



AUSTRALIA'S
SYMBOL OF
QUALITY
SERVICE

AussieHost Gazette

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Aussie's Host Kiwi at National Conference

The first National conference of Trainers and Providers was held at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre on 21 & 22 February 2008.

Conference organizer and QTIC Business Development Manager Kim Harrington said, "It was a successful and constructive meeting of the minds that set the platform for working together on a national level."

A lot of networking was conducted between delegates sharing their experiences and offering tips and advice for newcomers to the program.

Delegates were introduced to the new AussieHost management committee of Kim Harrington and Neoni Payne of QTIC and Garry Terrill and Caroline Mews of the Australian Retailers Association.

AussieHost National Lead Trainer, Penny Delfs also addressed the conference to emphasise the requirement of trainers to facilitate rather than teach



KiwiHost General Manager, Simon Nikoloff providing delegates with an outline of the KiwiHost journey.

workshop participants.

However, the keynote speaker for the event, General Manager of sister program KiwiHost, Simon Nikoloff enthralled the audience with his accounts of the transition of KiwiHost. Our New Zealand counterparts have continued with their successful program to evolve to a

franchise structure with a suite of customer service and business management training programs including "Professional Telephone Skills".

Simon emphasised the need to get to know your customer as AussieHost providers, saying, "It is important to focus on the local aspect and know your market, as well as realising that you are the sole provider in the majority of cases especially in regional areas."

Penny Delfs from Core Semantics shared some practical tips on the art of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) and how to use this skill when facilitating workshops.

Mark Jones from TRAC Consulting Sunshine Coast spoke on his experience with setting up a steering committee to generate whole of region support for the improvement of customer service and participation in the program.

The conference was a success that allowed trainers from across the nation to meet and share experiences. For a copy of the conference presentations please go to www.qtic.com.au/aussiehost.



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Networking, networking, networking...

Delegates travelled from Western Australia, Northern Territory, Victoria, New South Wales and all parts of Queensland to participate in the first conference held since the revitalization of the AussieHost program.

David Mallory from Biztelligence in Western Australia said, "It was great to talk to other people and to listen to what they were doing or plan to do with the



Sharing Stories and Getting to Know You session at the conference

program. I think that the National Conference was imperative in providing a focal point from which people could move into the future and as was quite rightly pointed out, we are in a rebirth of AussieHost almost to the point of it being a new program and that also makes it exciting."

All participants expressed their interest in developing a regular communication system to remain in contact with each other until the next conference in 2009.

Who will be the first AussieHost Town?



Penny Delfs chatting to Debra Murphy-Bell at the conference.

The race is on to be the first AussieHost Town in Australia under the new revitalized AussieHost program.

Penny Delfs, from Redland Shire in Qld, says she has the full support of their new Mayor to ensure they reach the post first.

Whereas, Mark Jones on the Sunshine Coast says that his committee is striving to reach this accolade first.

AussieHost Towns require 60% of their businesses to be

Bronze AussieHost Businesses or above.

Surely there will be other towns across Australia who would be keen to take up the challenge.

Remember you don't have to be a full town, there are street, shopping centre, island, schools, association and other similar accolades that you can use to promote your business group.

We would love to hear

from Trainers and Providers who would like to participate in the race to be the first AussieHost Town under the new logo.

The challenge is out there and the race is on!

To send information about your goals and achievements please email Neoni Payne, AussieHost Administration Officer at aussiehost@qtic.com.au.

Let's start a friendly competitive media frenzy.

Nine Things to Remember while Replying to your Customers' Email

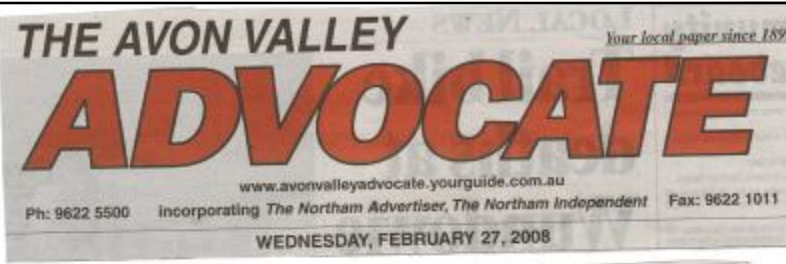
- 1.If the customer has provided their name, use it in your reply. A first name is preferable.
- 2.Thank them. It's the best way to let them know that you are willing to help them and they are not a trouble for you. For the ending, use something like: "I hope you had a good day."
- 3.Treat them as you want yourself be treated. You have expectations when you send in your own requests. Just keep those points in mind.
- 4.What's the easiest way to make it friendly? Do it as if you are sending an email to your friend (just don't make it extra casual).
- 5.Can you make it a little more simple? That helps a lot. Customers would love your replies if you can make them a little more simple. ...Usually customers complain that techs are too "technical", just put it in simple words that they know what they are doing wrong and how to correct the issue."
- 6.Are you using a Quick Reply or Email template? Always edit them by adding something personal (customer/issue specific) and remove the unnecessary parts.
- 7.Before you send the reply, read it once as the customer would do. This is another quick tip that will make your reply more simple and easy to understand.
- 8.Are you forwarding or assigning a client's email to another department or person? Let them know why. It's always good to keep them informed.
- 9.Is there a delay in answering your customers' email? Apologise and let them know that its taking a little longer for you to process their request. If you can finish the work in one or two hours, simply give them an update and keep them informed about what you are doing. Let them feel that you are trying your best for them.



Our latest trainers from Townsville Hospital, Sunferries, Reef HQ and Gladstone Training completing their workshop in Townsville with Penny Delfs

By Dinsan Francis
 Source: Customer Service Manager CSM E-Magazine
<http://www.customerservicemanager.com>.

Workshop Snippets from around Australia



Improving customer service with Aussie Host

THE Small Business Centre Wheatbelt West recently held a customer service workshop Aussie Host course to improve the skills of staff at local businesses. The course was run by private training provider David Mallory of the Small Business Centre.

The four participants from local businesses Heather Mielkem from Windward Balloon Adventures, Bev Hodges owner of the Northam Caravan Park, Lauren Willing employee at Bob Davey Real Estate and Craig Birnie from Northam Furnace & Bedding, have felt the benefits of taking the course.

"It teaches common sense but allows the ability to put it into words and how to handle difficult situations," Heather said.

"The course improved my general knowledge and helped me put the skills into practise," Lauren said.

The courses are held on a needs basis and anyone interested for himself or herself or employees can contact the Small Business Centre on 9622 5730.

Aussie Host is a step in improving the customer service within the Avon Valley to encourage people to return.

The course has been running since 1994 and is modelled on similar programs run in New Zealand and Canada.

It is nationally accredited and training provider David is a well-respected instructor.

David has been invited as a guest speaker to the Aussie Host National Conference in Queensland.

Aussie Hosts (l. to r.): Heather Mielkem, Bev Hodges, David Mallory (private training provider), Lauren Willing, Craig Butterson and Mike Jose the executive officer of the Small Business Centre at the certificate presentation for the completion of the Customer Service Workshop Aussie Host.

From David Mallory of Biztelligence, Western Australia

Send your pics and news clippings to aussiehost@qtic.com.au for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Becoming good AussieHosts

At last Tuesday's Discovery Coast Tourism & Commerce meeting held in Sandcastles Conference Room, a large group of members and visitors gathered to discover how we can improve customer service in our area.

The meeting began with a drink and some delicious nibbles from Iteam Cafe. With everyone relaxed, the meeting began with the rollout of the AussieHost program.

Kim Harrington from the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) explained the history behind the AussieHost program, and the partnership formed by QTIC and the Australia Retail Association (ARA) to re-launch AussieHost last year.

Kim went on to explain how the program can provide training for business owners and their staff to achieve a standardised high quality of customer service.

Kim introduced Cole O'Brien the accredited AussieHost trainer for the region.

Both Kim and Cole then fielded many questions from the group who expressed enthusiasm for the program.

"The AussieHost program offers our area a chance to improve our customer service standard," said Cheryl Wickes, president of DCTC after the meeting.

"Every business needs to get involved."

"If every business owner attended one of the workshops, and then started to roll it out for their staff members, we would see a huge improvement across the board."

"We need to know that every visitor to our area is greeted with the same high quality of customer service in every business they enter, whether it's a restaurant, a tourist activity, buying a loaf of bread or filling their car with petrol."

Better service is better business!

The AussieHost Program represents a collective effort by businesses, communities and individuals to maximise the opportunities and benefits of good service to everyone.

Customer service is constantly being identified as the main drawback to growth for our tourism industry.

AussieHost is a comprehensive program designed to upgrade the standards of service and hospitality provided to a customer in any service environment throughout Australia.

It is a unique communication, customer-relations and service skills workshop being offered to anyone who deals with customers.

AussieHost is a proven training program that has been utilized within the tourism industry nationally since 1994.

The format of the AussieHost training offers a one day workshop delivered by an accredited and industry leading AussieHost facilitator. These inspirational deliveries are aimed at stimulating participants to critically evaluate the standards of service in their business and proactively embrace renewed AussieHost standards that reflect a symbol of quality service.

The content of workshops is both thought provoking and interactive. They are affordable and delivered in just one day.

Participants will be inspired by the experienced AussieHost facilitator using practical exercises and case studies to complement their understanding of excellence in customer service.

National Industry research consistently identifies customer service as a key area of ongoing concern for ensuring business growth and success.

For more information on the AussieHost program and how it can help your business, contact Stephanie Fuller at Gladstone Area Promotion & Development 4972 4000, or call in to the Agnes Water Visitor Information centre and ask for Charmaine.

Above: Article from the Agnes Water Coastal Rag 23 Feb 2008



Above: The Queensland Visitor Information Centre Association (QICA) conducted an AussieHost Workshop to commence their annual conference

The Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE

launched the new Aussie Host program in Townsville on the 19th of February. Held at the Pimlico campus the workshop was supported by a range of organisations within Townsville and the surrounding district. Roslyn from the Balgal Beach Holiday Units was so impressed that she email QTIC saying,

"I am pleased that I attended the AussieHost Workshop in Townsville on Tuesday. It was certainly well worth a day back in the classroom. It was great learning from the experiences and attitudes from Steve the lecturer and also from the knowledge shared by the students (mostly mature aged). I certainly gained a better knowledge of what service customers expect and tips on how to deliver improved customer service to our guests.

I sure will be recommending AussieHost to other businesses."

The Balgal Beach Holiday Units also become a Bronze member of Aussie Host with 50% of the staff having completed the program.

The second workshop is schedule for Thursday 24 April and booking can be made by contacting Steve Smith on (07) 4750 5345 or email Steve.Smith@deta.qld.gov.au .

Do what you do so well they will want to see it again and bring their friends.
Walt Disney

If you make customers unhappy in the physical world, they might each tell 6 friends. If you make customers unhappy on the Internet, they can each tell 6,000 friends.
JEFF BEZOS



Conference Photos:

Left: David Mallory from Biztelligence and Damien Steele from Qld Hotels Association

Right: Anita Plath, Redland Chamber of Commerce

Bottom left: Reg Edwards, TAFE NSW and Stephen Smith, Barrier Reef TAFE

Bottom centre: Former AH Leader June Richards and Carolyn Curnow, Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE at the networking function.

Bottom right: Stephanie Fuller from Gladstone Promotion & Development Board deep in conversation



Conference Photos:

Far Left: Kelly Hourigan from Qld Hotels Assoc with Mark and Jeanette Jones of TRAC Consulting

Left: Claire Davies and Anne McKinnon from Tropical North Queensland TAFE

Sunshine Coast Steering Committee on TRACC

With support from QTIC, Sunshine Coast Regional Council and Caloundra City Enterprises are leading a newly formed steering committee set to lobby local businesses to raise the bar of customer service on the Sunshine Coast.

The first meeting of the committee was held in February with a subsequent meeting on Thursday 27 March which gathered additional support from key businesses and industry organizations such as Sunshine Coast TAFE, Sunshine Coast Area Consultative Committee, Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry, Caloundra Tourism, Caloundra Chamber of Commerce, Business Maroochy, Tourism Noosa, Tourism Sunshine Coast and Eumundi Markets to name a few,

The next steering committee meeting will focus on developing a formal committee structure and a regional implementation strategy.

Mark and Jeanette Jones from TRAC

Consulting, an AussieHost Provider were the instigated of the establishment of a community led steering committee.

Mark Jones said the representatives from these businesses and industry bodies are committed to improving customer service standards for the benefit of both industry and the community.

“Tourism, hospitality and service industries account for 41% of GDP on the Sunshine Coast”, he said, “and there is the opportunity to strengthen these industries through the provision of excellent customer service.”

“Quality service provision will also form part of the region’s destination profile, encouraging visitors to return to the Sunshine Coast for their holidays assured of the best holiday experience every time”, said Mr Jones.

Steering committee members have show exceptional enthusiasm for the AussieHost program and have committed to it’s

successful implementation.

The first priority for the committee is to educate businesses of the importance of customer service through profiling the AussieHost program and seek commitment from all businesses to send staff to scheduled workshops.

Once the majority of Sunshine Coast businesses have the right customer service mentality, the committee will address other business development and training issues across the region.

The development of a steering committee is highly recommended by QTIC and is proving to be a very successful method of generating community understanding and support for improving customer service standards and introducing the AussieHost program.

If you would like information on the Sunshine Coast steering committee or have some questions regarding the process please email Mark Jones mark@tracc.com.au.