

SCHOLEFIELD

BUSINESS

JOURNAL

Little Pig Consulting:
Ready to Elevate
Excellence

The Shadowy
Dark Web

A Blooming
Good Tale

Sleepout Raises
\$150,000 for
Homeless Women

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06

The responsibility
of being a custodian
of the Business
Excellence Awards

Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands, the Jagera, Giabal and Jarowair people. We extend that respect to the elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the cultures and the hopes of Australia's First Peoples.

on the cover

Clayton and Emma Menyweather.
Image by Oh Tilly, Emma's makeup
by Luminosa.



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CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

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The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is one of Queensland's largest regional Chambers. Together we represent a significant voice and as a group we can make a positive difference for our local business community. Contact our Chamber team today to learn more on how we can help you. We work for business. **Email:** admin@toowoombachamber.com.au

We want to hear from you

Send your story ideas and
submissions to communications@
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Respect at Work

In December 2022, key amendments were made to the Sex Discrimination Act 1984. There were eight key changes made, however on review there is one main change that effect all business, whether big or small. The introduction of a new positive duty into the Sex Discrimination Act.

This is a duty on employers to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate, as far as possible, certain discriminatory conduct, including sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sex-based harassment and certain acts of victimisation in the workplace.

This important change effectively means that employers must shift their focus to actively preventing workplace sex harassment and discrimination, rather than just responding only after it occurs.

New regulatory powers have been introduced by the Australian Human Rights Commission to investigate and enforce compliance with the positive duty. Following a 12-month transition period, since December 2023, workplaces should be fully aware of the changes and actively making the necessary amendments to ensure compliance.

To become compliant, the initial step for businesses is to develop a robust Bullying, Harassment (including sexual harassment) and Discrimination policy. Merely having this policy sitting in a folder or a cupboard will not ensure compliance.

Therefore, the second step in the process is to roll the policy out to all staff to ensure they are aware of the policy, its contents and implications.

Finally, training your staff on the policy and your internal procedures is also a key step to ensure compliance with the amended Act. This training should be completed regularly. This training should result in staff undertaking their workplace responsibilities, including in relation to bystander intervention.

Some other suggestions for businesses include:

- ensuring managers and leaders exemplify, encourage and enforce desired behaviours to send cultural signals and demonstrate expectations
- implementing gender equality and other inclusivity strategies to reduce the prevalence of discriminatory/harassing conduct
- adopting human-centred approaches to respond to reports of discriminatory/harassing conduct and investigations
- taking proportionate action where discriminatory/harassing conduct is found to have occurred.

Our team at Classic Recruitment & Human Resources can assist businesses, either big or small with the development of appropriate policies, conduct the required training, and assist with investigations if required. For more information on this topic feel free to reach out to our team on 4638 3599.



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The Chronicle



Elevating Excellence: Little Pig Consulting Takes Centre Stage as Naming Rights Partner for the Business Excellence Awards

Little Pig Consulting has been announced as the Naming Rights Partner for the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards for 2024-2026. This prestigious honour marks a new chapter for the Toowoomba business landscape, as Little Pig Consulting steps into the spotlight previously held by Focus HR.

The transition from one respected Naming Rights Partner to another underscores the spirit of collaboration and excellence that defines the Toowoomba business community. As Clayton Menyweather, Director of Little Pig Consulting, aptly puts it, "It's not just about the prestige; it's about the responsibility of being a custodian of the Business Excellence Awards."

Clayton expressed his gratitude and acknowledged the significance of the role: "It's a prestigious role – an

important one, as a custodian - to look after the Business Excellence Awards for the next three years." He shared his admiration for Naomi Wilson, Managing Director of Focus HR, considering her and her business as inspirations for his journey. He reflected, "When Focus HR took on the naming rights partnership, I thought, 'Wow, she's made it.' I want to get to that level someday."

For Little Pig Consulting, being the Naming Rights Partner is more than just about visibility; it's



about actively supporting and nurturing the local business community. Clayton emphasised Little Pig's collaborative and supportive approach:

"We believe in helping people – it's at the core of everything we do. With the Naming Rights, we see an opportunity to promote our brand and support other businesses and inspire them, much like Focus HR has inspired us."

The focus of the Business Excellence Awards aligns perfectly with Little Pig Consulting's values. Clayton explained,

"It's about celebrating other people's successes – that's what the BEA is all about. By shining the light on excellent businesses in Toowoomba, it promotes the 'buy local, support local' ethos that we have always championed."

Furthermore, Little Pig Consulting actively contributes to the local economy by employing and investing in team members who live locally Clayton shared a heart-warming example of an employee who was able to secure a mortgage and buy his first home, thanks to stable employment at Little Pig Consulting.

Little Pig Consulting is deeply involved with the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce, recognising its value in fostering connections and driving growth. Clayton stated, "We are proud Platinum Partners of the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce. The connections and opportunities provided by the Chamber have been invaluable to our growth."

Another element that makes Little Pig Consulting shine, is their commitment to giving back to the community as

a whole. They're not just building a business; they are passionate about helping to build a better Toowoomba. This ethos is reflected in their support for local charities and active participation in charitable events.

Taking inspiration from the tale of Three Little Pigs, the Little Pig team embodies the spirit of tenacity. Like the pigs in the story, they have weathered challenges and refined their processes to emerge stronger than ever.

Clayton also paid homage to his wife Emma, highlighting her integral role in the success of Little Pig Consulting. He expressed, "I want to pay homage to Emma, my wife. Having Emma by my side has been instrumental in our journey. She certainly is the yin to my yang. She levels me out on occasion, and vice versa. Together, we make a terrific partnership, and I wouldn't have had as much success as quickly as I have had if I didn't have her in the picture."

The announcement of Little Pig Consulting as the new naming rights holder for the Business Excellence Awards is a testament to the vibrancy and resilience of the Toowoomba business community.

Looking ahead, Little Pig Consulting's vision for the Business Excellence Awards is clear: celebrating and promoting **excellence** in the local business community. Over the next three years, they plan on being right beside every single excellent business in the region, and celebrating their success with them.

Ready to elevate your business excellence? Take advantage of Clayton's free 45-minute consultation, where creativity, expertise, and staunch commitment meet to fuel your success. Whether you're just starting out or refining your brand, Little Pig Consulting is your go-to for business coaching, brand development, websites, videography and digital marketing. Don't wait, seize the opportunity to build your business tenacity today!

2024 Local Election | Toowoomba Business Priorities



Small Business is a BIG Deal

We are an entrepreneurial city, a small business city that is the backbone of the Toowoomba regional economy. We are crucial to the region's sustainability and growth.

We know this, as the research undertaken by McCrindle as part of the Toowoomba Business Performance Sentiment Index identified that over 98% of the region's businesses are small. Yes, small businesses dominate the Toowoomba business landscape.

Small businesses are critical for the city's wealth generation and success. They also play an enormous role in our region by giving back to our community by supporting numerous community and sporting organisations and not for profit companies. That means when small business hurts our whole community hurts too.

The Toowoomba Chamber wants to see a turbocharged region, so businesses can expand, and more money can flow directly into the local economy. A region where business and people talk

about Toowoomba being THE place for business, throughout Queensland and around the nation.

Toowoomba Regional Council plays a critical role in small business success. How? By communicating and engaging with small business to enable growth. By creating enabling regulation to bring economic prosperity to a region. Rewarding small business. And much more.

The Toowoomba Chamber has engaged early and often with the business community to gain input into the key priorities that support business locally. With this input, the Toowoomba Chamber has identified key priorities and the commitment required from the next Toowoomba Regional Council Mayor and Councillors to enable small business.

We are the independent voice of business in our region. We will continue to advocate loudly to ensure the voice of business is heard.

*Myfanwy Rigby
Toowoomba Chamber President*

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Central Business District	
The Matter	<p>"The Toowoomba Central Business District is the jewel of our region. And understanding its business make-up, employment characteristics, strengths, and gaps, along with its roles and impact within the city's urban boundaries, the broader Toowoomba local government area, the region, state, and nation is essential is developing good policy. Any heart needs constant focus and attention to understand the critical factors that keep it activated. The CBD requires a collective effort and collaboration between business, government, and the community."</p>
Current Business Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of effective investment is restricting long-term growth and sustainability. • Local CBD Parking Policies have the biggest impact on the most common business types in the CBD, reducing customers and client base. • Local CBD Parking Policies are inequitable, financially disadvantaging for small business operators. • Business downturn. • Businesses exiting the CBD.
Facts and Data	<p>The CBD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contributes 8.1% of GDP to the Toowoomba region; • employs in the order of 8,521 people; • has a direct and in direct economic impact across the whole Toowoomba local government area, Queensland and nationally; • largest number of businesses by industry share are professional services, rental and real estate and retail trade; • most common business types are cafés and restaurants, hairdressing and beauty services and accounting services; and • when comparing the Toowoomba CBD against a control group of other CBDs consisting of Townsville, Ballarat, Bendigo, Albury-Wodonga; Mackay, Rockhampton, Bunbury, Bundaberg and Coffs Harbour, the control group performs better in key areas being tourism, accommodation, education and training and public administration; and • needs consideration of what other Local government authorities do in other cities like Williamstown who offer a parking permit service for business owners, delivery vehicles, construction workers and the like to support local businesses day to day operations and development. <p>Local government authorities in other cities like Williamstown have diverse parking strategies that offer a parking permit service for business owners, delivery vehicles, construction workers and the like to support local businesses day to day operations and development.</p>
Small Business Voices	<p><i>'The revised parking in the CBD has driven my business to the suburbs'.</i></p> <p><i>'We noticed a downturn in our CBD business when new car parking arrangements were implemented. Our customers say there is no reason to come downtown anymore due to car parking arrangements and poor public amenities. We know businesses have moved from the CBD due to these reasons'.</i></p> <p><i>'More needs to be done to facilitate housing in the CBD. It will bring people, support business growth, and make the area safer', Small Business Owner.</i></p> <p><i>'We need a community-based contribution in parks, streetscape enhancements and a conference facility delivered with the support of all levels of government and the business community to activate the CBD'.</i></p> <p><i>"In 2020, Council advised they will consider developing a public guide for hosting events in the CBD including how to activate laneways for events. I have heard nothing since 2020. Has this occurred?"</i></p> <p><i>"In my communication with many local businesses I've been made aware of red tape that has lost local businesses money and time opened. The handling of parking in the cbd has made it difficult for many businesses to get customers through the door and for staff to find a reasonable solution for their vehicles during work and has led some staff to change to jobs outside of the cbd. Leaving some cbd businesses struggling to find staff unless they have a private park for their team members - which is rare'.</i></p>
Connect with Government	<p>In 2021, Explore and Clarify CBD Priorities collaboration identified several matters as priorities for Toowoomba Regional Council including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a public guide for hosting events in Toowoomba, including information about activating laneways in the city; • repurposing the laneway spaces, they own, and where this fits into existing strategies and budgets; • the outcomes of the workshop to inform the development of this strategic document which will inform the City Centre Action Plan 2022 – 2023.
The Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consistent, clear, and equitable approach to CBD parking. • Invest in an urban park, improved long-term parking, conference facility, and more accommodation choice in the CBD. • Develop holistic incentives that facilitate increased tourism, accommodation, education and training and public administration uses in the CBD. • All events in the CBD and across the city should be coordinated in one place.

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<p>Identify How It Can Be Done</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement 3 hours' free parking in the Bell Street Car Park and Annand Street Car Parks, bringing consistency in parking offerings across the CBD. • Provide parking permit options for business owners and building owners, including trade services to assist with planned and urgent works being conducted in the CBD during business hours. • Extend the one hour parking arrangements to two hours in the CBD. • A complete signage audit and update for parking signage. • Complete a business case for investment in an urban park that includes green space, improved long term parking, a conference facility, and more accommodation choice. • Create an incentive package that facilitates increased tourism, accommodation, education, training and public administration uses in the CBD. • All events needing Toowoomba Regional Council approvals are co-ordinated in one Department.
<p>The Business Benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An activated CBD, with increased foot traffic and local spend. • A fairer and consistent approach to CBD parking for all Toowoomba ratepayers. • A safer CBD. • Flourishing businesses that attract and retain employment opportunities.

Rural Areas and Townships

<p>The Matter</p>	<p>The Toowoomba region has a rich resource base driven by agriculture and resource management. The rural areas are abundant with resources, with Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is the region's number 1 industry by business count.</p> <p>The region's unique townships like Oakey, Pittsworth, Millmerran, Highfields, Crows Nest, Clifton, Greenmount, Goombungee, Cambooya, Clifton, Yarraman and other smaller townships, not only support and service the surrounding resources, but are themselves a major tourist attractors and core to the area's history.</p> <p>The region's rural areas and townships need constant attention, support, and care.</p>
<p>Current Business Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor connectivity in rural areas and towns (eg roads and services) is restricting long-term growth and sustainability. • Economic deficient and reduced quality of life from poor quality. • Reduction in tourist opportunities.
<p>Facts And Data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries are the region's number 1 industry by business count. In 2023, there were more than 3,500 businesses from this sector located in our region. • In 20/21, Toowoomba 'economy id' identified the total value of agricultural output in Toowoomba was \$1,091m. • The Toowoomba region is agriculture and resource rich. • Rural areas, their resources and townships are significant contributors to the region's character and economic prosperity. • Tourism in the areas townships and rural areas can play a significant part to an area's vitality and opportunity. • Rural areas are not adequately represented at the local political level.
<p>Small Business Voices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'The surfacing and repairing of rural roads should be a key priority.'</i> • <i>'Beautification of roadsides entering and existing local rural towns needs improvement.'</i> • <i>'Most elected officials live in Toowoomba, and we feel no one cares about the rural areas and regional towns.'</i> • <i>'Attract more tourists and get Toowoomba people to visit their local towns. Make the whole area be seen, not just Toowoomba city gardens.'</i>
<p>Connect with Government</p>	<p>The Toowoomba region's rich history is built on the back of surrounding high quality agricultural areas. These areas are supported by regional centres of Oakey, Pittsworth, Millmerran, Highfields, Crows Nest, Clifton, Greenmount, Goombungee, Clifton, Yarraman and other smaller townships.</p> <p>The maintenance of infrastructure needed to support this fundamental part of the region's identity, lifestyle and growth must continue to be valued for their important role in our region's economic wealth.</p>
<p>The Request</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a responsibility for an elected official to lead a Rural and Toowoomba Townships portfolio through oversight and regular reporting. • Create or support an event which celebrates regional areas and agricultural sector. • Fund more township and rural infrastructure.
<p>Identify How It Can Be Done</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give greater priority to road, tourism, and other rural and township infrastructure needs. • Working with local event organisers and businesses to enable events in the region. • Implement collaborative strategies for town beautification and to activate main streets of each township. • A Rural and Toowoomba Townships portfolio with a Councillor responsible and a strong advocate within TRC decision making.

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<p>The Business Benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved oversight and reporting will ensure attention is paid to rural areas and townships and the impacts in decision making is understood. Wealth generator for business. A strong and diverse economy. Employment creator. Enhanced investment in the region. Decentralisation of the Region's population by increasing the livability of regional centres.
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Regulatory Environment

<p>The Matter</p>	<p>A regulatory environment that is excessive and unnecessarily complex, restricts business confidence and where inefficiently implemented, inconsistently enforced and with poor response times and lengthy delays, is a cost burden on business and increases costs of delivery services and products to the ratepayer.</p>
<p>Current Business Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased costs mean job losses. Inefficiently implemented, inconsistently enforced regulation, with poor response times and lengthy delays from government, results in the cost burden on business increasing . Regulation developed in a vacuum and poorly communicated creates confusion and increased costs on business which is passed onto the local ratepayers. Investment looks elsewhere.
<p>Facts And Data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 82% of businesses say that red tape costs have increased since 2021 and the financial administration compliance burden has increased 100% from \$25,000 to \$50,000 in the same period. 43% of businesses have confirmed they spend six or more hours a week on regulatory compliance. The Toowoomba Performance Sentiment Index Findings and Toowoomba Annual Survey of businesses demonstrate that 'red tape and administrative burden' remains the number one issue of concern for local businesses.
<p>Small Business Voices</p>	<p><i>'Toowoomba Regional Council should work harder at streamlining the processes for attaining Council permits for businesses to operate. Currently applying for permits is slow and clunky and costly to small businesses.'</i></p> <p><i>'In January 2023, we wrote to Toowoomba Regional Council about a 'red tape' issue and even included a possible solution. 12 months later, we wait for a response.'</i></p> <p><i>"Council is a barrier and never an enabler. Why aren't they more like Lockyer Regional Council who have open arms in helping small business succeed'.</i></p> <p><i>"Every time my wife runs an event the amount of paperwork she has to fill in would make your eyes water. Quite sad really what it has done to events here. Way over the top!'</i></p>
<p>Connect with Government</p>	<p>The Toowoomba Regional Council has committed to being a small business friendly Council, which we expect them to implement. This signed commitment says, amongst other things, Toowoomba Regional Council will limit unnecessary administration and implement business improvement processes and regularly review administration and regulatory requirements policies, procedures, and red tape.</p>
<p>The Request</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interrogate and remove excessive, unnecessarily complex regulation to build business confidence and our region's competitiveness locally, in Queensland and nationally. Develop an inclusive and collaborative approach to drafting and reviewing regulation that is open and transparent. Improve accountability around implementation, regulatory response times and understanding the financial impact of new regulation on business and the community in general.
<p>Identify How It Can Be Done</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a 'Red Tape Taskforce' between business and Toowoomba Regional Council to interrogate regulation. Involve the business community in the drafting of new regulations, upfront, in the development of policy. The creation of a Business Liaison Program, similar to the model used by the Reserve Bank of Australia. Create a responsibility for an elected official to be the lead in creating Better Regulation and Reducing Red Tape through oversight and regular reporting. A full report to be included in the Annual Report outlining the ways red tape has been addressed.
<p>The Business Benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient regulator protects Toowoomba jobs. Efficiently implemented, consistently enforced regulation, with agreed turnaround times reduces the cost burden on the business and the ratepayer. Regulation developed together in an open and transparent way develops rapport and understanding by all parties, creating the right 'fit for purpose' regulation. Better Regulation and Red Tape oversight and reporting will ensure constant attention is paid to regulatory and business impacts in decision making. Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.

Small Business Friendly Council	
The Matter	<p>On 16 March 2020, Toowoomba Regional Council signed a Small Business Charter, committing to being a Small Business Friendly Council.</p> <p>The small business friendly council initiative outlines the commitment between local councils, its partners and small business to support a prosperous and sustainable small business sector in communities across Queensland.</p> <p>Toowoomba Regional Council has fallen short of being a Small Business Friendly Council.</p>
Current Business Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stifles innovation. • Increase costs to do business. • Brand awareness for business and the region is limited. • Investment is inhibited.
Facts And Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021 and 2022, the Toowoomba Chamber undertook a survey with the business community to determine if Toowoomba Regional Council was meeting its commitment to the business community. • In 2021, the outcome was clear. Toowoomba Regional Council was not a small business friendly council. • In 2022, with strong advocacy and steadfast accountability, the business community saw improvement, but noted that significant improvements are still required when it comes to Toowoomba Regional Council meeting its signed commitments to the small business community. • The results from the business community are clear, that on a scale with A+ being outstanding and F, being a failure, the Toowoomba Regional Council, in my assessment has moved from an overall rating in 2022 of a C to a 2023 rating of C+. A pass mark is not good enough. <p>Specifically, the findings from the business community survey are that Toowoomba Regional Council has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significantly improved in communication and engagement with small business; • slightly improved in raising the profile and capability of small business; • marginally enhanced its support for small business resilience and recovery; • made limited inroads to simplify administration and regulation red tape burden; • had good improvement in ensuring fair procurement and prompt payment terms; and • shown no advancement in promoting or showcasing small business.
Small Business Voices	<p><i>'The dealings I have had with the council has shown that like many organisations the bureaucracy of their departments hampers meaningful and helpful information. They do not actively seek to use local businesses for their major projects or events like the Carnival of Flowers. They do not actively support new ideas or events.'</i></p> <p><i>'I don't believe dealing with council is ever 'simple'. Often bureaucracy gets in the way of them being helpful.'</i></p> <p><i>I can only reference the administration and regulation of food licensing by the Council. The information is inconsistent, the 'catch you out and fine you' approach is antagonistic, attending large events and disrupting custom of small businesses is stressful.'</i></p> <p><i>'Council is a barrier and never an enabler. Why aren't they more like Lockyer Regional Council who have open arms in helping small business succeed.'</i></p> <p><i>'Council officers and committees should consult transport providers in a more efficient manner as this has been lacking in recent years.'</i></p> <p><i>"Implement a procurement strategy that proactively priorities social enterprises in local government contracts and tenders'.</i></p>
Connect with Government	<p>The Toowoomba Regional Council has committed to being a small business friendly Council.</p> <p>This signed commitment says, Toowoomba Regional Council will communicate and engage with small business, raise the profile and capability of small business, support small business resilience and recovery, limit unnecessary administration, and implement business improvement processes and regularly review administration and regulatory requirements policies, procedures, and red tape, ensure fair procurement and prompt payment terms for small business, and promote and showcase small business.</p>
The Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly report on the achievement of the commitments in the Small Business Friendly Council Charter. • Commit to a Small Business Friendly Council in the Corporate Plan. • Include performance against KPI's in Council's Annual Report. • Financial investment in all the Small Business Friendly Charter Commitments.
Identify How It Can Be Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively collaborate with the Darling Downs Regional Alliance to seek quarterly feedback from small business to help drive business improvement. • Publicly release quarterly reports to the business community on achievement or otherwise of the Small Business Friendly Council commitments. • Publish in the Toowoomba Regional Council Annual Report, Council's performance against the Small Business Friendly Council Charter.

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<p>The Business Benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased engagement with the business community. • Support in raising business profiles and capabilities. • Support business resilience and recovery. • Simply the regulation burden so that compliance with what really matters is achieved. • Promote programs for small business. • Promote and showcase local business. • Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.
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Shovel Ready Infrastructure Pipeline

<p>The Matter</p>	<p>Infrastructure spending will future proof the region. New catalytic infrastructure grows the economy, and an identified pipeline of projects ensures the continued flow of employment in the region.</p> <p>Toowoomba Regional Council can create confidence in the business community by committing to and working hard to secure major projects, plan for the future, and have shovel ready projects ready to go that will benefit the region.</p>
<p>Current Business Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of business confidence. • Lack of long-term vision inhibits investment. • Makes the region uncompetitive. • Drives investors to other regions.
<p>Facts And Data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure refers to roads, transportation, power and water supplies, phone towers, internet, buildings such as hospitals, police stations, fire stations, art galleries, parks, and the like. These types of infrastructure are vital systems that play an important role in economic development and business growth. • An investment in infrastructure enables business to grow, cities and regions to flourish and improves collective wealth. It enables greater productivity and growth in the delivery of goods and services. • The right infrastructure facilities business growth provides jobs and reduces economic disruption helping to maintain an equilibrium. • Infrastructure investment stimulates the economy as seen by the Toowoomba Bypass which provided an estimated \$2.4 billion dollar boost to the region.
<p>Small Business Voices</p>	<p><i>'As a CBD business owner for over a decade, the need for a legacy project like this that delivers for the community and business sector has been long awaited.'</i></p> <p><i>'As Toowoomba has grown, events have drawn larger crowds while infrastructure lags behind.'</i></p> <p><i>'Ratepayers are developing anxiety symptoms over inaction on transitioning to green technology and infrastructure.'</i></p> <p><i>'If we don't get the framework for future infrastructure development right now the cost of fixing it later will be greater.'</i></p> <p><i>'Plan transport corridors and future water infrastructure.'</i></p> <p><i>'Council needs a solid direction. Where are we headed?'</i></p>
<p>Connect with Government</p>	<p>The Toowoomba Regional Council has committed to plan, build, manage, and maintain infrastructure to support the region's lifestyle and growth</p>
<p>The Request</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate with community and all stakeholders for the delivery of inland rail and the fast rail between Toowoomba and Brisbane. • Advocate with the community and all stakeholders for water security for Toowoomba and the region. • Work with stakeholders to deliver a 15,000 to 20,000 seat permanent sports stadium with allied services and programs to develop the sporting opportunities in our region • Work with community and all stakeholders to deliver an improved public transport system to move people within Toowoomba and surrounding townships. • Create shovel ready projects like major tourist attractors Quarry Gardens and The Jondaryan Woolshed, a convention centre, and regional arts gallery (which includes the completing of relevant business cases).
<p>Identify How It Can Be Done</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate and engage with the community early and often. • Providing quarterly public updates on progress of major infrastructure investments. • Have the Quarry Gardens, Jondaryan Woolshed, a convention centre and regional arts gallery shovel ready. • Complete businesses case for a convention Centre in the CBD and a regional arts gallery. • Where opportunities to partner with other levels of government arise, prioritise the project management planning and approvals to allow progress to occur. • Fund the revitalization of the Jondaryan Woolshed in conjunction with a strategic business plan to ensure its financial sustainability.

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<p>The Business Benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic investment and diversity in the region. • Jobs growth. • Builds business confidence. • The region is a destination of choice and showcased globally. • Flourishing business and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.
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<h3 style="text-align: center;">Housing</h3>	
<p>The Matter</p>	<p>Many sectors of the business community understand the impact of a lack of housing is a deterrent to business attraction, is a disincentive to attracting a workforce, impacts on the ability of businesses to deliver their service, affects the image of the city, and inhibits business growth and success.</p>
<p>Current Business Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to attract a workforce. • City image. • Homelessness and affordability. • Business attraction and employment. • Stifles investment.
<p>Facts And Data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021, Toowoomba Regional Council did not have sufficient supply of residential land. • In 2021, Toowoomba Regional Council used constrained land, like Koala Habitat, to boost the residential land supply figures. • In 2021, the Toowoomba business community compiled a range of solutions to address the business impacts from lack of housing. • In 2022, Toowoomba was identified as having the highest amount of rental stress in the country. • In 2022, an affordable housing supply in Toowoomba was questioned as housing prices soared in part due to lack of supply. • In 2023, physical homelessness on the streets of Toowoomba is highly visible.
<p>Small Business Voices</p>	<p><i>'We need workers who don't have to commute.'</i> <i>'Open up accommodation and infrastructure to support the same as soon as possible.'</i> <i>'Long term vision and planning to make our region strong into the future.'</i> <i>'Council is a constant blocker, never a supported'.</i></p>
<p>Connect with Government</p>	<p>The Toowoomba Regional Council has a responsibility to create land supply for residential development and facilitate shelter for all.</p>
<p>The Request</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the delivery of more housing choice.
<p>Identify How It Can Be Done</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboratively work with all stakeholders to deliver more housing and housing choice. • Incentive accommodation in the CBD. • Work with the business community to create housing efficient regulation. • Increase local land supply. • Release unused and underutilised Council land for residential development. • Delivering a new Planning Scheme for the region in 2024.
<p>The Business Benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic investment in the region. • Jobs growth. • Housing for all. • Build business confidence. • Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.





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From Garage Gourmet to Culinary Community Cooking

Words by Amy Thompson, Monkey Business Catering & iCooked

The team at Monkey Business Catering and iCooked have been on a wild ride.

Starting with just \$10,000 in cash and a commercial kitchen outfitted in our converted garage, we've provided catering for nearly a decade for events hosting up to 600 people. Our client base spans the private and commercial sectors, including councils, banks, government departments, schools, and just about every other type of business you can imagine.

Then came March 2020.

COVID-19 and government lockdowns led to the complete cancellation of all our catering bookings, drying up our cash flow with no quick path back to normalcy. This devastating period prompted us to transform our lean startup operation into a mature business. We implemented a full kitchen management system, digitalised our recipes, introduced kitchen iPads, adopted new accounting software, upgraded our website, and undertook a host of other system development projects.

This overhaul was a leap of faith, a commitment to surviving the economic turmoil.

Recognising the need for business diversification to mitigate the impacts of government lockdowns and COVID waves, we acquired iCooked, a boutique frozen meal manufacturing business, in May 2021.

Not all food production is equal. Catering differs significantly from manufacturing a retail food product. It took us two years to update the labelling and packaging to meet current government standards and to implement efficient labelling and packaging machinery. We also moved into a warehouse facility equipped with two commercial kitchens and ample space for growth.

Just when things began to stabilise and our cash flow started to improve, in June 2023, we had the opportunity to bring Janelle's Kitchen, a long-standing local business and small food manufacturer, into our fold. Janelle's Kitchen, now rebranded under iCooked, brought with it contracts to supply meals under the Home Care Package and NDIS government schemes, offering clients with funding access to a 70% meal subsidy.



Our team is small, peaking at 12 team members who are incredibly flexible. Our frozen products can be produced at any time throughout the week, while catering requires specific timing. Between the two operations, we always have something for our people to work on. They love the variety, and we love the productivity.

Currently, we sell over 400 frozen meals weekly to our 'golden oldies' under the meal subsidy scheme, 200 frozen meals to private clients (think exhausted professionals), another 180 meals under a government department contract, and approximately 500 to 2,000 catering items.

Furthermore, when remote working crews can't secure site cooks, we supply them with bulk frozen meals. For the upcoming harvest season, we've already prepared over 1,500 meals, and it hasn't even officially begun!

The growth of our diversified business currently hinges on supplying quality, delicious meals under the Home Care Package and NDIS government schemes. Demand has more than doubled in the last eight months.

When asked about the secret to our success, I always say, "Community. Our business has always focused on community needs. Yes, we produce delicious food, but we've never been picky about the types of food or delivery formats. This approach has carried us from corporate catering to the emerging space of Home Care Package meals and the unexpected, highly seasonal work for our harvesters. We are deeply grateful to Toowoomba for embracing us throughout this journey."

Reach out to us at Monkey Business Catering and iCooked for a 'Deliciously Easy' food solution for events, remote working crews, or golden oldie meals.

You can find more information about our range of delicious frozen, ready to eat meals at www.icooked.com.au or if you'd like to learn more about our catering options, visit www.monkeybusiness.catering.

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Empowering Financial Futures: Erlandson Finance Group's Journey

Words by Nicole Erlandson, Erlandson Finance Group

As the founder of Erlandson Finance Group (EFG), I am thrilled to share our journey with you! EFG began its venture in July 2023, and we celebrated our official opening in November with great enthusiasm. My husband, Andrew, and I founded EFG with a shared vision of providing exceptional financial services to our clients, and it brings us immense pride to see our dream come to fruition.

At EFG, our mission is clear: to empower individuals and businesses through tailored financial solutions. From mortgages and small business lending to asset finance and personal loans, we offer a comprehensive suite of services designed to meet the diverse needs of our clients.

Our clientele is as varied as the services we provide. From first-time homebuyers taking their initial steps towards homeownership, to seasoned investors and ambitious entrepreneurs, we welcome everyone seeking expert lending guidance. At EFG, we believe in accessibility and inclusivity, and we are committed to serving all who walk through our doors with integrity and professionalism.

One of the cornerstones of EFG's philosophy is our dedication to giving back to the community. We understand the importance of social responsibility, and we actively support local charities such as the Base Services, which operates a soup kitchen and provides essential services to those in need. For us, contributing to the betterment of our community is not just a responsibility but a privilege.

The heart of EFG lies in our team, comprising of five brokers and two customer managers. With our combined expertise, qualifications, and experience, we are well-equipped to provide unparalleled financial advice and solutions to our clients. Every member of our team shares our commitment to excellence and is dedicated to helping our clients achieve their financial goals.

As we look to the future, EFG remains steadfast in our commitment to integrity, professionalism, and client-centricity. We are constantly seeking ways to innovate and enhance our services to better serve our clients' evolving needs. With determination and passion, we aim to continue our journey of growth and success in the dynamic world of finance.

At EFG, we are more than just brokers; we are your trusted partner on the path to financial success.

For those seeking to realise their financial dreams with a team that truly cares, reach out to Erlandson Finance Group and take the first step towards turning your aspirations into reality www.erlandsonfinance.com.au.

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"The DiSC profiling has given us a better idea of where people's personalities sit, how to best cooperate with people and how to make sure the right people are in the right positions."

Lachlan Hogan, General Manager



COLLIERS



It's helping us build team culture

"The most valuable component of the Engaged People Program has been the DiSC profiling. It's a great workshop, especially with a large team with varying personalities, and it's something that we've really been able to hold on to."

Dan Dwan, Director

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From Paddock and Plate, to Brewery and Bar

Words by Alister Ferguson: Bone Idol Brewery

Bone Idol Bar and Brewery was born from the passionate mind of the owner behind the acclaimed Plate Restaurant and Paddock Butchery in 2022, seamlessly integrating the brewery into the restaurant's unique design.

The story of The Plate Restaurant unfolds with owner Alister Ferguson at the helm, a seasoned veteran after more than two decades in the Australian meat industry. Alister built the world's premier organic and natural meat company, renowned for brands like Cleavers Organic, Borrowdale Free Range Pork, among others. Post selling the enterprise in 2021, Alister's love for all things meat and dining ignited a new venture in Toowoomba. He envisioned a space where the fine quality and expertise of his Paddock Butchery meshed with the finesse of a quality restaurant.

Launching with a focus on modern Australian cuisine, The Plate earned a coveted hat in its first year. As we look toward 2024, we're pivoting to a steakhouse model, embracing charcoal cooking to accentuate flavours with the Big Green Eggs, which are sold through the Paddock Butchery. Our new menu is set to showcase a fantastic selection from the Paddock's butchery, featuring locally sourced lamb and beef, Wagyu, and superior grain-fed varieties, alongside specialty dry-aged meats from our in-house dry aging rooms.

For Alister easy drinking beer is a must, so with the help of his mate and head brewer Tim Anderson they built a brewery inside the venue to do it themselves. The wine list isn't your usual stroll down the bottle shop aisle either – it offers a list of management's favourite drops to be shared and savoured. Exciting cocktails and an eclectic

list of spirits are served at the bar over 'good ice' that doesn't melt too quickly (bad ice is our pet peeve #7).

Driven by a desire to craft exceptional beers and create even better vibes, Bone Idol bar was the next iteration of the business where we wanted to create a more relaxed venue to come and enjoy our beers along with great entertainment and food – Bone idol quickly became a local Favorite upon its grand opening in November 2023, setting a new standard for what a great bar should be.

From its inception, Bone Idol has stood out as more than just a watering hole; it has become a cultural epicentre, where the community congregates to unwind and connect. The bar's success was immediate, with functions booked out and weekends bustling with patrons eager to experience its unique charm.

What sets Bone Idol apart is its ability to cater to diverse tastes and preferences. Spread across three distinct areas—the main bar, the upstairs shuffleboard room, and the Bone Idol backyard—each space offers a different ambiance, ensuring there's a spot for everyone. The edgy, modern country vibes are a hit with patrons, providing a relaxed yet vibrant setting.

Sporting a range of entertainment options, Bone Idol offers something for everyone. The bar boasts four shuffleboard

tables, a pool table, and a dartboard, and plans to introduce shuffleboard and pool competitions. With five house beers on tap and two rotating taps showcasing independent craft breweries, beer enthusiasts are in for a treat.

Live music is a staple at Bone Idol, with a great selection of local talent on stage every Friday and Saturday night. They recently hosted Gold Coast based band, Disgraceland - the punk rock Elvis experience. With this event being such a huge success, Bone Idol now has plans to bring in more big acts in the future. There is nothing idle about this venue, which is bound to continue growing as the local hub for live music.

For those seeking a bite to eat, Bone Idol's pit-yard style BBQ menu on Sundays is a must-try, providing the perfect complement to the bar's laid-back vibe. And for those with a competitive streak, Bone Idol is set to launch shuffleboard and pool competitions, adding a new dimension of excitement to the venue.

Bone Idol Bar and Brewery has quickly become a beloved fixture in Toowoomba, offering not just great beers, but also a welcoming environment where friends gather, memories are made, and good times are had.

Its success is a testament to the vision and dedication of its founders, who have created a space where everyone can feel at home.

So, swing by at 424 Ruthven Street—where the beer flows, the music plays, and memories are made.



Outgrown your existing accountant?

If another year has passed that could have been better with more practical, timely advice and business support, then it's time for a positive change.

The level of uncertainty for business owners is at an unprecedented high – so what are you and your accountant doing together to help you succeed? To make confident decisions about your future you need an accountant who brings ideas and insights to the table. One who thinks differently and can work with you to reimagine possibilities. How those challenges are considered and acted upon is what differentiates successful business leaders from others.

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Kat Lynn, Sonny & Kat Photography

Yoga for Every Body

Words by Donnamarie Vanderhorst, Bloom Holistic Collective

If you thought yoga was beyond your abilities, you wouldn't be the first. But the truth is that yoga is not just designed for every body, it's for everyone, everywhere. And it only needs to take a few minutes each day.

I didn't dream of becoming a yoga instructor, let alone owning and running a yoga studio. It was one of life's happy accidents born out of a hectic life and stressful, high-paced job. I finally reached the point where I knew I had to make some changes.

A small shift in habits and mindset resulted in the biggest impact upon my life - a daily yoga practice that I take with me wherever I go. And I now get to share this practice with our community and local businesses in my home town, Toowoomba.

Yoga's growing popularity in wellbeing programs is testament to an understanding that integrated health and wellness in business is no longer just an employee "perk". It is about business owners recognising the need for employee holistic wellness to be top of mind for businesses to thrive. And we're not talking about KPIs and revenue here; the fact is yoga in the workplace has resulted in increased productivity and lower levels of mental stress when compared to other forms of workouts 1.

The positive influence yoga has on mind and body keeps people returning to the mat. With improved flexibility, strength and balance, and greater stress relief, relaxation and focus being some of the main benefits of yoga2.

Even with so many boosts to overall wellbeing, it is still common to hear some interesting things being said about my favourite daily practice. Let's dispel some of the most common misconceptions.

"Yoga is religious/hippie/woo-woo"

Yoga does have roots in ancient Indian philosophy, but yoga practice does not require adherence to any specific religion, and no belief system is forced upon practitioners. Modern yoga emphasises personal growth, mindfulness, and physical health, achieved through

aligning the body with your breath in various poses. This mind-body-breath connection only scratches the surface of a true yogic lifestyle but is the most appealing and highly impactful to most yoga enthusiasts.

Yoga truly is about physical and mental well-being. It is not about chanting with incense sticks and going vegan. Yoga invites you to become more self-aware, and in turn, more empowered and more resilient to life's stressors.

"Yoga is only for flexible people"

Just like you don't have to be fit before I go to the gym, or be rich before you see a financial planner, you don't need to be flexible before starting yoga.

Yoga's accessibility is about its adaptability for all body types and flexibility levels.

The emphasis is to improve flexibility over time, rather than requiring it from the start. When I began, I couldn't touch my toes, but I gained greater flexibility and strength in both body and mind with every class.

"Yoga is for women"

Yoga was originally practised mainly by men. I'm not sure where the misconception that yogis are predominantly women came from. My studio consists of a solid 15% males, and 28% of global practitioners are men2.

Yoga benefits all genders.

It's also for all ages. We have students from just nine years of age, right through to members in their seventies, including my own Mum!

"Yoga is hard". And also, "Yoga is easy"

Peoples' reservations to try yoga usually stems from thinking it is either "too hard" or "too easy". So, which is it, hard or easy?

Different yoga styles and traditions offer different experiences. For example, we have classes structured to build energy, leaving you dripping with sweat, Other classes get you into a deep state of relaxation where a snore is not uncommon.

Yoga is a personal journey. We all have different abilities, bodies and experiences. An experienced yoga instructor will guide you to uncover the practice that suits you.

“I’m not good at Yoga”

There is no such thing as being “good” at yoga. As it’s such a personal and introspective practice, the only person you can compare yourself to is you!

When starting out, people are often concerned that other practitioners or the teacher are judging them. They are pleasantly surprised to find the high level of encouragement and inclusivity in a class. We meet people where they are at, give modifications for poses if needed, and always advocate to do what feels best for your body.

I couldn’t get through an entire class when I first started, often needing multiple rests. However, I persisted and accepted this was just the beginning. My inspiration was seeing the long-time yogis who were so strong, capable, calm and happy. I never believed anyone was better - only that all sorts of people at all levels making up a supportive yoga community.

Yoga anywhere, anytime, every body.

People think they need an hour or more each day, and the fanciest yoga gear to go to a yoga class. But even a few minutes a day in your office chair can make a big difference. Chair yoga is a practice modified for those limited to sitting and there are many great options online to get you started.

There are so many yoga styles to choose from; when working out which is best for you, start by considering your needs and intentions for doing yoga.

A qualified instructor will help you choose what’s right for you. Your personality and current level of activity also plays a factor. For some people a class with a mix of yogis at different levels will suit - the best instructors give modifications for newcomers to advanced. For others, a beginner class where everyone is at the same level will be better.

For me, yoga’s drawcard is its inclusivity and adaptability for people from all walks of life. My practice of over 20 years has helped me through many stages and big events in my work and personal life, all around the world.

Yoga is about “doing you” - accepting where you’re at and consistently working towards something better. It’s a personal practice that’s tailored to the individual’s needs and goals.

You’ll find that little changes - one small open movement, one deeper breath, one moment more of stillness - will have exponential effects upon your overall health and wellness.

Visit Donnamarie and the team at Bloom Holistic Collective, where they hold 30 classes per week of yoga, pilates & meditation. Plus wellness workshops, private classes, corporate programs, and fundraising for the Toowoomba community.

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2997233/>
2. <https://www.doyou.com/yoga-survey/>



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Grand Central and Protea Place Unite to Raise Crucial Funds for Homeless Women

Grand Central has partnered with Toowoomba's Protea Place to host a major sleepout event, raising a total of \$150,039 to support homeless women.

This initiative aligns with the centre's ongoing community partnership ethos, focusing on increasing social welfare across the region. The 4 Pink Wheels sleep out was a real eye opener for the Toowoomba community regarding the fast increase of those called the "hidden homeless" – women over 55 who find themselves living in their cars. Protea Place Women's Support Centre, at the forefront of providing support, dignity, and safety, operates solely through community generosity and donor support, without government intervention. The centre is a testament to the collective effort of the people of Toowoomba, who share a commitment to supporting those in need.

As location partner Grand Central hosted the event in a carpark while also integrating retailers to ensure participants could access food and supplied retailer deals to thank them for their fundraising efforts.

This year's event saw participation from 37 teams, made up of 64 individuals, who together achieved a significant fundraising milestone for their community. Centre Manager Tracey Ford, who also slept out for the night, said the partnership with Protea Place had grown over the years and looked forward to hosting the event again in the future.

"It is really important for us to support causes like this as these women could be working in the centre, they could be shoppers in our centre or they could be the family members of our retailers, she said.

We are extremely proud of the relationship we have with Protea Place and how our retailers and the community have rallied to raise this amount of money for those in need."

Protea Place CEO Amanda Dalton expressed her gratitude for the community's commitment to standing in solidarity with those experiencing homelessness.

"The overwhelming support from the community has been nothing short of remarkable, she said.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to this cause, whether through donations, fundraising efforts, or simply spreading the word.

Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of vulnerable women in the Toowoomba region.

Every dollar raised directly supports the efforts of Protea Place to provide secure housing for women in need in the Toowoomba region and the contributions are invaluable in ensuring these women have access to the support and resources they need to rebuild their lives."

The funds raised are crucial for Protea Place, established in late 2018 by Dalton, who identified a need for specialised support services for women. The Centre now offers the Welcome Home Project, assisting women in establishing homes once they have secured housing,



and the Toowoomba Support Centre, a refuge within the city that offers a range of services, including nutritious hot meals and a safe space for connection and care.

Protea Place also extends their reach through the Oakey Outreach and the Warwick Service, providing support services in these communities. All services from Protea Place are offered at no cost, ensuring that all women can access the support they need.

One of the key players in the event's success was Round Square Marketing (RSM), who took charge of the overall strategic marketing and communication. They developed a full-suite strategic marketing and communications approach, developing all branding

and promotional collateral and activity. Their strategy motivated a strong community involvement and laid a solid foundation for Protea Place's ongoing marketing efforts. They generously donated a portion of their services, ensuring the campaign's cost-effectiveness.

Together, Grand Central, Protea Place, Round Square Marketing, all the proud sponsors of the 4 Pink Wheels event and, of course, the Toowoomba community have demonstrated a strong and united front in addressing the critical issue of homelessness among women, proving that every contribution has a meaningful impact.

To contribute or to learn more about Protea Place, please visit their website: <https://www.proteaplace.org.au/>.

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Cybersecurity: Train Your Team to be Cyberheroes!

In a world where cyber villains lurk around every digital corner and hidden in the far reaches of the shadowy dark web, it's time for you and your team to don your cyber capes and protect your business from nefarious threats!

Now is the time to talk about cybersecurity awareness and how your team can become the ultimate cyberheroes in the battle against cybercrime before it's too late. We've heard of big business being the target of cybercriminals, however, Australian small business has become the low hanging fruit ready to be plucked by these thieves.

Australian businesses are the most likely to pay out a ransomware attack at a \$2.3 Billion cost to the Australian economy.

Unmasking the Cyber Threats

Picture this: your business is the fortress, and cyber threats are the sneaky ninjas trying to breach your defences. While hackers and malware often steal the spotlight, let's not forget about the undercover agents hiding in plain sight – your very own team members! From accidentally clicking on suspicious links to falling for phishing scams, employees can unwittingly open the door to cyber chaos.

Threats are everywhere! Email, MS Teams, WhatsApp, Slack, SMS, SharePoint, Dropbox, Google Drive, Slack.

Embracing Your Inner Cyberhero

But fear not! Every hero needs a trusty sidekick, and that's where cybersecurity awareness training comes in. By empowering your team with the knowledge and skills to spot cyber threats, you're arming them with superpowers to defend your business against these digital villains. It's time to unleash your inner cyberhero and join forces in the fight against cybercrime!

70% of Australian Businesses have been the victim of a cyber attack in the past 5 years.

Supercharged Security with AI

Of course, no hero's journey is complete without some cutting-edge gadgets. Enter artificial intelligence (AI), the ultimate sidekick in the battle for cybersecurity supremacy! With AI-powered tools by your side, you'll be able to detect threats faster than a speeding bullet, thwarting cyber villains with lightning-fast reflexes and precision accuracy. But these tools are merely the utility belt with which your team fight the real criminals.

Fun and Games

But who says cybersecurity awareness must be dull and dreary? Turn training sessions into epic quests, where employees embark on a journey to uncover

hidden cyber threats and save the day! With gamified learning experiences, your team will be more engaged than ever, mastering cybersecurity skills while having a blast along the way, and why not encourage training by offering rewards and incentives to the team members who perform the best in these simulated attacks, its so much cheaper rewarding your team with positive reinforcement, than suffering a breach.

Gamification can increase team engagement by up to 48%

The Power of Teamwork

Remember, even the mightiest hero can't go it alone. Encourage a culture of collaboration and communication, where team members can report suspicious activities without fear of reprisal. Timing really can make the difference between "Geez, that was a silly mistake, and I won't do that again" to "I've got the next week off work, while the IT department tries to recover our entire system", Together, you'll form an unstoppable alliance, ready to defend your business against cyber evildoers and emerge victorious!

9 out of 10 breaches originate from human error.

So, there you have it – cybersecurity awareness isn't just about thwarting cyber threats; it's about unleashing the cyberheroes within your team and embarking on an epic quest to safeguard your business from digital villains. With the right knowledge, tools, and a sprinkle of fun and rewards, you can transform your team into a formidable force to be reckoned with in the ever-changing landscape of cybercrime. It's time to suit up, gear up, and become the cyberheroes your business deserves!

Security starts from within.

If you'd like to know more about protecting your business from cyber threats, contact Kurt and the team at Identity Computing www.identitycomputing.com.au and book in for a consultation.





Cyber Security Awareness Training

9 out of 10 breaches
originate from human error

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→ Cyber Health Checklist

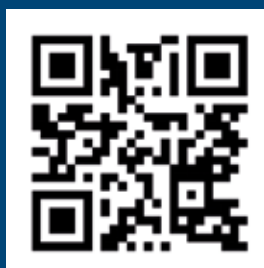
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What is the Real Cost of Imposter Syndrome to Your Business

By Sharné Lategan

Imposter Syndrome is often experienced through feelings of inadequacy, not feeling as deserving as others, or having the right to speak up, contribute and be heard. Imposter Syndrome looks like me googling what Imposter Syndrome is, the night before speaking about it to a group of 100 women, full-well knowing it is a subject I know, inside out.

Imposter Syndrome can make even the most capable people feel like frauds, consumed by fear their success can and will be taken away. Despite many proud achievements, including founding a multi-award winning, nationally recognised law firm at age 28, I experienced firsthand the devastating impacts of what is the greatest energy vampire of all time.

I experienced it in countless meetings with corporate clients, who came to me for advice on how to solve a problem, just to insist on what the solution should be.

I came face to face with it in many construction boardrooms too, where I had it explained to me why my solution wouldn't possibly work "in that industry". I always found it curious that they couldn't see that their solution was in-fact not working "in that industry". Particularly by the fifth time they were explaining to me the flaws in my solution, to their recurring problem.

Imposter Syndrome originates within the person themselves, no doubt thanks to our cultural norm of placing significant emphasis on mistakes and inadequacies, while labelling any signs of confidence and self-worth as arrogant.

Imposter Syndrome is further fuelled by leaders, bosses, clients and peers every time an idea is instinctively shut down, a perspective is dismissed or a creative solution is never given the opportunity to be explored.

How many ideas, perspectives and solutions are never uttered, because people feel unworthy, unjustified or like a fraud. What is the opportunity cost to business when those around us shut down opinions, solutions, or ideas without a moment's thought? What problems could we be solving in business through becoming aware of Imposter Syndrome



and its limiting and costly nature? Perhaps the first problem we will solve, is that of Imposter Syndrome itself.

The story that follows is set in the legal industry, where respect is akin to respect when I was a child. It is irrelevant whether the person demanding it has earned it, no one dares to point out it might not be deserved, and the fact that demanding respect is an oxymoron to the very definition, counts for very little.

During my last legal Mediation before starting my Mindset Coaching business, Imposter Syndrome reared its head in the form of a particular senior Barrister who was set on a strategy, despite it not considering all the relevant factors of our client.

I knew the strategy was not the right one. The right strategy required the consideration of the law, as well as the client's factual and emotional matrix. Given the previously mentioned culture of respect in the legal industry, my Imposter Syndrome remnants were triple checking with me at the time that it was, in fact, my place to speak up.

Reminding Imposter Syndrome I was in the same room as the Barrister, I pushed through the discomfort, spoke up and we collaborated and left that room with a winning strategy which never would have been possible, had I stayed silent and let Imposter Syndrome win.

So two years on, why did I feel the need to ask Chat GPT about this opinion piece? And why was I rattled by its comment, "some parts may come across as slightly self-congratulatory, which could be off-putting for some readers"? Would this be yet another instance where a worthy opinion isn't expressed? Not today, and not on my watch.

If Imposter Syndrome is standing between you or your business's potential, it's time to feel the fear and act anyway. Contact me for an obligation free conversation, on how I can work with you and those in your business to overcome the limits of Imposter Syndrome through proven tools and strategies.

****Sharné Lategan, mindset coach, business owner, leader and visionary based in Toowoomba, Australia.**

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Managing the Risk of Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace: Understanding the Code of Practice

The Code of Practice for Managing the Risk of Psychosocial Hazards at work is an official guide under the Workplace Health and Safety Act and is a crucial framework for businesses in Australia. It addresses continually overlooked, yet significant, aspects of psychological and social factors that influence employee wellbeing.

As the understanding of the importance of mental health in the workplace evolves, adherence to this code becomes not only a moral obligation for an employer, but a legal requirement.

An Overview of the Code

So, what exactly is the Code of Practice for Managing the Risk of Psychosocial Hazards at Work? It serves as a structured framework designed to address the identification and mitigation of hazards related to psychological harm within the workplace. These hazards encompass a wide array of factors including stress, bullying, harassment, employee engagement, and overall well-being. The code delineates a risk management pathway comprising four pivotal steps: Identifying the Hazard, Assessing the Risk, Controlling the Risk and Maintaining and Reviewing.

The positive effects of psychosocial safety extend far beyond mere compliance with regulatory requirements. By prioritising employee well-being and mitigating psychosocial risks, organisations can unlock numerous benefits

including a healthier work environment, increased productivity and organisational health.

Minimising psychosocial risk creates a foundation where employees, productivity and organisational success soars.

Understanding Your Risk Exposure

The first crucial step for addressing your psychosocial risks is to identify them. Take the time to consider a diverse array of data sources that will play a role in informing your decisions. These can be things like employee feedback surveys, incident reports, performance metrics, turnover rates or even direct observation. These insights can uncover patterns of stress, dissatisfaction, or conflicts, providing a firsthand understanding of the current level of psychosocial safety within your organisation. In addition to internal data sources, it's essential to look outward and benchmark against industry standards for best practices in psychosocial hazard management. By comparing your practices to others, you can gain a broader perspective on areas for improvement and identify innovative strategies for risk mitigation.

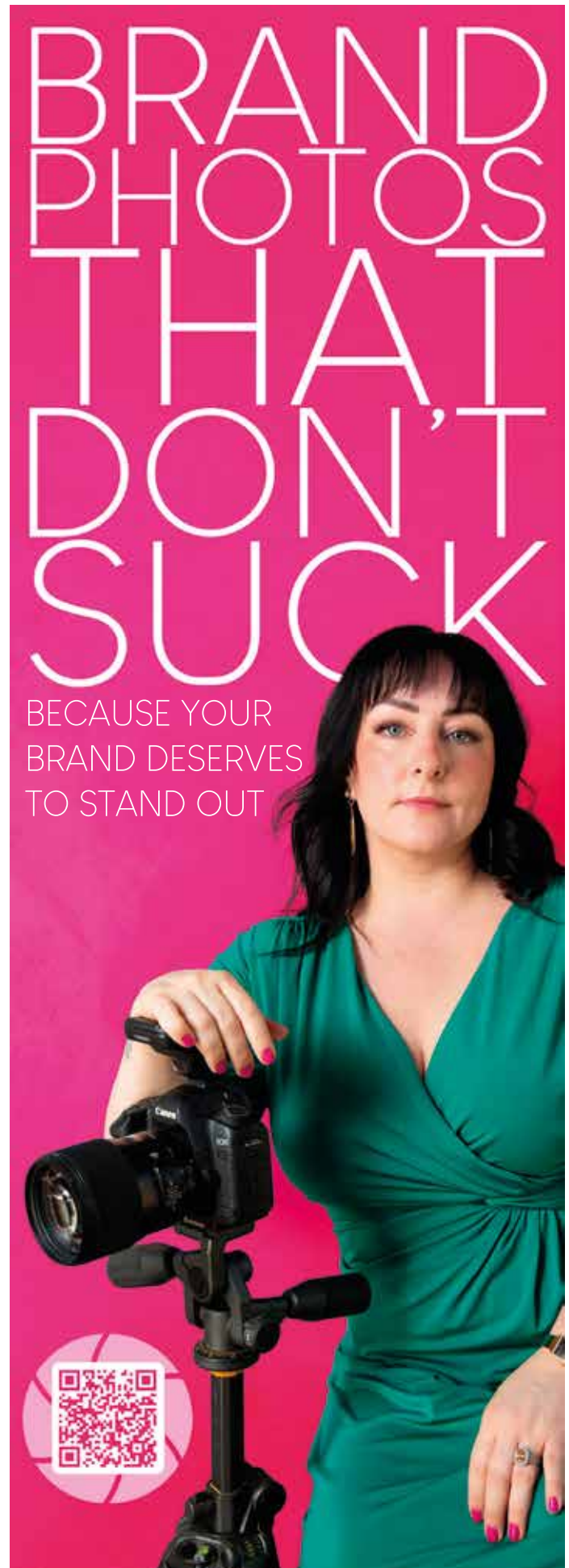
This evidence-based approach ensures that decisions are grounded rather than assumptions. By collecting and analysing relevant data, you can identify trends, patterns, and correlations that inform your risk assessment.

Practical Steps that Work to Reduce Risk:

1. **Consultation:** The cornerstone of effective risk management lies in identifying the "why," "who," and "how". By engaging a consultant in this process, companies ensure a structured approach that facilitates meaningful participation and collaboration among employees, ultimately leading to the identification and implementation of effective solutions.
2. **Plan, Do, Check, Act:** Implementing a systematic approach is key to success. By following the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, businesses can continuously improve their psychosocial risk management strategies. This methodical approach ensures that interventions are evidence-based, monitored for effectiveness, and adjusted as necessary.
3. **Workplace Representatives:** Establishing workplace representatives dedicated to addressing psychosocial issues fosters inclusivity and empowers employees to voice their concerns. These representatives serve as liaisons between management and staff, facilitating meaningful dialogue and collaborative problem-solving.

While businesses were granted a grace period to meet compliance obligations, the WHS Inspectorate has begun issuing notices to non-compliant employers. After this grace period, enforcement actions are being taken against businesses failing to fulfill their risk management duties. This underscores the seriousness with which regulatory bodies approach psychosocial health and safety in the workplace, making it crucial for businesses to ensure compliance. Failure to comply may result in fines, enforceable undertakings, and, in serious cases, imprisonment.

Need help with compliance support? Workforce Positive can help you with a risk management plan to help implement controls for the risks identified and an evaluation plan to track the effectiveness of controls. Navigating the complexities of the psychosocial code can be daunting, but you don't have to do it alone. Our team are here to help you reach psychological safety.



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Defending Data: Aisha's Journey to Becoming a Cyber Security Champion

Words by Melannie Feoli, TAFE Queensland

Ezidi Syrian national, Aisha Rash, completed her telecommunications engineering qualification in 2015. Fast forward 10 years and Aisha is now living in Toowoomba and has secured a role within FKG Group's IT team while studying a TAFE Queensland cyber security course.

"After graduating as a telecommunications engineer in 2015, I dedicated myself to the technology field in Syria, gaining valuable experience until 2018," Aisha began.

"But, the challenges posed by the war in Syria and subsequent disruptions, led me to pause my career. It wasn't until 2022 — after a four-year hiatus, and with a renewed sense of purpose, that I arrived in Australia and reignited my passion for technology," said Aisha.

Inspired by the quality of education offered by TAFE Queensland, and its reputation for excellence, Aisha chose to study the Fee-Free TAFE funded Certificate IV in Cyber Security (22603VIC), while working in administration — opting for a study mode that enabled her to balance work and education effectively.

Aisha undertook the one-year qualification full time at the Toowoomba campus, which involved two days per week, with one day of face-to-face classes, and one day of online sessions.

Recognising the pivotal role of cyber security in today's digital landscape, Aisha saw Fee-Free TAFE as an opportunity to return to education and equip herself with the knowledge and practical skills in an in-demand industry, as an extension of her former career.

"I chose TAFE Queensland because of its strong reputation for providing practical, industry-relevant training, especially for cyber security, and the flexibility was particularly appealing to me," said Aisha.

Aisha found the practical exercises, and simulations of real-world cyber security scenarios, particularly engaging and rewarding, which enabled her gain employment half-way into her studies, as a Technology Support Coordinator with FKG Group.

"The qualification saw me gain a deeper understanding of cyber security principles in action. Additionally, I appreciated the opportunity to enhance my skills in Linux-based operating systems and Python programming language," she shared.

Employees equipped with cyber security skills like Aisha's are indispensable in protecting an organisation's IT environments as the risk of cybercriminal activity, including attacks on business data, money and reputation, continues to rise.

It was reported in the results from the Australian Cyber Security Centre's (ACSC) Small Business Survey in 2023, that the ACSC receives approximately 144 reports of cybercrime a day.

And with the demand for skilled workers in the field becoming increasingly apparent, more organisations are choosing to upskill their current employees.



TAFE Queensland General Manager of the South West Region, Jenni Butler, said that business owners can access a range of funded cyber security courses for their staff to help mitigate cyber threats.

"In today's environment it's imperative that businesses embrace a positive cyber security culture and are prepared for potential cyber-attacks by ensuring team members are skilled and ready to defend," Mrs Butler said.

"At TAFE Queensland, we are committed to providing world-class digital skills training including the Certificate IV in Cyber Security. We have also just released the Cyber Security in the Workplace Skill Set which is specifically designed for boosting the cyber security capabilities of small businesses," Mrs Butler said.

"Furthermore, our educators have first-hand industry knowledge, and share their insight and best practice principles with students, to help them fight common cyber security threats in every-day business operations."

For Aisha, TAFE Queensland's teaching staff had a significant impact on her learning journey.

"Their dedication to sharing real-world scenarios and challenges has not only deepened my understanding of cyber security but has also inspired me to persist and excel in this dynamic field," she explained.

To learn more, or to register your interest in the fully funded Cyber Security in the Workplace Skill Set (SSBSB0015), visit tafeqld.edu.au/cyber-skills.

To learn more about the Fee-Free TAFE funded Certificate IV in Cyber Security (22603VIC) visit tafeqld.edu.au/cyber-security.

Fully funded

Cyber Security in the Workplace Skill Set

SSBSB0015

Cyber security is more than a buzzword, it's an essential tool in any small business' toolkit ... but where do you start?

With the Cyber Security in the Workplace Skill Set (SSBSB0015), you'll gain the knowledge and skills to secure your online presence, prevent cyber threats, and respond to incidents. You'll also learn how to create a cyber security culture in your organisation, train your staff, and comply with legal and ethical standards.

Whether you're a business owner, manager, or employee, this skill set will help you boost your cyber security confidence and competence. You'll learn from experts in the field, secure the skills and knowledge required to ensure the cyber security of digital devices, promote cyber security in a work area and identify and report online security threats to limit potential impact of cyber security breaches.

Cyber-attacks can cost any business money, reputation, and customer trust. Take charge of your digital security.



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tafeqld.edu.au/cyber-skills





Moving the Earth

Words by Shana Rogers, for Tilly's Crawler Parts

In the world of earthmoving machinery and parts in Australia, Tilly's has been a name associated with reliability, quality products, and exceptional customer service. Now, it has new owners.

From its humble beginnings in 1984, Tilly's has consistently delivered on its promise to provide the right part at the right price, right now.

With its recent acquisition by USCO ITR Group, Tilly's begins an exciting new chapter that promises to further build the business while staying true to its core values.

The decision for USCO ITR to acquire Tilly's speaks volumes about the success and longevity of the Tilly's business.

Recognising Tilly's strong market presence, extensive product range, and the depth of experience in the 60-strong team, USCO ITR saw an opportunity to integrate Tilly's into its global network while allowing it to retain both its unique identity and operational independence.

This strategic move signifies not a change in direction for Tilly's but rather a reinforcement of its commitment to providing quality service and products to its loyal customer base.

Existing customers will know that ITR has long been one of the preferred brands in Tilly's catalogue of more than 40,000 product lines.

Customers can be assured that Tilly's will continue to stock all the brands they know and trust, and these will in turn be complemented by an extended range of quality ITR products.

Importantly, while Tilly's gains the backing of a global company, its commitment to personalised customer service remains at the forefront.

Customers can still expect the same level of attention to detail, expertise, and care that the Tilly's team is proud to provide.

Whether it is assisting with parts selection, providing advice, or sourcing hard-to-find parts, the dedicated

team at Tilly's Toowoomba continues to prioritise the needs of its customers above all else.

In addition to its extensive range of new alternative parts, attachments and components, Tilly's will continue to offer a range of quality, near-new earthmoving machinery including late-model excavators, loaders, dozers and skid-steers.

Tilly's extends its service offering with a full refurbishment workshop on site in Toowoomba. Trained mechanics perform complete undercarriage replacements and engine rebuilds right through to final drive or transmission rebuilds.

With preventative maintenance essential to long machine life, the Tilly's refurbishment team is happy to offer mid-life rebuilds and quality, price-competitive services to customers across Australia.

For Tilly's customers, the purchase of the company by USCO ITR represents more than just a change in ownership; it's a testament to Tilly's ongoing commitment to excellence.

With the strength and backing of USCO ITR, Tilly's is poised to continue its growth and success, offering customers a powerful combination of quality products, extensive expertise, and personalised service. It's business as usual at Tilly's Toowoomba, but with even greater possibilities on the horizon.

Tilly's General Manager, Lance Hinrichsen, said it was with great pride that the business' strong position and years of success in the Australian market had been recognised and valued by the global leader in the industry, leading to the significant acquisition.

"Becoming part of a global powerhouse allows us to leverage buying influence and quality assurance at a manufacturing level, while retaining our own identity and trusted product offering. That means the best of both worlds for our valued customers," he said.



Curtains Up on Commerce: The Showbiz Spark in Entrepreneurship

If you told Tristan James's younger self that in 2024, he would be dressed as Elvis Presley singing to Gold Medallist Olympian Liesel Jones, he probably would have fallen of his chair.

Brisbane born, Toowoomba bred and educated, Mr James, Director of Magnifico Creative, never envisaged that he would become known as the 'Darling Downs Elvis', nor did he imagine himself at the helm of an entertainment and marketing agency. Yet, the transformation from a diligent nine-to-five IT salesperson & marketer to an on-stage sensation and business owner is precisely the story that Tristan revels to tell.

His journey commenced in an expected fashion; armed with a marketing degree and a flair for sales, Tristan could have easily remained within the corporate realm. However, it was the allure of the stage—not the office—that beckoned his true passion. He established Magnifico Creative, a company offering a spectrum of entertainment and marketing services, ranging from Tribute Acts, singers and bands to Facebook Advertising, Graphic Design and Copywriting. Tristan infused the spirit of musical legends into his business, hoping to strike a chord with audiences, and indeed he has. "I took the essence of legends like Elvis Presley, Roy Orbison, and Neil Diamond, and gave it my own twist that I hoped would be well received... and so far, so good!" he said.

In a candid interview, Tristan described how he is keen to demystify the perceived glamour of business ownership and highlight the nitty-gritty aspects instead. He emphasised the significance of diversification for entrepreneurs, noting how the world's constant evolution necessitates an adaptive approach. "For fellow business owners and those with that entrepreneurial twinkle in your eye, I can't stress strongly enough the importance of being able to diversify" he said. In this spirit, Magnifico Creative delivers exceptional entertainment experiences, whilst also delivering marketing and creative services at the core of the business.

The journey of solo entrepreneurship, Tristan confesses, parallels the solitude of a solo stage performance: "it's thrilling but intimidating". He admits to periods where the stamina for business tasks waned, yet these moments often led to his most significant breakthroughs. The lesson, he shares, is to discover one's own rhythm and lean into it. "Pursue what you genuinely enjoy, aim high, fail graciously, but don't sit on the fence, you'll learn more from trying and failing than a life of perfected planning" he explained.

When asked what other advice he would give to aspiring business owners, Tristan put it simply: "Never underestimate the power of asking for help. Surround yourself with people smarter than you." He illustrates this through his performances not only as Elvis, but generally how he is growing his business in 2024 – he loves to network, to seek out likeminded people in the community, and importantly to learn from others as much as possible.

Through his experiences, including expanding into the aged care sector, Tristan has learned that business transcends mere transactions; it's about creating meaningful connections and memories that outlast the final bow. He recognises the vital role of community in Toowoomba, where business is built on relationships, and encourages entrepreneurs to network and support local enterprises.

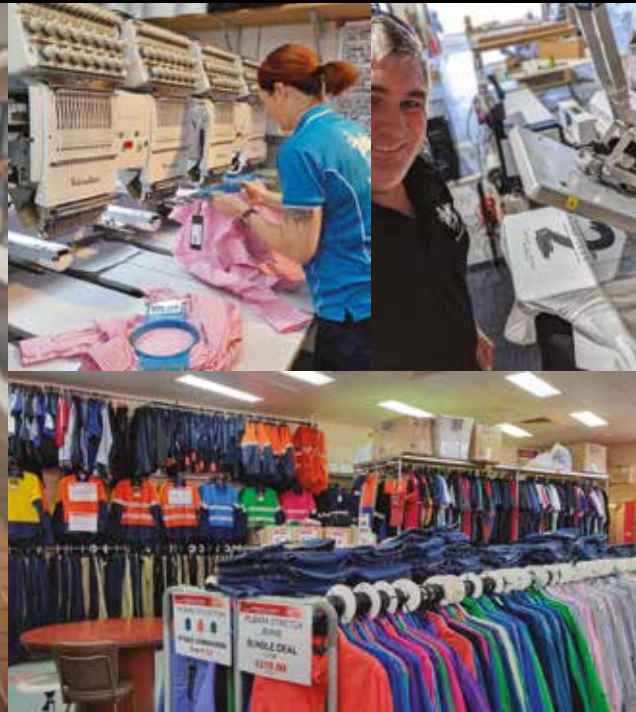
In concluding his interview, Tristan underscored the importance of collaboration. "It's ok to support and champion others who are doing similar things to you. It will never hurt your business. In fact, if anything it will help you both. Competition happens at the bottom – collaboration happens at the top".

Magnifico Creative is a Toowoomba based entertainment, events, and marketing agency. You can find out more information at www.magnifico.au or call 1300 882 907.



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hippocketworkwear.com.au/toowoomba



Workwear and Safety Gear Fit for Purpose

Words by Graham Strang, Hip Pocket Workwear and Safety

At Hip Pocket Workwear and Safety, we're more than just a business; we're a bustling hub filled with purpose. You'll find me, Graham Strang, working alongside my wife, Teela, and our dedicated team. We're committed to ensuring that Toowoomba's businesses and workers are equipped with premier workwear and safety gear. We do more than promise excellence; we stitch it into every product and service we offer.

Within our walls, you'll find much more than workwear and safety equipment; an enthusiastic team stands ready to meet your every need.

What sets us apart is our ability to source just about anything our customers are looking for when it comes to workwear and safety gear. Looking for a specific brand of work boots? We've got you covered. In need of customised corporate clothing to enhance your brand? Look no further. From rugged country clothing to high-vis gear and beyond, Hip Pocket Toowoomba is your one-stop destination.

Our commitment to customisation doesn't stop there; we take it to the next level with our on-site embroidery and screen-printing services. Whether you want to add your logo to your workwear or create custom decals for your vehicles, our skilled team will bring your vision to life. And speaking of vehicles, we offer decal and wrapping services for cars and trucks to ensure your brand is noticeable on the road. If you require signage for your storefront or custom signs for your business, we've got the tools and expertise to make it happen.

At Hip Pocket, we understand that efficiency and dependability are crucial when it comes to workwear and safety gear. That's why we're open six days a week, eager to serve you with a smile and unmatched expertise. Every member of our team embodies the values of friendly service and attention to detail that define our brand.

But our mission at Hip Pocket extends beyond providing excellent products and services; we're here to build lasting relationships within the local community. We believe in supporting local businesses and nurturing connections that go beyond well beyond the sale.

With winter on the horizon, ensuring your team is equipped with the appropriate gear to face the elements is a must. We've curated a selection of winter workwear designed to keep your team warm, secure, and productive, even on the coldest days. Our range includes insulated jackets, hoodies, and jumpers—everything necessary to combat the cold while ensuring comfort and mobility.

Additionally, our winter range features high-visibility options to maintain visibility in dim light, and sturdy boots designed to keep feet dry and stable on slippery surfaces.

We can even personalise your winter workwear to match your brand's identity. Through our on-site embroidery and screen-printing services, we can add your logo or brand to jackets, beanies, and more, turning generic items into unique uniforms that show off your professional image.

We understand the value of consistency and efficiency in outfitting a team. That's why we provide bulk ordering and streamlined procedures to guarantee that every team member receives their winter workwear promptly and hassle-free.

At Hip Pocket, we work with you to ensure your name and brand gets recognised wherever you go. Whether you're a small local business or a large corporation, we're committed to providing the same level of exceptional service and attention to detail that has made us a trusted name in the industry.

So, as the temperature drops and the days grow shorter, trust Hip Pocket Workwear and Safety to keep your team warm, safe, and stylish. Give us a call or visit us today to explore our winter workwear options and discover how we can help you outfit your team for success.



Getting Ready for Tax Time

Words by Robertson Scannell Associate David Brodrigg

As the end of the financial year approaches, we find ourselves amidst the flurry of paperwork and calculations synonymous with tax time.

Whether you're a seasoned taxpayer or a first-time filer, navigating the complexities of our tax system can be daunting.

However, with careful preparation and a clear understanding of your obligations, you can streamline the process and maximise your returns. Here are a few suggestions on how to be well prepared for tax time:

1. Gather Your Documents

The first step in preparing for tax time is gathering all relevant documents. These may include receipts for work-related expenses, and records of any investments or rental properties. Generally, your payment summaries and interest will be sent directly to the ATO, however it is always a good idea to ensure these match records provided by your bank or employer. Organising these documents early on will save you time and ensure you don't miss out on any potential deductions.

2. Understand Your Deductions

Deductions play a crucial role in reducing your taxable income, thereby lowering your overall tax liability. In Australia, taxpayers are entitled to claim deductions for a wide range of work-related expenses, including uniforms, travel, union fees and professional memberships. However, it's essential to understand what you can and cannot claim to avoid falling foul of the ATO. Keeping accurate records throughout the year will make it easier to substantiate your claims come tax time.

3. Consider Superannuation Contributions

Making additional contributions to your superannuation fund can offer significant tax benefits. Contributions made before the end of the financial year may be tax-deductible, reducing your taxable income and potentially lowering your tax bill. It's worth exploring this option, particularly if you have the means to make

extra contributions and are looking to bolster your retirement savings. It's never too early to meet with a financial advisor to discuss your financial goals.

4. Seek Professional Advice

Navigating Australia's tax laws can be complex, especially if your financial situation is anything other than straightforward.

Seeking advice from a qualified tax professional can provide peace of mind and ensure you're making the most of available deductions and concessions.

A tax agent can also help you navigate any changes to tax legislation and ensure your return is lodged accurately and on time.

5. Lodge Your Return on Time

The deadline for lodging your tax return in Australia is typically October 31st following the end of the financial year. Failing to meet this deadline can result in penalties and interest charges, so it's essential to lodge your return on time, even if you're unable to pay any tax owing immediately. If you're unable to meet the deadline, you can apply for an extension or enlist the help of a tax agent to ensure your return is lodged promptly.

6. Keep Records for Future Reference

Once you've lodged your tax return, it's important to keep copies of all relevant documents for future reference. This includes your Notice of Assessment, which outlines the details of your return and any tax payable or refund owing. Keeping accurate records will make it easier to substantiate any claims in the event of an audit and ensure you're well-prepared for future tax obligations.

7. Plan Ahead for Next Year

Finally, use tax time to plan for the next financial year. Review your financial goals and consider strategies to minimise your tax liability in the future, such as salary sacrificing, investing in tax-effective products, or exploring opportunities for additional deductions. By taking a proactive approach to your finances, you can set yourself up for success come tax time next year.

Preparing for tax time requires careful planning and attention to detail. By gathering all relevant documents, understanding your deductions, and seeking professional advice where necessary, you can streamline the process and maximise your returns. Remember to lodge your return on time and keep accurate records for future reference. With proper preparation and a clear understanding of your obligations, tax time needn't be a source of stress or uncertainty.

If you need help preparing for tax time, contact Robertson Scannell today <https://www.robertson-scannell.com.au/>



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Embarking on a Floral Journey: Our Blooming Tale

Words by Tracy Curless, Blooming Gorgeous

As the new owners of Blooming Gorgeous, my partner David and I have poured our hearts into creating a sanctuary of beauty and fragrance in Toowoomba. We think it tells our story of personal (and professional) growth, and our passion for a community spirit that we've nurtured since being in business from 2016.

Our journey from the original 60 square meters on Hume Street to the much larger 300 square meters on James Street in January 2024 has been nothing short of a dream blooming into reality. This growth has allowed us to create a hub for small businesses who don't have their own space to hold workshops, classes, and meetings. It also means we can now host more school-based traineeships.

A Petal for Every Purpose

At Blooming Gorgeous, our range helps celebrate joyous occasions like weddings and birthdays, provides solace for more sombre times, and so much more. We are very excited and proud that we can offer a collection that goes beyond what the usual florist offers —encompassing sweet treats, luxurious body products, elegant jewellery, adorable teddy bears, and an exquisite range of silk and preserved flowers. Everything we stock evokes the Blooming Gorgeous signature—a blend of unmatched quality and artistic flair.

A Thriving Community Petal

The new location on James Street has brought to life a new opportunity—a 90 square meter mezzanine area transformed into a vibrant hub space for local businesses. It's a space where the small businesses can hold classes, workshops and meetings.

So far, we've had cookie decorating, card-making, and silk-making classes, as well as more corporate-style meetings. It's our way of giving back, nurturing a space where small dreams can grow into reality.

Expanding Our Blossoms

Our floral family extended with the recent addition of a florist in Warwick. This has enriched our collection, not just

in fresh blooms, but also introducing an extensive range of products for hire, including items such as silk flowers, table décor, arbours and candelabras that can be used for everyday corporate events and weddings.

Adorning Life's Events

David and I take pride in providing a variety of fresh flowers and décor for various occasions. From intimate celebrations to larger corporate functions, we've added our touch of elegance to places like the George Banks Rooftop Bar. By sponsoring great events such as the Toowoomba fashion festival, we are able to be part of the many great local occasions and help celebrate the community that has supported us along the way.

A Floral Future

With the economy placing restraints on everyone's finances – where every dollar matters more than ever - we are committed to helping people be able to afford the joy of flowers and beautiful adornments where and when they need them. Our curated hire selection is designed to ensure that your events can flourish, all while respecting your budget. It's our personal mission to assist event organisers in putting together unforgettable experiences that not only look fabulous but allow them to keep their event ticket prices down so more people can attend.

We love being able to support our community. Our mixture of vibrant fresh flowers, long-lasting silk blooms, and a varied decor hire catalogue is tailored for versatility and economy. We give back to our community on a regular basis as a sponsor for the Toowoomba Hospital Foundation, Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and a number of smaller charities as our belief is that if we support our community the community will support us.

To add the Blooming Gorgeous touch into your life, whether it's for an event, special occasion, or just to add a splash of colour to your day, give us a call on (07) 4637 9704, or visit pop in and see us at 4/161 James Street, Rangeville.



REMBRANCE DAY
WREATHS

Blooming Gorgeous!

BECOME CODE COMPLIANT

A ONE DAY PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS YOUR BUSINESS TO BECOME COMPLIANT WITH THE MANAGING THE RISK OF PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS AT WORK CODE OF PRACTICE



THE WHY

The new Code puts a pro-active obligation on businesses to actively identify and manage mental health and wellbeing hazards at work.

The responsibility is an objective one. The Code expressly states that a business cannot expose people to a lower level of protection simply because it is in a lesser financial position than another business.

In an era where mental health claims are on the rise and compliance of the Code is a must, Sharné Consulting identified a real issue.

That is, most businesses want to do the right thing. Every business we spoke to expressed a genuine desire to understand and comply with the Code, as well as move their workplace towards better mental health and well-being.

But just because the law says size and financial health doesn't impact a business's ability to do this, doesn't make it so.

Luckily, at the heart of Sharné Consulting, lies the unwavering belief in the power of developing people (regardless of size and financial means).

With a firm belief that no issue is too big to solve, we rolled up our sleeves, studied the code inside out and came up with a one of its kind, innovative solution that allows every business the opportunity to Become Code Compliant.

THE WHO

Geared towards small and medium businesses and their officers, as defined by the Code.

This includes company directors, senior managers, executives and HR professionals.

THE DETAILS

DATE: 16 May 2024
TIME: 9:00am to 5:00pm
VENUE: Gips Toowoomba

Morning Tea, Lunch and Afternoon Tea Included

Scan for more details



THE HOW

Become Code Compliant allows you to participate in a collective one-day interactive program where we will:

- provide essential education and awareness on what the Code entails (we will keep this short and sweet, as this program focusses on becoming compliant and is not theory based)
- provide template legal policies, risk management frameworks and mitigation procedures to cover off on critical aspects of the Code
- facilitate the tailoring of the template legal policies, frameworks and mitigation procedures, for each business in attendance
- provide your business with tools to take back to the office to use and ensure future compliance
- provide your business with a road-map of what additional steps it might need to take, to ensure compliance
- work through commonly faced hazards and provide practical solutions that any business can implement immediately to manage these



SHARNÉ LATEGAN
Founder of Sharné Consulting

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