



An Australian Government Initiative



Shaping Business, Transforming Industry

CLIENT JOURNEY

ANVERS CONFECTIONARY

Latrobe TAS 7307

Background

Based in Latrobe, Tasmania, Anvers Confectionary manufactures exquisite chocolates, truffles, praline and fudges made from the finest ingredients.

Founder and Managing Director Igor Van Gerwen was looking to take his business to the next level and contacted Enterprise Connect for independent advice. Igor was seeking guidance on how to restructure his business for growth and build a management structure that focused staff responsibilities and freed him up to concentrate on growing the business.

Enterprise Connect Business Adviser Jack Van Tatenhove met with Igor and took the time to understand the industry and the business before providing a detailed Business Review Report. Jack also suggested Igor apply for Tailored Advisory Service funding to help implement some of his recommendations.

Outcome

Anvers staff were trained to Trade Certificate III level, key performance indicators were established, and detailed job descriptions were developed to focus staff efforts on reaching productivity goals.

“Training staff and focusing their roles on key areas of the production process has allowed our staff to focus on ways to improve and measure output,” said Igor.

Following Jack’s recommendations, the Anvers assembly line and factory layout were redesigned to streamline the production process, and lean manufacturing principals were implemented to



Anvers’ qualified confectionery staff making the fine chocolates.

cut down on wastage. Anvers also invested in a labeling machine to automate the packaging process and reduce assembly time. The result was an impressive 30 per cent increase in productivity.

“We were able to train staff to be conscious of the importance of minimising waste and we’ve developed a culture of continuous improvement and lean thinking. So far we’ve reduced waste by 15 per cent,” explained Igor.

By acting on Enterprise Connect’s advice, Anvers has developed a more focused approach to production, marketing and sales. Their new strategy has helped concentrate the business on profitable projects and markets, put in place effective staffing processes, improve lean manufacturing, and position the business for growth into the future.

“The Enterprise Connect Business Review really helped to identify the areas of the business we needed to tackle,” said Igor.

Anvers continues to supply to retail and department stores and the hospitality industry and is now expanding its café and chocolate shop concept with the opening of a new chocolate café, Port D’Anvers, in Sydney.

Further information

Visit www.enterpriseconnect.gov.au
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BIRCH & WAITE

Marrickville NSW 2204

Background

Since the 1980s, Birch & Waite has been a proud Australian manufacturer of quality food items including dressings, sauces, mayonnaise and desserts in bulk and portion sizes. Birch & Waite supply to restaurants, cafes, hotels, airlines and caterers throughout Australia, Asia and the world.

Birch & Waite has come a long way, growing from a small pâté manufacturer to a 105-employee production that has outgrown three facilities in over two decades.

With their rapid growth and retail expansion, Birch & Waite's Director Willi Schultheiss approached Enterprise Connect for a Business Review for recommendations on how to prepare the business for expansion and increased production.

David Hudson, Enterprise Connect Business Adviser met with Birch & Waite and assessed the key areas of the business including operational efficiency, product development, strategic planning and marketing strategies.

"Birch & Waite has strong internal processes with ongoing efforts to improve the quality of products and services. This led to a review of the new product development process, where the process was mapped out from start to finish, focusing on ways to reduce time and material resources," said David.

David recommended Birch & Waite apply for the Tailored Advisory Service to assist with engaging lean manufacturing experts to strengthen their production practices. This will see all staff receive training in a Certificate III in Competitive Manufacturing.

"In a time where so many food manufacturers are under so much pressure, it was encouraging working with David and Enterprise Connect who provided a fresh perspective and new ideas on ways of doing things," said Willi.



Mayonnaise selection from Birch & Waite's new retail range

Outcome

Birch & Waite has seen strong support at retail for the new range. The new dressings and mayonnaises can be found in Woolworths, selected IGA stores, and Harris Farm outlets, along with selected delis and premium grocers nationwide. Adding to this success the garlic aioli won "Best New Retail Product of the Year" at last year's Fine Food Australia trade show.

"Truly engaging and empowering our workforce along with refining manufacturing principles has resulted in increased performance and success. Our productivity is up by 27 per cent and we've just had our biggest month. The team at Birch & Waite have worked really hard to deliver a top quality product, and we're very proud to have won the 'Best New Retail Product' Award" said Willi.

Birch & Waite are working on new fresh quality food products and will continue to engage with Enterprise Connect as they expand their business.

"Working with Enterprise Connect has been an agent for cultural change across all levels of the business. Moving into the retail space and dealing with a major retailer can be daunting for many small businesses. David assisted us in preparing for our retail launch and that has been a very positive payoff"

Willi Schultheiss, Director, Birch & Waite

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HEATHER BRAE SHORTBREADS

Thomastown VIC 3074

Background

Heather Brae Shortbreads has been baking traditional family favourite treats since 1941. From humble beginnings, in the war years, this family business has developed into a professional medium size business based in Melbourne, VIC.

They produce a range of decadent baked-goods for the café, food service and retail markets, including gourmet biscuits, tarts and cakes. Their products are found in airlines, quality cafés, and large coffee chains. They also supply a range of “Private Label” bakery products to all major Australian supermarket chains.

Relocation to larger and refurbished premises provided the business with opportunities to expand into new markets and increase the product range. In 2008, the company undertook capital investments of \$772 000 to facilitate greater productivity, streamlined processing, elimination of manual handling operations, and improved quality, flexibility and process consistency.

Having made the large capital investment in plant and equipment, Heather Brae Shortbreads faced the challenge of recovering the expenditure through sales growth and expansion.

On learning of the support available through an Enterprise Connect business review, Managing Director Bass Wakim welcomed the opportunity to gain outside analysis on their business efficiency.

“While we’d done our own planning and evaluations, we were very happy to have expert assistance to check we were on the right track.” Mr Wakim said.



Heather Brae’s Choc Viennese fingers

Outcome

Business Adviser, Paul Smarrelli, conducted a full Business Review, benchmarking Heather Brae Shortbreads against other businesses and identifying key strategic strengths and issues. The Business Review report provided the firm with a full industry analysis, market analysis, operational analysis, and implementation plan to put recommendations into action.

“He listened to us carefully, got to know our business, looked at all our processes and spoke with key members of our staff. We found Paul to be excellent—very professional and extremely thorough.” Mr Wakim said.

Paul’s key recommendations focused on continuous improvement cycles and finding further production efficiencies. Paul also recommended that the firm increase their customer base through stronger sales activities, such as advertising and participation in trade shows. Heather Brae Shortbreads found the Business Review and recommendations to be helpful in ensuring they recover their investment in plant and equipment and prepare for expanding output levels.

“I found it to be relevant, focused, professional and ultimately effective. I can’t recommend Enterprise Connect highly enough.” – Mr Wakim, Managing Director, Heather Brae Shortbreads

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CLIENT JOURNEY

LA CASA DEL FORMAGGIO

Glynde SA 5070

Background

With a vision to become the leading Australian manufacturer of fresh Italian style cheese products, La Casa has grown from strength to strength. Since Gerardo and Rosa Cicchiello opened for business in Glynde, South Australia, in 1988, La Casa has moved with the times - it is now run by their children Claude and Marisa.

“As a small business we were able to drive outcomes by simply being on the factory floor, directing traffic on a day to day basis. However, after a conversation with Enterprise Connect I felt it was time we revisited the plan. Enterprise Connect provided a Business Adviser, Michael Cain, who took us through the Business Review process,” Claude said.

Michael, who has a strong track record in helping Australian small business, looked at all areas of the business, from customer base to operations, management and staff.

“We weren’t surprised at the review findings. It highlighted some things we could improve and created a pathway for us to move forward,” Claude said. “The review confirmed that we were good at the operations aspects of the business, however we were lacking in the systems and procedures necessary to support company growth,” he explained.

As a result of the review, La Casa has also put in a new management structure and incorporated systems.

“We also felt the need to invest in our people. We wanted to begin to develop a management team to help with the next phase of the company’s growth. Now I have people with specific skills at hand when I need.



Claude Cicchiello, Managing Director, La Casa del Formaggio, stretching the cheese

This management team has given me the confidence to grow the business, perhaps even more aggressively than I might have otherwise.”

“Ideally, in five years time, La Casa will be run by a management team with my involvement being very much based around overall business strategy and direction” - Claude Cicchiello, Managing Director, La Casa del Formaggio

Outcome

Acting on the review, the firm used funding from its Tailored Advisory Services (TAS) grant to introduce a culture program incorporating systems and procedures. Additional to a TAS project designed to sharpen the firm’s strategic focus, La Casa is now well on its way towards achieving its long term goals.

“Business growth has never been better and we now feel that we are beginning to support our operational strength with systems and procedures. Importantly, we have become more strategic in investing capital into the business as we prepare for even further increases in volume,” Claude says.

Further Information

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CLIENT JOURNEY MRS MAC'S

Morley, WA, 6062

Background

Since the 1950s, Mrs Mac's has kept the passion alive for family, tradition and meat pies, baking fine pies and savoury pastry products in its Morley facility in Perth. To this day, the business remains fully owned by the founding Macgregor family.

After five decades of continuous development, Chief General Manager, Murray Beros recognised continued growth and maintaining market leadership would require lifting the bar on performance in all areas of operation.

Enterprise Connect Business Adviser, John Clegg was keen to initiate a Business Review with Mrs Mac's to assist them in developing solid strategies to help the business prosper in the rapidly changing business environment. After an extensive review of their operations, John provided recommendations on how Mrs Mac's could achieve their business objectives.

"Consumers are becoming more informed and health conscious, and pie and pastry ranges have had to adjust accordingly to meet the needs of the evolving consumer market. The premium end of the pie market has boomed as people look for quality products, at an affordable price," John said.

Outcome

With John's support, Mrs Mac's developed an operating strategy that allowed them to reduce inventory levels and a sales and delivery strategy that regularly introduces new product lines to meet a loyal but increasingly dynamic customer base, and to capitalise on emerging market opportunities.

New product lines include the Heart Foundation approved Good Eating range, Red Embers gourmet range, Cruizer range, the Quick and Crispy Microwave range, the convenient supermarket multipack pie range, and Squarz sweet and savoury pastries.



Mrs Mac's frozen pie production line

"Product innovation, product improvements and close attention to consumer preferences play a very important role in our daily activities."

Murray Beros, Chief General Manager, Mrs Mac's

Mrs Mac's is built on tradition, but they also pay careful attention to new technological advancements in the industry. Mrs Mac's has reinvested for future growth by installing new state of the art manufacturing and processing equipment.

John recommended Mrs Mac's apply for Enterprise Connect's Tailored Advisory Service and the company accordingly engaged a consultant to identify and install the right maintenance software. Mrs Mac's needed a system that would support an advanced production line with computer based technology.

Mrs Mac's also committed to improving its carbon footprint through sustainable practices in a variety of ways, such as using recyclable packaging and sourcing fresh, high quality ingredients from local Australian suppliers.

While Mrs Mac's continues its long tradition baking iconic Australian pies and pastries, they are also moving with the times and evolving to meet changing customer needs and expectations.

Further information

Visit enterpriseconnect.gov.au or call **131 791**.