



BUSTER BULLETIN for Businesses

Inside this Issue

- On a roll again!
- Story Requests
- Innovative Advertising
- Staff Recruitment
- Business Grants on offer
- Tenders Available

Specialists in:

Government and Philanthropic
Funding

Tender Writing Services

Government and Private Sector
Liaison

Town Planning and Land
Resumption Advice

Business Support Services

Sponsorship Proposal and Event
Management

Shane Bowering - Director
PO Box 3126
WARNER QLD 4500
Phone: 07 3882 2055
Mobile: 0402 210 664

www.redtapebusters.com

admin@redtapebusters.com.au

On a roll once again!

We are on a roll now after our website drama. Our search engine rankings are back where they should be and we are again swamped with requests for assistance.

Thanks to your patience and interest, we have received heaps of new requests for people and organisations wanting to be added to our newsletter database. Please don't forget to spread the word to your friends and colleagues.

The newsletter is free each month – with no obligation.

We have many people in the database who don't use our services and equally we have many who do. That is entirely your call. We just have the runs on the board and believe that we have the skills and experience so that we can prepare better applications, submissions or tenders than you or your staff can prepare.

We also have a strong history in assisting businesses look internally then externally to improve their bottom line.

We really are now extremely busy in assisting businesses review their policies, procedures, markets and products and coming up with workable plans to increase their clientele.

We have been operating now for almost 13 years. I started this business from scratch without one client and with only a computer, printer, fax and telephone. I required no capital injection to get the business off the ground and yet I have now grown this business into a venture with clients all over Australia, so I think I have something to offer businesses and give them tips on how to increase market share without breaking the bank.

This is not an arrogant claim but reality – this is our world – this is our livelihood and this is what we enjoy doing and what we are very very good at.

When it comes to tenders most businesses fall into a few traps unfortunately. The first error is that the vast majority of businesses simply don't think about chasing Government, Council or commercial tenders. They believe they have no chance of success and in fact most have no idea how many tenders are out there that probably fit their business to a T.

We work for lots of small businesses including electricians, landscapers, builders, security companies who had never ever won a tender before contacting us. We have worked with these businesses to help develop the required policies and procedures and then to find the tenders and prepare the tender documents to assist them win lucrative tenders which have helped them stabilise and then expand their business.

The second flawed argument is that some businesses believe that hiring a professional tender writer is not cost effective. Agreed... there is **some** risk in hiring any tender writer including us. There are NO guarantees of success. There can't be, we have a couple of examples where we have prepared the best tender responses, our client had the experience and a competitive price yet no banana! Government/Councils and commercial entities can award tenders as they see fit. That unfortunately happens.

Similarly though we have had many clients with average business acumen that on balance, really are no chance of success yet with our expertise, some tweaking of the business, drafting of great documents – the business comes to life – the tender response shines and low and behold success – contracts are awarded!

We firmly believe that our skill and expertise will give your business and tender a far better chance of success. Our success lies in the fact that we think like a grant/tender assessor and therefore we prepare our responses with that as our overriding consideration. Now obviously some of you now are thinking 'OK, we will now think like an assessor!'

It is not that simple.

Most of my Consultants have actually worked in the public sector, understand the inner workings of Government and Councils and therefore have an inside knowledge of how to assess tenders and/or grants and what to look for. You really have to understand how the public sector works and how public servants think to be able to prepare responses and submissions that tick all the boxes they are looking for – not just some of the boxes. Yes, we have to represent our client's business obviously but at the end of the day Government/Councils don't really give a damn about your business – sad but true.

They don't really care if you survive or if you think your business is great, they care only about what outcomes you will achieve if they award the contract, if you will do a high quality job and is your price highly competitive offering great value for money. We write our tenders in a way that we consider, as an assessor of the tenders, what we would want to read about to convince us to give you the contract. So while as a professional business we need to charge our clients for the service we provide, wouldn't you rather pay us the reasonable fee we charge to give your business the very best chance of success rather than wasting your time and effort in being disappointed when your tenders fail over and over again?

Some examples of our most recent successful tenders include:-

- Powered Light and Electrical - Moreton Bay City Council - Panel of Services - Electrical Services,
- Waminda Services – Disability Employment Services Tender, and
- GF Property Maintenance - Lawnmowing and maintenance of various Queensland Government sites and local Council land.

So whilst hiring skilled tender writers costs a few dollars, wouldn't you rather pay someone who will give your business a better chance of accessing these lucrative tenders than waste your precious time and effort just to fail?

In my business I hire experts to do things that I either can't do or it is not cost effective for me to do, allowing me the time and flexibility to effectively manage and run the business. Similarly people in business should be focussed on the effective running of the entity and providing quality services to clients, because that is what you are good at doing. Trying to learn how to write funding submissions or tenders is not something that people can easily turn their hand to and be a success. Food for thought?

Story Requests

This month we received a heap of requests for different stories from our readers. We can't address all the requests this month but over the coming months we will try and highlight one reader's request each month. We will also try to give some focus to different grant and tender opportunities in each state. We always try to give our readers each month an insight into grants and tenders available across Australia.

Thank you very much to our readers who pose questions and suggestions. We will try and answer them all – please don't forget though – we are a business – we need to earn a dollar to put food on the table so we can't respond in detail to every query or else I would spend my time just responding to readers and not running the business. But we will try and cover as many issues as possible in our newsletters.

We really appreciate your input.

More tips for recruiting staff

If your organisation offers excellent remuneration and benefits, make sure you highlight these in your advertising for applicants and in the interviews. It is vital that prospective staff realise you pay well and this hopefully will encourage quality applicants to apply. However, if your organisation pays poorly and doesn't offer great benefits, I would still include some details in the advertising material but I wouldn't highlight it as something that is important. Instead, I would focus on other positive

attributes like the quality of the product and or service you offer, the culture of your organisation, location, (close to public transport), possibility of promotion, etc... There are other ways to skin a cat and you need to be really highlighting those aspects of the role and organisation that will give you the best chance of securing a quality applicant.

If you need assistance in developing a cost effective recruitment campaign or need a mentor to help improve your business please let me know. I will be keen to add you to our growing stable of businesses that I assist on an ongoing basis.

Innovative Advertising Tip

Advertising I believe is a sure fire way to waste money.

Most businesses believe that you have to pay for advertising in the local print, radio or TV mediums to attract clients. Unless you have very comprehensive measurement strategies in place, how do you know if this paid advertising actually returned more income to you than it cost for the advertisement?

I firmly believe that paid advertising like this especially for small businesses is just a waste of money. Others might have a different view but I advertised once in 2000 and have never ever advertised again and yet I have a business now providing services to clients all over Australia. I am not an entrepreneur nor is my business now some huge corporate monolith. I am still a small business based in Brisbane and yet we now have clients in every state of Australia and a great viable business. I have tried to follow some very basic principles in "advertising" our business.

I went to a business workshop many years ago and I remember them telling me that a client has to have seen your business name or heard about your business on average 6 to 7 times before they will feel comfortable to buy from you or use your services. That advice has stuck with me till this day. I have no idea if research has ever validated this but it has been foremost in my mind when implementing my marketing strategy.

If this advice is correct that it takes a client even 6 times to see/hear your business name before they will 'purchase' from you. If you are advertising in say the local paper that would mean you will have to pay for that ad at least 6 times before one sale. That is in the hope that the potential client sees that ad every week or every time you place it.

Isn't a far more cost effective way of getting your business name out to the local community be to plaster your vehicle with your business name – details about what you do and your contact number?

I now have three subtle but high profile 'ads' on my car. Across the top of the windscreen I have our business name. On the back window I have what is called a one way view – basically a see through screen fitted to the outside which has our business name a list of our primary services and our website. The screen is legal, it is colourful and it essentially 'hits' all drivers of vehicles behind me right in the face given it is at eye level. Then on the back bumper I again have our business name and telephone number. Again prominent yet subtle! These 'ads' cost me \$295.00 and wherever I drive people see the car, see the business name and in time I am sure they will jump on our website or give me a call.

That is all I want, if I can get them to the website or to call me I believe we will get a 'sale' 9 times out of 10. The ads on the car are just one of my strategies, we have a raft of ways we try and get our name out there without paying for advertising.

So instead of wasting money on ads, why not think about how you can get to your target market cost effectively without paying for ridiculously priced ads. Your car and cars belonging to family and friends are all mobile 'billboards.' With a neat, professional, eye catching concept on the vehicles you can reap the rewards of advertising across a wide demographic at minimal cost.

I am not saying don't pay for advertising, I am just saying think carefully and try and identify other ways to market your business. There are heaps of strategies out there that cost very little.

If you need assistance in developing a cost effective marketing strategy or need a mentor to help improve your business please let me know. I will be keen to add you to our growing stable of businesses that I assist on an ongoing basis.

Available Business Grants

Proof of Concept Fund - Queensland

The Proof of Concept Fund offers financial assistance to Queensland-based organisations that can demonstrate an innovation (technology, product or process) with the potential for commercial viability.

One of the biggest challenges for business innovators is getting funding to progress their ideas from the concept stage to production. The Proof of Concept Fund can help prove your concept will work and attract commercial allies, such as industry collaborators and investors.

Your business could be eligible for funding between \$30,000-\$75,000 (excluding GST). The fund can be used for up to 50% of your total (eligible) project costs over 12 months. Applications are currently closed but they it is anticipated this program will open again in 2013.

There are many ways to provide proof of your concept. It can be in the form of:

- production, testing and technical documentation of sophisticated models and early stage prototypes (physical proof)
- external confirmation of a technology, product or process (technical validation)
- activities that clearly articulate an innovation (technology, product or process) to external parties (what it is, what its benefits are, how it can be commercialised in the marketplace)
- activities that demonstrate the innovation's value to potential commercial allies.

TechVouchers - NSW

TechVouchers provides opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to create research collaborations with public sector research organisations to help their business become more innovative and competitive.

TechVouchers benefits both industry and the public research sector by assisting SMEs with seed funding of up to \$15,000 to help them engage with the NSW public, research community needs and access research equipment and technical expertise.

To apply for a TechVoucher, businesses need to propose a project which will significantly benefit from a partnership with a research organisation - whether it is for further research, clinical trials or access to scientific equipment to support product development.

Businesses across NSW are encouraged to consider how their products and services might be improved through partnering with a research organisation. In particular, businesses that have not previously worked with universities or researchers, and businesses located in regional NSW are encouraged to apply.

The Innovation Voucher Program is a new initiative of the Victorian Government that supports businesses wanting to explore ways of improving their competitiveness and productivity. It provides responsive and nimble funding to help companies access the know-how needed to innovate. The program includes two vouchers: the Business Research and Development (R&D) Voucher and the Innovation Skills Voucher.

Innovation Voucher Program - Victoria

The Innovation Voucher Program helps companies by providing a voucher that is exchanged for access to facilities, training, goods, services, advice or expertise provided by other companies or publicly funded research organisations (e.g. universities, CSIRO, research institutes). By supporting greater business innovation, the Innovation Voucher Program aims to facilitate improved performance (particularly with respect to productivity) and growth of businesses.

The program supports businesses at various stages of their product or development life cycle, and encourage and stimulates further business collaboration and research partnerships. The program is primarily targeted at small and medium sized businesses.

Businesses can apply for a maximum of \$25,000 under the Business R&D Voucher. This voucher can be used by businesses to start doing R&D and/or do more in Victoria.

Businesses or publicly funded research organisations can apply for a maximum of \$10,000 under the Innovation Skills Voucher. This voucher can be used by Victorian businesses to develop innovation-relevant skills, OR by Victorian publicly funded research organisations to improve their capability and capacity to engage with companies.

All Victorian small to medium businesses (1-199 employees) are eligible for one Business R&D Voucher and one Innovation Skills Voucher. Non-Victorian small to medium businesses (1-199 employees) are eligible for one Business R&D Voucher, but must undertake projects in Victorian with a local R&D supplier.

Vouchers can be applied for at any time.

CleverGreen™ Eco-Innovation program - South Australia

The CleverGreen™ Eco-Innovation program helps companies develop innovative solutions that promote resource efficiency and re-use to facilitate the 'greening' of South Australia's manufacturing industry.

The objective of the CleverGreen™ Eco-Innovation program is to improve the economic performance of South Australian manufacturers; while minimising environmental impacts and leading the way in sustainable manufacturing.

The program will be delivered until 30 June 2013 and many projects are already underway.

The program aims to:

- bring manufacturing and other businesses together to identify opportunities to collaborate on resource efficiency and waste recovery projects, as well as new business opportunities
- establish a source of technical advice and an industry resource base to assist firms to improve resource efficiency and re-use
- fund innovative infrastructure and technology solutions that demonstrate best-practice, collaborative resource efficiency and waste recovery practices in the manufacturing industry.

The following grants are now available:

- Eco-Innovation Feasibility Study Grant (EIFSG) – a fully funded grant is available for feasibility studies or business case development, which will identify and quantify the costs and benefits of implementing various resource efficiency or waste minimisation projects.
- Eco-Innovation Infrastructure Grant (EIIG) - a dollar for dollar co-contribution grant is available up to a limit of \$350,000 (excluding GST) for pilot, infrastructure or technology demonstration based projects.

Projects eligible under this program are:-

- funding of pilot projects and infrastructure projects (where the benefits do not accrue exclusively to one business)
- technology demonstration projects.

City of Perth Small Business Grants - Western Australia

Designed to support creative start-up businesses and innovative small business projects with up to \$2000 funding, the City of Perth Small Business Grants are available to all city-based entrepreneurs and small businesses looking at undertaking unique or innovative projects, that provide a clear economic benefit to the city.

Applications will be accepted from Friday 1 July 2012 and will remain open until all funds have been allocated. Limited funding is available and applications will be considered on a first come, first served basis.

Renewable Energy Loan Scheme – Tasmania

The Renewable Energy Loan Scheme (RELS) will assist eligible businesses to purchase and install renewable energy generation facilities or manufacture renewable energy technology.

The loan scheme includes low-interest loans under the \$30 million Renewable Energy Loan Fund to assist with the commercial viability of eligible projects.

Applications will be assessed on a competitive basis and approval of loans may depend on the availability of funds. The scheme will be open until 30 June 2014 and subject to an annual review.

Proof of Technology Grants - ACT

Proof of Technology Grants support the development of:

- prototypes that prove a concept; or
- a technology plan or business case study that demonstrates whether a concept is commercially viable.

Proof of Technology Grants range from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

ecoBiz - Northern Territory

ecoBiz NT is an environmental partnership program that helps Territory businesses adopt resource-efficient practices that are good for the financial bottom line as well as for the environment. This program is aimed at small to medium local enterprises who are in search of ways to improve how they do business while receiving cost savings and improving their environmental efficiency. A range of easy-to-use tools and guides are available for ecoBiz NT participants to help their business invest, compete and profit from sustainability. Eco-efficient business changes or practices can sound like a daunting task. However

improvements can be as simple as switching to energy efficient light bulbs, upgrading air conditioning systems, reducing waste and improving productivity methods.

By addressing energy, water use, materials management and consumption with your ecoBiz NT officer, costs and waste can be reduced almost immediately. Eco-efficiency savings directly increase profits. \$1,000 of savings equates to \$20,000 in sales annually (with a 5% margin). Additionally, the Power and Water Corporation is providing a once off deduction of \$100 to participating businesses.

Participating businesses may also become eligible for significant ecoBiz NT grants to assist in implementing eco-efficiency initiatives. Grants are available to eligible businesses and projects that clearly demonstrate the benefits of conserving, reusing and recycling energy, water and materials. Grants of up to \$20,000 (on a dollar for dollar basis) are available to assist eligible businesses with eco-efficiency improvements.

Available Tenders

Following are some examples of tenders which are available across Australia right now:-

Business Opportunity	Location	Closing Date
Warrego Highway Asphalt Overlay	Queensland	10 December 2012
Pedestrian Bridge over Wolli Creek, Turrella	New South Wales	11 December 2012
Cleaning Services	New South Wales (Northern Region)	11 December 2012
Provision of vehicle washdown services	Central Queensland	5 December 2012
Graffiti Removal from Council Sites	Victoria	13 December 2012
Cleaning Services for BBQs and Public Toilets	Victoria	12 December 2012
Landscaping and Facility Maintenance Contract	New South Wales (Western Sydney)	18 December 2012
Security System Asset Renewal	New South Wales	12 December 2012
Provision of CCTV and Security Systems Maintenance Services	Victoria	12 December 2012
Council Security Services	New South Wales	4 December 2012
Security and Customer Service Assistance Services at the Rockhampton Airport	Queensland	5 December 2012
End User Computing Hardware	New South Wales	21December 2012

Winning a tender is a sure fire way of increasing your business turnover and most have a guaranteed income attached to the contract.

At any time there are thousands of tenders on offer - could there be one that is a perfect fit for your business?

Red Tape Busters

admin@redtapebusters.com.au

www.redtapebusters.com