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Media Release:

2014 Westpac Northland Business Excellence Awards - Winners announcement

Westpac Northland Business Excellence Awards for 2014 took place at Forum North on Friday 24 October. There were entrants from 50 Northland businesses competing in 6 business categories, 5 ancillary categories and an overall supreme winner.

- Marine North Ltd was the Westpac Northland Business Excellence Supreme Award winner for 2014 and was also the winner of the Golden Bay Cement Excellence in Business Medium Business Award (10-24FTE).

The judges said...

The judges were impressed with the structured and effective business planning which has been carried right through to operational level, and the owners' willingness to tap into external advice and support and implement recommendations. Processes are flow charted and constantly being improved; internal communication is excellent, great attention is paid to customer service, and the business has a genuine 'support local' culture.

Tony Collins from the NZ Chambers of Commerce Northland said that the awards were a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the success of many Northland businesses. These enterprises were of varying size and often very different in structure and scale. The one thing they all had in common was their passion for what they were doing and their commitment to succeed.

Other winners were:

- Waipoua Lodge (Kanale Group Ltd) - winner of the Konica Minolta Excellence in Business Owner Operator (1-3FTE) Category. (Finalists Re-vive Beauty Therapy, Whangarei Accessible Housing Trust and The Papermill Charitable Trust)

The judges said...

The business owners demonstrated great passion for their business along with an excellent understanding of the market and the environment in which the business operates. The facilities were well thought out and presented. Systems and processes were robust with the owners displaying strong business disciplines.

As a final point, Waipoua Lodge has just been named by internationally renowned travel guide Fodor's in its global 2014 top 100 awards. Waipoua Lodge was 1 of only 2 NZ hotels to receive this honour.



- Springboard IT Ltd t/a Northcom ICT winner of the Henderson Reeves Connell Rishworth Excellence in Business Small Business Awards (4-9FTE). (Finalists Omak Meats and Kiwi Cake Supplies)

The judges said...

Spring board IT trading as Northcom ICT has created a niche product which targets the SME market, a market which has traditionally been difficult to address. Their managed services are very cost effective and remove the hassle of IT ownership from small businesses, which represent the bulk of the Northland economy. They have taken care not to over-extend themselves in the start-up stage until they are confident that systems and processes are scalable. As would be expected, their use of information technology underpins their business model very effectively. They are now planning the next phase of growth with the introduction of a sales person. What is exciting about this business is the potential it offers to other Northland Businesses to increase productivity and performance.

- Marine North Ltd - winner of the Golden Bay Cement Excellence in Business Medium Business Award (10-24FTE). (Finalist Louie Berkers Collision Repair Centre Ltd)

The judges said...

The judges were impressed with the structured and effective business planning which has been carried right through to operational level, and the owners' willingness to tap into external advice and support and implement recommendations. Processes are flow charted and constantly being improved; internal communication is excellent, great attention is paid to customer service, and the business has a genuine 'support local' culture.

- Onyx Capital Ltd - winner of the Vodafone NZ Excellence in Business Large Business Award (25 plus FTE) (Finalists Northpine Ltd and Northpower)

The judges said...

The owners of this business have come up with innovative strategies to ensure they always have a trained and stable workforce available in what is known to be a seasonal industry, and have provided permanent employment and training to workers who would normally spend part of the year unemployed while ensuring the sustainability of their own business. Customer and product knowledge is excellent and data and information are collected and used effectively. Risks have been assessed thoughtfully and risk mitigation put in place on a number of levels. An impressive and financially sound business.



- Baby Steps - winner of the Business Coaching New Zealand Best Emerging Business Award. (Finalists Styleline Installationz and Grinning Gecko Cheese Company)

The judges said...

Baby Steps was a clear stand-out in the emerging business category. Carolyn and her team have assessed the market thoroughly and have put together a unique niche offering that is second to none in their sector.

The highlights of this business include robust financial management, excellent HR and communication practices, superb client interaction, and sound strategic planning for targeted growth.

The judges were very impressed and have every confidence this business will be a benchmark in the years to come.

- The Papermill Charitable Trust - winner of the Top Energy Best Not-For-Profit Organisation Award.

The judges said...

Operating for over 20 years The Papermill Charitable Trust provides a vibrant and imaginative venue that focuses on special needs creative training. Effective governance and management processes contribute to meeting the needs of each individual, developing work skills and confidence.

The Trust demonstrated great initiative and resourcefulness in identifying and sourcing materials to recycle for paper making and other creative endeavours. Close relationships within the community support and foster a sustainable approach by the team of papermakers who have a passion and flair for what they do.

- Grinning Gecko Cheese Company and The Papermill Charitable Trust – joint winners of the Northland Regional Council Sustainable Business Award (finalist Ngati Hine Health Trust)
- Claud Switzer Residential Care – winner of the ACC Workplace Safety Award. (Finalists Dive! Tutukaka, Northpine Ltd and Northpower)

The judges said...

The winning business, Claud Switzer Residential Care scored highly in all of the workplace safety judging criteria, and stood out for their commitment to providing a high level of training and equipment to ensure the safety of staff and clients in the workplace. Congratulations to the Board, the Nurse Manager and the whole team.



- Dawn Dutton Photography - winner of the Creative Northland Excellence in Arts Business (Finalists The Papermill Charitable Trust and Amber-Lee Florists)

The judges said...

The judges were very impressed with Dawn's photographic work, her commitment to personal and professional growth, community involvement, systems, processes, passion, drive and goals. They would like to congratulate her on her extraordinary talent mixed with exceptional customer service. These are her unique selling points. Although already successful, the judges have no doubt she will be more so with every endeavour in the future.

- Kiwi Cake Supplies Ltd took out the Northland INC Judges Commendation Award (Finalists Results Rule ad Amber-Lee Florists).

The judges said...

Kiwicakes has established itself as the leading cake decorating company supplier in New Zealand, operating from their premises in Kamo. They have achieved success by their strong online engagement with their loyal customer base and being at the leading edge of the industry, bringing experts in to demonstrate latest decorating techniques. They are already exporting on a small scale but with their own branded products they have potential to go further. It is profitable business employing local people and can only be considered a success story.

- Dawn Dutton Photography was voted More FM Customer's Choice Service Provider while KiwiYo Whangarei was the More FM Customer's Choice Retail Provider.

This is what one client had to say about Dawn Dutton Photography...

A perfect combination of creative talent, professionalism and customer service. Dawn takes the stress out of photographic sittings. She will take photographs in settings of your choice and does everything just right so the subjects are relaxed and comfortable. The printed results are amazing!

And a KiwiYo customer had this to say...

They have a clean, beautiful shop with friendly staff. The franchise is locally owned so they are contributing to our economy while also creating jobs! The staff are great, knowledgeable and friendly and it is a pleasure to call in.

The New Zealand Media and Entertainment Business Hall of Fame inductee this year was Wayne Cowley in recognition of his contribution to Northland business.