

Coast marching to Piper's new tune

THE relocation of Piper Digital Marketing's head office from Brisbane to the Sunshine Coast represents a homecoming for its globally-minded directors, an opportunity for a new generation of workers and a chance for the region to further diversify away from its reliance on tourism, retail and construction.

Local businesses are also tipped to benefit, as Piper's core business is helping small and medium enterprises improve their web presence and internet marketing strategies, a potentially confusing area for many.

Director Dena Dillon, who has more than 10 years' experience as a marketing consultant, grew up on the Coast and has family in Buderim.

Co-director Ryan Fitzgerald is a former St John's College student and has family a little further north, at Noosa.

The pair realised they did not need to base their three-

year-old company in a metropolitan area and shifted to an office in Noel Burns House at Minyama a year ago.

It has offices in Sebu, Philippines, home to 45 staff, and has just opened another in downtown Beverly Hills.

"Our production office is in the Philippines, so we have our web developers, designers, coders and our creatives there," Ms Dillon said.

"And we decided to open in the US because it's a big market to tackle. Why not? The world is our oyster.

"We moved here purely for lifestyle, but we are also really excited to be offering job opportunities to the market that weren't available when I was here and had just left uni.

"If I wanted a marketing job I had to go to the city, whereas we just put on an excellent girl who is a former Mountain Creek High student."

Piper's clients include one-man businesses, deve-



MAKING STRIDES: Piper Digital Marketing directors Dena Dillon and Ryan Fitzgerald in the Minyama office they opened a year ago.

PHOTO: NICHOLAS FALCONER/190062

lopers, telecommunications companies, restaurants and retail stores.

The company also has a licensing division with a goal to bring 50 licensees on board within the next 12 months. They could be either individual entrepreneurs wanting to set up a digital marketing agency or existing media companies wanting to expand to include digital services.

Ms Dillon said the concept was like a franchise,

but the individual could retain their own branding and just make use of Piper's business model.

"We launched in September 2009 and we already have five licensees," she said. "Macquarie Business Brokers are selling the remainder for us.

"We would expect that we would need between 20 and 25 staff at our Sunshine Coast office (current staff is four) to handle that within next 12 months."

Ms Dillon said market research, planning and leaving nothing to chance were the keys to keeping such a diversified business performing strongly across all divisions.

The business is holding a free discovery session on March 30 to outline details of the two-day digital marketing workshop they are offering.

To register, go to www.businessintelligenceworkshop.com.au

Preparing for tax clouds on horizon

WHAT would you do if you were suddenly slugged with a \$20,000 bill from the tax man this year?

Now imagine what you would do if you were pre-warned that a bill of that size was looming on the horizon?

The well-worn Scouts motto of "be prepared" is the driver behind a series of free tax planning seminars put on by local accounting firm Holmans each year for the past eight years.

Principal Wayne Staal hosts some of the events, which are run monthly from March and increase in frequency closer to June 30.

"They are aimed at profitable businesses, people with numerous investments or structures, high net worth individuals earning over \$80,000 and those who have sold a business, a property or shares or anybody who wants to estimate their tax liability 12 months in advance," he said.

"We give some general examples of the strategies we use but anything more specific should be done on an individual basis."

Mr Staal said Holmans had developed an automated spreadsheet that could take profit and loss and BAS results and convert them to a likely tax scenario months in advance.

Mr Staal said the seminars were held in the boardroom of Holmans offices, at either Maroochydore or Noosa, and were limited to about 20 people at a time. Register by phoning 5430 7600.

Newspapers In Education

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- Benefit from an enhanced business image and further community recognition.
- Sponsoring NiE will give you the opportunity to advertise and increase your branding power.
- Your business will be seen by thousands of new potential customers with typical users of the program being students, parents and the educational community.
- The majority of our teachers and students from the Sunshine Coast schools utilise our NiE program in their local paper on a weekly basis to access resources.

What is NiE?

Newspapers in Education consists of educational pages published weekly through-out the school year in APN's 14 daily papers from Coffs Harbour to Mackay. The pages target (years 4 to 9), and are a platform to launch children into research and encourage curiosity and investigation.

NiE hopes to initiate discussion on important current affairs and curriculum linked topics that challenge students at every level. NiE is about expanding awareness through reading the local newspaper. It is a partnership between the local newspaper, local businesses and local schools and offers youth the opportunity to create a better tomorrow, by challenging their thoughts and opinions today, expanding their literacy capabilities and providing them with life skills. The content of the NiE pages are designed to encourage students and readers to investigate and research additional information through multi-media channels. The program also supplies resources for in classroom activities that support the NiE pages.

For more information on sponsoring our children's future in Newspapers in Education contact Raeleen on 5430 8097



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