



President's Report

Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, 3 February 2009

I would firstly like to thank the members of the Maleny Commerce, for allowing me the privilege to serve as President for the past year. Special thanks also to the Executive Committee for their strong support and assistance, without this it would have been impossible to achieve what we have for our members in 2008.

Maleny has a strong business community, and our businesses go well beyond just the provision of jobs and trade, they form part of the fabric of our strong and diverse Maleny Community. Throughout the past year we have seen dramatic changes within the global economy, and we are now being bombarded with media reports that in the words of the John Flynn's immortal Hanrahan have us believe 'We'll all be rooned'. What with global credit crisis spiralling out of control, climate change and fuel prices, the media and politicians would have us all of us at home hiding under the bed.

We acknowledge that we need to operate in the prevailing environment but the truth is that, in many cases, we continue to survive in spite of the politicians and world economy rather than because of them. At a local level we need to look at the issues we can influence and improve and try and mitigate the risks as best we can.

In an ever competitive business world, one of the major influences we can have an affect on is the relationships and alliances we have with other businesses within the region. It is a well known fact that networking and referrals are one of the cheapest and most effective forms of advertising. In essence, what most of us are selling in our businesses are relationships because people like to buy from people they know and trust, not from a business.

To assist our businesses in this regard, we commenced in 2008 "Hinterland Connects" a series of major regional networking events specifically aimed at bringing together not only the businesses in the hinterland, but also those from further afield wanting to do business with us.

This is just one of the activities successfully undertaken in 2008, with planning under way this year focusing on giving greater value to our members and visitors. In fact our first Hinterland Connects for 2009 will be held in just 2 weeks time.

However back to the beginning of 2008, we commenced the year with some soul searching, and undertook a complete review of who we are and what we provide our members, culminating in a concise and effective new strategic business plan. I would thank Geoff Butler and Darryl Harbottle in providing their time, expertise and assistance with this process.

As an outcome of our strategic business plan, we have refreshed our image, name, logo and established our new website, which was officially launched at our October Breakfast function. Our website now provides a wealth of useful information and links, including member's profiles and our current calendar of events, a recent addition is the ability to register and pay on-line for our events.


We now hold monthly functions rather than meetings, with professional development speakers and business member profiles, all aimed at delivering real value and benefit to members. All of this is aimed at making Maleny Commerce - ***Your local business partner of choice.***

To finish the year we were again involved with coordinating the **2008 Maleny Christmas Street Carnival**, held on Friday 5th December. This event was extremely well supported by both our local businesses and the Maleny community, with the proceeds of this event being donated to the Maleny Rural Fire Brigade. I personally thank Nathan Arrowsmith, Karen Binstead, Janice O'Connor and our organising committee for their efforts in making the 2008 Maleny Christmas Street Carnival the most successful to date. All previous records were broken, in terms of numbers attending, tickets sales and proceeds raised, allowing us to provide a massive donation of \$5,000 to the Maleny Rural Fire Brigade. This was very gratefully received and will be used to purchase much needed equipment.

In summary Maleny Commerce has achieved a great deal this year, by way of overview I have attached a list of our **10 Top Achievements and Initiatives for 2008.**

As we look to the year ahead, Maleny Commerce is committed to providing a strong effective support network for all areas of business activity, and assisting Maleny businesses to build capacity for the challenges ahead and to be positioned to embrace new opportunities.

Once again, I sincerely thank all who have assisted in our growth and successes in 2008, and it is with this relevance that we look positively into the future.



Stephen Dittmann
President

Top 10 Achievements and Initiatives for 2008

- 1 Review of our operations, purpose and future vision - preparation and implementation of a Strategic Business Plan
- 2 Established a successful series of Regional Networking Events -“**Hinterland Connects**”
- 3 Membership increase of 120% in 2008
- 4 Established our Website - www.malenycommerce.org.au
- 5 Reinvigorated our meetings into Monthly Business Functions, providing greater value for members and an opportunity for Business Profile presentations
- 6 Series of Professional Development Speakers at our Monthly Functions
- 7 Online Events Calendar
- 8 Online Membership Directory
- 9 Business Security Network being established, in partnership with local Police
- 10 Co-ordinated a very successful Maleny Christmas Street Carnival, with proceeds of **\$5,000** to the Maleny Rural Fire Brigade

Our Services



A Strong Voice for Maleny Business



Monthly Functions



Professional Development Speakers



Local & Regional Networking Events



Opportunity to Profile your Business



Advocacy with all levels of Government