently connects 50,000 business women, mainly in Australia and operates in 35 locations.

BIH new online services and products exchange platform is called Xchange, which launched early September. It enables all members to buy and sell or trade skills and products at a rate worked out by the participants.

This hands-off approach allows market forces to determine outcomes and people to value themselves as they see fit. In only a month thousands have joined the platform.

Desiree runs Free Yourself Holistic Health Coaching. She is one of many women who has benefited from her connection to BIH. After attending a BIH event and meeting with Lisa Sweeney at a PR conference, Desiree decided to take over the Business in Heels branches both in Western Sydney and Sydney Penrith.

To find out more contact Desiree Taylor on 0430 486 047 or desiree@businessinheels.com

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New hotel for St Marys Leagues

By Red Dwyer

The long-awaited goal of the St Marys Rugby League Club is expected to be realised in late 2017 with the opening of a six-storey hotel.

The UK-based multinational InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) is developing the $18.8 million Holiday Inn Express in conjunction with the leagues club.

The hotel is part of the club’s $40 million expansion plan. Built by FDC Construction and to be known as the Holiday Inn Sydney St Marys, the hotel will be located adjacent to the existing club and linked to it by a covered walkway to form part of the club’s entertainment precinct.

The hotel will also include a business centre, gym and meeting rooms, and additional parking will be provided.

“We are delighted to announce this new hotel which will be developed over the coming years,” said club CEO, Rod Desborough.

The head of development Australasia & Japan, IHG Matt Tripolone, said the deal was “very important and a timely one for IHG”.

“As we’ve seen with the success of our other Holiday Inn franchises in Warwick Farm and Parramatta, this will be a very popular accommodation option for visitors to the area, and a solid investment for St Marys Rugby League Club.”

Happy workplace = happy business

By Michelle Pozo

CREATING a positive workplace culture could help decrease staff turnover, according to the Australian Institute of Management (AIM).

AIM has released a new report revealing staff retention is a growing concern for businesses.

The 2016 Staff Retention Report found more than half of businesses (54.6 per cent) across Australia were concerned about staff retention, up from 48.8 per cent last year.

The report was based on findings from the National Salary Survey, released earlier this year, which revealed four in five Australians are unhappy at work.

It found a high staff turnover could threaten a business, with organisations reporting increased stress, reduced staff morale and loss of corporate intelligence affecting the remaining workforce.

A high staff turnover could also lead to reduced customer service, satisfaction and productivity, in addition to the cost of recruiting and training new staff.

The report found employees were leaving jobs to look for a new challenge, better training and development opportunities, or to seek improved recognition in a role - all of which were more important than financial reward.

AIM Chief Executive Officer, David Pich, said retaining staff was not easy, but there were strategies businesses could consider to reduce their resignation rates.

He encouraged businesses to reassess their current pay models and create a positive and inspiring workplace culture.

“Employees can become restless in roles that have limited career advancements or where they don’t enjoy their time at work,” Mr Pich said.

To motivate and engage staff, managers and leaders need to understand the motivations of their employees and implement strong tactics to keep valuable team members.

The most significant decrease in resignation rates in 2016, compared to 2015, were recorded in the wholesale machinery/auto industry (decreasing from 13.9 per cent to 10.6 per cent), while the business and professional services industry recorded the highest resignation rates, at 15.4 per cent.

When broken down by financial turnover, companies with an annual turnover of more than $200 million recorded the most significant decrease in resignation rates – a drop from 13.7 per cent in 2015 to 11.3 per cent in 2016.

Organisations with an annual turnover of $5 million to $10 million, recorded the highest resignation rates in 2016, at 12.6 per cent.

Mr Pich said about a third of our working ages lives were spent doing just that - working.

“It is vital our experiences in the workplace are positive as they impact on our overall well being and on society as a whole,” he said.

High staff turnover can:

• Be a threat to business in terms of reduced staff morale, loss of corporate intelligence, reduced customer service and the cost of recruiting and training new staff.

• Be addressed through HR strategies like Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies. The report found the average resignation rate is lower in organisations with formal CSR policies.
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LIMITED AVAILABILITY
Classic Yes Minister comes alive

By Iliana Stillitano

AUDIENCES will be in for a treat as they step into the whirlwind world of politics when Boxboards Theatre brings the classic British comedy Yes, Prime Minister to the stage.

The picturesque Waldorf Leura Gardens Resort will be the backdrop for the popular political satire when it opens in January.

Artistic director Matthew Barry said rehearsals were underway and he was excited to see the well-known and loved characters come to life.

“Getting the right person for each character is important,” he said. “The rehearsal process is very much about finding the vocal and physical traits of the original actor and using them to build the characterisation.”

Boxboards newcomer John Dwyer gives a quirky performance to build the characterisation. “He was amazing so the cast all look up to him,” Mr Barry said. “They become the guests and constituents of the Prime Minister. We really make them part of the whole world of the show we are doing. The characters have their script but also improvise with the guests who love to join in to create a lot of hilarity.”

Yes, Prime Minister is directed by Ben Wilson-Hill who played General Melchett in Blackadder.

“Mr Barry said. “It is rare to have such a shared vision between a venue and a performance group. The Waldorf create very delectable menus for the evening and provide accommodation at the beautiful Lady Fairfax property,” he said.

Yes, Prime Minister runs every Friday and Saturday from January 6-28, 2017 at 6pm. Tickets are $89 per adult on Fridays and includes the show and a three-course dinner or $109 on Saturdays. A matinee performance will also be held January 28 at 12pm and tickets are $89 for the show and lunch.

Bookings: www.leuragardensresort.com.au

Funding will transform the Nepean Hospital

By Michael Walls

PENRITH Council wants to ensure that infrastructure and jobs are delivered to match the increasing population of the city.

Penrith Mayor John Thain said the NSW Government’s announcement of a $550 million redevelopment of Nepean Hospital is a sign of the confidence in the role Penrith will play in a growing Sydney.

An upgraded emergency department, with a paediatric assessment and treatment area, a safe assessment room and an upgrade of the mobile duress systems and CCTV is the first piece of work to begin in the redevelopment of Nepean Hospital.

The redevelopment also includes:

- A new clinical services block.
- Expanded and upgraded medical imaging.
- At least 12 new operating theatres.
- 18 birthing suites in new accommodation.
- A new Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.
- More than 200 overnight beds in new accommodation.
- A new helipad.
- New community health services.

“Nepean Hospital has one of the busiest Emergency Departments and the longest wait times for elective surgery in the state,” he said. “This funding will not only help turn these statistics around,” Mayor Thain said.

Nepean Hospital is an integral hub of Penrith’s Health and Education Precinct (PHEP). The Precinct has the potential to create 12,000 jobs.

Health Minister Jillian Skinner said work on the new emergency department will start immediately. Work will start on new clinical services building in 2018 and is expected to be finished in 2021.
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**Testing drug free industrial precincts**

By Craig Hingston
Manufacturing Editor

Drug Safe Communities has announced a strategy to establish the nation’s first drug safe industrial community in Western Sydney.

The organisation, which was founded by long time anti-drugs campaigner Michael White, will focus its efforts initially on the Wetherill Park-Smithfield region.

Michael started his crusade in the late 90s after losing his business partner to heroin addiction, a tragedy which led to the closure of that business.

**Property executive to lead SOPA**

Well-known businessman who has extensive knowledge of the property has become chief executive of the Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

Former Colonial First State Asset Management fund manager, Charles Moore, steps into the position as SOPA heads for “biggest revitalisation of Sydney Olympic Park in its history”.

The Sydney Olympic Park Masterplan 2030 could see up to 10,000 units and more than 100,000sq m of retail space developed alongside a rejuvenated commercial core.

Listed giants GPT Group, Dexus Property and Growthpoint Properties Australia are preparing plans to capitalise on plans unveiled by the NSW government last month for towers of up to 45 storeys in the precinct.

Mr Moore was most recently principal and managing director at the private Cortex Consulting and was advising the NSW government on property strategies.

Before that he headed the listed Commonwealth Property Office Fund, which controlled a $4bn portfolio before it was taken over by Dexus Property Group and the CPP Investment Board.

NSW Minister for Sport, Stuart Ayres, said Mr Moore had an extensive knowledge of the property sector, a deep understanding of development of community precincts, and a proven track record of strong leadership.

“With the recent release of SOPA’s 2030 Master Plan outlining the biggest revitalisation of Sydney Olympic Park in its history, I have great confidence in Charles’s leadership to deliver the vision for the Park,” he said.

The SOPA board, chaired by former NSW premier John Fahey, will support the overhaul, which is set to house 23,500 residents, businesses, new transport links, parklands and retail.

The Olympic Park precinct contains assets of about $1.8 billion, with assets under lease including residential, retail and commercial office developments, ANZ Stadium, Allphones Arena and Sydney Showgrounds.

“For employers, it also means increased productivity, improved morale and reduced insurance premiums when your work place is drug safe.”

Michael said his organisation has already reduced drug use from 15 percent to just one percent in Western Sydney companies.

“Seventy percent of drug users are employed. They need their jobs to support their habits. Two thirds of them use their drugs at work,” he said.

“Some business owners believe they know their staff but my own story shows just how you can be taken completely by surprise and lose everything you have to drugs.”

“When you consider that some employees are operating complex equipment and machinery and they drive vehicles on the road in warehouses, what is the potential risk to them and their work mates.”

Michael said Drug Safe Communities assists employers by running drug awareness workshops. Testing of staff is confidential and they try to keep people in their jobs. When they find people with an addiction issue they refer them to specially trained counselling services.

Dr Tharid Ali is preparing to meet with businesses in Wetherill Park and Smithfield.

Drug Safe Communities provides screening and testing services (oral fluid, urine and alcohol), assistance with development of policies and procedures, education workshops and training, competency courses, alcohol and other drugs awareness, mobile clinics, self-testing kits and test results analysis.

Contact the Cumberland Business Chamber for more information: 02 9737 4794.
Welcome
Welcome to the November edition of KPMG Family Business feature. How do you inspire your people? Attaining the right balance between traditional ideas and the mind-set of family members and management is key to achieving innovation. How does your business fare with the many internal and external business risks that you are faced with in today’s environment? And what is your relationship to wealth? We explore these three diverse and interesting topics. Please feel free to contact me on 9455 9996 or davidpring@kpmg.com.au to discuss this month’s features.

Moving from now to next

PROGRESS

First, understand what it is you own and how you own it. Then ask yourself ‘Why?’ Understanding your relationship to wealth will be important in developing future plans.

When planning a big trip, we instinctively think about the itinerary, what we need to pack, what time we have to leave and what we need to do between now and then to have as stress – free a break as possible.

Planning based on a particular objective and singular transaction comes naturally to most of us. However, faced with the prospect of planning the journey of transitioning wealth many of us hesitate. So to help let’s start with an understanding of the current structure and ownership.

First step – an inventory of what we own and how we own it

By first understanding the nature of the assets owned and structure of ownership, it is possible to develop a plan for the future evolution and management of the wealth at hand.

It is also useful to have a reference point at which to measure future progress and perhaps more, importantly, as the basis upon which you can provide your family with place to start a conversation... This is what we own and this is how we own it.

As a basis for explaining a current position this is a good place to start discussing your wealth.

Next step – ‘why?’

In contemplating, the future management of your wealth, first understanding your own feelings around being financially comfortable and your relationship to wealth is important. What are your hopes and expectations for your wealth? How would you like your wealth to be applied in the future?

Many struggle to come to terms with their wealth and the extent to which being wealthy defines who they are. How you think about your wealth is a key determinant in developing plans for subsequent transfer and ownership.

For many, of course, the question is not how they think their wealth affects them but more significantly, how they think their wealth will affect their family.

In discussions with wealth owners around these concerns, the conversation often starts with anecdotes of mis-spent inheritances and the failures of friends’ children, leaving them paralysed for fear of the consequences of doing something untoward to their own offspring.

In this regard many have no touch point or firsthand experience to rely on because, many have never inherited themselves. Dennis Jaffe, a leading US family adviser, refers to “immigrants to Wealth” as a means of describing the sense of arriving in a strange place not speaking the language or having the behavioural norms to fit in.

What we do know is that ‘failure to communicate’ is the number one cause for the dissipation of family wealth through dispute or mismanagement.

So knowing your own feelings is the basis for asking others their opinion. If you have fears find ways to express them. Bearing in mind, your need to protect could be seen as a lack of trust, if the basis of your action is not explained.

ARTICLE FIRST PUBLISHED BY BILL NOYE – KPMG PARTNER ENTERPRISE, AUSTRALIAN PRACTICE.
Achieving innovation in your family business by inspiring your people

MOTIVATION

FAMILY businesses succeed through multiple generations by striving to be the best. As the world around us changes at an ever faster rate it’s important to inspire management and family members to innovate and grow.

KPMG practice People Powered Performance specialist Ingrid Waterfield joined with Donna Mahony of Lane4 to bring a deeper understanding of what it takes for family businesses to create a high performance environment.

When coaching Family Businesses in innovation, the ultimate challenge is in achieving the balance between the traditions of the family’s business with innovative ideas and business practices that will enhance the growth, profit and sustainability of the family’s business.

To develop a successful family business innovation program, mind set of both management and family members will need to be addressed and challenged.

These include:

- Employee motivation - the difference between ‘emergent passion’ and ‘reason’. In non-family businesses the business model is based on ‘rational’ problems and ‘rational solutions’. In family businesses you have ‘rational’ problems and ‘emotional solutions’. In every family business decisions are not based on what is best for the business but what is best for the family or a member of the family.

- Envisioning Capabilities – the difference between ‘what you wish/want’ versus ‘what is’. Being able to honestly and accurately assess the strengths and weaknesses of your family’s business is the starting point.

- Today’s ‘Generation Y’ expect to have potentially 15-16 different employment during the length of their career. This means that the family business of the future will be influenced by the need for increased flexibility across the workplace and the changing demands of both employees and family members.

The organisational responses will be:

- The organisational structure needs to be fit for purpose. This includes the design of both the organization and the process, so that both the structure and the environment are aligned. The structure and the environment are continuously evaluated to ensure they are fit for purpose.

- Organisational structure - how a business is structured can also mitigate or enhance a business’s success. It’s paramount importance that a cohesive and efficient structure is established and maintained.

- Organisational culture – how your business is structured can also mitigate or enhance a business’s success. It’s necessary for success to be fit for purpose. This includes the design of both the organization and the process, so that both the structure and the environment are aligned. The structure and the environment are continuously evaluated to ensure they are fit for purpose.

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When assessing how organisational structure might pose a risk to your business, evaluate the jobs being done in tandem with one another.

Politics and Mismanagement - internal company politics, particularly in family businesses, can be debilitating, causing management and staff alike to focus, not on the market and the job at hand, but on what’s happening internally.

Taking your eye off the ball can ultimately open the door to competitors stealing your market share. Mismangement – including a lack of proper control over finances, production, labour and marketing – results in increased costs for the business, which will affect your business’s bottom line.

Resources - having enough financial and human resources is crucial, if your business is lacking in either of these, you will find it difficult to achieve your business goals. Not only does a lack of resources impinge on the nature and scope of the work you are able to take on, but it can also impact significantly on staff morale.

Innovation - whether it relates to product development, marketing and promotion or staff welfare, innovation is what keeps a business one step ahead of its rivals. A lack of innovation, therefore, can pose a risk to business success as a company becomes stagnant and irrelevant in a changing marketplace.

Incentives - did you know that incentivising employees could prove to be a business risk, if it’s not done correctly, fairly and appropriately? Make sure that you explore the right incentive and reward schemes for your business – for example, will group or individual performance bonuses, production bonuses or non-monetary rewards achieve the best results by reinforcing the behaviour you wish to see in your staff?

Internal, external pressures for success

RISKS

N today’s market environment every business potentially faces challenges, or risks. Whilst risks are becoming more complex, the ability to manage and mitigate them is a necessity for the company’s success.

Whilst business risks can never be entirely eliminated, being aware of what these risks are and where they come from can help you better manage them if they occur.

Risks can be categorized into three major risk factors – internal factors (circumstances within your organisation), external factors (those in the wider business environment) and legislative can impact on business, which is generally classified into two major risk factors – internal factors (circumstances within your organisation) or external factors (those in the wider business environment).

Internal business risks

Often, businesses can be so focused on negotiating perceived threats in the greater business environment that they fail to identify factors within the company which could threaten its success.

Take a look at these common internal business risks and think about how you think your business fares with regards to each one:

Stability - the ability of a business to manage its finances, meet its debt obligations and return capital to its investors is integral to its success. A business which is financially stable can grow its profits more easily than one which is not. Furthermore investors, lenders and employees are more willing to engage with and invest in a financially stable company.

In addition, management stability and branding stability contribute to a company’s overall impression of being a sound and stable venture. The reverse is true for businesses which are unstable, instability can quickly lead to decreasing profits and ultimately bankruptcy.

Organisational structure - how a business is structured can also mitigate or enhance a business’s success. It’s necessary for success to be fit for purpose. This includes the design of both the organization and the process, so that both the structure and the environment are aligned. The structure and the environment are continuously evaluated to ensure they are fit for purpose.

When assessing how organisational structure might pose a risk to your business, evaluate the jobs being done in tandem with one another.

Politics and Mismanagement - internal company politics, particularly in family businesses, can be debilitating, causing management and staff alike to focus, not on the market and the job at hand, but on what’s happening internally.

Taking your eye off the ball can ultimately open the door to competitors stealing your market share. Mismangement – including a lack of proper control over finances, production, labour and marketing – results in increased costs for the business, which will affect your business’s bottom line.

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External business risks

Risks in the greater business environment include:

The Economy – whether it’s boom time or bust, how the economy is doing impacts on your business. While you may not have control over the economy at large, understanding what drives it can help you manage threats and maximise opportunities.

Political-Legal Factors – changes in government or government policies and legislation can impact on business, which is generally classified into two major risk factors – internal factors (circumstances within your organisation) or external factors (those in the wider business environment).

Socio-Cultural Factors – ignore these at your peril.

Technology – if you wish to remain relevant, make sure that you monitor technology and its impact on your field and in the wider business sphere.

Shareholders – a business manager, your company’s shareholders and future profits for future growth may be at odds with company shareholders who wish to take value out of the business. This business approach – which may be more focused on personal than business wealth – can be very risky indeed for a business and requires careful yet firm management. 

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A step-by-step guide to get some entrepreneurial spirit into your life

By Lianne Taylor
Senior Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and International Business, Anglia Ruskin University

WHEN confronted by life, we are each bound within the scope and the limits of the perspectives we have adopted and nurtured over our lives. In times of uncertainty we might be tempted to play it safe, pull up the drawbridge and look enviously out as others grab the opportunities we have missed. Entrepreneurs can appear to be a different kind of beast altogether – starting businesses, launching products, failing and starting again. In truth, though, we can all adopt their characteristics to change our own perspectives on life.

Step one
Start by viewing life and opportunities through the eyes of a colleague, customer, friend or even a child and you will experience something new. Entrepreneurs try and see this from their customer’s perspective – how would they use this product or service; how could it be useful for them and what would they think about it? This helps us to break down the cognitive or mental maps that limit idea creation.

For example, the High Line, now a vibrant tourist attraction in a multicultural area of New York, used to be a derelict train track. Two ordinary New Yorkers imagined what people would enjoy and initiated a collaboration to transform an eyesore into a delight. It is essential that we are allowed to dream in our own ideas about life and relationships. Confidence is developed by knowing what your personal strengths are. And if you don’t know, adopt the entrepreneurial eagerness to learn, or ‘steal with your eyes and ears’. Use the intoxicating blend of knowledge and introduction to introduce some entrepreneurial flair where you need it the most.

Step two
Take the plunge. And ignore the impulse to “do things properly”. Easy to say, hard to do. But it does mark out the entrepreneurs. Much of the time fear prevents action, and the desire to have all the answers delays using intuition.

Peter Taylor, CEO and chairman of TTP Group Plc, an award winning technology and product development company based in Cambridge, said in a recent interview: “Management is something we don’t want a lot of, it needs to be intuitive.”

For an entrepreneur this means less time following processes and procedures and more time for action. Have a go and let it evolve, because the first action you take might be wrong, but you would have learned something from it.

In a world driven by metrics, entrepreneurs use intuition when information is lacking. However, as any entrepreneur will tell you, analyse and use the detail, but don’t ignore your inner voice.

Confidence is developed by knowing what you are able to do; know yourself and know your personal strengths. And if you don’t know, adopt the entrepreneurial eagerness to learn, or ‘steal with your eyes and ears’. Use the intoxicating blend of knowledge and intuition to introduce some entrepreneurial flair where you need it the most.

Step three
Collaborate with others in a meaningful way. Although some may believe the entrepreneurial spirit is single-minded, many entrepreneurs appreciate the power of collective cognition or thinking together.

That idea of being “in this together” is a significant entrepreneurial driver that builds trust. The spirit of co-creating with colleagues and customers, testing your theories and products and services breaks down our mental maps of how the world works. These extrinsic behaviours and interactions start to unpick the intrinsic, sometimes unobtainable thoughts, that bind us to our limitations of the perspectives we have bound within the scope and the limits of the perspectives we have adopted and nurtured over our lives.

The narrative of successes is handed down through generational story telling. Attribution theory means that we try and explain events and find reasons for how and why our life is the way it is. By sharing and attributing our successes to others, we generate a culture of belonging.

Step four
Grow through the uncertainty we face. We have a choice to make in thinking about whether something is a threat or an opportunity. Faced with uncertainty, we all expend energy trying to reduce cognitive dissonance or in other words, sidestep the contradictory arguments. This reduces the ability to learn. It is understandable that deciding to be comfortable with uncertainty feels like a contradiction. But having courage and patience means that the entrepreneurial spirit is comfortable with standing on shaky ground.

Step five
Share your glory. People attribute their success to various things, but there is always more than one person that is part of the story. Within families and family businesses the entrepreneurial spirit is kept alive by sharing stories.

The narrative of successes is handed down through generational story telling. Attribution theory means that we try and explain events and find reasons for how and why our life is the way it is. By sharing and attributing our successes to others, we generate a culture of belonging.

Step six
Take an hour or two to day dream. Entrepreneurial spirits have enjoyed the benefits of this as part of their lives in work and play. It is essential that we are allowed to dream in order to create, allowing the neural networks in the brain to make connections or create the dots. This might feel like a waste of time, mostly because the education system discourages gazing out of classroom windows.

However, because of the ability of the brain to continually change itself throughout your life, letting your mind wander provides it with fertile ground.

Answers to questions are found and new ideas created. Immerse yourself in a walk by the seaside and the grey matter in your brain has more food for thought without you having to do any work. Put it all together and what do you get? Well maybe others will soon be wondering why it’s you who seems to be grasping all the opportunities.

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Tell-tale signs of bullying

By Brett Murray

In recent articles, we discussed what bullying is and is not, the difference between bullying and assertive behaviour or leadership.

In this article, we want to look towards how we can help. I believe the first step in helping reduce and eradicate bullying is to know when someone is being bullied.

Research shows that 27% of students who suffer from long term bullying never tell anyone. Many victims of workplace bullying fear retribution if they report being bullied at work.

Victims often feel isolated, alone and powerless. If we as a community want to make a difference, then we must be vigilant, disciplined and alert to the tell-tale signs of people who are being bullied.

For parents, if you are feeling something isn’t quite right, you suspect that your child may be getting bullied, the best way to find out is through engaging, Observe their behaviour. If they are beginning to withdraw from normal family life, they are becoming more introverted, perhaps they are occasionally lash out at family pets that they are normally very close and affectionate with, or they become more aggressive towards siblings. These are classic signs something is going on.

If they withdraw from extra curricular activities that they normally love, coming up with all kinds of excuses why they don’t want to go, then there is obviously something going on.

At this point it is important not to lose! If your child divulges that they are in fact being bullied, then respond, DON’T react. Reassure your child that you will take care of the problem, thank them for trusting you, and reaffirm their value and that it is never their fault.

At the workplace, the same patterns of behaviour can occur. When someone is being bullied, not just harassed, but bullied over a long period of time, you will see that the amount of sick days increases, their punctuality waivers, they isolate, withdraw, are reluctant to turn up to work social gatherings, these are all tell-tale signs and need to be noticed.

By noticing we are aware, if we are aware we can say something, by saying something we can cause positive change.
Two worthy charities benefit

THE Mayoress of Blacktown City, Anne Bali, is calling on residents and business to remember those less fortunate at Christmas by donating a gift to the Mayoress’ Community Christmas Gift Appeal.

“The annual Appeal seeks local businesses, community groups and residents to donate gifts to those less fortunate in our community.

“This year the gift appeal is focused around giving to two wonderful local charities; Junaya Family Development Services and Kids West and donations of money will go to the Blacktown Mt Druitt Hospitals Foundation,” Mayorress Bali said.

“Junaya Family Development Services is a community based organisation offering Early Intervention Services and support for families with children between the ages of 0-18 years old, she said.

“Kids West is a local children’s charity that raises funds for medical research. It also develops and distributes educational programs dealing with accident awareness and raise money for medical equipment for children living in Western Sydney.”

“The Appeal is an opportunity for the people of Blacktown City to show their generosity by helping out those doing it tough this Christmas,” Mayorress Bali said.

Gifts are collected for children aged up to 16 years. Gift suggestions include toys, books, new clothing and non-perishable goods.

Penrith festival a REAL success

PENRITH Mayor Councillor John Thain has declared the inaugural Real Festival a success, with more than 20,000 people attending the two-day event at the Nepean River over the weekend.

“Council delivered one of the best events I’ve ever been to over the past weekend,” Cr Thain said. “I couldn’t be happier with the result or more proud of those involved in making the Real Festival happen.”

“The success of this event is not only measured by the number of people who attended, but also in the number of people who expressed their thanks and went out of their way to give positive feedback.”

“Thank you to the members of our community and those who travelled from other areas to attend on Friday night and Saturday. It was wonderful to see so many people enjoying themselves by our beautiful Nepean River,” Cr Thain said.

“Of course this event wouldn’t have been possible without our sponsors and we’re thankful to Busways, JK Williams, The Western Weekender, Vintage FM, Nutrition Station and Club Paceway for their support.”

Penrith Mayor Councillor John Thain at the Real Festival.

Blacktown Hospital CEO Sue Ann Redmond (glasses), Junaya reps Debra Deering (Santa bear) and Paulo Postage (snake) and Mayoress Ann Bali (pink jacket).

Kids West CEO, Trevor Oldfield, Mayoress Anne Bali and Mayor Stephen Bali.

Leave gifts unwrapped or in a gift bag for ease of distribution. Donate to either organisation by buying a Christmas gift and leaving it under the tree at various places in throughout Blacktown city.

Gifts will be accepted up until Thursday, December 15, 2016. For a list of collection points visit: www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au

Lt ondares Bali, is calling on residents to donate gifts to those less fortunate in our community.

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Penrith Mayor Councillor John Thain at the Real Festival.
RAY White Commercial NSW is set to take the commercial real estate market in Western Sydney by storm with the recent opening of a new office in Parramatta. Managing director and partner, Jeff Moxham, said the decision to open in George Street was key to the agency’s growing success.

“Parramatta is the geographical centre of Sydney and is becoming such a powerhouse of economic growth,” Mr Moxham said. “It’s the capital of Western Sydney really and has some very exciting years ahead of it in terms of the development that is coming up.”

Parramatta is the second of several planned new offices for Ray White Commercial NSW which already has a base in the Sydney CBD. It will open an office in the Sutherland Shire by February next year followed by North Sydney soon after.

And it comes off the back of a successful two years for the business which has sold $600 million worth of property in that time.

“We share the same view that there is a real space for family values and a personal approach in the corporate environment,” he said. “As a business we’re hugely passionate about the value of long term relationships and that really is what our business is based on. And we’re always striving to take the business and our services to the next level.”

Real estate is in the blood of both Mr Moxham and Mr White. Mr Moxham’s grandfather, Cyril Moxham, started Moxham Real Estate in the 1950s and his father John Moxham was integral to the business.

Ray White Group, which was this year named one of the top 50 family businesses in the world by Ernst & Young, started out with one office in rural Queensland and now boasts more than 1000 offices across 11 countries.

Asked what his forebear Thomas Moxham would think of the move to Parramatta, Mr Moxham said: “I think he would proud and humbled by it - and be just as excited as I am.”

RAY White Commercial NSW is at Level 6, 80 George Street, Parramatta.

Iconic property families open office
2016 THE YEAR RAY WHITE ACHIEVED GLOBAL RECOGNITION

This year the Ray White Group were named by EY (Ernst & Young) as one of the Top 50 family businesses in the world, as part of their famous international and Entrepreneur of the Year program that has been running since 2001 – next to the likes of IKEA, Ford, ALDI, Walmart, 20th Century Fox and more.

Commercial_Know How.

Annual turnover exceeding $44 billion

$3.9 billion + managed commercial properties

1 in every 10 properties sold in Australasia is sold by Ray White

The Ray White network is approaching 1,000 locally owned & operated offices in more than 10 countries

$2.5 billion commercial sales and leasing transactions each year.

Over 2,500 leasing deals per year

More commercial auctions than any other real estate group

250 specialist commercial agents in over 45 locations
SYDNEY FESTIVAL BRINGS A WORLD OF SURPRISES TO PARRAMATTA

A world-class line-up of Australian and international performers will bring energy and colour to the summer season when Sydney Festival returns to Parramatta this January with a dedicated program of events.

The 2017 Parramatta program features a number of world premiere and Australian exclusive works, as well as a new festival precinct, Circus City in Prince Alfred Square, where Riverside Theatres and the Spaghetti Circus Big Top will bring a ten-day celebration of physical performance exclusively to Parramatta.

Parramatta's 40,000 year Indigenous history will be celebrated with the interactive work *Bayala*, and the National Theatre of Parramatta will bring balmy summer nights and Middle-Eastern storytelling to one of Parramatta's dining institutions El-Phoenician in *Hakawati*.

FOR the first time, the free *Symphony Under the Stars* concert will also be presented in Parramatta as part of Sydney Festival, at The Crescent within the World-Heritage listed Parramatta Park.

"Great cities have great festivals, and in 2017 Sydney Festival joins award-winning events including Parramatta Lanes, Tropfest and Parramasala in calling our City home," Ms Chadwick continued.

For full details and Festival program visit www.sydneyfestival.org.au

www.cityofparramatta.com.au

City of Parramatta has welcomed the State Government’s announcement that it will build a new western metro line as part of an integrated transport plan centred on Parramatta which includes the Parramatta light rail project.

The announcement of the Sydney Metro West reaffirms Parramatta’s position as Sydney’s Central City and acknowledges the need for improved transport links to the City, which is set to undergo a major transformation over the next five years underpinned by unprecedented levels of public and private investment.

The underground line will become the new spine of Sydney’s public transport system. It will effectively double rail capacity between the Eastern and Central CBDs and take pressure off the busy western railway line.

Sydney Metro West will be able to move 40,000 people an hour in each direction between the CBDs of Parramatta and Sydney, running via the Bays Precinct and Olympic Park and servicing a rapidly growing population and employment base along that corridor.

The integrated transport plan will also support the additional 41,000 residents and 186,000 workers expected to be in Parramatta by 2021.

Council looks forward to working with the Government during the planning phase of the Sydney Metro West project to identify possible locations for underground stations in the Parramatta LGA, including new stations at Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park.

City of Parramatta is encouraged by the Government’s statement that it will investigate innovative ways to reduce travel times between the Parramatta and Sydney CBDs.

A joint Federal and State Government scoping study of western Sydney rail needs, including a possible fast rail service linking Parramatta and Western Sydney Airport, is due for release before July 2017. The Sydney Metro West line is forecast to be operational in the second half of the 2020s.
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CHEERS!
To thinking ahead.

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The Access News Australia Regional Roundtable is an invitation-only forum of influential people that have an interest in developing business excellence, exchanging ideas and networking. The ANARR meets in a private board room setting. Following is an edited transcript of the latest Round Table session which was held at Esplanade Norwest sales offices.
Anthony Moss: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome. Great to have you here this morning. A special thank you to Michael and Access News Australia for pulling together this august group of local business people, local leaders, local Council, to talk about the Sydney Hills Opportunities, Road Blocks and Solutions. And a special thank also to our host for today. Here we are in the lovely display rooms of Esplanade, Norwest Lake. Thank you to Jim Taggart for attending. Jim has often chaired these round table meetings and it’s great to have you as a participant in these meetings too, Jim. Ok, we might start with introductions please. Shall we start with Steve?

Steve Grant: Steve Grant, Capital Blue-stone. Our business has been going for 27 years this year. I walked into Norwest Business Park before there was a building built and – just an opportunity. And it’s been great for us. We’ve done 45 buildings. Esplanade is our latest that we have underway at Norwest, on the site of the Ice Skating Rink. And I’m very pleased to be here and to give some thoughts.

Michael Edgar: Michael Edgar, Group Manager - Strategic Planning, Hills Shire Council. A local government career of slightly over 30 years – 11 of them here at the Hills. I don’t think I need to tell too many people around the table the Hills is really, really booming. And it’s really, you know, on the back of the economy broadly but thanks to a - in a lot of ways – the investment of government in critical infrastructure – road and rail – to be honest.

David Inkster: David Inkster, PRD Norwest – local, commercial and residential real estate agent. We’re involved very much with this project at Esplanade. Thank you, Steve. We’ve been in business for 18 years and we’ve seen a lot of changes. I only echo the last 2 people in my thoughts around that. But excited, I guess moreso, with what’s to come. Jim Taggart: Jim Taggart. Known to most of you for a variety of reasons. Very pleased to be here, if I can say. I do some consulting work. I think that’s probably the easiest way to say it. I don’t really know what to say.

Michael Walls: Michael Walls. I’m the publisher of Western Sydney Business Access and several other publications. We’ve been a gold partner of the Hills Chamber for some years and we are very connected in the region, sponsoring major regional events such as Tropfest, the Corporate Triathlon series and so on. The Hills is a very important part of our base. Thank you everyone for coming along today.

Andrew Frank: Andrew Frank. I’m Managing Director of Frank Legal. We’re a legal firm that has 2 divisions – that’s business and corporate, and personal. So we’re very concerned about the individuals in the Hills, but we’re also concerned about business and corporate in the Hills. The firm has 3 significant pillars that we base our whole practice on. One is knowledge – knowledge for us, knowledge for clients, and knowledge for the broader community that we want to share. The second one is integrity – and that is, the whole notion of ensuring that, you know, work’s done in a way that achieves the goals for the clients – client – all the time. The third element which is important is community, both within the practice and beyond the practice. We see that lawyers have a very important role to be part of the community, serving the community within the community.

Anthony Moss: Great. Thank you. Alicia Sylvester: I’m Alicia Sylvester from Left Field Public Relations. We work very closely with Capital Bluestone across their projects across Sydney. We specialise in property development. We know that people have a fundamental fear towards change and it’s our job to connect with and partner with the community to help them overcome this natural fear and to help them get excited about how their community is changing, particularly here in the Hills. We have quite a few clients around this area. It is such a boom area. And it’s about getting community on board with the opportunities that come with that kind of growth.

Richard Holland: Richard Holland from the Sydney Hills Business Chamber. I’m the Membership and Engagement Manager. It’s a role that I take very seriously and I love. We basically help people to connect, to develop, to promote and also to speak within the local area. And I throw in behind that my 22 years of networking and being around businesses and helping people and working for several businesses before. So yeah, we’re here to help people basically.

Shahzad Khan: Shahzad Khan – basically looking after the Novotel Norwest. We own and built the Novotel Norwest in the Park. And when Michael was talking about how the area is booming, we’ve been part of that booming. We’ve witnessed it the last 20 years. We’ve got a couple of plans for the hotel, going forward. So, thank you Michael, for the invitation.

Nabil Chammas: Nabil Chammas, KPMG, Tax division. In a previous life I managed a key function for an investment bank. I have a mix of financial services and tax experience, and I’m heavily focused on the property sector as well, from an indirect tax perspective. Very pleased to be here today as I’m originally from the Hills district. It’s amazing coming here every time, there’s always something happening here, always something happening, the area continually changes. I think this was always going to be the case, it was just a question of when.

Kristen Tod: Kristen Tod, Managing Director of Young Living Essential Oils. We were very excited to relocate our business in January this year from Brisbane – the outskirts of Brisbane. It’s been a very good move for us. But we’ve had a very major problem inasmuch as we made a relocation offer to 14 of our staff to relocate – generous packages to relocate – two accepted and both of them have gone back to Brisbane. They cannot afford to buy a home in the Hills. Major brain drain for us.

Anthony Moss: Thank you for sharing that with us, and that’s a bit of content for our discussion. Thank you. And Geoff?

Geoff Brailey: My name is Geoff. I’m from McCrindle Research. So, I’ve been involved in the research behind today’s discussion. And it’s a privilege to be here. I’ve worked in the Hills area before, working at McCrindle, in community organisations and it’s kind of been great to work into social research. So, a real love of people, I guess, is one of the drivers in working at McCrindle and seeing the data about people come to life, through things like our infographics. Through our research, we know the times and understand the social trends, the attitudes, behaviours of Australians. That’s what we love finding out through surveys, etc.

Anthony Moss: Excellent. Thank you, Geoff. Thanks, everybody for introducing yourselves. I guess I should have started too. I’m chairman of the Sydney Hills Business Chamber at the moment – my second year in that role. And that’s a real honour for me to be able to do that. That’s what I call my ‘early morning and late night job’. My day job is running my own strategic planning consultancy working with high growth small and medium privately owned businesses, particularly those that are looking to expand internationally. So, thanks everyone for being here and introducing yourself. That’s excellent. Let’s jump straight into it if we can. We perhaps set some context about what is happening in the Hills and the dynamic we talk about – and we’re always a little bit blasé about it, I guess. It would be great to be able to identify what are those changes that are taking place. I mean we know we’ve got the Metro Norwest happening. We know we’ve got development happening. We know we’ve got Council amalgamations happening/not quite happening in this region. We know we’ve got demographic changes. We know we’ve got an economic shift happening and we’ve got businesses coming in and leaving the region too. I thought it might be useful to start with Michael in terms of putting some context around those shifts that are taking place in the region.

Michael Edgar: I know we’re here to talk about the Hills. But we are part of a broader region of North West Sydney, with Parramatta, Blacktown, ourselves and, to a lesser degree, Hawkesbury. The region is very important in terms of the growth of Sydney as a whole. Between the Councils I’ve mentioned, there’s effectively the population of Canberra to move in. Much of the land is already zoned –
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possibly not all serviced - that takes time to roll out over a long timeframe. But certainly, the critical infrastructure projects you talk about, really serve to be a catalyst for investment and that growth. I think, if you even just look at Norwest Business Park from its very humble beginnings in the 80s – and you referred to it earlier, Steve - I think shots in the arm that came along were on the back of major investment in infrastructure, whether it be the M2, then the M7 and now the connection to the freeway going north, and clearly the North-West Rail Link. I think the thing that people need to reflect upon with the North-West Rail Link is that we have not seen a service like that in Sydney let alone Australia. A train that comes not to a timetable, but every 4 minutes, can move rapid amounts of people very quickly, we haven’t had that here. And I think one of the important things we need to do is make sure that we not only have origins from those stations – so people that leave and go and feed the productivity arc of Sydney – but reasons to also move from within. So, around those station precincts over the next 10, 20 years, housing is important – no doubt about that. But crickey, so are jobs – and jobs closer to home. If we’re really going to meet the goals of Federal and State governments about jobs closer to home, we’ve got to really focus on what jobs we need to attract to, in what are the elements that make people want to be here and to locate their business here.

Kristen Tod: I think affordable housing is the key.

Michael Edgar: And that’s been the problem in 30 years of my career so maybe we might solve it by the time I finish! But one thing I would ask you all to be aware of – and you may or may not be - but this week the government released the District Plans for Greater Sydney for public comment. It’s under the umbrella of the greater Sydney Commis- sion and is a real opportunity for the logical and systematic rollout of land use and infra- structure planning to underpin our quality of life into the future. But we’re in the West Cen- tral sub region. Clearly, there’s a big emphasis on Parramatta and growing Parramatta’s role in Greater Sydney into the future, both in terms of housing and employment and as a real global city in its own right. So, I’d encourage everyone to have a read of that. It sets a lot of policy objectives around housing afford- ability and where the housing supply is, where the job supply is and where are the priorities. And, I think every business should have a look at that plan and see how they might contribute or otherwise to that plan.

Anthony Moss: You look at the popula- tion numbers they’re forecasting – to go from 971,000 in 2016 – an increase of 800,000 by 2036. That’s a significant number. Steve, I guess, Michael’s reference was in terms of the sort of changes is about to face, you’ve seen a lot of changes that you’ve also contributed to as part of that kind of infrastructure growth in the region. How do you see, the changes that have taken place right now and the impact on the community?

Michael Edgar: The Hills Shire is 380 square kilometres – round figures. Lost a bit to Parramatta – 12 or 14 square Kms or so. But of that, the urban footprint fits into about a quarter of it. So, when you get beyond Maraylya and Dural, it’s quite rural. And its part of our resources we need and it’s not only agricultural and flower growing lands, but mining, extraction for sand and sandstone that supplies materials for Sydney’s growth. Our SlrE still extends, all the way up to Wisemans Ferry. It’s very diverse region.

Steve Grant: It’s hard to imagine. When you hear those numbers, what does it mean, how many buildings is it, how does it go. And it’s a strange sort of phenomenon as far as the residential is concerned. Where do these people come from? This is a challenge that we have, of course, is to know where to market our products. For some retirement buildings for years and you find out people retire in one of a few places – where they grew up and where their family are or where their family go for holidays. And as far as where people live, if you live in the Eastern Suburbs now and you’ve got kids in their early 20s, you start to think about where are they going to buy a home, where can they afford a home. And of course, you know, that’s when they look for places – Kellyville, etc. One of our businesses, Eden Blue Homes, build at The Ponds at Kellyville, for instance. And as far as product being the right price and how it works, I think there was 8 builders there and we got 48% of the product. If you got the numbers right, you know, there’s a pretty good reward as far as the business is concerned. But also, for people that work for us, for instance, one of the young chaps is I think already in his fourth home now. We all know that, if you live in that home for a year or so, or 2 years, it’s tax free if you sell it. So those young people have got that run on. So they’ve got a good story for people that are coming from interstate. When we built one particular place here at Norwest, we relocated a company to come here from Chippendale. And the company had 35 staff. And they made a decision to come to Norwest. And we found that within – I think it was 18 months, about 25% of those 35 staff had actually moved out here, because they saw it as a good opportunity. The big challenge for business, which I think is a big attraction for people who want to live in this area, is we haven’t grown our infrastructure lately. And that’s a real concern for people like ourselves. I travelled up from the Southern Highlands this morning. It took me an hour and probably 30 minutes to get to the turnoff on the M7. And it took me 60 minutes to get from the turnoff on the M7 to here. And that’s just disgraceful. As a community, we’ve got that totally wrong and we have not put enough effort into sorting that out. And I don’t care what position you play – whether it’s my position or the Council or Norwest or the EPA – it’s disgraceful. To sit there, you know, and crawl all that way down to here, we just can’t allow that.

Michael Edgar: Council has about $500,000 in funds that can be made available to put lights on the roundabout. The RMS are the lead agency and the Minister’s announced it, I think yesterday. So, a good interim solu- tion but not your final solution. But it’s a good interim solution. The big fix is a very big fix. And it’s an expensive one, both for land take, but also just the movement of utilities. For example, there is a massive water main there that’s got to move.

Kristen Tod: Can I just add to that? Out of the 40-odd people that I’ve offered a job in the last 12 months, probably 4 have turned down the job, because they don’t want to travel along Norwest Boulevard.

Andrew Frank: Anthony, picking up on what Steve said, I’ve come here with the catch phrase of: It’s not competition, but integration. And so often, everything gets distilled down to what’s good for ‘me’, and we lose sight of the bigger picture, as is exhibited most emphatically by the jobs and housing relation- ship. And that’s why I’m excited by what Lucy Turnbull’s published in one sense, because it’s big picture thinking. It’s recognising 3 centres of Sydney. And I think that’s important. But then the challenge is for Council to try and make that work in terms of integration with the other government departments and the other needs – both release of land, both mak- ing the construction of housing affordable. We find new home owners and others being able to borrow ridiculous sums of money on average income. And so, it’s the availability of money which is creating a competition in growth, which I think something that has to be managed. I’m not quite sure how. I don’t have that wisdom. And yeah – but it’s about integration. And we must think, Council, business, developers must sit down and think

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Lost their business. And the Hills Lodge has occupancy rates are concerned. And they haven’t and in fact we’re doing better as far as overall. Adina Apartment opened and our business have the exclusive rights to it. Four years ago, we can see that. We’re the only hotel in the region. I guess you’re a reasonable responds and its spend over the next 10, 15, 20 years to match the priorities.

Shahzad Khan: If I could just add one thing, though. And I’m glad most people are aware of the Greater Sydney Commissions’ work. And to me, it represents a real opportunity. So, if business understands that, next year you’ve got 2 other opportunities to influence government spend. One is the update of the Metropolitan Plan itself. But importantly, the Metropolitan Transport Plan, which deals with roads, rail, buses – the whole lot. I feel that business is too silent on those documents and doesn’t give its input to help government make good decisions about how you integrate – because often it is a competition. Governments can’t do everything at once. So, what are the right things in the right order? And I think – I actually really optimistic that people around the table knew about that document, the updated plans next year are where we will see how well government responds and its spend over the next 10, 15, 20 years to match the priorities.

Anthony Moss: Shahzad, you operate a hotel in the region. I guess you’re a reasonable of activity in the region too. What comments, do you have in terms of the opportunities for growth potential for this reason?

Shahzad Khan: Thanks Anthony. It’s absolutely no secret that the opportunities are growing by the day. The size of the pot maybe hasn’t expanded, for obvious reasons. But with high rises and other projects, residential capacity is increasing, and so is an opportunity for more people to come here to work. And we can see that. We’re the only hotel in the Park – fully serviced hotel in the park. And we have the exclusive rights to it. Four years ago, Adina Apartment opened and our business took a bit of a hit. But we’ve recovered that and in fact we’re doing better as far as occupancy rates are concerned. And they haven’t lost their business. And the Hills Lodge has recovered theirs. And now we have another apartment – serviced apartment block – about 96 odd rooms – 140 actually. So, the supply has increased as far as hotel accommodation is concerned. But so has the demand.

Anthony Moss: So it reflects a rising tide?

Shahzad Khan: Absolutely. But the trouble again, going back to... performance, it’s been 2 years we’re short of staff in the kitchen – and the reason being, most of our staff – Jim knows very well they’re excellent people and we’re very, very fortunate because they local. So, the head of our HR Department has been there before. She was the first person we employed – before anyone else was employed. So before the hotel opened, she was there and she’s still there, which is fantastic. But if she moves on, we don’t know what to do. We’re struggling to recruit staff because that which is available is, you know, not plentiful skilled – say, for example, kitchen people, cooks and chefs – and we can’t bring people from outside the Hills for similar reasons. They don’t want to be sitting at the traffic light, staring at it, whilst it turns from red to green about 20 times and they haven’t moved 6 inches. So, to answer your question, Anthony, I just wonder – I hope I’m still alive in 5 years’ time – that we can see some changes in 5 years’ time. It’s exciting. I mean I hope we’re all, you know, in good shape and still here to enjoy that growth.

Anthony Moss: Excellent. Thank you for that. I actually have a reference to PSI in a minute, but not until we’ve really gone around the table, and we’ll talk about what are the outcomes of the sort of PSI. But perhaps if I can get Nabil you’re obviously dealing with lots of businesses in the region, too. What are the challenges and opportunities you’re hearing from your client base?

Nabil Chamas: Just talking to a number of points that were made today. I think the challenges are to seek markets nationally, internationally, outside the west. There’s a big push on being more efficient in what they do, being more productive, and attracting the right talent. I keep hearing a common theme saying. Yes, there’s a very sophisticated workforce in the Hills. But predominantly it’s people that have either grown up in the Hills or live close by. Kind of broadening it’s people that have either grown up in the Hills or live close by. Kind of broadening the theme saying: Yes, there’s a very sophisticated workforce, but broader than the people that live in the area – and attracting, getting rid of the brain drain – you know – stopping the bleed effectively, we’re doing well.

Anthony Moss: Thank you, Richard, you deal with many businesses. At least 340 of them are members of the Chamber now, and many more businesses that are prospects too. What are you hearing about the kind of opportunities and challenges that business experiences?

Richard Holland: From what I can sense of from people who talk about what’s going to happen development-wise, I can see it crystal clear in my head. But I think a lot of people still don’t get how it’s going to change, how different it’s going to be and all the opportuni-ties there. So, that’s exciting in a lot of ways, because I mean there’s some flowering that goes on. I think especially the catalyst will be the rail link, once that happens. The 2 biggest things that I hear over and over again is parking and people, Parking, traffic and people. And it’s ideological. I’m in that bottom end. It took me – I put it on Facebook – it took me 50 minutes to go from Meridian Way at 6 o’clock, to get out onto Old Windsor Road, going out that way one night.

Anthony Moss: So, there’s a lot of challenging. But by the same token there, I mean there are changes growing quite dramatically.

Richard Holland: Look, there’s always, you know, there’s pluses and minuses. And I believe is working well. To the extent there’s something similar for the Hills, that could potentially also work.

On another note, our clients are big on data. Discussing what has been said on the PSI, data links – understanding data and how that drives decision making on a day to day basis is massive for a lot of our clients. These are really the main challenges. Western Sydney is growing really well. You can see there’s government commitment which is great. Mike Baird’s government’s actually doing things. Having said that, how do you attract the right people? There’s clearly a sophisticated workforce, but broader than the people that live in the area – and attracting, getting rid of the brain drain – you know – stopping the bleed effectively, we’re doing well.

Anthony Moss: Very well. Thank you. Richard, thank you. Now, I think about the next question then: how do you attract the right people? There’s clearly a sophisticated workforce, but broader than the people that live in the area – and attracting, getting rid of the brain drain – you know – stopping the bleed effectively, we’re doing well.

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out the door – within sort of 10 to 12 weeks of marketing that space, which is over 36 offices, we’d agreed terms with pretty much everyone. We certainly didn’t anticipate it. And I think it sort of speaks to the fact that there is immense pride in being involved with the wider community of the Hills community. It’s an incredible district.

Steve Grant: It was very exceptionally well-priced as well, David.

David Inkster: No, you’re right. It’s – in terms of price, though, we actually – we surprised ourselves in that regard. And the rates achieved here in Esplanade for the commercial were a new benchmark:. So everyone owns an investment in Norwest benefits from that sales process. We were talking – prior to marketing here, and Steve and I had some robust discussions around price – that 4 and a half to 5,000 a square metre was pretty much what we were paying for commercial space.

Steve Grant: For good office suites, the best available.

David Inkster: Yeah, for the best stuff in Norwest. And that was echoed by what we achieved in Atlanta, the previous commercial development. Our average for here was 6900 a square metre and we were selling in the last stage over 7 and a half-thousand a square metre. So that means that every, you know, business that is already here substantially would have increased the value of their premises.

Anthony Moss: And you’re just highlighting the fact that, despite the challenges that we talked about, there’s an appetite to come into this region. We also need to recognise, of course, that we’re not just Norwest Business Park. We are broader than that. Alicia, did you have anything that you wanted to add to that?

Alicia Sylvester: From our perspective, we’ve talked about the population needs to increase. And there’s obvious population targets.

We need to accommodate those people. And how we do that is a shift towards apartment living. But I think the Hills is traditionally a house and land area – you come here to live on land. The area has the rural properties where acreage is an incredible lifestyle. It’s about an enlightenment process, I guess, about the benefits or the attractiveness of living in apartments. It is a new lifestyle. So, that’s an opportunity and a challenge at the same time, it’s about shifting people’s perspective of what traditional Sydney living is. And the new way of living and the low maintenance lifestyle is just as legitimate as a house and land.

Anthony Moss: That’s a good point. We hadn’t captured that point. But it’s a very key issue. And so, it will require a cultural shift, all those things. I’d like to talk about the PSI if we can, just so that everybody’s aware of it. The PSI – Performance Sentiment Index – is an initiative that the Chamber working along with the Council and McCrindle Research developed about 2 years ago, which was the idea to create a snapshot of the performance and sentiment and conditions for business in the region.

Geoff Brawley: I think you can see in the report, the Hills as an LGA has had a 65% increase in the number of businesses from 2013 to 2015. So now, a total of over 2,000 businesses. From some anecdotal evidence of living and working in the area over the last 7 years and I’m probably one of the newest in the area from around the table from what I gather. But I guess the strengths of the Hills are the lifestyle factors – I think even the community and the family expectations in this area that are where there is that frustration – residents that are driving 45 minutes because of the traffic, when it only takes 10 minutes at 10pm at night. But that frustration when people might be spending more time sitting in the traffic rather than they get on annual leave over the year. So, there’s that kind of frustration, I think. One key social trend is that people are more people are studying and are living at home longer. The Hills has a higher average household numbers compared to the Sydney average possibly because these days, younger people are studying longer. One in two Gen Z will have university level qualifications. People are studying longer, delaying their earning years and in an increasingly challenging financial kind of environment, young people are looking for the most affordable opportunity to get into the housing market. Trading the back-yard for the balcony; this kind of language – where it means you don’t have to wake up on Saturday morning to mow the lawns. You get to go and have a nice latte, which sounds really appealing I think, to be honest. Overall, the 2016 Hills PSI saw a significant increase of 23 points from the 2015 PSI results. In 2016, 164 business owners and managers completed the survey that measures three components; business conditions, performance and sentiment. The biggest area of increase in the nine PSI measures that make up the three components was in the economic conditions. Also, the increase in the future sentiment component was top scoring of the three components. The respondents to the survey indicated economic conditions are getting better and will continue to improve with the future sentiment score rising 16 points. The results of the nine measures in the 2016 PSI measures was around local infrastructure.

[ Silence ]

Kristen Todd: Sorry for jumping in. It might be easier for me to jump in there, if I can. So, just to give you the Chamber’s perspective on the survey, the first result that we got – we’re going to measure 3 things: conditions, performance and sentiment – and its algorithm how they combine – we ended up with a negative score. When you scratched the surface and look at the detail, the 2 positives were around future sentiment and current earnings, but the negatives were off the charts. And the negatives were people and staff and infrastructure. Now, what changed to take us positive, was the economic outlook has gone extremely positive. So, it’s gone right up from 29 to 47 as a positive score. But the conditions stayed negative. They improved a little bit from minus 31 to minus 22. There’s 2 sides of the coin that we’ve been talking about. Lots of opportunity, but some real challenges.

Michael Edgar: So clearly, there is a real focus around Parramatta’s future role along with Westmead. And they really plan to amplify the scientific and medical jobs. That provides opportunity for The Hills as well. Not as a competitor to them. There’s a new hospital planned somewhere out towards Rouse Hill. We don’t know the site. But that’s another opportunity for the clustering of medical related industries and jobs. At the moment, the hot property is residential. There’s an insatiable appetite for housing. At some point with the population increase, I think that’s going to switch. And one of the things we noticed across the regions, because I was involved in some of the workshops that put the plan together, was that in some areas Council’s rezoned land that’s employment land over to residential too quick. And at some point, that’s going to need to recalibrate back so we do have enough land for jobs.

Anthony Moss: Good. We’re going to delve into that right after the break in some detail.

Steve Grant: So what businesses are going to come to the Hills? What businesses now? So, we’re about to start new projects. We’re going to market. Who do we market to? What businesses are going to come here? That’s my question mark.

Kristen Todd: Well I can give you an example. In fact, Anthony didn’t know this. But in the Norwest Business Park, out of the 200 plus direct sales businesses in Australia, approximately 2.5 international companies have their headquarters here. So I would market to the other 200.

Steve Grant: What did you say? Direct sales?

Kristen Todd: Yeah. Direct sales. So, you’re very familiar with the business I’m in. So we’re talking about the Amway, the Mary Kays, the Nutrimetics etc. A million Australians is either a customer of, or a distributor for one of those companies.

Michael Edgar: So there’s a little opportunity. If you could just pick up on something that you mentioned in your talk a moment ago. One of the things we’ve got to get right – and we’re working hard to do that – and look from the window in this room and the imagery, you start to get a sense of what I’m talking about. We have to do a bit of work on place-making, because that will create an environment for people not only to want to work here but we want people to want to live and work here. And when you start to see – and I think Norwest Lake and the environment and your development here is the window into the future about the place-making. In a way, that’s not a bad alternative to the traditional great Australian dream. But it’s about how we do that, to make it a place – to make it a place where people want to spend a lot of time and cut down on the need to travel a lot.

Kristen Todd: Steve, didn’t you say earlier you were talking about the “village” atmosphere. That’s what we need.

Steve Grant: When you do these buildings – Michael’s been down to one that we’re doing at Cramulla at Woolwooler Bay Town Centre. It will end up with 850 apartments and a $200 million Shopping Centre. But when you do that, there is so much on entertaining those people. And you know, we’ve got 3 different types of pools – a resort pool for all the families with kids and everyday else, a lap pool – a big lap pool – and then you’ve got a rooftop pool, and the rooftop facility across the other side’s got the rooftop theatre, just so our buyers have something special. So, you know – and Michael said to me: Why aren’t you doing this in the Hills? Well, we
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Andrew Frank: Give or take 4 minutes. Anthony Moss: So at what point – because I mean that is an issue that came out of the focus groups from the PS2, which is there needs to be an articulation of that vision – of the impact of the train – because there are some people I think at the moment that are dealing with the traffic challenges that see the development taking place, and all they see is more pain – not necessarily the gain.

Michael Edgar: Obviously, the government’s committed to closing the link between Chatswood and the South West Rail Link. So, look to be honest, the government, and I am apolitical – should be congratulated for this investment because this is hard wiring us into the future and future-proofing our region and our movement of people. There is widespread criticism recently of Government but I think the investment they’ve done in roads and rail and big infrastructure, is not to be underestimated.

Andrew Frank: There is one other issue though that I think a lot of people talk to me about when we talk about the rail. And that is: Yes, but where does my car go to get to the station to jump on the train, when you’re at various stations around here.

Michael Edgar: Well there’s a couple of good communter spots. One’s at Kellyville. Another one is at the Singe Ground. But one of the challenges that we’ve got to do around the repurposing of the suburbs of those stations, is in the context of the comment about lime in terms of the jugular training day – that picture, that model is just a terrific model for us to grab and to plant in other people’s minds.

Anthony Moss: It needs to be articulated, doesn’t it?

Andrew Frank: Articulated as being the bigger picture and a variety of occupation is – and you know, the notion that there’s a lot of rural space still left in the Sydney Hills is very attractive as a proposition for many people.

Shahrad Khan: Can I add something please? I grew up in and around London and Oxford. And what Michael and Steve said – the idea, for me, I’m just waiting for it to happen. The idea of having a train every 4 minutes – you don’t need to plan it. You need to be in the city at 9:00. You can be at the station at 8:00. And, you know, if you miss one, 3 and a half minutes later there is another coming. This is just month-watering. I had a car in London and I only had it because, when I moved from Oxford to London, so I could go back to Oxford whenever I wanted over the weekend. That was the only reason I had a car. And I worked in London for about 9 years. The train – it’s – once people realise the facility and the advantages of, you know, having a train every 4 minutes, I don’t think anyone is going to – unless they desperately need to – no one is going to put up with the horrors of driving a car to the city.

Anthony Moss: So when – the train is due to finish early 2019?


Andrew Frank: Car space, because of the lost opportunity. Building underground is probably $400,000 a car space. So it comes with great cost to the taxpayer to provide so I understand there’s a limit to the amount of commuter spaces that can be afforded. Road investment and particularly regional road investment (M2 and M7 as an example) are critical. I firmly believe that if you took the regional traffic off our local roads, our local roads would perform well. So, I think when these bigger networks get delivered and hopefully they’ve got the feeder points right, so regional traffic starts to get off localised roads we see improvement.

Anthony Moss: Michael, are there numbers around that? You must have done studies or the Council’s done studies around, you know, they’re sort of anticipating so many cars per day coming off the road – kind of like there is on the top with the North Connes – they’ve done analysis around that, haven’t they?

Michael Edgar: They would have some statistics however I’m not aware of the figures so. I couldn’t quote any.

Anthony Moss: It’s probably something that is part of this message around articulating what the change is likely to be when you’ve captured it.

Jim Taggart: I was just going to say, I’m trying to look at a solution point of view. And I look in the – and see a particular – I’m solutions – I like solutions. Why wouldn’t you securitise those car parks and super funds? Well, I’m taking those principles. That’s what I’m saying. And I’m really, without looking at Michael, I’m saying this: it’s about innovation. Look, I like clean finance and structured finance and all of those types of stuff. But from a technical point of view of saying: Hey, there is that much money out there at the minute – you know.

Steve Grant: The thing is, with those things then, we don’t want all these massive car parks if we don’t need them as well.

Jim Taggart: Yes. That’s right. Steve Grant: So, you’ve always got to design a car park so you can convert it to something later.

Jim Taggart: Yep.

Steve Grant: Because Sydney Olympic Park, which is disgraceful, you cannot have a car above ground. So, just for instance, let’s say the train works perfectly at Sydney Olympic Park in 3 years, in 5 years all those spaces below ground are becoming useless. We don’t want the cars there. They should be building car parks above ground to be able to convert that into office or accommodation or something. And that’s – for me, Sydney Olympic Park is the worst example in the planning that we’ve got when it comes to cater for improved public transport systems.

Anthony Moss: Interesting, Nabil, you also came to me at the break and you had something that you… around that issue around innovation.

Nabil Channous: I know it was touched on briefly in the PS1 as well. And KPMG is Continued on page 32
playing quite heavily in that space. In terms of innovation and what that means, we’re having a conversation generally around what is the future of employment for the people that are going to Universities now, what are they going to be working in?, what are they going to be in the future? What are the professions and industries? I look at an area like the Hills District and I think there needs to be a bit of an effort or initiative around: OK. Well these are going to be the jobs of the future now. When you drive up and down you can see there’s a lot of major pharmaceutical companies around here, there’s biotechnology life science companies in Norwest Business Park. At KPMG we’re working quite closely with Western Sydney University. We are part of the Launch Pad initiative. Maybe in terms of the Hills District, on a stand-alone basis, there has to be some thought around ‘we’ve got to do something now via maybe incubation hubs or something to start the thinking’ What’s the future of the Hills going to look like? How do we retain the talent – people that have grown up here, that are in Western Sydney – keep it here, and start thinking about the industries they’re going to be working in. I feel there needs to be more thought around innovation.

Anthony Moss: So, just to follow up from the PSI – because that point came out very clearly from the focus groups that we did at the PSI too, which was: somebody made the PSI too, which was: somebody made the argument that we need to create an atmosphere where it’s attractive to live, work and play in the Hills. I thought that was a great line. But I can’t remember who came up with it now – but that sense of the Hills as a place to live, work and play. So, let’s take Kristen’s point from earlier on, because we’re talking about solutions now. Your issue was housing affordability.

Kristen Tod: Yes.

Anthony Moss: So how do we address that issue – housing affordability?

Jim Taggart: I heard something the other day. And I just want to run this by you for ideas – to bring other ideas. And one of the other ideas is by another business – a builder/developer who is selling homes. They’re selling their homes with a granny flat in them. Because 2 reasons: as grandparents now – and I want my children to have a house. So, say for Carol and I – we’ve lived our lives – we’re happy to be with our grandchildren, and all of those values we hold close – to live in a nice place at the back of the children’s home, because at the end of the day, you’re going to end up with it anyway, all things being equal. So, I think there’s a conversation around changing attitudes and values of how people live, if they still want that smaller block.

Steve Grant: They’re what we term as a ‘Fonzie pad’.

Jim Taggart: Sorry, Steve?

Steve Grant: Remember Fonzie and Happy Days?

Kristen Tod: So that’s about the 300 square metre blocks, you’re talking about?

Steve Grant: Yeah, 280.

Kristen Tod: Yes. This is what we need. Absolutely. And I’d like to clarify my statement because, present company excepted, we don’t live in their world. They earn – 70% of my staff earn less than $69,000 a year. How can they afford to buy here? Sorry – with respect. But if we had those Fonzie blocks that you’re talking about, there’s a chance they could buy here.

Nabil Chammans: There’s a conversation around affordable housing, because now a lot of Councils are considering designating a portion of total developments to affordable housing. That’s quite big in the US now. New York is close to 50% – new housing has to go to affordable housing, because they recognise ‘affordable housing’, it’s not just about size of land – it’s about the value of their property by reducing the size of it. So, other words, they lower the cost of the property. If you’re going to introduce smaller blocks, you’ve got all sorts of other issues of a community nature that you’ll have to deal with. The whole notion of living one stuck together – that’s something that would have to also be addressed, because it’s not just about... it’s not just about size of land – it’s about the community context. We’re talking about Fonzie pads of how many hundred...?

Kristen Tod: About 300, roughly.

Andrew Frank: About 300, roughly. We’re now producing – we’re now going to be in the position to take this whole notion of really close living, which is the reason why people came to this part of Sydney in the first place. So, you’ve got that tension. I’m not saying you shouldn’t have it. But it’s a huge – there’s going to be a lot of push back there.

David Inkster: I mean one thing that we’re really seeing with – we’re involved in the project marketing of a number of different sites around the Hills District – and the ones that are becoming particularly popular are the ones that are addressing that issue. Steve sort of just mentioned before the site that they’ve got opposite Cudgegong Road. That answers a lot of your questions. We’re talking about an entry price of circa $500,000 to get in. Now, when you get into that complex, you get over 5,000 square metres of space, including a tennis court, including a swimming pool and a community centre. So, you’re not just confining those people. You know the developments that are working are those ones where the developer is not just putting a block there and saying, you know: ‘that’s your space’. They’re saying – we know, you know, acknowledgement of break-out areas, acknowledgment that people have a need for connectivity, and they want to – you know – to have these areas where you can go down to the – it’s a 300 square metre community centre. You can have a barbecue. You’ll probably do your Owners Corporation meetings there.

Andrew Frank: The notion of affordability – is it the case that there’s more and more
property being – or housing units being constructed which allow for part – 1 of the rooms to be rented easily? That’s the issue. Because if you’ve got a young couple who can buy a 450, 500 square metre block of land and put a house on it with a granny flat, suddenly the granny flat becomes an income stream which helps them to fund their purchase. Similarly, if they buy a unit and the unit has a structure that allows them room...

Steve Grant: So we’ve got 14 of those in 280 we’re just handing over at Crowsnest now. So, it’s only 14 out of 280. But I do think – I do agree with you, Andrew, that is going to be more popular in the future. A lot of the people that buy from us buy with the intent they’ll live there in 3 or 4 or 5 years. So, they’ll lease them out for the time being.

Michael Edgar: I’ll just mention 2 things, just very briefly – one of them is that you must have a diversity of product. When I first started running around as a building surveyor at Blacktown Council in the 1980’s, properties were around about 600 square metres – a house and land package. The land was about half the build price.

Steve Grant: Correct.

Michael Edgar: Now, the land is double the build price. So, something’s gone wrong with the basic land economy. When land went from 600 square metres down to let’s say 120 square metres it doesn’t seem to fit in the market price, what’s really important is that there is a wide range of land sizes to keep price relativity. If all land is the same size, that’s going to be market price but if there is choice, then you find it has a natural shock absorber to make sure the smaller blocks are worth less than the larger blocks. So, it’s very important that we just don’t focus on the low end particularly. You must have the larger blocks. And one of our success factors in this Shire is we have the housing and the education that attracts people to want to raise a family. That’s why we have 3.2 people per household – because it’s a great place to raise our families. So we must make sure we don’t let our housing stock decay to a point where that doesn’t encourage the business owner, managing director to come and live here and raise their family here, because that’s what’s going to fuel our economy. So, there’s not one single answer. It’s a combination of things. Some of the initiatives that you talked about, Andrew, are good.

Andrew Frank: There’s one other driver that I’ve personally experienced. And that is the location of the better schools. I live in Baulkham Hills, just next to Matthew Pearce – not far from Matthew Pearce. In the last 7 years, the demographic of my street has changed dramatically – very happily so. But now, the Asian residents and the Indians – subcontinent residents – are very very prominent because they’re prepared to – that’s where they’re going to buy.

Kristen Tod: We intend to pay an incen-
tive based performance bonus quarterly.

Jim Taggart

Continued from page 12

Yesterday, at our staff meeting I announced that the person who has the most nominations for Employee of the Month, which is from our client base – not internally – that I’ll take them on a trip with me to a convention next year in the US. So, it’s all of these little things that don’t cost a whole lot of money. And another thing: your child’s sick? OK. They’re not infec-tious; they’re not really sick. We have a room set up where you can bring your child to work. You can see the child, and they play on their computer or whatever, and mum is right there. But it means that my staff members at work, being productive, and she loves it.

Anthony Moss: So, the message is theonus is on business to have to think inno-
vatively about how you, we know, hire and manage staff.

Shahzad Khan: Andrew, like Richard Branson said: Train your staff so they can leave. But treat them so they don’t want to. So, that’s very important for retention, bringing in fresh talent once you – know, the bigger picture that we spoke about – once these things start to kick in, then the train is there, then the load is taken off the roads. Then people would, because – like the ruler of Dubai said: If you’re earning more than 10,000 Dirhams a month, don’t come to Dubai because you will struggle, which is about 3,000 to 4,000 Aussie dollars. But you’re thinking on what you said earlier, this is a kind of an area unfortunately – maybe it changes over the next 15 years – but unfortunately if I’m earning 65 grand a year, I’m not going to own a house here. That’s just... If you’re earning £50,000 a year, you don’t get to live in Mayfair. You don’t get to live around Hyde Park in London. That’s just the reality of it. But, once these things start taking effect, you will be able to bring talent from areas where they’re happy and easy to live, and afford it, but are happy to travel because it doesn’t take them more than half an hour or an hour.

Michael Edgar: One of the interesting things in the Greater Sydney District Plan, there was a real narrative around rental affordable-ability. There seems to be a shift from owner-ship to it’s going to be OK to rent.

Andrew Frank: But Mike, the problem with that though is that’s unattractive from the average punter because that’s their asset, that’s their investment, that’s their future – is the home. The whole tax regime has been set up on the basis of giving the average person a tax benefit – no CGT, etc., on your residence.

Michael Edgar: You’re right.

Anthony Moss: Kristen, I want to come back if I may to the points you raised about having a flexible approach to staff manage-
ment too. Can I also ask: do you have a roster system that people can work around the traffic queues?

Kristen Tod: Absolutely. Very flexible. I think once a staff member creates trust, I trust them. I know that they can do their work more productively from home than in the office. They produce about 25% more work from home. There’s no interruptions, and it’s constant. But, no, I just want to add: you know the biggest thing that my staff love, and unfortunately, I don’t have enough guys in the office. I’ve got about 7 men. The rest are women. But the thing they love most is everybody hates Christmas school holidays, with young children. You’ve got like 5 weeks. You need to find entertainment. You need to provide. It costs a lot of money. So, I provide an entertainment programme for the children for 3 of those weeks which costs the parents nothing and it costs me $22 an hour.

Anthony Moss: OK. So, the message is, business has got to be agile in how they deal with the workforce, distributed workforce – think about the teleworking and the work from home initiatives – and having a flexible approach to work practices. I want to move onto the third issue which is the big one that we talked about earlier. So, what are the 1, 2, 3 strategic initiatives that need to happen, even though we know we can’t necessarily afford them yet, but that we need to do.

Andrew Frank: We need an integrated plan – bus, pedestrian, train – a visible, trans-
parent, integrated plan.

Anthony Moss: Just articulate that, Andrew. What do you mean?

Andrew Frank: Linking up on the corri-
dors, taking people from the hospital or from the community near the car park to the train. Buses to the community – to the trains. Anthony Moss: So, integrated transport?

Andrew Frank: Absolutely. And it has to be transparent, because no-one believes this government at the moment, you know, they don’t do. But no-one else does – that’s what’s happening – but it has to be integrated. We’ve got to resolve and, you know, obviously repair the sins of the past in terms of how our city is developed. And that’s painful, but it’s got to happen.

Michael Edgar: One of the things that has worked with our staff since coming to North West Business Park is being a little bit flex-
ible with start and finish times. And we’ve got several staff that might not arrive till 10, but they’ll be there till 7.00. So, they’ve missed the peak – the morning and evening.

Shahzad Khan: Can I add to the integrat-
ed transport plan? There are things in – when Boris Johnson was the Mayor of London, he started a Boris Bike which was sponsored by Barclays Bank. And there were bike stations all around Central London. You just get the bike. It’s all integrated. It reads your – Card or you can use your coin. And you cycle/pedal through wherever you want to get to and just leave it at the next one, and just don’t worry about hills or anything. And obviously bi-
cycles – study bicycles – are a very long lasting pieces of equipment that does last.

Michael Edgar: It’s important to sell that message. And we’ve got a very good planned cycle network in throughout the whole Hills. We’ll be able to cycle from one end to the other. But there’s missing links, and we’re working on it over time.

Anthony Moss: OK. So, building cycle ways and communicating that message. Jim?

From what I can sense of from people who talk about what’s going to happen development-wise, I can see it crystal clear in my head. But I think a lot of people still don’t get how it’s going to change.

- Richard Holland

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- Richard Holland

““It kind of talks to this whole concept of business now being more socially responsible and kind of being more involved in the community.”

- Nabil Chammash

“My view

“It’s absolutely no se-
cret that the opportunities are growing by the day. The size of the pot maybe hasn’t expanded, for obvi-
ous reasons. But with high rises and other projects, residential capacity is in-
creasing, and so is an op-
portunity for more people to come here to work. And we can see that.”

- Shahzad Khan

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Continued on page 34
Jim Taggart: And probably better improvements around home based businesses. And that’s not a point of – you know what I’m involved in. So let me make that clear. It’s not. But I think the whole notion, structurally, is around Council and home based businesses and regulation. So it’s not the Councils personally, Mike. It’s about just regulation and so on – people are working 2 and 3 days to really understand how that could become more friendly and different things.

Michael Edgar: There will be a road that extends Lexington down to the Balmoral end of Memorial. We’re going to have another link from – hopefully from Maitland Place into Spurway, behind Council. So improving the permeability around here is going to assist. It’s not going to happen overnight. And that’s the reality. So, we’ve got to find other coping mechanisms in the meantime.

Nabil Chammas: One of the things that is happening in other industries is the use of social bonds and so on and getting buy-in from the private sector. Particularly now, banks/financial institutions are willing to inject capital into a project that’s viable and that gets a good return, because they’re finding that particularly when they work with government, it’s an easier sell to the public, to investors to actually invest in a program. I don’t know whether there’s an opportunity to align government initiatives. It kind of talks to this whole concept of business now being more socially responsible and being more involved in the community.

Jim Taggart: And this is not community, but just to share with you the whole notion of social bonds: I don’t know if David’s told you, but myself and other colleagues in other areas have gone to KPMG to talk about developing social bonds. So, I’m just saying to you: that’s where the money is. So, I’m saying to you: that’s where the conversation is going to. I just sort of smile to myself now. If I go for coffee and those guys will come up that ought to have (inaudible). So, let me make that clear. It’s not.Nabil Chammas: OK, ladies and gentlemen. We are 15 minutes over time. But what does happen overnight is the opportunity. And you move on that quickly, and you’re set for it. And we put a lot of work into knowing where the market is today. We try and concentrate on that, make sure that what we’re doing is not out of step. I had so many people at Norwest that couldn’t afford to move here, and we walk down to Toongabbie and all those different parts of industrial areas across Sydney trying to convince them to come here to Norwest. But I just sort of smile to myself now. If I go for coffee and those guys will come up with that off me 17 years ago and say: Thank goodness you talked me into it. These days people would always ask me: Where’s the next Norwest, where should we invest? Well, the next Norwest is at Norwest. That’s where it is. This is the opportunity. It’s a great situation. And when I say that, this is just the hub that provides the group to participate.

Andrew Frank: One of the things that is happening in other industries is the use of social bonds and so on and getting buy-in from the private sector. Particularly now, banks/financial institutions are willing to inject capital into a project that’s viable and that gets a good return, because they’re finding that particularly when they work with government, it’s an easier sell to the public, to investors to actually invest in a program. I don’t know whether there’s an opportunity to align government initiatives. It kind of talks to this whole concept of business now being more socially responsible and being more involved in the community.

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Steve Grant: We must be agile, alert for change. Change sometimes doesn’t happen quickly, other times it’s instant. Like, when we talked about the car parking at Sydney Olympic Park in that discussion we just had, the best way to do it is to have a plan that works and work through that to get the best result. It won’t happen overnight.

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BMW’s Alpina brand launches in Australia

By TUNG NGUYEN

BMW’s Alpina branch, which is the BMW tuning house, has launched in Australia with order books open for its 3 and 4 Series B3 and B4 twin-turbo models.

Suzuki takes S-Cross over

Revised specification and pricing for redesigned Suzuki S-Cross

By TIM NICHOLSON

Suzuki has taken the popular Suzuki S-Cross crossover over for a facelift, with the updated model being offered in a new turbocharged engine, additional standard gear and a $6000 price increase over the previous entry model.

Inside, Alpina has fitted its logo to the steering wheel with hand-stitched Lavalina leather. Moving to the 35t-based B4 coupe and convertible lifts pricing to $160,900 and $170,900 respectively with two-door Alpinas utilising the same 301kW/600Nm powertrain.

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Thank you for your reading.
Compass engineered to be class-best 4x4

Improving refinement while boosting 4x4 ability were key goals for Jeep Compass

By BYRON MATHIOUDAKIS

JEep stowe to make the second-genera-
tion Compass the most capable off-roader in its class while improving every other facet over its aging predecessor.

Although three of the four variants follow competitors such as the Mazda CX-5 and Toyota RAV4 in offering front- or all-wheel-drive formats, the Trailhawk usters in an extra low-geard 20-t ratio, a Rock Mode set-
ting, a 45 per cent increase of 25mm raise, skid plates, tow hooks, a shorter front overhang, Hill Descent Control, off-road tires, 48cm water-fording ability, a full-sized spare and greater towing capacity.

However the Trailhawk, like the regular AWD versions of the base Sport, mid-range Latitude, and up-spec Limited, do not have the added weight, complexity and cost of more dedicated 4x4 transeas, meaning that the monocoque-bodied Compass is not in the same league of Jeep’s toughest vehicle, the Jeep Wrangler.

Instead, the AWD system is part-time, with what the company claims is "seamless operation and on-off of the all-wheel-drive module and boasts an electronic drive disconnect function to help reduce drivelog and save fuel.

Plus, there are four driver selectable modes based on terrain via Jeep’s Select-Terrain dial. A transparent system that requires no driver intervention, it includes Auto, Snow (with second gear starts, reduced steering assist and gearbox calibration), Sand and Mud.

The Trailhawk’s Active Drive Low brings off-road electronic brake controls with increased brake-lock differential capacity and 100 per cent front/rear torque split. Using the flat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) Small Wide-Axle modular platform shared with the slightly more compact Renegade, the newcomer features modular and interchangeable components, allowing for flexibility in the wheelchair, tracks, length, width and overhangs.

It underwent over 1.8 million kilometres of accelerated testing; road-test simulators took that up to 25.7m, with development work also carried out in Brazil and China, as well as at the Queenstown Snow Farm in New Zealand.

The global focus was deemed imperative because, unlike any previous Jeep in this segment, the MP-series Compass will not be built in North America, having been engineered as a truly global vehicle to be made available in more than 100 countries.

Once production kicks off in the first half of next year, it will be manufactured in Mexio, Brazil, China and India – with the later being the source for Australian Jeep buyers for the first time. "Global co-ordination of the engineering and design with multiple markets and development locations throughout the development phase was key...", according to FCA vehicle line executive Art Anderson.

High torsional stiffness and a rigid body structure thanks to 65 per cent high-strength steel, suspension brackets and cradle attachments, and front and rear steel cross-members and aluminium knockles (on AWD versions) help deliver better on-road dynamics as well as reduced noise, vibration and harshness (NVH) properties compared to any previous Jeep compact SUV, addressing one of the coming MP Compass’ biggest criticisms.

Aiding the above is a new type of ‘split’ type shock absorber that transmits road vibrations to the body structure via two different routes for better overall dampener performance. Mr Anderson said that the best possible wheel articulation, maximised spring rates, and reduced roll steer led to the decision to use a lightweight ‘Chapman’ rear suspension design featuring two lateral links and half-shafts, as well as MacPherson struts up front. Both also include a Koni frequency-selective damping system for improved handling, road-holding and ride qualities. The electric power steering set-up is fitted to the steering column for best possible feel and response.

To help quell noise pain, there is frame under glass door construction with triple seals, acoustic wheel arch liners, and a comprehen-
sive sound-deadening package, for what a Jeep claims is "world-class interior sound quality."

On the powertrain front, there will be 17 four-cylinder combinations made available worldwide depending on region, ranging from a 1.4-litre MultiAir turbo, to a 2.4-litre atmos unit, as well as a range of MultiJet turbo
diesels of 1.6-litre and 2.0-litre capacities, courtesy of Fiat.

Front drivers have six-speed transmissions in both manual and automatic, while AWDs are offered with nine-speed auto.

Finally, the MP introduces advanced driver assist systems to the Compass, including adaptive cruise control, blind-spot moni-
toring, forward collision warning and lane departure warning, while seven airbags are fitted to all vehicles headed for Australia.

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Ferrari GTC4lusso T breaks cover

$503k rear-drive baby brother to V12 Lusso packs 488 engine, rear-wheel drive

By TIM ROBSON

Ferrari Australasia has revealed a potent V8 rear-wheel-drive version of its Ferrari 488 GTB, the GTC4lusso T, at an event in Sydney this week.

Priced at $503,888 plus on-road costs, the order books are now officially open and cars are expected half way through 2017 – but even early birds are not likely to receive their cars until 2018.

The Lusso T sits below the similarly shaped all-wheel-drive V12-powered Lusso, and above the California T Drop-tops and Coupe in Ferrari’s GT line.

The GT4lusso T is all but identical inside and out to the Lusso – it’s a step change ver-
sion of the FF from 2011. This is the car we expect to be used for the school run, the supermarket, the everyday inner-city commute, all the way to weekend getaways. It’s an all-encompassing car, “for Australasian palms” and CEO Herbert Apollerath told GoAuto.

Mr Apollerath suggested that the penetra-
tion of V8-engined rivals in the prestige and luxury segment meant that Ferrari needed more presence in the space, but reiterated that the brand’s signature engine would be part of the mix for the foreseeable future.

V13 is always a part of the Ferrari family, but if you look where the segment is in this everyday drivable supercar, it’s mainly V8, 85 per cent, in fact,” he said.

“Seventy per cent of California T buyers are new to Ferrari, and we expect this to be about the same, or maybe even more.”

Mr Apollerath believes buyers considering luxury SUV’s such as the Bentley Bentayga and the forthcoming Levante from Ferrari’s sister brand Maserati will also look at the Lusso T:

"That luxury SUV space is becoming very crowded,” he said. "Where do people go from there? They come to Ferrari. Where they finish is where we start."

The GTC4lusso T is almost identical inside and out to the all-wheel-drive GTC4lusso, so using instead Ferrari’s latest V8 which is also used in the California T and 488 GTB.

The front-mounted 3.9-litre twin-turbo V8 makes 449kW at 7500rpm and a mon-
strous 760Nm of torque between 3000 and 5250rpm, sending it all through a seven-speed dual-clutch transmission to the rear wheels.

This is 43kW less than the V8-powered 488 GTB, though the torque figures are the same, while it is at 374kW more powerful than the California T.

The V12 Lusso, meanwhile, makes 507kW and 697Nm.

The Lusso also sports all-wheel steering, adaptive dampers, carbon ceramic brakes, electronic limited slip diff and bespoke 20-
inch rims. It also drops 50kg over its all-wheel-drive sibling, thanks to the loss of a front gearbox and drivethunks.

The $503,888 Lusso T can sprint from 0-100km/h in just 3.5 seconds, just 0.1s slower than the V12 Lusso. It also ‘only’ top out at 320km/h to the V12’s 335km/h.

Inside, all the standard elements of the V12 version – including carbon-fibre shifter paddles, a drive mode dial (or manettino), steer-
ing-wheel-mounted indicators and a digital dash – are present and correct.

There’s also a 10.2-inch infotainment touchscreen, four USB ports on the central transmission tunnel, rearview camera, front and rear sensors and a remote boot release.

It is classed as a four-seater, and even though the aperture to clamber into the rear is narrow, it will seat a pair of adults. It can also carry 450 litres of their luggage.

The left-hand-drive production example on display is fitted with more than $127,000 of options, including a glass roof ($32,000), and a suspension lift ($11,000).

Apple CarPlay costs $6790, while the fittings to mount an iPad Mini in the rear will set you back $4900. A front parking camera is $4000, and the passenger display screen is $900.

And a set of bespoke luggage, including a suit bag, golf bag and trolley bags, costs around $39,000.

"We expect a lot of personalisation from our customers, just like on all our cars. On average a customer will spend about $65,000 extra on their car”, said Mr Apollerath.

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New digital verification service for home loan checks

ASHCHING, Australia’s first online marketplace for home loans, is launching a pilot for a new biometric identity verification service.

The new feature, which will be trialled with a small test group from December 1, 2016, will enable HashChing brokers to satisfy the strict ‘know your client’ (KYC) banking regulations using a completely digital process. KYC verification, which is typically conducted with time-consuming face-to-face meetings, will be accomplished via video call.

An advanced facial recognition algorithm compares the customer’s face with the picture on their driver’s license or passport in real time. The system also connects to the Attorney-General’s Department’s Documentation Verification Service (DVS), which confirms the authenticity of presented ID against government databases within seconds.

The digital verification system speeds up the home loan process and for brokers, it can make all the difference between a cancelled application and a converted lead.

“[This new feature] is a huge step forward in reducing the overall time to complete the mortgage application process,” HashChing co-founder and COO, Atul Narang, said that HashChing is aiming to digitise the entire home loan process to make it faster, more efficient, and easier for both brokers and consumers.

“[Consumers benefit because they don’t need to visit the bank branch or broker representative to prove their identity. Brokers, on the other hand, have the comfort of knowing that any communication that happens with the customer is recorded and can be accessed in the future for any type of auditing or fraud cases],” he said.

“Given we’ve simplified all of the other steps in the home loan process with technologies such as machine learning for automated match making and predictive analytics to target the most suitable deals, conquering the ‘KYC’ requirement was really the last hurdle we had to tackle to create a completely digital process.”

Removing the need for customers and brokers to meet face to face means customers can connect to any broker in the country who offers the most suitable deal. For brokers, it means they’re not limited to leads in their immediate geographic vicinity.”

“About HashChing: HashChing is Australia’s first online marketplace allowing consumers to access home loan deals without having to shop around. Completely free to consumers, HashChing connects customers directly with verified mortgage brokers who further negotiate better rates from lenders, saving valuable time and money. Consumers can ask any home loan related question on HashChing and only verified financial experts will respond to the questions allowing people to make smart and informed financial decisions.

Western Sydney University

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Mapping the best of Western Sydney

A 5 Western Sydney embraces a raft of new developments, Western Sydney University is asking locals to help create an emotional heat map of the region through a digital project mapping the most loved and loathed local spots.

In Western Sydney is an interactive online map developed to capture public feeling about the local landmarks, hidden treasures and no-go zones located across Australia's multicultural heartland.

Users log into the website and digitally mark the locations that either provide inspiration or cause grief, and can add comments, photos and stories to illustrate why the area is important to them.

Institute of Culture and Society researcher Associate Professor Amanda Third says the aim is to create a digital representation of the way people feel about the many varied parts of Western Sydney.

“Everyone has their own special memories and moments, and In Western Sydney will create a historical record of the places and moments in time that arouse people’s emotions,” she says.

“We are asking locals to visit the website and document how they feel about places in Western Sydney. They can make a simple report by answering some quick questions, but they can also upload photos and share their stories.”

“These can range from the park where they won their first rugby game, the restaurant where they met the extended family, or the local dives that are best avoided. The research team will analyse the results and feed them back to local and state government.”

Home to over two million residents, Western Sydney has one of the most diverse multicultural communities in Australia, with almost one third of residents born overseas, and 50% either first or second generation Australians.

Western Sydney will capture their feelings and connections to the region at a crucial time, as Western Sydney prepares for tens of billions of dollars of developments, including a new airport, road links and cultural institutions.

“Western Sydney is undergoing a massive transformation as new infrastructure projects such as the new Badgery’s Creek airport, road links and the relocated Powerhouse Museum take shape,” she says.

“By recording the opinions of local residents, we’re building a new map of western Sydney, an emotional map, and in doing so contributing to conversations about the future planning and design of our great city.”

“Importantly, this information will be collated at the end of the project and available to the public, with the aim of using these insights to inform the planning process as our region continues its remarkable transformation.”

This project is a collaboration between Western Sydney University researchers at the Institute for Cultural and Society, the School of Humanities and Communication Arts, and the Young and Well CRC.

Goal-setting APP helps wellbeing

Goalzie is a mobile game application designed to challenge young people to make positive changes in their lives, such as embarking on new exercise or diet programs, or unleashing their creativity by making videos for their friends.

Just like truth or dare, users of the app will be set fun challenges for any unachieved goals.

Researcher Dr Phillips Collin, from the Institute for Culture and Society, says the app was designed in collaboration with over 65 teenagers.

“Young people are often consulted by researchers and designers of online campaigns, but are rarely involved at all stages as peers researchers or co-creators,” says Dr Collin.

In contrast, this project has worked with young people, in a range of settings at all stages of research and design. This helped identify that promoting help-seeking can start before a young person has a problem, and helped us understand how their social and digital practices could provide the basis for everyday goal-setting and help seeking practices.”

The Goalzie app was created by the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre and the University of South Australia, in conjunction with Western Sydney University, Zuni and the Queensland University of Technology.

Challenges range from physical, such as a dance workout, self-regulation such as going two days without Facebook; being creative by making a Vine video; and being healthier by giving up chocolate for a week.

Consequences include washing the family car, making One Direction your Facebook cover photo, and handing in homework two days early.

The CEO of the Young and Well CRC, Associate Professor Jane Burns, says research has found 75% of mental health difficulties occur before the age of 25.

“Unfortunately, 70% of girls and 80% of boys don’t seek help for managing their mental health issues,” she says. “Through apps like Goalzie we are trying to instil help-seeking behaviour using humour and gamification. I feel confident that Goalzie will break down stigma around asking for help.”

As an added bonus, Goalzie also includes access to The Toolbox – a resource developed by ReachOut.com and the Young and Well CRC to further help young people seek help through identifying goals.

The Toolbox provides a collection of over 50 health and wellbeing tools and apps endorsed by professionals and reviewed by people under 25 years-old.

The app was launched at Merrylands High School and included a Q&A session with researchers and the students who were involved in the development of the app.

The research insights will be available mid-year.

INNOVATION • GAME CHANGERS • TECHNOLOGY • NEW IDEAS
Hills business eyes Sundance film awards
From humble beginnings...

SUCCESS

By Hardeep Girn

In a world where marketing comes flooding into our lives at breakneck speed, the ongoing challenge for business is how to achieve cut through and reach their desired audience with enough impact to cause people to act.

Whether the purpose of the message is to sell a product, or to create a brand or personal profile the key is to look to unconventional approaches.

Using film and media to convey critical business messages has resulted in some unusual adventures over the past year for me and my crew, including a recent stint of filming in Hollywood and a film production being established in Sydney's North West, complete with modern equipment and changeable sets.

A first production was a lightbulb moment for me. I realised that further production could offer my clients highly lucrative opportunities to connect with and through media and events, strategically showcasing them through social and digital coverage.

Over the past 12 months, some of the productions that have been filmed include interviews with Sandhurst Fine Foods, the Salvation Army, AmCham, Royal Institute for Death and Blind Children, Paralympian Champion Ellie Cole and business and media identity Peter Schwitzer as well as an international venture which took the small production house to Hollywood's Madame Tussauds' to film an interview with Hollywood Chamber of Commerce President 'Mr Hollywood', Leron Grubler.

With every Know My Group production comes an opportunity to facilitate collaborations between those involved, to get closer to the network surrounding the organisation or person being filmed, as well as sharing and telling a brand, organisational or personal story.

Film provides us with a unique opportunity to tell a story and convey a message, and when done with a business mindset, can achieve many more objectives for those involved.

Place and usage of the footage we produce is a key component in maximising the opportunity for all involved.

Recognising the need for reliable channels to promote my film productions, I have established partnerships with media groups such as Foxtel, Event Cinemas and various news publications, and well established member based organisations such as Family Business Australia and the American Chamber of Commerce.

These partnerships have allowed us to distribute our work, which often features unsung community heroes or not for profit organisations, well into the public eye and to attract attention far beyond that of traditional marketing.

The Know My Group productions, which originated started as a small-scale attempt to showcase my company's own work has gained industry credibility.

We have secured IMDB accounts and achieved recognition as an Executive Producer with AACTA (Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts). The association has Geoffrey Rush as President, Cate Blanchett as Ambassador and George Miller, the director and producer of the Mad Max films, as its Patron.

Plans are in place for a production about a variety of medical conditions and the associated organisational and individual stories that stem from a personal experience within my own family.

Along with plans to collaborate on a potential Tropfest entry for 2017/18 and plans for a number of internet television series, there is plenty to look forward to.

Hardeep Girn is managing director of www.knowmy-life.com.au

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From left: Casey Ralph, Cheryl Ralph, Hardeep Girn, Paul Ralph, Blake Ralph The Know My Life studio.
“A gift for this planet.”
—Georgian veteran journalist Helena Apkhadze

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“Demonstrating the highest realm in arts, Shen Yun inspires the performing arts world.”
—Chi Cao, lead actor in Mao’s Last Dancer

“5,000 Years of Chinese music and dance in one night!”
—The New York Times

“Incredible! Groundbreaking!”

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When it comes to money, what animal are you?

People with Dolphin preferences like harmony, peace and purpose. Dolphins are more interested in “what could be” than “what is”. The Dolphins core needs are possibility, purpose and authenticity. Oprah Winfrey displays Dolphin preferences.

People with Owl preferences like knowledge, possibility and analysis. Like the Dolphins, Owls are more interested in “what could be” than “what is”. The core needs of Owls are competence, possibility and maximising opportunities. Bill Gates displays Owl preferences.

People with Monkey preferences like spontaneity and flexibility. They act on their impulses and find highly structured plans and situations restricting. Monkeys like to take advantage of new opportunities quickly. Donald Trump displays Monkey preferences.

People with Labrador preferences like order, closure and stability. They excel in managing and maintaining proven structures and systems. Labrador’s core needs are loyalty, responsibility, and belonging. Warren Buffett displays Labrador preferences.

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PROPERTY

Tallest residential tower tops out

PROPERTY Development firm Lateral Estate has reached a significant construction milestone with the ‘topping out’ of the first stage of Skyhaus, Liverpool’s tallest residential tower.

Construction has now reached the top of the 31-storey tower located at 420 Macquarie Street, Liverpool. Once complete, there will be two buildings connected by a five-storey podium. The buildings will both boast views spanning from Western Sydney all the way to the Sydney CBD.

“This is an exciting milestone for Skyhaus. The community has been so accommodating and we are proud to deliver them a state-of-the-art residential facility. “Liverpool has continued to go from strength to strength over the years and has become a hub for innovation and major infrastructure development including the Westconnex Motorway and the planned Western Sydney Airport at Badgerys Creek. We are experiencing strong demand from people wanting to take advantage of the growing region and get in before it becomes another Western Sydney boom area like Parramatta,” said Tony Johnson, Associate Director of Lateral Estate.

Since its commencement in 2015, the construction of Skyhaus has created over 200 new construction jobs, with most of the sub-contractors on site coming from Western Sydney.

The Skyhaus topping out ceremony.

The Skyhaus building in progress.

GPT expands holdings with five opportunities for $180M

INDUSTRIAL

By Red Dwyer

GPT Group has expanded its industrial property sector in Western Sydney with acquisitions of five opportunities expected to have a completion value of about $180 million.

Combined, the five development opportunities could deliver up to 130,000 square metres of logistics product in the highly sought western corridor.

The acquisitions include 5.3 hectares of land on Old Wallgrove Road, Eastern Creek, a 50 per cent stake in a 4.3-hectare lot on Templar Road, Erskine Park, and a facility at 1 Huntingwood Drive, Huntingwood, with an adjoining two-hectare parcel of land.

“Eastern Creek and Erskine Park are great locations for industrial property due to the proximity to transport and infrastructure,” said Matthew Faddy, GPT’s head of office and logistics.

Mr Faddy said the new sites would replenish GPT’s land bank and development pipeline following its success in delivering $300 million of logistics and business park assets at Erskine Park and Sydney Olympic Park last year.
By Craig Hingston
Manufacturing EDITOR

$170M bus project
AN Australian bus building company has been selected for a $170 million Malaysian electric bus project - at the same time it will build electric buses to be operated in Adelaide.

Robots teach themselves
NVIDIA and Fanuc Corporation are collaborating to develop artificial intelligence for robots which will enable them to teach themselves to do tasks faster and more efficiently.

We are more connected
AUSTRALIA has fallen to 34th out of 140 countries in the latest Global Connectedness Index (we were previously ranked 28th). Report author, Deutsche Post DHL, said the world is about 8 percent more connected than it was in 2005.

Export looking good
EXPORT forecasts for iron ore, gold, uranium, alumina, copper and bauxite are looking optimistic, according to the Australian Government, which predicts a 15 percent increase in export values by 2020.

Groving mining sector
A STRATEGY to grow Australia’s mining equipment, technology and services (METS) sector - the 10 Year Sector Competitiveness Plan - has been unveiled.

24.5-metre-long tankers
AN Australian manufacturer has built a first-of-its-kind tanker for the road transport industry: the 24.5-metre-long B-double tankers have 20 percent more space than standard B-doubles.

Armoured vehicle program
THE Australian Government is conducting workshops across the country advising small and medium businesses opportunities how they can become involved in the multi-billion-dollar LAND 400 Phase 2 armoured vehicle program.

$186M acquisition
ST MARINER’s mixed waste management company Toxfree announced a $186 million acquisition of Daniels Health and Daniels Manufacturing.

Competitive manufacturing
THE Australian Government has launched the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre in its bid to help the manufacturing industry become more competitive and more productive.

Energy storage capacity
AN Australian start-up is developing nanotechnology which will boost the energy storage capacity of lithium ion batteries by up to 50 percent.

Infrastructure cost rising
INFRASTRUCTURE related construc-

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WHAT THEY SAID...

"Liverpool has come a long way ... and it is going to go a lot further." — Harry Hunt announcing his resignation after 13 years as president, of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce. Mr Hunt, OAM, owns the 140-room Country Comfort Hunts Motel Liverpool.

“We have forecast a doubling of economic growth, an investment boom of more than $10 billion, and a significant growth in commercial floor space [in the Parramatta CBD].” — Jeremy Thorpe, economics and policy partner, PwC which is to open an office in the CBD.

“All this is about the future of Campbelltown and the growth of the region,” – Michael Dagostino, director, of Campbelltown Art Centre, which proposes a $30 million upgrade and expansion of the facility. Mr Dagostino has been appointed the Western Sydney representative on the new 15-member NSW Office of Culture, Arts and Screen.

“It is important that we in Liverpool show the government that we are serious here and they need to look at Liverpool in a more positive way in the future. Liverpool will become a major city with Badgerys Creek as part of the Western City near the Badgerys Creek airport.” — Harry Hunt, president, Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, on the Greater Sydney Commission’s plans for Eastern Harbour City, Central Parramatta River City and the Western City near the Badgerys Creek airport.

“Even with the Powerhouse Museum coming, there’s still a mindset in Sydney’s eastern suburbs that we don’t deserve these things. Western Sydney is deprived of arts opportunities. Parramatta could become the state’s art capital.” — Paul Garzard, patron, The Parramatta Art Society.

“[Penrith] Council estimates that 1.2 million people visit Penrith every year but they have nowhere to stay because of a lack of accommodation.” — Rod Desborough, CEO, St Marys Rugby League Club, on the club’s $18.8 million hotel project

“We’ll sit down and masterplan the whole site, adjust the hotel offering and look at how the retail components work, considering the height and FSR benefits.” — Peter De Angelis, of the family-owned hotel group which bought the Uncle Bucks Hotel in Mount Druitt, for $25.3 million.

“Seventy percent of drug users are employed. They need their jobs to support their habits. Two thirds of them use their drugs at work.” he said. Michael White DRUG Safe Communities

“With the recent release of SOPA’s 2030 Master Plan outlining the biggest revitalisation of Sydney Olympic Park in its history, I have great confidence in Charles’s leadership to deliver the vision for the Park,” he said , Charles Moore

“From the moment, the audience arrives, they are no longer the audience,” Mr Barry.

“They become the guests and constituents of the Prime Minister. We really make them part of the whole world of the show we are doing. The characters have their script but also improvise with the guests who love to join in to create a lot of hilarity.” Artistic director of the new production of Yes Minister, Matthew Barry.

“Nepean Hospital has one of the busiest Emergency Departments and the longest wait times for elective surgery in the state,” he said. “This funding will not only help turn these statistics around; they will deliver the state-of-the-art facility our region deserves.” − Penrith Mayor John Thain.

“Victoria has an abundance of industrial land supply. We are starting to see industrial users who want to relocate to Western Sydney, looking at Victoria as an opportunity because land is cheaper and more available.” — Head of Industry at Mirvac, Stuart Penklis.

“I want to create an environment where women entrepreneurs can come along to our event evenings, take something of value home with them to implement into their businesses, connect with other like-minded women and leave feeling completely inspired and supported.” - Business In Heels franchisee owner, Desiree Taylor.

“We want to help you define your position, develop your presence and get placed in the right opportunity.”  

Hardeep Cirm, CEO Know My Business

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Know My Business

BUSINESS INTRODUCTIONS
RIVERSIDE Theatres brings a world of theatre and dance companies to Sydney audiences and particularly those in Western Sydney, with the announcement of their 2017 program.

Many of the nation’s performing arts companies alongside resident company Riverside National Theatre of Parramatta (NT of P) and international touring productions, have been programmed in Riverside Theatre’s line-up of 20 diverse and entertaining productions for 2017.

Program manager for Riverside Theatres, Michelle Kotovski said: ‘Every great city has a great theatre. As Parramatta grows to take its place as a global city, Riverside Theatres’ 2017 program of sophisticated, diverse and virtuosic performing arts from around the world reflects the city’s vibrancy.’

The program features contemporary and classic works from major performing arts companies including Melbourne Theatre Company (What Rhymes With Cars and Girls), Sydney Dance Company (Frame of Mind), Queensland Theatre (Grin and Tonic Theatre’s 7 Stages of Grieving), Belvoir (Mark Colvin’s Kidney), The Australian Ballet (Giselle) and Sydney Theatre Company (The What Wharf Revue).

Kicking off during the Sydney Festival in January, Riverside Theatres will co-present two productions – Hakawati from NT of P and Kaleidoscope from Company 2. Inspired by the ancient Arabic tradition of storytelling and breaking bread, Hakawati will celebrate food, music and the telling of tales; while Kaleidoscope will invite audiences to view life through the eyes of a young man with Asperger Syndrome in a joyous, poetic circus experience.

For the very first time, Riverside welcomes Melbourne Theatre Company for an exclusive Sydney season of the contemporary Australian love story, What Rhymes with Cars and Girls, based on the iconic album of the same title.

Continued on page 51
name from You Am I frontman Tim Rogers. Performed with a live band led by Rogers, this intimate musical sees two lovers brought together by a conjunction of the stars and a pizza delivery gone wrong.

In March, Satu Bulan Theatre Company and Performing Lines will present the Australian-Indonesian play, The Age of Bones by Darwin’s award winning playwright Sandra Thibodeaux. Set in a magical world under the ocean, this fantastical piece is realised through a combination of shadow puppets, video and music.

Throughout 2017, NT of P will present three world-premieres including David Williams’ Smurf in Wanderland co-produced with Griffin Theatre Company, and two adaptations of Australian literature, The Incredible Here and Now by Parramatta writer Felicity Castagna and The Red Tree by Shaun Tan and adapted by Hilary Bell.

In June Queensland Theatre and Grin and Tonic Theatre Group present an enduring masterwork of Australian Indigenous theatre, The 7 Stages of Grieving. Penned 20 years ago by today’s Sydney Festival Director, Wesley Enoch along with acclaimed actor Deborah Mailman, this new production stars Western Sydney actor Chenoa Deemal and is described as funny, devastatingly sad, politically relevant and culturally profound.

Making a welcome return to Riverside will be two of Australia’s most celebrated dance companies - Sydney Dance Company with a powerful double bill, Frame of Mind by Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela and Wildebeest by recipient of the prestigious 2016 Tanja Liedtke Fellowship, Gabrielle Nankivell. Plus, the Australian Dance Theatre’s Be Your Self (Reduce) choreographed by Artistic Director Carryn Stewart explores the fundamental question about ‘self’ using the body as the focus.

Rounding out the stellar program will be two classic stories including a new adaption of the Gothic horror story Dracula from shake & stir Theatre Co; and Katherine Thomson’s Diving for Pearls, produced by Griffin Theatre Company and starring Helpmann Award®-winning actor Ursula Yovich.

A summary of the 2017 program can be found on the following page. For further information, visit the Riverside Theatres’ website at: https://riversideparramatta.com.au
WHAT IF YOUNG PEOPLE designed their own learning?

STUDENTS

By Megan O’Connell
Policy Program Director,
Mitchell Institute, Victoria University

and

Bill Lucas
International adviser, Mitchell Institute, Victoria University

MAGINE two teenagers. Let’s call them Jack and Alaysa. They go to Imaginary High School somewhere in Australia.

There are no year levels or set curriculum. Students move on to the next stage when they are ready, irrespective of age. They partner with teachers to design what they learn and how they are assessed.

Traditional subjects are replaced with real-world problems. Kids are still learning maths and English – they’re applying their knowledge to build and race a bill cart and to market products at a local fair.

Students develop their capabilities and give back to their communities. They might be out revegetating the local creek, mentoring preschoolers or restoring furniture.

Students are totally absorbed in what they are doing, studying areas they have chosen which clearly matter to them.

Four topics that catch your eye are the challenges of migration for kids, why the internet is changing punctuation, what it’s like to be an apprentice, and an exploration of different school systems across the world.

Students are creating products, producing blogs and sophisticated multimedia presentations.

Classes have students of different ages. Teachers from different subjects are working together. At times during the week, lessons last for a whole morning or afternoon.

Rather than having an identical timetable to others in their year, students here have a personal plan which is updated twice a week. Students have the flexibility to work part-time, engage in physical activity and community service. They create electronic portfolios to show what they have learned. In some cases these exist as “open badges”, digital proof that they have reached certain levels of accomplishment.

Why schools need to change

The current system is clearly not working for a large number of students. Levels of

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disengagement within schools are high and increase as students pass through secondary school.

To carry on batching children into year groups and teaching them the same content partly explains why there are high levels of disengagement, stress and underachievement.

Schools recognise that today’s complex world needs students who are capable in different ways.

There is growing disquiet about the capacity of education to meet future skill needs and a recognition that we need students with a different set of capabilities.

The American educational reformer John Dewey was making these kinds of arguments a century ago in his book Democracy and Education.

Dewey believed that students thrive in an environment that allows them to interact with the curriculum, and that all students should have the opportunity to take part in their own learning.

Creativity expert Ken Robinson became a TED-talk phenomenon as a result of his savage critique of assembly-line schooling. He called for a radical rethink of the school system so that it nurtures, rather than undermines, creativity.

Ken Robinson poses the question: do schools kill creativity?

Australian Council for Educational Research CEO Geoff Masters has called for us to view the school curriculum as a roadmap rather than a series of identical short road trips.

We should measure children’s learning in terms of breadth and depth, with the roadmap laying out the ultimate learning goals. Each student’s journey would run at their own speed.

International education advisers Guy Claxton and Bill Lucas have similarly reimagined schooling in their book Educating Ruby. They suggest the core purpose of education should be to build young people’s capabilities to function in their lives beyond school.

We need to shift the focus away from teaching to the test towards learning for life.

How do teachers fit in with this?

The teacher’s role is vital in this new approach.

Where once teachers imparted knowledge and skills for an age-related syllabus, today they need to be coaches, critics and experts in learning. They need to be able to ensure that students get the very best out of their time in class.

Teachers need to strike the balance between encouraging independent learning and providing students with guidance. They have a key role in cultivating confident, curious learners who can take risks and learn from their mistakes. Feedback loops are critical, with students and teachers providing regular feedback to each other to achieve quality learning.

But could this really work?

The Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE), an international centre of expertise in evidence-based policy and practice, shows some of the benefits of a shift towards more independent learning.

CUREE found that independent learning could improve academic performance, motivation and confidence. Studies showed some students such as those with special learning needs and socially excluded children, felt more engaged in their learning. However, learning needed to be scaffolded with support and feedback. Teachers played a key role in facilitating students’ independence. Further empirical evidence would strengthen understanding of the size of the effect.

Education professor John Hattie reminds us that: “The biggest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their own teaching, and when students become their own teachers.”

In other words, what’s needed is a rethinking of roles for teachers and students.

Making Imaginary High a reality

Across Australia some of these ideas are being put into practice. Some schools have dropped the notion of year levels to enable them to meet children at their point of need and acknowledge that not all students learn at the same pace.

Computer programs are enabling instruction tailored to the student by assessing where they are at and providing a tailored curriculum.

Capabilities, such as personal and social capability and critical and creative thinking, are being embedded in the curriculum. Work is under way to develop assessment measures. Teachers across Australia are working on developing new models of practice to support this approach.

We need to accelerate the change. We are wasting too much of students’ learning time and are failing to amplify their talents. To continue along the current path is increasingly unscientific, unjustifiable and plain dull.
Design or content, which delivers $$?

By Deb Jeffreys

WEBSITE designers have done a great job of extracting money from businesses owners on the promise that a beautifully designed website will deliver leads and sales. Rarely do web designers talk much about content. Generally, they include a content management system and tell the business owner to add the words and images themselves.

All too often the website fails to deliver on promise, and the disgruntled businesses owner decides digital marketing doesn’t work.

But of course, when it’s done right, digital marketing works spectacularly well. Our company, Brilliant Digital has many clients for whom strategic, high quality digital marketing delivers a massive return on investment in the form of a steady flow of quality leads over a prolonged period.

So, what’s the secret to success? Success, measured by delivering quality leads and sales, is achieved using strategically structured, high quality website content. Storytelling is key.

Companies must tell the story of the business and its products and services in a way their target market understands. They must clearly explain how they solve their target market’s problems.

And they must format the content in the right way for Google so it sends organic traffic.

A key detail is to explain what the business aspires to accomplish. Stating the big mission behind a company that solves a big problem for its customers is crucial. Buyers also want to read about the passion that drives and excites key team members. And finally, the story of how a company solves buyer’s problems will allow a potential customer to buy into its solution.

For example, we recently worked with an accountancy firm who had a beautifully designed website that was not delivering a single lead. Following a detailed strategy session, we re-wrote every word of their website content. We also overhauled the website structure and search engine optimisation. We included details about the company’s services in language their business clients could understand, stories about previous clients buying experiences and profiles from each team member conveying their passion for what they do.

Immediately the content started to deliver results. The firm now gets a steady flow of around four quality leads a week directly from the website. Same design. New content. Totally different outcome.

So, is website design important at all? All this talk about content doesn’t mean that design is irrelevant. Like the reception in your business premises, your ideal customer must feel a good first impression when they arrive or they will leave.

And a well-designed web page will always convert better than a badly designed web page if they contain same content. But design can only take you so far towards a sale. No substance. No sale.

Our most successful clients understand the power of content. They are prepared to invest in professional, high quality website content. Each year their investment in content is at least 10 times their investment in design. The content delivers organic, sustained business growth. And they dance all the way to the bank.

Deb Jeffreys is principal at Brilliant Digital. Visit: www.brilliantdigital.com.au

Key Points
- Great web design gives a great first impression.
- Content is the substance that delivers the dollars.
- Consider a 1:10 design to content investment.

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WESTERN SYDNEY BUSINESS ACCESS DECEMBER 2016
This Christmas, Have a Pandora's Christmas

We're open for lunch this Christmas. Here is the 3 course à la carte menu:

**Entrée**
- Tempura Soft Shell Crab (gf) (df)
  Wild baby rocket, avocado salsa, lime aoli
- Sticky Pork Belly (gf)
  Cucumber & baby herb salad, plum sauce
- Lemon & Thyme Quail
  Toasted brioche, red wine poached egg, English spinach, truffle oil

**Main**
- Pan fried Barramundi Fillet (gf)
  On crisp smashed potatoes, green beans, topped with creme saltata and lemon butter sauce
- Golden Duck Breast (gf)
  Sweet potato mash, soy & sesame greens, Cherry jus
- Turkey Saltimbocca
  Creamy herb polenta, grilled asparagus, Red wine jus, cranberry sauce
- Char Grilled Beef Tenderloin (gf)
  Creamy potato dauphinoise, asparagus, wild mushroom ragout, red wine jus

**Dessert**
- Christmas Pudding
  With custard and vanilla bean ice cream
- Vanilla Bean Crème Brûlée
- Lemon and pistachio biscotti
- Summer Pavlova (gf)
  Double cream, fresh fruits & raspberry sorbet

**Price**
- Adults: $150
- Child (under 12) $30*
- Child (under 5) $15*
*Children's menu different from above

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