



President's Report

Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, 2 March 2010

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. A 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 2009.

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 continuing challenges from the changes within the global economy, and whilst 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 world economy rather than because of it. 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, and as we move into 2010 there is a noticeably optimistic tone within the Maleny business community.

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 continued in 2009 our successful series of major regional networking events, **Hinterland Connects**, specifically aimed at bringing together not only the businesses in the hinterland, but also those from further afield wanting to do business with us.

In 2009 we continued with our popular monthly Business Breakfasts, with professional development speakers and business member profiles, all aimed at delivering real value and benefit to members. All of this is aimed at reinforcing Maleny Commerce as - ***Your local business partner of choice.***

We had the opportunity in 2009 to engage Carrie Shaw in a contracted position as Secretariat, this was in line with our Strategic Business Plan and has brought to our Chamber a higher level of operational efficiencies. This provided us the capacity and resource to deliver increase value for members, and I would envisage for this arrangement to continue in 2010, within the Chamber's capacity to fund.

Sunshine Coast Enterprises sponsored and established in September 2009, a Chamber of Commerce Alliance E-Newletter, open for all Sunshine Coast Chambers of Commerce to participate. This is a website hosted by Sunshine Coast Enterprises, that contains a monthly President's message, current events and combined calendar for all the participating Chambers. This program has value and could add benefits for our members, so we became one of the six Sunshine Coast Chambers to support this initiative. The combined E-Newletter is emailed directly to all participating Chamber members each month.

To finish the year we were again involved with coordinating the **2009 Maleny Christmas Street Carnival**, held on Friday 4th 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 Hospital. I would like to personally thank Nathan Arrowsmith, and our organising committee for their efforts in making the 2009 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 **\$6,500** to the Maleny Hospital. This was very gratefully received and will be used to purchase much needed equipment.

As we look to the year ahead, Maleny Commence 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 be positioned to embrace new opportunities.

Our first and successful business breakfast function for 2010, with a record attendance of over 50 members and guests, included a presentation titled 'The Maleny Precinct and your Business'. This reinforces the position of Maleny Commence as the recognised voice and advocate for Maleny business. It is our commitment in 2010 to provide forums on topical issues that are impacting on Maleny business and work towards an improved environment for our businesses to grow and prosper.

Another exciting program we are commencing in 2010 is a **"Women in Business"** series, a joint initiative with Zonta Club. This will provide local businesses with another opportunity to not only network, but gain valuable business advice from some of the Sunshine Coast's most highly successful business women.

Once again, I sincerely thank our Executive Committee, and all who have assisted in our growth and successes in 2009, and it is with this relevance that we look positively into the future.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Stephen Dittmann", written in black ink on a white background. The signature is positioned above a horizontal dotted line.

Stephen Dittmann
President



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