



Welcome to the second edition of the Brokerage Service Newsletter – one of the many features of the Community and Business Partnerships Brokerage Service. The service is an initiative of the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership, administered through the Australian Government's Department of Family and Community Services.

The Brokerage Service has many features and behind each of the following services you will find many helpful resources. If you have any inquiries about the Brokerage Service or the newsletter, or have trouble receiving the newsletter, please let us know at denism@ourcommunity.com.au

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1. Welcome by Rhonda Galbally AO, CEO of ourcommunity.com.au.

Welcome to the second Community Business Partnerships Brokerage Service newsletter.

It's been a big year for community business partnerships, and for the Partnerships Brokerage Service - an initiative of the **Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership**, administered by **Our Community** and the **Federal Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS)**.

Since the launch of the service last December, it has grown dramatically – the **service itself** now houses a huge number of resources, including help sheets, case studies, contact details, training and reference tools and a matching service for both community groups and businesses looking for partners.

Also during the year the service staged a hugely successful Regional Seminar Series, with the community business partnership message spread far and wide to hundreds of people across Australia.

One of the great things about getting out and meeting people at these seminars has been the genuine interest they've had in getting involved in partnerships. There has been some lively debate and informed discussion about partnerships and how they can benefit community groups and small and medium-sized businesses.

A key message that I've heard time and again during these seminars is that there are many groups looking beyond just receiving money or hand-outs from business. Both community groups and businesses have talked about their interest in partnership models like sponsorship, sharing premises and resources, in-kind donations, mentoring, secondment and volunteering.

They want real, lasting and mutually-beneficial partnerships which make the most of the strengths of both parties involved.

In the lead-up to the Festive Season, this newsletter looks at some of the ways partnerships can add some "Christmas cheer" during December and January, and what businesses can do to get into the Christmas spirit.

We also talk to Charlie Manolis of Crocodylus Park about their interesting partnership with Charles Darwin University, and bring you the latest news on the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships – including information about a review of the awards which started last month.

On behalf of everyone at Our Community, I wish you a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

RHONDA GALBALLY AO
Chief Executive Officer

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2. Community Business Partnership Brokerage Service Website Updated

Now is a better time than ever to visit the Community Business Partnership Brokerage Service website, with more free resources and new information being added in the past month.



More than 20 new Help Sheets have been added to the site's [Resource Centre](#) section, with a number of these new Help Sheets being written in response to issues raised and topics discussed throughout the Brokerage Service's Regional Seminar Series over the past six months.

Among the new Help Sheets are special "Help Sheet sets" on topics including:

- [Involving your local council in supporting a partnership.](#)
- [Ethics issues and your Community Business Partnership, and.](#)
- [Marketing Your Community Business Partnership.](#)



Some of the other Help Sheet titles now available at the Resource Centre include:

- [Service Clubs as "Informal Brokers".](#)
- [Marketing and Your Community Business Partnership – Parts 1 and 2.](#)
- [Involvement in Your Partner's Board or Group, and.](#)
- [Preparing for an In-Kind Partnership.](#)

A pair of new Case Studies have been added to the Resource Centre's [Case Studies](#) section, both of which demonstrate the successes community business partnerships can bring about.

Another part of the Resource Centre that has grown recently is the [Consultants Register](#). New contact details for partnership brokers and consultants have been added to the site for groups wishing to get a bit of extra help in forming a partnership.



The site's [Partnership Wizard](#) and [Partnership Matching Service](#) remain popular, with more and more community groups submitting their details and their preferred partnership options as they search for a prospective business partner.

And last but not least, the service's [Essential Facts](#) document has been updated substantially, with improved information and an updated list of Help Sheets available at the site.

The new and improved Essential Facts document is available by [Clicking Here](#).

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3. New Train the Trainer Resource now Available

The **Community Business Partnership Brokerage Service** has all sorts of free resources and information for community groups, businesses and existing partnership partners to download.

But the new **Train the Trainer** seminar resource targets a different audience – those who want to conduct their own seminar and spread the word about what community business partnerships have to offer.



The type of people who might want to run such a seminar – and to whom the Train the Trainer resource is aimed – include:

- Local economic development officers.
- Community development officers.
- Area Consultative Committees.
- Councils.
- Chambers of Commerce, or.
- Community organisations.

The presentation goes through the basics of preparing and getting ready to give a seminar, as well as all the information you will need for the seminar itself – including links and examples drawn from the **Community Business Partnerships Brokerage Service** site, and the **Essential Facts** document.

The presentation is available in either PowerPoint or Word format – both of which are under 1 Mb in size – and can be downloaded simply by visiting the **Seminar Program** section of the Brokerage Service and following the links, or by clicking one of the two buttons on the left depending on which format you wish to download.

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4. Regional Seminar Series a Huge Success

The Partnership Brokerage Service's Regional Seminar Series has wrapped up, but not before it travelled all over Australia during the past few months to spread the message about partnerships and what they had to offer community groups and small or medium businesses.

Hundreds of people representing community groups, businesses, partnership brokers and local government attended the seminars – held in locations throughout Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia between May and November.

Last month's seminars in Dubbo, New South Wales, and in the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia, were indicative of the positive response to the event.

Dubbo City Council grants officer Damien Duffy said a total of about 140 people had attended a council grants workshop in the morning and the partnership seminar in the afternoon of November 10.

"Everyone we spoke to (after the seminar) thought it was an excellent day with some great ideas," Mr Duffy said.

"They were very happy with the booklet that had been produced (as well). The response was very positive."

Mr Duffy said among those attending were representatives of the local Chamber of Commerce, as well as from the Dubbo City Development Corporation (DCDC).

DCDC aims to promote and protect Dubbo business' interests, as well as work to educate them, lobby politicians on their behalf, attract major events to the town and research relevant economic and business trends.

"DCDC and the Chamber of Commerce were very impressed (with the seminar), and there were a lot of community groups involved," Mr Duffy said.

The good news was that the seminar had moved a number of existing community business partnerships to re-examine and build on their relationship.

"There have been a few developments with some existing community business partnerships ... the seminar gave the community group a chance to go back and consolidate their relationship with business; build on the partnerships they already had."

The Wheatbelt seminar was held in Merredin through the Wheatbelt Area Consultative Committee on November 8.

Wheatbelt ACC Lisa Shreeve said that many businesses attending the seminar realised they were already involved in partnerships in the community.

"A lot of the stuff mentioned in the seminar is what businesses do already. They realised quickly that they were already doing the right thing," she said.

Our Community would like to thank all the local councils and area consultative committees that helped us in staging the seminar series.

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5. National Partnerships Awards - Update and Review

The winners of the 2004 Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships are likely to be announced next February, according to the Federal Government.

The government made the announcement last month after unsuccessful efforts in rescheduling the awards earlier in the year.

The original date for the awards – September 15 – fell during the recent Federal election campaign. Because of this, the awards presentation had to be delayed.

The government has now pencilled in next February as the likely date for the presentation of the 2004 awards. The 2005 Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships would be launched at the same time.

Information on the 2004 state and territory winners across all categories can still be found at the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership website: www.partnerships.gov.au/awards/awards.shtml

Meanwhile, the government has also launched a review of the Partnerships Awards in a bid to help them "maintain their relevance".

According to the government, much has changed in the world of community business partnerships since the awards were established in 1999.

"When the Awards were first introduced in 1999 the concept of community business partnerships was relatively new in Australia and the Awards initiative was welcomed as an innovative way to encourage a socially responsible approach by business," a government statement said.

"Over the past 6 years significant developments have occurred. The private sector approach to managing the social and environmental impacts of business and investing in communities has advanced significantly in both philosophy and practice and an approach based on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become more widely understood and accepted.

"It is important that the Awards maintain their relevance to the business and community sectors by reflecting their needs and priorities, and by showcasing CSR best practice. The Awards are currently being reviewed to ensure they continue to recognise leadership in these areas."

The government has invited past winners and nominees for the awards - as well as those who have not previously been involved in them – to have their say by taking about 10 minutes to fill out a survey. All comments are confidential and cannot be attributed to a particular person.

If you wish to fill out the survey, choose one of the following three links.

- [Survey for previous winners of the Awards](#)
- [Survey for previous nominees of the Awards](#)
- [Survey for those who have not previously entered the Awards](#)

Alternatively, you may email comments on the review to: cbp.inbox@facs.gov.au

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6. Interview with Charlie Manolis - Crocodylus Park and Charles Darwin University

The partnership between Crocodylus and the university has been ongoing for seven years, and has grown after being originally established as a pilot project.

Crocodylus Park is based in Darwin, and is both a wildlife park that showcases crocodiles, other reptiles, native wildlife, felines and bird life, and a facility for research, filming, training and wildlife management.

Wildlife Management International (WMI), which owns and operates the park, have for 30 years researched crocodiles and works to enhance and improve wildlife conservation and management.

The partnership sees students from the University operate what is known as a "practice firm" – entitled Crocodylus World – from premises at the Park. Students explore all aspects of running a business with an emphasis on conservation and sustainable living.

The park benefits through training students – who could become future employees there – and having them take on projects for the facility. Students get some hands-on learning and training in a unique environment.

The partnership was a state finalist (Northern Territory) in the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships in 2004. Charlie Manolis is chief scientist of WMI.

OC Brokerage Service: Can you explain the background of the partnership?

Charlie Manolis:

Charles Darwin University has a "practice firm" where it sets up students in a workplace environment - where they learn as if they are in an office doing business or administration.

That practice firm is actually based on our company and the things we do.

We were selected because we were a little bit different from the normal company in what we do. We deal with marketing with wildlife products, and a whole bunch of different things students could learn about instead of just sitting in an office putting stamps on envelopes or accounting.

That's the relationship and everything they do is based on our practices and procedures. Their workplace is out here at our facilities, and while they have the students we also contribute in terms of staff time and some financial contributions to help them go along.

OC Brokerage Service: What benefits does the partnership produce for both the Park and the students?

Charlie Manolis:

The main benefits are clearly to the university and the students in that they have someone here they can base their work on.

Although it is a virtual firm they run in there and run it as a company, they can come and actually see it working in real life – and they walk out with much better work skills than they would if they were just in an environment where there was someone out the front just telling them "this is what you do".

For us the benefits are - apart from the fact we are inherently interested in training of all sorts, and have been for decades – we figure it is a way to train people for jobs but also we get some benefit where students will take on a project.

For example, our newsletter, students will take on a project and a whole bunch of them will get together and give us a draft back which we comment on and that helps us in that way.

They try to help us in little ways – for example we have a stall at a shopping centre at Christmas time which displays our products and the students help out by being there and talking about the products to the public. They help with stock takes, with our administration sometimes they come in and help with that as well.

OC Brokerage Service: How did you find your partner - is there something specifically you were attracted to in your business partner?

Charlie Manolis:

When the university embarked on this virtual practice firm, it was slightly co-incidental that I knew the lady who was going to run it, and still does run it.

As she was searching for a private business partner, she saw the potential for us because we are a little bit different.

Crocodylus Park - which is our main visitor centre, marketing centre - was only young then, we'd only been going for three years. So the whole thing has grown for them as well.

As we've got bigger there's more things they can put into their virtual company – we're Crocodylus Park and they're Crocodylus World. And they actually sell products on the Internet – virtual products – and they come up with ideas for us as well.

They also knew that we ran training courses for other things – on crocodile management and husbandry for overseas students and Australians. So they were aware of our involvement in training.

OC Brokerage Service: Explain the steps of forming the partnership.

Charlie Manolis:

It was pretty straight forward. We already had relationships with the university through their science department, so it was probably a bit simpler.

Once we were made aware of what the practice firm was going to do, one of our concerns as private industry was "What is it going to cost us?"

A small company that is building up simply can't afford to just dip into all the time to make things work – that was our concern.

But after we talked we were happy enough about what our contributions would need to be, in terms of our staff time, and money, equipment, products – it was very quick actually, it was a handshake and off we went.

OC Brokerage Service: What have been some of the challenges of your partnership, and how have they been addressed?

Charlie Manolis:

I suppose the main thing is the understanding of - and I think this goes with any collaboration like this – often, especially the government or public sector doesn't necessarily have experience with the private sector and doesn't understand how the private sector operates.

I don't think in this case we really had that because we made it very clear at the outset that we've got a business to run and we'll do what we can but we can't drop everything at 5 minutes notice.

So it was just a matter of co-ordinating and making sure we knew in advance when we were needed to be somewhere or when they were sending people in. And that's really the main thing – an understanding where we are coming from.

But that was just minor stuff. It's been very good – I mean, you have your hiccups, but in reality when you look back on them it's very minor.

As long as you can sit down and talk about it and nut out any issues, things are fine – and we've been able to do that.

OC Brokerage Service: What are the key lessons you've learned by being in partnership, and what advice would you have for others seeking partnerships with business?

Charlie Manolis:

Because they were evolving from small numbers of students, and we were evolving as well, they worked out what their requirements were from us, and we from them, we slowly modified stuff as we went along so each partner was OK about it.

It's not the sort of thing that is like: "This is the way it's going to be for the next 10 years." It just doesn't work that way.

If things aren't working, you've got to go through it and fix things up. I suppose that is the main (piece of advice) being able to resolve any conflicts should they arise, and just be clear from the very start what the obligations are from each side.

There probably should be a contract – I don't think we ever signed one, but really, there just needs to be that understanding what you are going to be up for, and very clearly, not just "oh we want you to do this every now and then" – it needs to be quite clear, and each partner on each side knows what they are going to do to help the other.

And if you are not happy with things at the start, modify it straight away – don't let it keep going.

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7. Finding a Community Group or Business Partner

There are many ways you can find a community business partner:

1. Use the Community Business Partnerships Brokerage Service. Through the online [Matching Service](#) community groups and small to medium businesses can come together to form partnerships.
2. Through contacting your local council's economic development officer or community development officer to see if they can help identify a local group or business that they know is actively seeking a partnership.
3. Another option is through your regional Area Consultative Committee.
4. Through local Chambers of Commerce or business representative bodies.
5. Or, if you are confident enough, you can identify a group or business yourself and develop a proposal for a partnership that will achieve your joint goals.

There are hundreds of community groups looking for a business partner, and we feature a small number of them below. Alternatively, for a full list in your state, click on one of the following links:

[ACT](#)

[New South Wales](#)

[Northern Territory](#)

[Queensland](#)

[South Australia](#)

[Tasmania](#)

[Victoria](#)

[Western Australia](#)

- **National Ethnic Disability Alliance**

Ms Lou-Anne Lind

Phone: (02) 9687 8933 Fax: (02) 9635 5355

Email: office@neda.org.au Website: www.neda.org.au

Address: PO Box 381 Harris Park NSW 2150

The National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) is the national consumer-based peak body for people from a migrant or refugee background with disability, their families and carers.

The overarching aim of NEDA is to advocate at a federal level, for the rights and interests of people from a migrant or refugee background, their families and carers.

All activities undertaken by NEDA include strong consumer involvement and are based on the following objectives:

- Represent the rights and interests of people from a migrant or refugee background with disability, their families and carers.
- Advocate on issues impacting on people from a migrant or refugee background with disability, their families and carers.
- Work towards securing equitable outcomes for people from a migrant or refugee background with disability, their families and carers.
- Co-ordinate policy advice to the Federal government and relevant peak bodies on the impact of policy and legislation on people from a migrant or refugee background with disability, their families and carers.

NEDA is governed by a Council, the majority of who are people from a NESB with disability. NEDA Council members serve for one-year terms and are appointed via the NEDA membership. For more information, please log onto www.neda.org.au.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Volunteering, Pro-bono or discounted services, Monetary Donations, Skills and Knowledge sharing/Secondment

- **Karnak Playhouse**

Ms Diane Cilento.

Phone: (07) 4098 8144 Fax: (07) 4098 8191

Email: xsite@karnakplayhouse.com.au Website: www.karnakplayhouse.com.au

Address: PO Box 167 Mossman QLD 4873

Karnak Playhouse is a 500 seat open air amphitheatre located next to the Daintree National Park, 30 min north of Pt Douglas, Far North Queensland.

Karnak Playhouse is home to world class productions of theatre, dance, opera, comedy, cabaret and laser dramas. We have a fully licensed restaurant and on site accommodation for performers only.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Sharing/Donation of Premises and other infrastructure, Volunteering, Pro-bono or discounted services, Sponsorship, In-Kind Donations, Monetary Donations, Community Involvement Programs.

- **Mental Illness Fellowship Victoria**

Mr James Beckford Saunders.

Phone: (03) 9482 4199 Fax: (03) 9482 4871

Email: jbeckfordsaunders@mifellowship.org Website: www.mifellowship.org

Address: Fairfield Place 276 Heidelberg Road Fairfield VIC 3078

The Mental Illness Fellowship is Victoria's leading membership-based not-for-profit organisation working with people with mental illness, their families and friends to improve their wellbeing. Our vision is of a society in which mental illness will be understood, treated and accepted.

The Mental Illness Fellowship exists to make a real and positive difference in the lives of people affected by mental illness. We do this through:

- Working with people affected to achieve their own defined outcomes. We provide a range of effective and innovative services in conjunction with health professionals providing treatment;
- Creating a research agenda into the impacts of mental illness;
- Giving people a voice for change, a chance to end the stigma and to improve their quality of life.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Sharing/Donation of Premises and other infrastructure, Scholarships and Awards, Employment/Work Experience, Volunteering, Pro-bono or discounted services, Sponsorship, Mentoring, In-Kind Donations, Monetary Donations, Community Involvement Programs, Skills and Knowledge sharing/Secondment

- **Glendi Greek Festival Inc.**

Mr Manuel Chrisan.

Phone: 0402 919 077

Email: manuelchrisan@hotmail.com

Address: 106 South Road Torrensville SA 5031

The Glendi Greek Festival is held annually in March over a two day weekend attracting approximately 50,000 people. It showcases Greek exhibitions, art displays, school programs, classical recitals, dancing displays together with traditional Greek food and Greek Music.

The festival has been around for over 25 years and many Greek organisations participate in it. It is the largest ethnic festival in South Australia.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Volunteering, Sponsorship, In-Kind Donations, Monetary Donations, Community Involvement Programs.

- **Milligan House**

Mrs Suzen Arthur.

Phone: (08) 97218944 Fax: (08) 97916990

Email: ask@milliganhouse.org.au Website: www.mysouthwest.com.au/~milliganhouse

Address: 35 Milligan St Bunbury WA 6230

Milligan House is a community facility offering everyone the opportunity to learn and grow by joining in low-cost classes, activities, playgroups and discussion groups. Milligan House also operates a homework centre and has its own small computer centre where volunteers help beginner users.

Milligan House's current classes include: drawing, meditation, Centrelink and You, home safety, sewing, computer confidence, Indonesian, Writers' Group and Patchwork.

Several support groups are also based Milligan House, including Al-anon, Babychase, Gamblers Anon, Australian Breastfeeding Assoc, SIDS and Kids, SWARDS, Overeaters Anon, SW Epilepsy and the Freedom Centre.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Sharing/Donation of Premises and other Infrastructure, Scholarships and Awards, Employment/Work Experience, Volunteering, Pro-bono or discounted services, Sponsorship, Mentoring, In-Kind Donations, Business as a collection point, Monetary Donations, Community Involvement Programs, Skills and Knowledge sharing/Secondment

- **Clarence Plains People-Link Inc.**

Mr Greg Keane.

Phone: 0163 011 100

Email: peoplelink@ozemail.com.au Website: www.people-link.com.au (under development)

Address: PO Box 954 Rosny Park TAS 7018

To provide a debt and consumer counselling service in Clarence Plains on the Eastern Shore of Hobart in accordance with the Service Standards and Professional Conduct rules of the Financial and Consumer Rights Council Inc (Vic). Current projects include "Our Life" Building Self Confidence, "Our Life" Peer Support Network & "Our Life" Youth Mobile Phone Debt Support Project.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Sharing/Donation of Premises and other infrastructure, Scholarships and Awards, Sponsorship, Mentoring, In-Kind Donations, Monetary Donations, Skills and Knowledge sharing/Secondment.

- **Central Albury Occasional Childcare Centre**

Ms Janet McCracken.

Phone: (02) 6021 6545 Fax: (02) 6040 6008

Email: ja_mccracken@hotmail.com

Address: St Matthews Parish Centre Queen Elizabeth Square, Dean Street Albury NSW 2640

Established in 1970 this vital community managed organisation is facing closure.

The local council is redeveloping our site but we have not been included in the new plans. We receive our income through fees, fundraising and a state government operational grant. We receive no ongoing assistance from local or federal governments.

We have saved \$20,000 in the past 3 years and although this may seem a small amount it represents a mammoth effort by current and past committee members. Local council have committed \$250,000 on the proviso that we match their amount. We desperately need assistance securing location (either purchase or lease), building equipment, tradesman, suppliers and site manager.

Any assistance appreciated. We are well managed by dedicated parents and have the support of the local community but are feeling overwhelmed by the task in front of us.

We also need help on ways we can raise funds and guidance on devising a strategy and communicating our circumstance to the wider community.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Pro-bono or discounted services, Sponsorship, In-Kind Donations, Monetary Donations.

- **Outward Bound Australia**

Mr Karim Haddad.

Phone: (02) 6237 5158 Fax: (02) 6237 5224

Email: karimh@outwardbound.com.au Website: www.outwardbound.com.au

Address: Naas Rd Tharwa ACT 2620

Outward Bound is the largest not for profit, independent, educational organisation in the world. Outward Bound Australia (OBA) is a member of Outward Bound International, which has over 50 schools worldwide.

OBA programs operate in most Australian states and are administered through the National Base in Tharwa, ACT.

Outward Bound Australia has been delivering life changing educational programs that help people discover, develop and achieve their potential for almost 50 years.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Sharing/Donation of Premises and other infrastructure, Pro-bono or discounted services, Sponsorship, In-Kind Donations, Monetary Donations, Community Involvement Programs, Skills and Knowledge sharing/Secondment.

- **Australia 21 Limited**

Dr Bob Douglas.

Phone: 0409 233 138 Fax: 02 6288 0823

Email: office@australia21.org.au Website: www.australia21.org.au

Address: PO Box 3244 Weston ACT 2611

Australia 21 is a recently formed, non profit company whose core business is research and development on issues of strategic importance to Australia in the 21st Century.

Its honorary Board of Directors is working to ensure that research into large and complex issues is addressed in a rigorous way through the establishment of sustained collaborative networks of outstanding thinkers and researchers from various disciplines across Australia.

The company has been granted tax exemption and gift tax exemption by The Australian Tax Office and is registered as an Approved Research Institute with The Department of Education, Science and Technology.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Pro-bono or discounted services, Sponsorship, In-Kind Donations, Monetary Donations.

- **Partners In Micro-Development Inc.**

Ms Donna Vaughan.

Phone: 0407 506 291 Fax: (02) 9816 1542

Email: info@microdevpartners.org Website: www.microdevpartners.org

Address: P.O. Box 165 Gladesville NSW 2111

We are a volunteer based organisation working in the field of education and ICT in developing communities primarily overseas but intending also to work in Australian indigenous communities.

We are seeking the following kinds of partnerships: Pro-bono or discounted services, Sponsorship, In-Kind Donations, Monetary Donations

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8. In the News

Deveson hits out at "Gekkos"

Ivan Deveson, former Melbourne Lord Mayor and current director of the Business School at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), last month slammed sections of Melbourne's financial and legal professions – as well as other executives – saying they did not display enough social responsibility.

Speaking at a forum on leadership and management at the Certified Practising Accountants 2004 Conference – held in Melbourne on October 12 - Mr Deveson compared some executives in these fields to the Gordon Gekko character from the movie Wall Street, equating their attitudes to Gekko's famous "Greed is good" philosophy.

Mr Deveson, who has also served as chair of the Seven Network, as chief of Nissan and at board level with a number of other companies, set his sights firmly on those executives who did not have a sense of social responsibility in his presentation.

He said Collins Street – the centre of Melbourne's business community – was "full of little Gekkos" and that many executives needed to gain a sense of social responsibility.

"Stand up you bastards if you think you are excused from corporate social responsibility," Melbourne's *Herald Sun* newspaper reported him as saying.

He added that while many executives may have the possessions and trappings of a successful lifestyle, without ethics they had nothing. He also warned against ruining their names through bad business practices – citing examples like OneTel, HIH, Parmalat and Martha Stewart.

Westpac tops Reputex Ratings

Westpac Bank has been ranked far and away the best of Australia's top 100 companies when it comes to socially responsible behaviour – according to the 2004 Reputex Social Responsibility Ratings released in November.

The rankings were released on November 8, and rank Australia's top 100 companies across four fields - corporate governance, environmental impact, workplace practice and social impact.

The rankings are derived from publicly-available external material on each of the companies, with analysis coming from what Reputex describes as "analysts with specialist expertise in each of the four categories".

Westpac Bank was the only Australian company that achieved an overall AAA rating from Reputex. No Australian company received an overall AA+ ranking, with the next nine highest ranking companies receiving an AA rating overall.

Those companies were, in alphabetical order: Australia Post, BHP Billiton, Energex, Hewlett-Packard Australia, IBM Australia, Insurance Australia Group, National Australia Bank, Queensland Rail and Visy Industries.

Westpac bank also topped Reputex's corporate governance scale – the only company to achieve a G1 rating in the category. In the environmental impact category, Visy Industries led the way, and was the only company to notch an E1 rating in that category.

Australia Post and Westpac both scored top marks, and an S1 rating, in the social impact category, while Exxon-Mobil Australia and IBM Australia were rated at the top of the workplace practices scale – with both receiving a W1 rating.

At the other end of the overall scale, none of the Australian companies analysed were graded as C- or D. Three companies – Bank of Western Australia, Spotless Group and PaperlinX – were graded as C, or very low.

A further eight companies – including Mitsubishi Development, Village Roadshow, Murray-Goulburn Co-Op, News Corporation and Queensland Sugar – received an I/A, or “insufficient information available” ranking.

RepuTex’s chairman Graeme Lee said the latest set of rankings showed that companies were taking the concepts of corporate social responsibility seriously.

“The majority of companies operating in this region are actively seeking to enhance their CSR performance and positions,” he said.

“Many have a dedicated team of staff to manage social responsibility and the number of companies publishing comprehensive social reports continues to grow.

“Companies and the community are recognising that they need each other to be sustainable. This is good news for the community and the longevity and growth of our companies.”

More information on the ratings can be found at this site: <http://www.reputex.com.au/7-home.asp>

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9. Stats that Count - Customers Know and Appreciate Socially Responsible Businesses

As more and more research is done on the effects of corporate responsibility or corporate citizenship, the statistics showing its benefits to the bottom line of businesses – as well as the growing customer awareness - continue to mount.

And as these statistics continue to mount, the argument for businesses to become a part of a community business partnership – and publicly show some corporate social responsibility - gets stronger.

Listed below are a number of these statistics, drawn from both Australian and overseas sources, which show how being a part of a partnership can make for happier customers and improve your bottom line.

- A 2001 survey of 750 Australian consumers by Washington Worthington Di Marzio for Cavill + Co found almost 60% of consumers expect Australian companies to be more involved in supporting charitable or community causes – up from 50% recorded in a similar study in 1997.
- The same study also found the number of Australian consumers influenced to buy a product or service because of a company’s association with a cause has almost doubled (from 19% to 34%) between 1997 and 2001, and.
- That when considering similar products in terms of price and quality, 77% of Australian consumers would prefer to purchase a product associated with a cause, and 54% would switch from their normal brand.
- A Research International survey published in AdNews in 2001 found that 81% of people agreed that when price and quality were equal, they were more likely to buy a product associated with a cause.
- A 2000 survey of more than 12,000 consumers across 12 European companies by Market and Opinion Research International (MORI) and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) found 70% of consumers surveyed said a company’s commitment to social responsibility was important when buying a product or service.
- The same survey also found 20% of consumers surveyed said they would be “very willing” to pay more for products that were socially or environmentally responsible, and that more than half of those surveyed - and over 70% of consumers in Great Britain - felt industry and commerce did not pay enough attention to their responsibilities.
- More than half of the British public say they have chosen a product or service because of responsible reputation, according to a 2002 report from the Ethical Consumer, MORI/The Co-Operative Bank.
- In 1997, 24% of the British public believed that when buying a product it was very important that the company showed a high degree of social responsibility. By 2002 this had risen to 44%, according to MORI’s annual Corporate Social Responsibility study.
- Three-quarters of respondents to a 2003 “Brand Benefits” survey by British organisation Business in the Community stated that cause related marketing affects their future behaviour and attitudes.

- A 1997 national study of consumer attitudes in the United States by Cone/Roper found 76% of consumers would be likely to switch to a brand associated with a good cause, compared to 63% in 1993.
- A survey of several hundred Canadian business and community groups, as well as individuals, by the Canadian Democracy and Corporate Accountability Commission in 2001 found that 72% of respondents accepted the legitimacy of corporations and their right to make profits, but also wanted companies to accept a broader sense of accountability that extended beyond profit maximisation.
- The same survey found that 74% of shareholders said business executives had a responsibility to take into account “the impact their decisions have on employees, local communities and the country as well as making profits”.
- A 2003 Global CSR Monitor survey in G7 countries found almost a quarter of shareholders surveyed had bought or sold shares because of a company’s social and environmental performance.

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10. Partnerships at Christmas – What You Can Do

With Christmas only a couple of weeks away (yes, it’s that time of year again!) and the season of giving and goodwill almost upon us, it could be a good time for you and your community business partnership to have a think about doing that little bit extra to add value and meaning to your relationship.

If your partnership has enjoyed a year full of successful activities, it could also be a good time to take a break, take a deep breath and show some appreciation and understanding for your partner over what can become a hectic time of year.

Here are six relatively simple ways your community group or business can community group or business can add some “Christmas cheer” to their festive season.

1) Be patient and flexible.

Sometimes Christmas can be a busy time for both businesses and community groups. This might mean your business or community group partner is busy, needs all hands on deck or could have family or other commitments – meaning some partnership activities may have to go by the wayside.

If so, be patient, understanding and flexible – and if needed don’t hesitate to reschedule activities to a time suitable to both partners.

2) Invite your partner to your Christmas function.

If your business or community group is going to have a Christmas function, send out an invitation to your partnership partner. Not only is it a good way to show your appreciation, you never know – you might get an invite to their function in return!

3) Send them a Christmas card and thank you note.

As you do your annual Christmas card mail-out, make sure you put one in the mail for your partner and its staff or members.

4) Buy a joint gift/donate jointly towards a Christmas appeal.

Community business partners can also do their bit to make the community a happier place this Christmas by slipping a joint gift under a giving tree, donating a gift to a toy appeal or passing the hat around to raise money for a good cause. All sorts of appeals and ways to give can be found at the [Australian Giving Centre](#) section of the Our Community website.

5) Put an ad in the local paper or write a letter to the editor outlining what you have achieved through your partnership this year.

Partners could work together on a letter to the editor or an advertisement thanking each other and outlining the partnership’s successes during the year. This is also a good way to gain some publicity for your partnership, but remember, many local papers shut down or work to short deadlines over Christmas, so get in touch with them and ask about their deadlines.

6) Finally – maybe just sit back and take a break.

Simply taking a break, sitting back and reflecting on the successes of a community business partnership over Christmas may not be such a bad idea – especially if everyone is very busy. Just make sure you make it your New Year's resolution to get back into the partnership after the Festive Season ends!

Information on more things your partnership can do to make Christmas that extra bit festive can be found in the Help Sheet Partnerships at Christmas, available at the Partnerships Brokerage Service Resource Centre at the Our Community website.

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11. Getting Local Government Involved in Community Business Partnerships

Among the new Help Sheets now on the Community Business Partnership website's Resource Centre are a series on Local Government and Council involvement in community business partnerships.

These three help sheets:

- [How Local Government can Support Partnerships](#).
- [The Benefits of Being Involved](#), and.
- [A Role for the Mayor](#).

talk about how local government involvement and what the benefits are of their involvement.

If your community business partnership is looking to get local government involved in supporting your partnership – or partnerships in general – here are some of the benefits you can point out to them in discussions on getting them involved.

- It displays a commitment to community involvement, empowerment and betterment – things any council should strive for.
- It builds solid links and healthy relationships between community, business and council.
- It improves the community's perceptions of the council, in that residents see their local government helping and supporting something which is positive for the community. It also sees people view the council as a proactive one.
- It can help community groups become more empowered and self-reliant, meaning they are less reliant on council grants or funding – which can then in turn be used to help other groups.
- Through establishing a way of awarding and recognising partnerships, it rewards both business and community groups who are pro-active in seeking to better themselves and the community – an attitude which is rewarding for local groups and businesses, as well as to the council.
- Supporting partnerships can see the council play a vital role in creating or building economic benefits for the entire local community. As partnerships have economic benefits for businesses, having the council support them can make the local community an attractive place for businesses wishing to move to the area.

Working with your local council and involving them in your partnership should be seen as an important step towards widening the benefits it can produce.

Your partnership should not be afraid of approaching your local council and asking them if they are doing anything to promote and support community business partnerships. If they are not, you could point out the benefits to them and explain why they should be getting involved.

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12. Ways your Business can Help Celebrate Christmas

While there are plenty of things your community business partnership can do to celebrate Christmas and add value to your relationship, there are plenty of ways your business can add to the Christmas cheer in the community.

Here are a dozen ways for your business to help the community at Christmas. They are drawn from the "125 Tips to Help your Local Community This Christmas" resource available through the **Our Community website** at: <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/christmastips>

Ask your friends to give money, not presents

If you are one of the many people who already has most things they need, why not ask your friends not to give you a Christmas present this year but to instead donate the money they would have spent on you to a nominated community group? It will make for a more meaningful Christmas than another pair of novelty socks!

Swap gifts for donations

Instead of giving out Christmas presents, consider making a donation on your friends' behalf to an appropriate community group – possibly your community group partner! Give them a card telling them that you have made a donation and provide the receipt. Again, the benefit will last longer than a pair of socks, a packet of soaps or box of chocolates.

Buy your Christmas cards from a community group

Many charities and community groups raise funds by selling their own cards. This is an easy way of helping out a local group and giving something different and meaningful to family and friends. It can also help to spread the word about the group you are buying from.

Join your community partner's group

Don't just be a supporter, make it your New Year's resolution to become a member of your local community groups. While community groups love donations, many survive on the annual subscriptions from dedicated members. You can also reap the health benefits of becoming more connected to your community.

Donate your expertise to make a difference

Consider whether you or your business could provide pro bono assistance to your community business partner. It may be legal advice, accounting, auditing, marketing, public relations or IT knowledge - or landscaping, carpentry or bricklaying skills - whatever your professional or trade skills, chances are a community group needs them.

Join a Board or Committee

Consider becoming a Board member of a community group (maybe that of your community business partner) that you are involved in and have a say on how the group runs and what it does. You can make a lasting contribution and make a difference by becoming actively involved in something you are truly passionate about.

Be a mentor

Pass on your expertise and knowledge to a young community leader. It gives them the chance to bounce ideas off someone with experience and ensures your expertise has double the impact.

Support crisis and help lines

Crisis telephone lines need volunteer counsellors to answer phones and, unfortunately, Christmas can be a time of high demand. Find out about the help lines in your area and offer to undertake the training required to staff the lines for next Christmas.

Sponsor a local community event

If your business is in a position to do so, why not sponsor an event held by a community group in your local area? It doesn't have to be a major event but it will help build a relationship with your local community (and local customers).

Put the bite on your boss

Ask your employer if they will provide a matching gift for whatever your workplace can raise in a special Christmas fundraising effort for a community group. Consult your colleagues to select a group everyone supports.

Help to organise a Carols by Candlelight event

You could offer to be on the organising committee or help out on the night. Maybe you could type up song books, help set up the stage or audio equipment or hand out candles to people as they arrive. Or you could show up the next morning to assist in the clean-up operation.

Hold drinks for your hard-working community group volunteers

Offer to hold a dinner, drinks or Christmas party for your local community group to thank volunteers or staff or to provide a get-together for major supporters or donors. It could also help to ease the strain on the group's budget.

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This project is managed and sustained by [Our Community](#), with its associate partners - the [Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#) and the [Municipal Association of Victoria](#).