

TalkingBusiness

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Paul's Corner

Are we really approaching the last quarter of 2019? This is the September edition of Talking Business, so I guess that must be the case. Please tell me I am not alone in finding this a little hard to digest?

As always, this magazine takes pride in showcasing the developments and achievements of our diverse local business community. In this edition, we dedicate a full page to those that have been recognised for excellence across many industry award bodies, including HM Gem Engines, Woolworths Distribution Facility, Caps and Closures, Ego Pharmaceuticals and Kuga Electrical.

We also highlight those businesses that are expanding or are leading the way in innovation such as Propharma achieving its Australian Certified Organic certification, Fine Food Holdings' \$10 million investment into a new manufacturing facility, and Spee3D's revolutionary technology that is taking the world by storm.

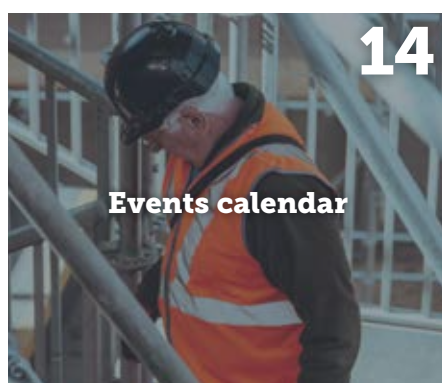
Starting and sustaining a small business can be a difficult but rewarding road, and we recognise the need for strong support throughout the various phases of growth. To this end, we have shared some case studies for three popular programs including the Dandy Markers Market (p.3), Launch Me (p.9), and Ignite Greater Dandenong (p.13) – each offering contrasting and complementary supports for different markets.

Please enjoy the variety of articles in this edition, and we shall be back in touch with you again in December.

Paul Kearsley

Group Manager,
Greater Dandenong Business
(Includes Economic Development, SEBN
and Activity Centre Revitalisation)

FEATURES



Cover: Couture Mantra on 109 Foster St. Model featured in one of owner and designer, Kiran Lally's silk lengha sets.

Dandy Makers Market paves way for aspiring stallholders

Dandy Makers Market is a handmade craft and artisan food market with a difference.

A social enterprise of the Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre (SMRC), the market was born from the desire to ignite the passion of business for clients who showed unique cultural talents. With the help of Dandenong Market, SMRC now offers both 'get market ready' business courses plus the opportunity to become a regular stallholder – selling unique one-off creations in a mentored environment.

"Without the Dandy Makers Market, I couldn't have pictured myself starting my very own Ethiopian coffee roasting business."

Graduate of the business course, Alem Abyssinia, said The Dandy Makers Market was instrumental in helping establish her business, Coffeeland.

"Without the Dandy Makers Market, I couldn't have pictured myself

starting my very own Ethiopian coffee roasting business. This space has allowed me to bring my product to the community, and has also assisted me with my packaging, marketing and pricing," said Ms Abyssinia.

The Dandy Makers Market is located on the terrace of Dandenong Market and held on the second Sunday of the month, adding a novel addition to the thriving market. When buying from a maker you are buying a piece of a heart, part of a soul, a moment of someone's life, a livelihood made from a passion.

"Having my homeland tradition in this market is very exciting and I'm confident by its potential and grateful for the support," said Ms Abyssinia.

If you are keen to turn your skill or hobby into a small business and would like to find out more about free short courses, please contact dandymakers@smrc.org.au or 9767 1900.

The Dandy Makers Market reopens from a winter hiatus on 13 October 2019.



Coffeeland owner, Alem Abyssinia

Noble Park Activity Centre pilots new Shopfront and Improvement Scheme

Noble Park Activity Centre will soon see some enhancements with the rollout of new pilot Shopfront Improvement Scheme.

Council's economic development team engaged local brand and visual merchandising experts, Pop Creative Collective, to deliver a program aimed at improving the visual appeal of shopfronts within the shopping precinct.

The program surveyed more than 46 businesses to gain their existing views on the condition of the precinct, and

to gauge their early interest in being involved in the pilot program.

This was followed by a formal, competitive expression of interest process, where 21 businesses were selected to undergo targeted changes to their shopfront, visual merchandising and painting.

Pop Creative Collective had a hands-on approach and created an 'instant' makeover. Proposals were developed and implemented with business owner collaborations. New branding and

signage were part of a suite of outcomes for traders to use in future multimedia and promotion of their business.





Grand designs for Dandenong

An innovative designer is keeping retail dollars in Melbourne with a unique fashion offering. In January, Kiran Lally opened Couture Mantra next to Dandenong's Little India precinct.

"No one else has this in Australia in terms of Indian-ethnic wear," says Ms Lally, who originally launched the business online in 2013.

"It's currently all fast fashion so a lot of people are heading overseas to

shop for quality garments. I'd like to see more stores of my kind open so we can keep people shopping local."

Ms Lally designs the hand-made garments down to the fabrics, which are 90 per cent silk with cotton-silk lining.

"It's a lot of work but the pieces are timeless – they can be passed onto your kids. The Mayor visited during my store launch and I liked that she had knowledge of embroidery and

hand work. I've found this Council really responsive to businesses."

A building designer by profession, Ms Lally originally intended to study fashion design but instead chose a more 'reliable' vocation. After a trip to India, Ms Lally's love for design was reignited and Couture Mantra was born.

"It's currently all fast fashion so a lot of people are heading overseas to shop for quality garments. I'd like to see more stores of my kind open so we can keep people shopping local."

"If you've got a passion, you can make it work. I'm learning new things every week – more than I did at school and university," Ms Lally explains.

Couture Mantra has utilised Instagram and Facebook to generate interest in the brand. "I've realised the customer needs to know the details of how to style the outfits.

"Social media is still how people find me these days, but what you post needs to be relevant. I get a strong response when I'm in the picture, and this might be because people can relate to a curvier model."

Couture Mantra has been featured in Melbourne Spring Fashion Week, and has since held its own fashion show featuring a Bollywood actress. Ms Lally plans to hold a similar event in Dandenong later this year.



Kindness, Tolerance, Tenacious, Spirited, Resilient, United, Fellowship, Determined – the making of Noble Park.

Noble Park Railway Station honours its history

A series of large scale panels installed at Noble Park Railway Station tell the story of Noble Park's early settlers and the lives they lived.

The panels represent the final touches to the newly built railway station as part of the Victorian Government's Level Crossing Removal Project across Melbourne.

Combining historical photographs with thematic words depicting the spirit of Noble Park in its early days, the panels now greet commuters at this modern state-of-the-art railway station.

<http://www.greaterdandenong.com/levelcrossingremovalproject>

Game on for Melbourne Football Club and Dandenong

Melbourne Football Club (MFC) has further cemented its commitment to the south east region by joining the Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce.

MFC's community initiatives include collaborations with Victoria Police in the south east area.

"We want to immerse ourselves in the community and have this area be an extension of our football club as a whole," says Josh Mahoney, General Manager of Football and Casey Operations for MFC.

"Initial discussions have identified numerous opportunities to help the business network of Greater Dandenong, either through the development of programs or partnerships."

Peter Maynard, General Manager Casey Football – a VFL club affiliated with MFC – says the organisation recently celebrated its 10th year of partnership with City of Casey. "We want the best facilities possible in the Casey/Dandenong area, not only to grow the game of Australian Rules but to increase physical activity within the community."

MFC also runs the 'Melbourne Next Gen Academy' in partnership with the Dandenong Stingrays, AFL

South East and other networks to encourage and develop talented players. All programs include on-field skill development and educational components with an additional focus on creating more opportunities for multicultural and indigenous participants. For example, highly talented players who have graduated through the Melbourne Academy Zone and meet certain criteria are eligible to be drafted to Melbourne's AFL side.

"We have been able to partner already with many great, local businesses on our network programs such as 'Leadership in Business'," says Mr Maynard. "Expanding that reach to Greater Dandenong businesses with similar community mindsets is an important opportunity for MFC."

"We believe our new, \$8 million development and surface upgrade planned at Casey Fields is a terrific achievement for the whole South East community. We're looking forward to bringing events and programs to Greater Dandenong that benefit the wider community."

Rigby Cooke Lawyers backs vision for dispersed Melbourne with South East Business Hub

Accommodating a growing client base in Melbourne's south-east, Rigby Cooke Lawyers has opened a business hub in Dandenong South to serve businesses located in the region.

Managing Partner, Bill Karvela, said the firm was making a strategic move as planners looked towards a decentralised future for Melbourne.

"We want to meet our clients where they are. Not just to provide more convenient service, but also to better understand their needs and their industries," said Mr Karvela.

Located in Monash Drive, Dandenong South, the new space will provide Rigby Cooke with a base to interact with its clients in the growing region, including manufacturers, hotel and accommodation providers, health, logistics, clients and trade exposed businesses and other commercial clients.

Mr Karvela said this venture was a genuine investment in the new business hub, and a serious commitment to their clients and future clients in the South East.

"We want to support the growth aspirations of our clients outside of the CBD, and with a number of clients already in the South East, this is an expansion that makes sense for us" he said.



Dandenong engineering and remanufacturing business wins elite industry award



From left to right: HM GEM Engines Managing Director, Bruce Parker and General Manager, Dean Taylor

City of Greater Dandenong business, HM Gem Engines, has been awarded Best Engine Reconditioner (large business) in the prestigious 2019 VACC Industry Awards.

2019 category winners and other outstanding Victorian businesses were formally recognised at a black tie event on Saturday 22 June at the Grand Hyatt, Melbourne.

With its head office and principle engine reconditioning and remanufacturing plant located in Dandenong, HM Gem Engines is recognised as the largest engine remanufacturer in Australia with engineering service plants strategically located along the east coast of Australia, employing in excess of 100 people.

Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC) Chief Executive, Geoff Gwilym said that the industry Awards demonstrate VACC members commitment to quality and customer service.

"It is a huge accolade to be named the best in Victoria and these businesses have all proved themselves worthy of that title," said Mr Gwilym.

Eight expert judges evaluated entries based on business management, workplace practices, customer service, marketing and communication and an independent standards representative audited the judging ensuring that only the finest of VACC's 5,500 members would be announced as finalists.

As a multiple winner of this award since its inception, HM Gem Engines was recognised among four other outstanding companies and individuals with induction into the VACC Automotive Industry Hall of Fame, the industry's highest honour.

Local businesses take out range of prestigious awards

The past quarter has seen a number of Greater Dandenong businesses recognised for excellence across a range of industry awards, and we extend our sincere congratulations to all.

Award for Development Innovation – Woolworths Distribution Facility

The Kone Award for Development Innovation was awarded to Woolworths and Charter Hall for Woolworths' new Melbourne South Regional Distribution Centre at the Australian national property awards.

Woolworth's latest state of the art facility uses world class automated technology to deliver enhanced customer, safety, supply chain, economic and

sustainability benefits. The collaboration with development partners, suppliers and store operations has reset the benchmarks of what can be achieved in distribution centre development in Australia and worldwide.

International packaging award – Caps and Closures

Caps and Closures achieved international recognition for their innovative and unique packaging design at the prestigious 2019 WorldStar Packaging Awards held in Prague, Czech Republic. The company won in the domestic and household category for Precise Pour, described as a leap forward in the functionality of the simple tap.

Clunies Ross Entrepreneur of the Year Award – Dr Jane Oppenheim, Ego Pharmaceuticals

The award, organised by the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering, recognised the leadership and innovation provided by Dr Oppenheim, which has seen an Ego manufacturing plant expand 10 times, creating valuable jobs and a significant export market.

Energy Efficiency Project of the Year Award – Kuga Electrical

Congratulations to John Kurta and the team at Kuga Electrical for winning the Energy Efficiency Project of the Year Award, presented at the 2019 Excellence Awards by Master Electricians Australia. These awards recognize outstanding achievements in the electro-technology industry at a state and national level.

Propharma adds organic to its production portfolio

After more than 40 years in business, Dandenong South's Propharma achieved Australian Certified Organic certification in April 2019, opening the already successful business up to new markets.

The company, which brands itself as "Dry Powder Specialists," works in the animal nutrition, food and pharmaceutical industries, assisting small businesses through to global brands.

"We're set up to handle all varieties of dry powder milling, blending, sieving and packaging," says Propharma's QA/NPD Manager, Ladan Azizsoltani.

"Management's thinking was always to focus on quality rather than volume. We're contract manufacturers and because we don't have any minimum quantities in our orders, that's attractive for start-up businesses seeking trial batches.

"Multi-nationals are confident of the calibre of the quality systems we have in place, knowing they can trust our step in the chain of their manufacturing processes."

The founders of Propharma had a farming background and good knowledge of the nutritional requirements of animals, starting the business in 1976, according to Ms Azizsoltani.

"They commissioned a purpose-built factory in Dandenong South in 1986, establishing a separate facility for human nutrition and therapeutics."

The company obtained a Therapeutic Goods Administration licence in 1991.

"Since that time, multiple manufacturing licences have been achieved, as well as formal supplier accreditation with several multi-nationals."

The organic certification comes as a result of customer demand and interest at food exhibitions. Propharma recently expanded the food side of its business with a food technologist recruited and extra casual workers added to the team.

The company has also been collaborating with Monash University's food incubator since 2017 to develop products in larger batches, with the aim to commercialise the ideas generated from the incubator.

New Business Growth Fund to help businesses expand

The Victorian Government recently confirmed it will establish a \$250 million Victorian Business Growth Fund, the largest of its kind in Australia, for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to help them access capital and create jobs to grow the economy.

On 7 June 2019, Treasurer Tim Pallas announced a \$50 million contribution towards the Fund, which will be developed with leading industry superannuation groups First State Super and VicSuper.

"The Victorian Business Growth Fund will give some of our best SMEs the incentive to take on new ventures and employ more Victorians," said Mr Pallas.

The Labor Government, First State Super and VicSuper are continuing to work together to finalise the design of the fund, which is subject to a formal agreement.

First State Super CEO Deanne Stewart said many Victorian SMEs find it difficult to access affordable capital, limiting their ability to expand their business.

"As one of Australia's largest super funds, we have long been looking for innovative ways to invest in successful SME companies that are ready to expand, in turn creating new jobs and economic growth in regional and metropolitan communities," said Mr Stewart.

A high-quality, independent fund manager will be appointed through a competitive process.

The Fund will complement other business support programs, such as the Victorian Jobs and Investment Fund and the payroll tax cuts announced in the Victorian Budget for 2019-20.



From left to right: Champi Thotamunige, Norma Garner, Lesley Smith, Ladan Azizsoltani, Alf Staffa

The power of the hashtag



'Consumers are more likely to 'tell your story' when your brand aligns to a strong set of values, issues or experiences that go beyond your product.'

By the time you read this article there will be approximately three million images uploaded onto social media applications (apps). On Instagram alone, there is an average of 80 million images uploaded daily.

Instagram is a social media app that can be loosely described as a photo sharing tool used by both individuals and businesses. We all know the timeless adage "a picture speaks a thousand words," and Instagram's rising success and popularity shows this is the case, so we better pay closer attention.

Instagram has 1.1 billion users who open the app at least once a day on average, many of which post images showcasing life's joys

including that delicious avocado smash, the house transformation or the new outfit of the day (#OOTD). According to Hootsuite, 60% of users also (approximately 600 million people) seek out and discover new products on Instagram, making it a powerful tool for businesses.

So what is the most effective way to translate users to consumers? Research shows that User Generated Content (UGC) is outperforming traditional advertising, meaning consumers find peer-created content more influential in their choices than business marketing images (Marketing Society).

You will never find a better sales representative than your customers – and those loyal and engaged will post unsolicited images without you having to ask. Consumers are more likely to 'tell your story' when your brand aligns to a strong set of values, issues or experiences that go beyond your product.

This can be seen in the case of KOH Clean Living whose brand story matched the values of a new mother, Sally. With a newborn in the home, Sally began researching eco-friendly cleaning products to create a safer living environment for her child, and came across the business KOH Clean Living.

In reading their story, Sally found a personal connection to their purpose and decided to purchase their products to clean her home. While she wouldn't normally post an Instagram photo about cleaning products, she was proud of her conscious decision to create a safer home environment for her family, while also helping to protect the planet – this post was free UGC for KOH Clean Living.

In delving into the world of Instagram, here are a few facts to consider:



Instagram now has a shopping feature, making it even easier for users to make purchases in a few simple clicks



Instagram posts with at least one hashtag boast 12.6 per cent more engagement than those without a hashtag



Identifying and leveraging the trending hashtags (those that have a lot of traction) is a great marketing tactic to consider

So why not have a play and see what Instagram can offer your brand or should we say #whynot.

References

<https://www.marketingsociety.com/the-gym/how-harness-power-instagram#FXF3B13dXGm5SEmd.99>
<https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-statistics/>

'Intangible' skills predicted as priority for workforce of the future

According to the World Economic Forum's (WEF) *Future of Jobs Report* released late last year, at least 54 per cent of all employees will need reskilling and upskilling by 2022.

In-demand skills that WEF predicts for 2022 include:

- analytical thinking and innovation
- active learning and learning strategies
- creativity, originality and initiative
- technology design and programming
- complex problem-solving
- leadership and social influence
- emotional intelligence
- reasoning, problem-solving and ideation

Simon Waller, a speaker, author and advisor in the technology space predicts technology-related jobs will be more important in the short term.

"But large chunks of that work will become automated as well," says Mr Waller.

"Technology doesn't take jobs, it takes tasks, so you face greater risk if you're a specialist and that one thing you do gets automated. Those middle-management-type roles, which are relatively standardised, are also ripe for automation."

Farha Momandwall, Senior HR Manager SC/IR for Nissan Casting

"The real challenge is how fast the jobs of the future will be created and how quickly we can re-skill people for these jobs."

(Australia), predicts the manufacturing workforce of the future will need to be multi-skilled.

"Soft skills are becoming more critical. An area we are investing in is around people-management skills, such as communication, coaching and leadership. Investment in this area will enable our workforce to identify how to bring out the best in people, and provide room for creativity and innovative thinking," says Ms Momandwall.

Similarly, Mr Waller believes we need to look at intangible elements to predict the in-demand skillsets of the future.

"It's any type of work that can't be coded into 'ones' and 'zeros', that can't be easily measured such as compassion, creativity, collaboration or even love."

"The real challenge is how fast the jobs of the future will be created and how quickly we can re-skill people for

these jobs. I think one area we'll see growth in is self-education."

"With all of this technology we have, it's a bit of a double-edged sword. Nothing is all good or bad – it's what we choose to do with it that ultimately matters."

City of Greater Dandenong is proactively supporting businesses and their workforces to adapt to technological advancements. For example, South East Business Networks recently held a series of workshops on the future of work targeted to business leaders and educators.

Visit www.greaterdandenong.com and click on 'work' then 'South East Business Networks' to subscribe to further workshop information.



Local Jobs First Supplier Forum

Do you want to learn how your business can participate in Victorian State Government projects?

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) is hosting an information session to help suppliers understand the Local Jobs First and the Social Procurement Framework. It is an

important first step to participating in public sector projects.

Come along to hear presentations from DJPR and the Local Jobs First Commissioner. In addition, get an insight into upcoming government projects and hear from a Tier 1 Contractor about a successful project utilising local businesses

To register for this event visit <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/local-jobs-first-supplier-forum-registration-67632726305>



Jobs,
Precincts
and Regions

Love Food Halve Waste

Did you know the average food business in Victoria throws away more than 100 kilograms of wasted food every week? Not only is this a waste of food and lost profits, but it also ends up in landfill.

While many businesses understand the problem, they do not know how to improve the situation. Love Food Hate Waste is a free short program to help Victorian hospitality venues combat this issue by learning how to prevent food waste, reduce costs and increase profits.

Open to all Victorian hospitality businesses such as cafes, restaurants, pubs, clubs, hotels and takeaway venues, program participants receive a kit including food waste trackers, action plan templates and other tools and resources to help them reduce food waste in their business.

Delivered online via email, business owners, managers and head chefs can follow the simple three-step program over several weeks. The program will help you:

- 1. Track your food waste** to see where it is really occurring
- 2. Identify and take actions** to prevent waste before it happens
- 3. Measure and share success** with staff and customers

More than 150 Victorian hospitality businesses have already joined the Love Food Hate Waste Business program to start seeing the benefits of reducing food waste.

Sign up at the following link to make food waste your business:
<https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/campaigns/love-food-hate-waste/business>



Targeted support to start-up businesses



Residents of Dandenong and Doveton starting their own small business can receive coaching and support in the LaunchME program from Good Shepherd Microfinance. Developed to help people on low incomes, the coach works with participants to create business and marketing plans to help get their business concept off the ground.

Resident coach, Yvette Hayes, said starting a business is a daunting process so the program provides access to a supportive team, together with education on practical essentials like accounting software to make tax time easier.

"In our 12-month program, we work with participants on all elements from business plans through to sales. Most of us look at a Sunday Market stand and assume a business is just making things, but there's so much more going on and we're here to

help take the confusion out of the process," said Ms Hayes.

Myella Believe and Achieve is a business that has developed through the program. Business owner, Sabrina, is a mum and legally blind with 3 per cent vision. Her business runs programs in schools for young people teaching disability awareness, and she also sells a range of motivational t-shirts. Sabrina said the LaunchME program has been a godsend.

"It is wonderful having a coach/mentor to bounce ideas off and having the communication, support and guidance is extremely helpful," she said.

Participants meet with their business coach for 1.5 hours each fortnight for 12 months. Limited places are currently available.

Please contact Yvette Hayes via email:
yhayes@gsmicrofinance.org.au or
visit launchme.org.au for more details.

SPEE3D steals spotlight on global printing stage

SPEE3D has stolen the spotlight on the 3D-printing global stage, having recently installed machines in Germany, the USA and Australia.

The relatively young, Dandenong-based company is a former grant recipient of Council's Business Grants Program, and its innovative technology and practical application for rapid manufacturing is being lauded at international trade shows.

SPEE3D Co-founder and CEO Byron Kennedy says, "We're the only ones using this technology for parts. Traditional 3D printing is slow but specialised – what we focus on is making metal parts fast and at a very low cost."

The company launched its new WarpSpee3D printer in December 2018, which enables manufacturers to produce parts weighing up to 40kg and measuring up to one metre wide.

"We recently printed some copper rocket nozzles in about seven

"Typically, 3D printers of this size and complexity require up to two weeks to install and set up, however we've had Spee3D machines delivered at 9am and printing parts by lunch time."

hours, whereas the competing NASA technology took 28 days to do a very similar thing," Mr Kennedy reports.

"Typically, 3D printers of this size and complexity require up to two weeks to install and set up, however we've had Spee3D machines delivered at 9am and printing parts by lunch time."

WarpSpee3D compliments the original LightSpee3D model, which is ideal for smaller parts and material development. Both printers can work with copper or aluminium.

The University of Delaware is reportedly using the LightSpee3D model daily. "Primarily they do a lot

of work with the U.S. Department of Defence," says Mr Kennedy.

Swinburne University also recently purchased a LightSpee3D and officially launched it at an industry event in July.

"Interested parties can approach us or Swinburne to use the technology and discover how it can benefit them. It could be individuals through to defence contractors undertaking part development, material testing or corrosion testing."

According to Mr Kennedy, Spee3D has a "roadmap of products coming out" but is currently focussing on expanding the range of materials available with its printers.



From left to right:
Dr. Nick Shevchenko, Byron Kennedy,
Dr. Austin Good, Bruce Colter, Steve Camilleri

Australia's mobro moment impacts all waste disposal in Australia



When China announced a ban on receiving waste from foreign countries as of 1 January 2018, many Councils, recyclers and producers of waste were caught on the hop, but the ever-growing problem of waste disposal was earmarked over 30 years ago.

For example, On 11 July 1987, a barge that traversed United States east coast for almost four months, laden with New York City's trash finally found a home. The 'mobro' was a harbinger of a problem now being seen across Australia – how do we manage our waste effectively?

We must get smarter and more committed to 'end of use value' before things like Take Back Legislation become embedded in our approach to consumption.

It can be argued that much of our problem is in our mindset – we see unwanted goods as 'rubbish' first, 'waste' second, and 'resource' a

long, long third. Flipping that rating prompts a question: what products could we make from this resource?

For over a decade SEBN have been urging our manufacturers to consider the strategic implications of waste streams. Prior to the opening of the LOGIS business park in South Dandenong, we ran a full breakfast workshop discussing the benefits of industrial symbiosis (waste as input sharing between companies). We have run networking sessions looking at waste water, even prompting some manufacturers to look at donating their cleaned, used water during the last major drought, and we have flagged the challenge of rising costs of waste disposal.

But in the long run we need to answer: should we be upgrading the tech that already works for us? Should we be carrying a reusable bottle rather than buying more single use plastic? Is there some other use

that could come of this (unwanted) item? The mantra now is on *Reduce* initial use, *RePurpose* one object into another, *Re-use* the product in another location, or *Recycle* a product at the end of its consumer life.

Now we are looking to the upgraded ASPIRE program that has just been spun off from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), and of which City of Greater Dandenong has been an early member. An online portal, it allows manufacturers (and others) to flag their desire for a waste by-product as a raw input, or to flag a waste product output for others to access. By reducing raw ingredient inputs at one end and the 'to waste' outputs at the other we create win-win-win outcomes.

You can contact SEBN for more details about the ASPIRE portal or go to www.aspiresme.com for further information.



ASPIRE

Rethinking how to reuse our resources

It takes a village to raise a startup

Local entrepreneur, Riz Akhtar, is a participant in the Ignite Greater Dandenong program (funded by LaunchVic) and has an innovative startup in the automotive service sector. Riz is a strong advocate of the program and shared some of his thoughts on his experience to date.

"I'm involved in the startup and entrepreneurship space. In the south east we have so much talent, we have hubs popping up like the Ignite program. The best thing is the mentorship - to help founders with ideas, solving real problems and taking them to the next level. I've been in the ecosystem for about four plus years and I haven't come across many programs that offer that," said Mr Akhtar.

An engineer by trade, Riz started his business journey by thinking

'there has to be an easier way, there has to be a better way'. From that, he started to develop an idea that would revolutionise the automotive sector. Riz has used the program to develop his business and ensure all facets are covered – including financials, promotion, attracting investors and customers and future-proofing his product.

"Now the community exists and you have that support that didn't exist a couple of years ago. If you're thinking about checking out the Ignite program, really get involved with the community because it takes a village to raise a startup," he said.

SEBN is always looking for business speakers for our masterclasses and mentoring. If you would like to be involved, contact the team at ignitegreaterdandenong.cgd.vic.gov.au

Building future leaders for the region

Professional development, confidence building and knowledge sharing are the big benefits of SEBN's Developing Young Leaders Network, according to two local professionals.

Human resources manager Rachelle Mechielsen and lawyer Scott Fitzgibbon have been involved with the Network since its 2016 launch and have since progressed to a more senior level within their respective companies.

"The Developing Leaders Network provides a fantastic way for young leaders to develop their skills," says Ms Mechielsen, who works with AL-KO International.

"Young leaders are often isolated within organisations – they might be the only one in their particular field within an SME – so this also provides an opportunity to really open up those peer networks."

With the group meeting monthly at no cost, Ms Mechielsen says a challenge is communicating the Network's value to businesses so they can enable their young leaders to participate.

"The beauty is that each meeting has a different topic focus and expert guest speaker, so it's a very convenient way to access

those types of professionals, and participate in a hands-on workshop environment.

"Scott and I have grown through the process together and benefited from it. If I'm sitting at my desk and have a particular issue, I can pick up the phone and ask for his perspective. We're now looking for that next generation of leaders to come through."

Mr Fitzgibbon, Senior Associate – Commercial for Macpherson Kelley, says, "The Network is an investment in your people. All of the companies sending people to our sessions are motivated in seeing their potential new leaders grow and hopefully accelerate their ascent to a leadership position.

"To have points of reference from around 15 companies around the region is one of the big advantages, I think.

"Another benefit is the quality of the presenters and content. The workshops invite participation in real, practical issues of leadership facing emerging leaders," Mr Fitzgibbon says.

For more information on SEBN and the Developing Young Leaders network, email sandra.george@cgd.vic.gov.au



Interested in capability development and sharing learnings with your peers?

If so, then get involved with SEBN – from CEO to Production with activities for all.

Specific networks that meet regularly to enhance and embed learnings include:

- Manufacturing Leadership (targeting CEO/Senior Management)
- Manufacturing 'Xcellents' (targeting production managers / shop floor)
- SEQN (South East Quality & CI Network)
- Workplace Health & Safety
- Developing Young Leaders
- SE Women in Business
- CEO Series (quarterly)
- CEO Mentoring (quarterly)

All enquiries to sebn@cgd.vic.gov.au or SEBN Manager sandra.george@cgd.vic.gov.au

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Work Local Greater Dandenong

Events calendar 2019

	CITY OF GREATER DANDENONG RUN BUSINESS EVENTS	EXTERNALLY RUN BUSINESS EVENTS
SEPTEMBER	<p>2 September Understanding Superannuation</p> <p>26 September Part 1: Introduction to Energy Management</p>	<p>25 September Business Breakfast: Samuel Johnson Pakenham, Casey-Cardinia Business</p> <p>4 September Single Touch Payroll – introduction City of Kingston</p> <p>17 September Marketing your business City of Kingston</p>
OCTOBER	<p>7 October Part 2: Building a Business Case (for energy efficiency)</p> <p>9 October Worksafe Business Breakfast</p> <p>23 October Young Workers Breakfast</p> <p>22 – 25 October Small Business Bus visits Greater Dandenong</p> <p>29 October Cash Flow Improvements</p>	<p>OCTOBER IS WORK SAFETY MONTH</p>  <p>22 October Victorian Manufacturing Showcase 2019 (VMS2019) Industry Capability Network Wantirna South</p>
NOVEMBER	<p>13 November Start me, Grow Me</p> <p>29 November Intellectual Property and International Brand Protection</p>	<p>12 + 13 November Small Business Bus visiting Casey-Cardinia region</p>

Please refer to the respective websites for full details

Greater Dandenong Business events - greaterdandenong.com/businessworkshops

Library events – Phone 1300 630 920

External run events - please visit the respective Council website.

Small Business Bus visiting Greater Dandenong this October

Operated by Small Business Victoria, the Small Business Bus visits Melbourne and regional Victoria as a 'travelling office on wheels'.

This service offers friendly, professional assistance and expert advice from an experienced business mentor from the Small Business Mentoring Service.

Tour dates

Tuesday 22 October
Parkmore Shopping Centre,
Keysborough

Wednesday 23 October
Harmony Square, Dandenong
(Corner of Lonsdale and Walker Street)

Thursday 24 October
Buckingham Avenue, Springvale
(near Multicultural Place)

Friday 25 October
Dandenong Market carpark,
Dandenong



A Cracker of a company now Manufacturing in Dandenong

Dandenong South is the new home of Fine Food Holdings (FFH), a division of Gourmet Food, after an investment of over \$10 million in new manufacturing facilities.

The custom-designed operation more than doubles its previous Keysborough capacity with FFH - believing it will be able to manufacture the largest range of premium crackers products under one roof globally.

Gourmet Food's journey as the 'entertaining' specialists

Following the success of MaxFoods and its Ocean Blue seafood brand – an importing food business launched in 2009 – the business owners identified an opportunity to diversify from 'seafood entertaining' to the 'entertaining deli cracker' market.

FFH's production began in Keysborough in early 2015. From the outset, FFH sought to manufacture not only the most appealing, quality deli crackers, but also ones that lead

through innovation and creativity according to CEO, Todd Wilson.

"Already, Fine Food Holdings is acknowledged as a deli market leader in premium crackers within Australia and New Zealand," says Mr Wilson.

FFH also gained recognition as Top Ranked Supplier 2018 in the Australian Grocery Deli Category of the Advantage Report, a "360-degree survey" that sets the supplier performance benchmark across the retail sector.

Set for success

Mr Wilson attributes the company's success to a strong focus on building retail partnerships and understanding the demands of consumers.

"The premium OB Finest ranges are certainly an Australian favourite. They embrace various cracker styles from wafer crackers to specialty crackers such as Cranberry & Pumpkin Seed and Fig & Almond.

"Recently we launched OB Finest Parmesan Crisps and 3 Seed Crisps

and have additional delicious innovations planned for release by October.

"As an Australian food manufacturer, we are proud of our achievements and excited about how the larger capacity and creative flexibility of our new premises will enable us to take our future plans to greater heights globally," explains Mr Wilson.

The move to Dandenong South from Keysborough enabled easy relocation for all employees.

"As new product development plans are implemented and new markets are tapped, we will be in a better position to continue to grow our current 250-strong workforce.

"While Australian and New Zealand markets continue to grow, we already have export commitments from retailers in the USA, United Kingdom, Chile, Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Singapore and South Korea, with other counties on the horizon," explains Mr Wilson.

Transforming Springvale Road into a Boulevard

The Springvale Boulevard Project will transform Springvale Road into a signature boulevard, reinforcing the shopping district as one of Melbourne's leading cultural destinations.

Council conducted extensive community consultation to gain ideas for Springvale Road's future. From the input of over 1,000 participants, a design proposal for Springvale Boulevard has been developed which reflects the community's aspirations.

Improvements include widened footpaths for pedestrians and trader activities, new garden beds, more trees, more seating, improved street lighting and new public artwork.



Once a contractor is appointed, construction is expected to commence in 2020. When construction dates are set, the Springvale community will be provided regular project updates

on Council's website and by direct engagement with affected traders.

For further information visit <http://www.greaterdandenong.com/aboutspringvaleblvd>

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CONTACT

Greater Dandenong Business
Dandenong Civic Centre
225 Lonsdale Street
Dandenong, Victoria 3175
Ph: 8571 1550
www.greaterdandenong.com
business@cgd.vic.gov.au

Catherine Cunningham
Talking Business Editorial
Ph: 8571 1455
business@cgd.vic.gov.au

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