

The 2007 Business Excellence Awards

Wednesday 7th November saw the Town Hall packed for the gala dinner and the presentation of the Awards for 2007.

Leo Austin, Chairman of major sponsor **Business Hutt Valley Limited**, said that the forty entries were of a very high standard, confirming his board's decision to get the event back into the business programme for the year.

The Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards were proudly sponsored by:



EVENTS AND FACILITIES AWARD

The Events and Facilities category is to recognise those businesses that add a special dimension to living in or visiting the Hutt.

Despite the diversity of the finalists they have all become known in their different ways for their contribution to the community. The one thing they all showed in common was their commitment to being the best.

The finalists in the Events and Facilities Category were:

- La Bella Italia
- Te Omanga Hospice
- TheNewDowse

And the winner was:

La Bella Italia

La Bella Italia aims to be the “authentic Italian experience” from the moment the customer walks through the door.

La Bella Italia has all things Italian. It is known throughout the region as the place to go to shop for Italian, from olive oil and limoncello to salami and cheese and pasta. Founder **Antonio Cacace** likes to treat his customers as family and spends time to talk to them and make them feel at home.

La Bella Italia is continually innovating. Antonio offers personally-guided tours to his home region in Italy and has recently introduced demonstration dinners where customers can learn how to cook the authentic Italian way.

The creative flair shown in establishing and growing this business has made it a destination that is sought out by both locals and visitors.

GIBSON SHEAT EXPORTER AWARD

Exports are often described as the “life blood” of the New Zealand economy and the Hutt Valley is home to many exciting and innovative companies. Selling a product into overseas markets requires skill and dedication and it is not for the faint hearted. In this category, the judges were looking for those extra success factors such as extensive knowledge of target markets and a commitment to productivity improvements, combined with a very clear vision of where the company was going.

The finalists in this category were:

- Hakes Marine
- Robinson Seismic
- Tritec Manufacturing

And the winner was:

Tritec Manufacturing

Founded in 1998, Tritec Manufacturing Limited has developed from a contract manufacturer into a design and marketing-led business with a commitment to maintaining manufacturing capacity in New Zealand.

The company’s success has been built on its world-leading product “Mountain Buggy”. With global distribution including significant sales in USA, Europe, Scandinavia, United Kingdom and Australia, Mountain Buggy enjoys a reputation for quality, strength, reliability and safety. Despite this outstanding international success, Tritec is not a one-product company. Their other products include commercial furniture, van seating and theatre/auditorium seating, much of which is also exported.

HUTT CITY COUNCIL INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AWARD

ICT covers a very wide range of activity and is an essential part of most businesses today. The entrants in this category are companies that are providing ICT solutions ranging from software to infrastructure and doing it with an entrepreneurial flair.

Given the wide range of products and services, the judges were looking for great products, an on-going commitment to research and development and staffing policies that helped them to find and keep good people in an industry where the best staff can be hard to get.

The finalists in the ICT category were:

- Eyede
- iServe
- Smartlinx3

And the winner was:

EYEDE

Eyede is an innovative technology company that which has gained national and international recognition through the strength of its technical capabilities and the development of unique information management applications.

The company has extensive experience in database management, identity credentials and plastic card solutions. They are truly a entrepreneurial company which is growing rapidly and unlocking the enormous potential they have identified.

While achieving this growth, Eyede has developed and enhanced capabilities to ensure that it can continue its successful journey.

MANUFACTURING AWARD

The Hutt Valley has a reputation as a strong manufacturing base and home to many well-known companies. The companies that are doing well show a commitment to productivity improvement, staff development and research and development. As well as looking for these qualities, the judges were also looking for that extra flair that made a good business into an outstanding business. The finalists in the manufacturing category were:

- Baseline
- Silbery Longrun
- Stansborough Fibres

And the winner was:

Stansborough Fibres Limited

Stansborough Fibres not only create beautiful textiles, they also grow, monitor, design and weave their wool from sheep to shop.

Their range of fabrics covers fashion, film costumes, exclusive interior and boutique lodge collections, men's and women's accessories and baby wear. Their products are beautiful, creative, warm and practical, any they are 100% New Zealand made.

Stansborough has developed niche export markets around the world and has recently expanded its production spaces to meet the ever-increasing demand for its products. The recent addition of "The Stansborough Experience" has added a new dimension, unique in New Zealand, giving visitors a taste of history that covers the story of family pride and pioneering heritage.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AWARD

The Professional Services category is for all those businesses which provide services to improve our day-to-day lives and to enhance other businesses. The Category is wide and the entries were diverse but the judges found high standards and excellent business practices in many of them.

The finalists in this category were:

- Datamail
- Masterpet
- The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand

And the winner was:

Datamail

Datamail is part of the New Zealand Post Group and operated predominantly in the Business Process Outsourcing market. Their Petone base is one of six sites in New Zealand and the company has the scale to manage the largest print and mail jobs in the country.

A business with a strong community focus, a passion for innovation and best practice processes, Datamail has seen significant growth in business and staff numbers over the last twelve months.

A particular feature of this entry was the company's commitment to sustainable business practices, which has seen its waste to landfill reduced by 80%.

It demonstrates a strong ethos of staff engagement through regular surveying of the people in the organisation and there is a formal leadership training programme with recognition of potential for future development of people across the organisation.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SMALL BUSINESS AWARD

This was, in some ways, the most difficult category to judge. A small business was defined as having fewer than 10 full-time equivalent staff and this meant that any type of businesses was eligible to enter. This diversity is reflected in the four finalists - two restaurants, a pharmacy and a recruitment company.

Despite this, the judges were able to identify success factors that were common to all the finalists -

- A clear vision of where the business is going and how it is going to get there
 - A commitment to employing good staff and training them well
- Constant creativity and seeking for new products and new opportunities

The finalists in the Small Business Category were:

- Buzz Restaurant
- Clive's Unichem
- Key Skills Recruitment
- Mange-Tout Restaurant

And the winner was:

Buzz Restaurant

Buzz is more than just a cafe or a restaurant. It has grown beyond being just a food place to a venue of choice and a place of local entertainment.

The Buzz Concept is the evolving business concept which gives Buzz its clear definition and sets it apart from the other food outlets. The owners, Michael and Hilary Gray have an on-going passion and commitment to Positively Outrageous Service which is seen in all the components of the Buzz Concept

- Buzz Cafe
- Buzz Restaurant
- Buzz Juices
- Buzz Gallery
- Buzz Comedy Club and Buzz Jazz Club
- Buzz Theme Dinners

In the end, there was very little to separate the four finalists but the judges felt that Buzz Restaurant's track record in meeting increasing competition and creating new experiences for its customers gave it the edge.

BUSINESS HUTT VALLEY SUPREME AWARD

The winner was **Buzz Restaurant**

Judges comments:

The focus of these awards was business excellence, which was been measured by each business's commitment to:

- Creating a unique position in the market place
 - Fostering innovation and creativity
- Developing its staff to their full potential, and
 - Working towards a sustainable future.

All the finalists scored well on these criteria and, in many cases it was hard to choose between them.

However, even against this strong competition, **Buzz Restaurant** stood out for its continuing innovation, its flair and creativity and its success in a strongly competitive environment. Michael and Hilary Gray are to be congratulated on "the Buzz Concept" and the way that they have used it to make "Buzz" such a success and such a valuable addition to the Hutt City's many attractions."