

## FIA Business Sundowner

“Food and Naked Branding; Creating, Building and Protecting Brands”

Thursday 2nd September 2010  
UWA Club, Hackett Drive, Crawley  
4.30pm - 7.00pm

Join the **FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION** at our relaxed seminar on Food and Naked Branding; Creating, Building, and Protecting Brands, while sampling fantastic food, wine and beer while networking with industry colleagues and our guest speakers:

**Mr. Howard Carns, Director Brance-lls and Little Creatures Brewing** - will present on driving brand awareness, market research, targeting customer market segments, customer loyalty, generating sales and the investment in developing and managing brand strategies.

**Mr. Tony Joyner, Partner & Senior Commercial Lawyer, Freehills Law Firm** - Tony's branding team has reviewed the brand management of WA's top 100 companies - and the results are troubling. Tony will take you through the results of the review and highlight the issues it throws up about brand management with entertaining stories from around the world of 'branding gone wrong'.

This sundowner will be of interest to managers and business owners including staff involved in product and business development, QA, brand management, marketing and sales.

Cost per person incl. GST (including canapés and alcoholic drinks)

**Members and guests:** \$55.00

**Non members:** \$75.00

For further details, please refer to our website [www.foodindustry.org.au](http://www.foodindustry.org.au) or email us on [fiacconnect@foodindustry.org.au](mailto:fiacconnect@foodindustry.org.au)



## management

### Tips from across the ditch

Warm and friendly service is just one of the features of the New Zealand hospitality industry we could learn from, writes **Ken Burgin**.



SOMETHING big is about to happen to New Zealand—the Rugby World Cup in 2011. Sixty thousand people are expected to visit a country of four million and watch 20 teams play 48 games. Stretching from Invercargill at the bottom of the South Island to Whangarei at the top of the North Island, the whole country will be involved, and stretched to capacity.

To prepare the nation's hospitality businesses, the Hospitality Standards Institute organised a road show of business presentations through Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Rotorua and Auckland. They featured topics from hospitality business management and marketing, to design and cost control. It was my pleasure to present ten sessions during this road show, and hear first-hand about the challenges facing New Zealand restaurants, cafes and hotels.

A fellow presenter was New Zealand restaurateur Craig McFarlane, the power behind eight hospitality businesses from coffee roasters and restaurants, to cafes and a pub. A strong believer in systems and financial control, McFarlane showed how he has grown his businesses through partnerships and training key people to thoroughly understand how a business makes money. The businesses are big on personality and service, and they proudly focus on maximising profits and retaining staff.

Meeting McFarlane for the first time, you could assume he's just another hard-working operator struggling with one business. But he's made the breakthrough that most owners never do — leveraging his skills so expansion doesn't mean more and more work hours and extra stress. Most owners dream of opening another business, but they never find the way to use the talent of others to help them expand.

Keys to McFarlane's success includes his 3 P's — People, Processes and Partnerships. Do your people understand what the business stands for and support its values? Are the processes relevant or redundant? Are they effective? People and process-

es make sense, but partnerships are often understood in quite a narrow way. McFarlane sees partnerships as including not just shareholders, but also staff, suppliers, brands and professional associations—everyone who can help to make the business a success.

Many of his businesses have staff who have been bought in as partners to the operation, thoroughly trained in good management and now highly motivated to maximise the bottom line. They're not just partners, but leaders: people who can communicate, who want to learn, who are decisive and can motivate others. They also need to be confident, consistent and self-aware.

Central to the McFarlane model are accurate figures, available at the beginning of every week, so staff and management know exactly how the business is performing. Food and labour cost percentages, customer spending, best and weakest selling items, actual figures compared to budgets. It takes time to organise, but once the systems are established the performance improvements should be immediate. How well are your systems set up to give essential KPI's whenever you need them?

Are there problems that are unique to New Zealand? Not too many. The same shortage of skilled staff, rising costs for energy and food, and a small population a long way from the rest of the world. And in a shock discovery: Gen Y Kiwis are just like our own, until smart operators like Craig McFarlane find ways to motivate and engage them. Even with an exchange rate working in my favour by 20 per cent, food and drink in New Zealand is expensive. The rule is the same in every country: higher prices mean lower demand. The short cut for reducing food costs is to raise prices, but that won't increase volume — it needs a multi-pronged strategy and constant vigilance.

The best things I saw included wonderful sweet treats in cafes and restaurants — from puddings and lamingtons to date scones and 'road kill' (a mixed fruit slice that's definitely okay for vegetarians); warm, friendly and genuine service, without the 'world-weariness' that affects so many businesses here in Australia; delicious pinot noir and sauvignon blanc ('would you like a savvy?'); a robust coffee culture; and a proud use of local ingredients. There was lots of succulent lamb from the snowy-white sheep dotted all over the landscape, and with the same high prices as Australia, appealing menu descriptions are needed to overcome resistance. New Zealand is less than three hours to fly over. It's worth the trip to check out some ideas.

*Ken Burgin is a leading hospitality industry consultant. For more information visit [profitablehospitality.com](http://profitablehospitality.com) or call 1800 001 353.*