



# CGU CommerceBallarat Business Excellence Awards

# 2014

## EVALUATION REPORT



2014

### CGU Commerce Ballarat Business Excellence Awards

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The CGU Commerce Ballarat Business Excellence Awards recognises and celebrates business excellence across a broad range of industries.

The application process promotes the idea of using the awards process as an opportunity for an annual review.

The awards promote Commerce Ballarat as an organisation that provides advocacy, support and a platform to promote businesses in Ballarat and the region.

The awards also reinforce Commerce Ballarat's b2b Buy Local ethos.

### OVERVIEW 2014 PROGRAM

- The Launch of the business awards was held at the Mechanics Institute on 2 April 2014 for the first time the event was held in the evening from 5:30pm **Attendance of 110**
- An awards logo link to nominate was included in every Commerce Ballarat Business Weekly
- Social media, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram were used to promote all aspects of the campaign
- **393** nominations were received for the 16 categories
- Two new categories were introduced in 2014; Creative Industries and Community and Government
- All nominees were sent a letter of congratulations and an application booklet
- A downloadable application form was available for the first time and was well received
- Weekly emails were forwarded to nominees to offer assistance and encouragement
- All nominees received a phone call throughout the process to offer assistance and encouragement
- Three information workshops were provided throughout the application process. Workshop attendance of **66 businesses**
- A total of **138** applications were received for the 16 categories
- Our 19 volunteer judges had their initial briefing on the 20 June 2014
- All finalists received a phone call and a letter of congratulations
- All applicants received a letter of thanks and a basic feedback sheet generated from judges scores
- The finalist event was held at the Mining Exchange on 29 July 2014. **Attendance of 152**
- **1242** visits [www.commerceballarat.com.au](http://www.commerceballarat.com.au) 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> July
- Judges commenced their site visits on 30 July 2014
- The Gala Dinner was held on 28 August. **Attendance 608**
- **1129** visits [www.commerceballarat.com.au](http://www.commerceballarat.com.au) 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> August
- All sponsors, nominees, applicants & Gala Dinner guests were given the opportunity to provide feedback by means of an online survey
- All judges were given the opportunity to provide feedback by means of an emailed form

**SPONSORSHIP**

Sponsorship is a crucial element in any successful awards program. 2014 was CGU's last year as the Naming Rights Sponsor but will continue their support for the Ballarat business community as a category sponsor in 2015. Commerce Ballarat sincerely thanks CGU and all the Ballarat team for their passion for growing Ballarat business.

2015 will see the inaugural **Federation Business School Commerce Ballarat Business Excellence Awards**, we look forward to a long and successful relationship.

Our category sponsors are also crucial to the success of the program. We were pleased to welcome back the City of Ballarat, Powercor, Federation University Australia Technology Park, Ballarat Lodge & Convention Centre, The Courier, Power FM, Central Highlands Water, WIN Network, Harwood Andrews, Haymes Paint, Regional Development Australia – Grampians. This year we welcomed new sponsors Federation Business School, Ballarat Regional Tourism, Remingtons Insurance Brokers and Nova Pharmacy.

Our sponsors are aware of the agreed benefits of their continued support but Commerce Ballarat attempts to offer bonus promotion throughout the year at every opportunity.

<b>Sponsor commitment:</b>	<b>Additional benefits:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of Finalists Certificates</li> <li>• Presentation of sponsored category award</li> <li>• Logo association on promotional material</li> <li>• Media recognition on radio, print and TV</li> <li>• Logo representation on screens throughout the Awards night</li> <li>• Logo representation on the Commerce Ballarat Website with link to website</li> <li>• Logo representation on the Gala program</li> <li>• Complimentary tickets to the Awards Gala</li> <li>• Use of the 2014 Business Excellence Awards logo for promotional purposes</li> <li>• Sponsorship Updates</li> <li>• Contact list for finalists involved in the Business Excellence Awards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logo representation on the Commerce Ballarat Awards banner which will be displayed at all CB events throughout the year</li> <li>• Recognition through social media used consistently throughout the process</li> <li>• Extensive coverage of the awards in the September Enterprise Magazine</li> <li>• Coverage in Ballarat Lifestyle Magazine</li> <li>• Two features in The Courier for finalists and winners</li> <li>• Logo inclusion on the new CB app</li> </ul>

**Comments**

“Pleased with the excellent exposure that our new branding received through all events leading up to the Gala Event and the wonderful exposure we received at the Gala Event” **CGU Insurance**

“Congratulations to the CB team for all your hard work and effort in putting on last night’s Commerce Ballarat Business Awards.

It is a testament to your dedication to business in and around Ballarat that Commerce Ballarat has such a strong support base and can showcase an awards night to such a high standard.” **Nova Pharmacy**

### JUDGES

**Chairman** – Damien Butler

**Judging Panel** Andrew Bradley, Tim Canny, Chris Cartledge, Michael Duffin, Carmel Flynn, Joanne Gell, Diane Gibney, Bill Gitsham, Stacey Grose, John Hayes, Robert Kerr, Dianne Gow, Phillip Lee, Lachlan McKenzie, Judy-Ann Quilliam, Geoff Sharp, Jamie Sleep and Matt Vallance.

The judging panel consisted of 19 independent business representatives drawn from diverse backgrounds. All judges were asked to identify all potential conflicts of interest before they were paired and assigned to their categories.

The judges assessed and scored all application forms in their category and consulted with their co-judge in order to determine finalists. Judges complete a spreadsheet which then allows CB to provide a basic feedback sheet to non successful applicants. **“Due to the volunteer nature of the judging panel and the quantity of applications it is not feasible to ask for more specific details.”**

Once finalists have been determined, the judges arrange site visits with the finalists to select a winner for each category.

Commerce Ballarat is extremely fortunate to have a judging panel that is not only very well qualified but also incredibly dedicated to the process. **“Our judges volunteer at a minimum of 40-50 hours of their valuable time to ensure Ballarat businesses have this avenue to showcase their successes.”**

### Comments

“I enjoyed experiencing the vast array of businesses, it was an honour and a privilege to visit our finalists.”

“I felt the process was well structured and the process was clear and understandable. The support from Commerce Ballarat Team was excellent. Having a co-judge was also very supportive and beneficial for myself”

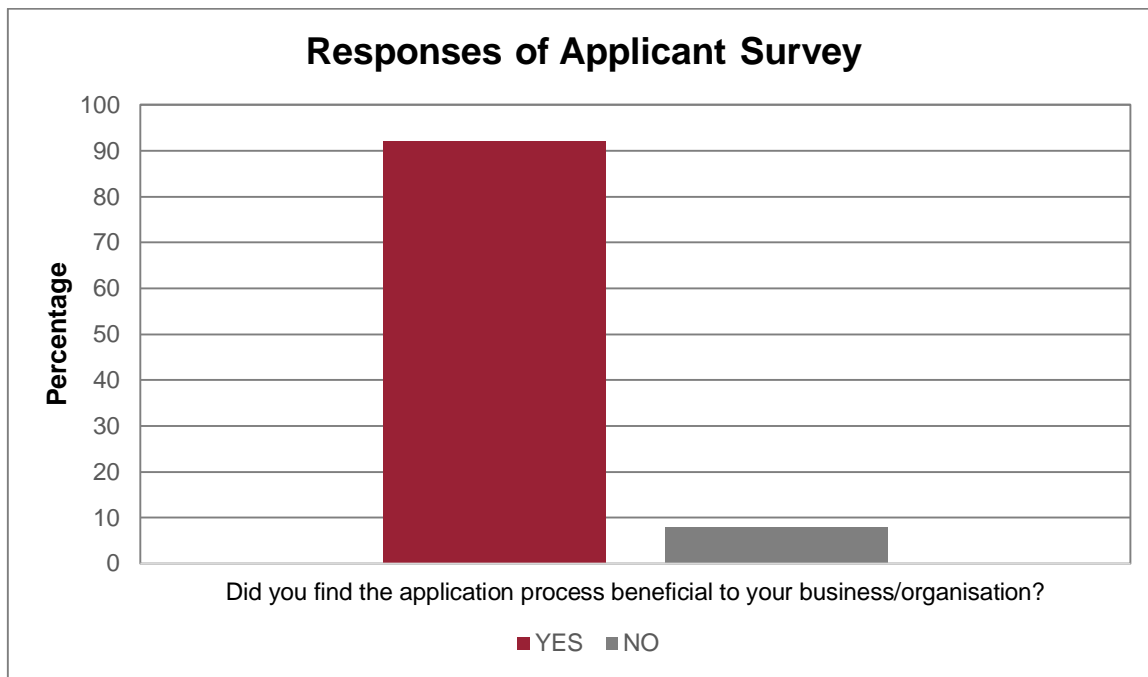
“I always enjoy learning about different businesses in the community and especially seeing some businesses grow and improve as they continue to enter year after year”

### APPLICANTS/FINALISTS/WINNERS

The spread of finalists and winners shows that these awards are readily accessible to businesses from all sectors and all sizes. Winners in 2014 varied from small retailers to larger manufacturers, <http://www.commerceballarat.com.au/2014winners.aspx>.

Three application workshops were held over the application period with 66 nominees attending. The workshops offered advice and assistance to nominees, the value of these workshops is clearly identified with the following statistics.

- 21 of the 43 finalists have attended a workshop in 2014 or 2013
- 8 of the 16 category winners have attended a workshop in the past two years



### Comments

“We wanted to let you know that we thought you did an amazing job with everything leading up to the awards night. We were very impressed with the Gala night and had a great time. We still can't believe we were finalist and have thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Your help, advice and communication throughout the process has been outstanding and really appreciated. We are looking forward to next year's Business Awards.” **Coronet Breakfast Lunch Bar**

“Just a quick email to thank you and your team for a fantastic night on Thursday. The whole process for these awards has been extremely professional, as well as rewarding on a business development level. The amount of well wishes we have received since Thursday night has been staggering. Many thanks for the opportunity to be involved in such an event.” **Lake Health Group**

### FORWARD PLANNING

Planning for the 2015 awards will commence in the next few weeks with current sponsors being asked to confirm their commitment to 2015 prior to the end of November. In December 2014 potential sponsors will be sourced to ensure that categories are locked in by mid-February.

Categories will be reviewed as they are each year, 16 categories will be the maximum. It is crucial to offer a variety of categories to ensure appeal to each business sector and to cater for businesses of all sizes. The application booklet and the judging process will be reviewed as it is each year to ensure that the process remains relevant and valuable to the business community.

### KEY DATES 2015 (TBC)

- April 2, Nominations Open/Launch Party
- May 1, Nominations Close
- May 7, Applications Open
- July 10, Earlybird applications Close
- July 17, Applications Close
- 28 July, Finalist Event
- 27 August, Awards Gala Night

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR 2015

- Judges to work as a group to offer a group general feedback sheet e.g. generalised suggestions
- Review questions, particularly Trade and Creative categories
- Review categories
- Applicants to have access to one hour of individual mentoring on their application
- Nomination Launch Event to be changed to a Thursday to accommodate Councilor's and City of Ballarat staff

### MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram were used to promote all aspects of the campaign. For the first time we also used Instagram to congratulate all 43 finalists in the lead up to the Gala Dinner.

Twitter was used throughout the entire campaign and was highlighted to finalists at the media workshop as a key avenue to engage with their customers and consumer base. This was embraced by many finalists and sponsors.

The live feed at the Gala Night added an extra element of crowd interaction and was embraced by many.

A feed of the tweets can be seen by following link; <http://www.thecourier.com.au/story/2520304/ballarat-business-awards-2014-photos-and-social/>

PRINT, TELEVISION AND RADIO

A breakdown of what media was produced is as follows;

When	What	Distribution	Result
<p><b>Launch;</b> Launched on Wednesday April 2, the launch officially announced nominations open. Key messaging included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self nominations</li> <li>- The benefits for businesses to be involved in the process</li> </ul>			
Monday March 31, 2104	Media alert	The Courier WIN Network Radio Ballarat	None required
Wednesday April 2, 2014	Media release	The Courier WIN Network Radio Ballarat	The Courier, Thursday April 3: Awards to recognise Ballarat's top businesses Radio Ballarat; Included on news bulletin
Tuesday April 4, 2014	Radio interview	3ba interview	Nomination Process
Tuesday April 15, 2014	Media release; <i>Categories for everyone in 2014 Awards</i>	The Courier WIN Network Radio Ballarat	The Courier, Wednesday April 16: CGU Commerce Ballarat Business Excellence Awards expand with two new categories
Thursday April 3 – Friday May 5, 2014	Advertisement	The Courier	A total of three placements into The Courier with nomination form
Thursday April 3 – Thursday May 1, 2014	Advertisement	WIN Network	Commercials encouraging nominations
Thursday April 3 – Thursday May 1, 2014	Advertisement	Radio Ballarat	Commercials encouraging nominations
<p><b>Applications;</b> Nominations were now closed, the communications aimed to convert nominations into applications. Key messaging included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Success rate of applicants who attended the application workshops</li> <li>- The benefits of the application process, encouraged business owners to use as an evaluation tool to better their business operations</li> </ul>			
Thursday May 1, 2014	Media release; <i>Businesses urged to convert nominations into applications</i>	The Courier WIN Network Radio Ballarat	
Tuesday May 13, 2014	Media release; <i>Application workshops could be the secret weapon</i>	The Courier WIN Network Radio Ballarat	

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Tuesday May 13 – Tuesday May 27, 2014	Advertisement	The Courier	Three advertisements promoting workshop details
Thursday May 15 – Thursday June 12, 2014	Advertisement	The Courier	Advertisements with hints and tips from previous finalists/winners
<p><b>Finalist;</b> This campaign looked at promoting the three finalists in each category. Key messaging included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highlight the high calibre of finalists in each category as a representation of the current business environment in Ballarat</li> <li>- To congratulate all businesses that submitted an application</li> </ul>			
Monday July 28, 2014	Media Alert	The Courier WIN Network Radio Ballarat	No action required
Tuesday July 29, 2014	Media Release; Business celebrated as finalists are announced!	The Courier WIN Network Radio Ballarat	The Courier, Wednesday July 30; Commerce Ballarat business excellence awards finalists named Tuesday July 29; coverage on WIN News
Tuesday July 29, 2014	Radio interview	3ba	Announce Finalists
Wednesday July 30 – Wednesday August 20	Advertisement	The Courier	Four advertisements listing finalists
Wednesday July 30 – Wednesday August 27	Advertisement	Radio Ballarat	Congratulations Finalists, 130 placements
Tuesday July 29 – Wednesday August 27	Advertisement	WIN Network	Congratulations Finalists, 315 placements
<p><b>Gala Dinner and Post Event;</b> Similar to finalist campaign but congratulating winners of each category. Key messaging included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Congratulating winners</li> <li>- Thanking sponsors</li> </ul>			
Tuesday August 26, 2014	Business Awards Special Feature	The Courier	
Wednesday August 27, 2014	Media Alert; <i>Gala Dinner to announce winning businesses</i>	The Courier WIN Network Radio Ballarat	No action required



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Thursday August 28, 2014	Media Release; <i>Gala Dinner to announce winning businesses</i>	The Courier WIN Network Radio Ballarat	Thursday August 28; live crosses during and after WIN News Friday August 29; double page spread and front page in The Courier
Friday August 29, 2014	Live social media Feed and Photos	The Courier	Social media feed updated on The Courier website; <b>Photo Gallery (113,000 views)</b>
Friday August 29, 2014	Radio interview	3ba	Announce winners
Friday August 29, 2014	Advertisement	Radio Ballarat	Congratulations winners, 130 placements.
Friday August 29, 2014	Advertisement	WIN Network	Congratulations winners, 75 placements
Wednesday September 3, 2014	Advertisement	The Courier	Thank You Sponsors