

Commerce Ballarat News Bulletin

14 January– 20 January

Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy. - Benjamin Franklin

Welcome New Members

Commerce Ballarat Ambrose Golf Day

Lets Do Business in 2012

Date: 17 Feb 2012

Members: \$15.00pp includes beer and barby

Details: Mercure Ballarat, Main Road Ballarat

Begins at 1.30pm

A great opportunity to develop new relationships and strengthen current ones.

Members and Non-Members: [REGISTER HERE](#)

505 Club

Date: 23 February 2012

Non Members: \$16.50

Members: Free

Details: Finding Futures, 30 Doveton Street North

5.30pm - 7.30pm

An evening of networking and fostering relationships to grow your business.

Members and Non-Members: [REGISTER HERE](#)

Ambrose Golf Day

Midlands Golf Course

Friday 2 March 2012

\$330 (includes Golf, BBQ and drinks on course)

N.B Teams can only be hosted by Commerce members

Novelty holes and raffle to benefit CAFS

Limited teams

Members: [REGISTER HERE](#)

Members Chance to Win

Name the horse entered in the 2012 Petstock Ballarat Pacing Cup owned by the CEO of the **Ballarat & District Trotting Club** and you will win 2 tickets to the Live Barrier Draw Breakfast next Tuesday morning. Live broadcast by 927, a special appearance by Billy Brownless and much more! For more information please click [here](#). To enter just email jodie@commerceballarat.com.au the name before 3pm today. First five correct entries will win. Good luck!!!

Member of the Week

A family owned and run business, Gold Bus has been offering a safe, reliable and friendly service since 2000. Need to hire a bus, organise a tour, go to an event in Melbourne? Call us, no job is too big or too small.

Members News

2012 CGU Commerce Ballarat Business Excellence Awards Opportunities

Three out of 15 categories are in need of sponsors for 2012, including two of our new categories the Workforce Development & Training Award and the Franchise

Business Award. If you would be interested in more information please contact Jodie in the New Year. Sponsorship will be finalised by mid February. Include link to video from 2011

Mega Clearance Sale offer for Members!!!

You are invited to participate as a stall holder in the Ballarat Traders Mega Clearance Sale at the Mining Exchange on March 30 & 31, this will be offered to CB members initially but if we do not have capacity by mid January we will open it up to non members, there are only limited positions available so I encourage you to register now. This will be an ideal way to clear old stock whilst encouraging spending locally. [Registration form](#)

Items of Interest

Articles

Is Australia really the world's third most free economy?

Source My Business 13 January 2012

US think tank The Heritage Foundation, working with the Wall Street Journal, has placed Australia third on its annual "Index of Economic Freedom". That puts us behind Hong Kong and Singapore, but above tenth-ranked America.

The index ranks nations by assessing ten factors:

- Business freedom
- Trade freedom
- Fiscal freedom
- Government spending
- Monetary freedom
- Investment freedom
- Financial freedom
- Property rights
- Freedom from corruption
- Labour freedom

We think this ranking needs to be taken with a decent quantity of salt, as The Heritage Foundation's emphasis on freedom reflects its unashamedly conservative position. To understand where it is coming from, consider that the Foundation says its mission is "... to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense."

We also wonder if the Foundation has heard of the Carbon Tax or the Mining Tax – issues that we've been told are crueling the economy. Nor does the Index take into account issues like the administration burden on SMEs, a topic championed by COSBOA and others.

Lending finance falls in Nov

Source Business Spectator 17 January 2012

Commercial and personal finance commitments fell sharply in November, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The figures showed business lending declined a seasonally adjusted 9.6 per cent to \$33.098 billion in the month, down from \$36.624 billion in October.

Personal finance also fell heavily, down 7.8 per cent, seasonally adjusted, to \$7.199 billion, from \$7.806 billion in the previous month.

Finance for the owner occupied housing sector increased a seasonally adjusted 2.2 per cent to \$13.790 billion, up from \$13.487 billion. Lease finance was up 15.1 per cent to \$490 million, compared with \$426 million October. Revolving credit commitments in personal finance declined 17 per cent in November, in seasonally adjusted terms, and fell 19.1 per cent for business finance.

Why some companies are scrapping the performance review

Source Vecci 16 January 2012

Often the New Year period coincides with the staging of performance reviews, but some businesses have decided they get so little value from these reviews they're abolishing them for good.

The Wall Street Journal reports that some employers are replacing the traditional yearly or six monthly performance review with alternative measures.

Australian company Atlassian abolished reviews in 2010 and replaced them with brief weekly one-on-one meetings. Employees also conduct self-analysis on an online application that asks them to drag a dot along an axis to answer questions. Atlassian's Joris Luijke said the company ditched the traditional performance review because they caused anxiety among managers and subordinates, and acted as a demotivator.

Other businesses haven't bothered to replace the performance review with any other formal feedback mechanism at all. American manufacturing company Glenroy Inc. hasn't used reviews for 20 years and has no plans to reintroduce them.

Glenroy president Rich Buss says the company relies on employees being proactive about offering advice and runs management training sessions so workers are more comfortable giving and receiving feedback. It hires an external consultant to determine salary levels.

The results of a 2010 survey indicate many other organisations are only persisting with performance reviews because it's the norm in most workplaces. Nearly 60 per cent of American human resources managers graded their employer's performance management procedures at a 'C or below'.

UCLA Professor Samuel A Culbert, a strong advocate for abolishing performance reviews, believes they are "an obstacle to straight-talk relationships, and a prime cause for low morale at work".

Professor Culbert instead advocates for "performance previews", where a manager guides, tutors and does whatever is required to help his or her team member perform to the best of their abilities.

"Substituting performance previews for performance reviews promotes straight-talk relationships for people who are up to it," he wrote in 2008 in *The Wall Street Journal*.

"It welds fates together because the discussion will be about what the boss-subordinate team accomplishes together, which I believe is the valid unit to hold accountable."

Australian Bureau of Statistics

7122.0.55.001 Stocks of Grain Held by Bulk Handling Companies and Grain Traders, Australia, Nov 2011

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/7122.0.55.001?OpenDocument>

8301.0 Production of Selected Construction Materials, Nov 2011

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/8301.0?OpenDocument>

8755.0 Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary, Sep 2011 (Replacement

Content)

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/8755.0?OpenDocument>

1504.0 Methodological News, Dec 2011

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1504.0?OpenDocument>

8635.0 Tourist Accommodation, Australia, Sep 2011

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/8635.0?OpenDocument>

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Regional Industry Link

If you're not on it, how are you going to know about it?

Register on www.regionalindustrylink.com.au

Click [here](#) for current opportunities

Media

**Publication: *The Ballarat News*
Wednesday 11 January**

Publication: *The Courier* www.thecourier.com.au

Saturday 14 January

Monday 16 January

A massive \$190,000 will be the final total, raised from the 2011 **3BA** Christmas Appeal. Appeal director Peter Caligari said the donation of cash, toys, food items and other gifts, of which there is a few still to collect, meant the 2011 Appeal would be the most successful in its 32-year history.

Wednesday 18 January

Actress and comedian Denise Scott will be the headline act during **The Courier's** International Women's Day celebrations. Scott, a guest on many of Australia's popular television shows and cast member of *Winners and Losers*, will appear during the luncheon on March 8. It will be held in the Eureka Ballroom at the **Mercure Ballarat Hotel** and Convention Centre, with a kick-off time of 12 noon.

Friday 19 January

Families are expected to flock to the **Ballarat Turf Club's** family fun race day on Sunday, with loads of things to see and do for people of all ages. The meeting features eight races beginning at 1.15pm with full betting facilities provided but it's the kids activities, food and ample picnic space that will really draw a crowd.