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Newsletter – December 2008

Wishing you a safe and happy Xmas!

Christmas is upon us again and I hope as many staff as possible get to spend some time with family and friends, eating a little too much perhaps, and recharging the batteries for next year.

The Christmas and New Year period is also a time for reflection and resolutions, a time to reconnect with people we love, and a time to consider what we can do for others.

As a great man, Sir Winston Churchill, once said: "We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give".

For Outback Stores staff, you have given enormously. You have substantially changed many lives for the better, made a difference where many people thought it couldn't be done, and gathered many lifelong friends on the journey.

I thank you all for your efforts, many of them quiet and unassuming. As I often say, Outback Stores is a place of very special people doing an extraordinary job.

I wish you and your families all the best for the festive season.

John Kop, CEO

Jilkminggan gets a spruce up

The Jilkminggan store has reopened after renovations that have transformed the building into a real centrepiece for the community.

The store has gone from having just three food items on the shelves to nearly 1000, is now air-conditioned and has been fully re-lined.

A barbecue was held on December 9 to celebrate the reopening. It was attended by Outback Stores chief executive John Kop and head of the Northern Territory Emergency Response, Major General Dave Chalmers.



Cheers: The Outback Stores team celebrate with a banana.

The work, and a bus into Mataranka twice daily for seven weeks while the store was closed, was funded under the Emergency Response's flexible funding pool. Major General Chalmers said he was very pleased with the result.

"When I last came to the community the store was horrible, it was probably one of the worst stores I have seen in the communities I have visited," he said.



Team effort: John Kop, store committee chairman Robert Smiler and Major-General Dave Chalmers

"So to see it today, to see a wonderful store, a community asset, it is a real credit to the community, to Outback Stores, to our Government Business Manager, who have all worked together to make this happen."

Store committee president Robert Smiler was equally pleased.

"We are proud of our store now," he said.



Lorraine Doctor serving in the revamped store

Special people getting the job done

Message from Chief Executive John Kop



Finally, after a year of rapid growth, we are turning our attention to telling our story better to the outside world.

It has been a busy but productive time at Outback Stores, with our latest store opening at Tennant Creek, a regional restructure, most of our new management team in place and a new website.

The progress we are making confirms to me that we are an organisation built by special people devoted to doing a special job.

We now have 24 stores under our management and we are on target to achieve 30 by the end of December, as laid out in our business plan.

Retail operations recently held store managers' workshops in Darwin and Alice Springs on the theme of "successes, sharing and setting standards".

This is the first time that we were able to get all the store managers together to talk about Outback Stores' progress, build support networks and share ideas.

The conference was a chance to recognise the excellent work being done by store managers, who are at the heart of our operations. In particular, I pay tribute to Rob and Raquel Monkley, who won the Perpetual Trophy for outstanding performance in managing an OBS community store.

Rob and Raquel run Nyirripi, a store that has gone from strength to strength, with strong sales, an active store committee, profitable operations and tidy surrounds.

The Nyirripi Store is run so well that it inspired the women of Yuendumu to ask for a similar store, now trading as Nguru Walalja (everybody's place) out of the community Women's Centre.

The two other finalists for this award were Willowra and Bulman.

The store managers' conference gave me a chance to get a better feel for some of the issues faced by our managers in the field and I thank all participants and organisers, in particular Kylie Swan and Kate McIntyre.

At the recent staff meeting staff recognition awards were given to individuals from the Darwin Support Office and Regional Operations team for their outstanding contribution to Outback Stores. The award for the Darwin Support office went to Belinda Orme, and the Regional Operations award went to Steve Bryant and Rebecca Watson.

At board level, we have made several significant decisions on issues such as distribution of profit and store managers housing and signed off on the 2009 budget. Territorian Bob Hudson, an ex-Deloitte partner, has joined the board and we welcome his financial and risk

management experience. We also hope to announce another Territorian Board appointment shortly.

On the staff front, I welcome several new people including Merchandise Manager James Thom, who started with us on 15 November from South Africa, and Barry Orr, who is Regional Manager for the North. Barry is a former store manager from Woolworths who previously managed the Beswick and Barunga stores. He is returning from interstate to start with us on 10 November, completing our senior executive team.

Finally, after a year of rapid growth, we are turning our attention to telling our story better to the outside world.

We have met with Ministers and other politicians, prepared submissions for the Northern Territory Emergency Response Review and senate committees, briefed several other key stakeholders, and presented to the Desert Knowledge Symposium in Alice Springs. We also ran community briefings in Alice Springs and Darwin at the end of November.

We have launched a DVD on the makeover of the Barunga store, gone live



Pitching in: John Kop helps restock at Jilkminggan.

with our new website and rolled out our new branding (see www.outbackstores.com.au) as reflected in the more professional look of this newsletter.

Federal Minister for Families and Housing, Children's Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) Jenny Macklin visited Yuendumu Women's centre store at the end of October and was impressed by the strong partnership with the women in the community, the range of fruit and vegetables on sale, and the strength of the women in setting up the store against opposition from some in the community. We had a good meeting with Minister Macklin, who was keen to hear about our progress and the issues we are facing. I thank everyone at Outback Stores for your dedication and look forward to catching up with everyone to hear more success stories!

MEET

MEG ELLIS / MANAGER – HR OPERATIONS

I joined OBS on August 25, 2008, and after three months I remain elated to be part of such a fast-moving and forward-thinking company! Not only am I being challenged professionally with the day-to-day operations of Human Resources, but I also feel I am contributing to something much, much more.

With my role, among other things, I get the fantastic task of introducing new employees to our company culture and what it means to be part of the team. “To be part of the team is to be part of the vision of Outback Stores and embrace its values.”

Integrity – Outback Stores Pty Ltd is committed to the principles of truth and honesty and we will be equitable, ethical and professional;

Diversity - We respect and embrace cultural differences;

Health & Safety - Health and safety is a fundamental element of all our activities;

Simplicity - We value and practice simplicity;

Quality - We measure quality by our stakeholder satisfaction; and

Accountability - As individuals we will be transparent, accountable to our organization, stakeholders and each other.

These values I believe play a crucial part in achieving our Mission: to make a positive difference in the health, employment and economy of remote indigenous communities by providing quality, sustainable retail stores.

We have appointed some excellent employees over the past three months, people are the key element in any business and it is such an honour to be part of helping OBS improve the service we offer to indigenous communities.

So please join us in welcoming our new comers to Outback Stores and in many cases, to the Northern Territory!

I want to personally thank Haley Moulds/ Senior HR Officer, Tamara Thompson/ HR Officer, Margie Groom/Travel Supervisor and Deb Hutchings and Rosie Hewitt from the Berrimah Training Centre for embracing me into their team; along with a warm welcome to Jasmin Forrest/Payroll Coordinator.

I would like to extend a big CONGRATULATIONS to Tamara on recently passing - with a CREDIT - her HR Unit as part of her Bachelor of Commerce Degree! Haley, I wish you all the best in your up and coming assignments for your HR Diploma!

I look forward to a happy and productive working relationship with everyone at Outback Stores.



Steve Bryant and Rebecca Watson – accepting the Retail Operations Staff Meeting of 10 October Award for Outstanding Contribution to OBS.

Front-line troops gather in Darwin

Report: Retail Operations

The recent store managers’ conference reinforced the integral role played by our store managers.

“Store managers are in the front line of any retail business,” said CEO John Kop. “Nothing can happen without you and everyone else in the organisation is there to support what happens on the front line,” he said.

“It is our store managers who serve our customers,” he said. “So, in a variation on the old saying, ‘if you are not serving a customer, you need to be serving someone who is’ because it’s pretty frustrating if good customer service is undermined by broken equipment, delays responding to inquiries, or goods that don’t show up on time.”

In particular, we congratulate all the winners of our Outback Stores awards, presented by John:

- » The Perpetual Trophy for Outstanding Performance in Managing an Outback Stores Community Store went to Nyirripi, managed by Rob and Raquel Monkley. Willowra and Bulman were the runners up;
- » Community involvement awards went to Ali Curung (Alice region) and Bulman (Darwin region);
- » Team awards went to Engawala and Barunga;
- » Operation awards went to Nyirripi and Bulman;
- » The JGOWTJA (Just Got On With The Job) award went to Balgo and Angurugu.

Our retail and area managers have been working hard to bring on the new stores as well as managing stock takes, people movements and helping with special assignments such as the new point of sale (POS) roll out.

We now have POS in eight stores and believe all stores will be completed by December. A training session was held in Alice Springs to help familiarise store managers with the system.

“Store managers are in the front line of any retail business”

We continue to roll out new stores, such as Tennant Creek, which set a record for fruit and vegetable sales in its first days at



Marilyn (Maz) Lewis accepting Team Award for Engawala Store – Alice Conference

17 per cent of total goods sold. This store, which was purchased by Indigenous Business Australia and Julalikari Council, is in a town where 70 per cent of the population is Indigenous. Despite this, when we took it over, the store had no Indigenous staff, a situation we plan to remedy quickly.

In Yuendumu, the store set up in July was turning over \$55,000 a week by the end of October, 400 people had signed up for income management, and store committee member Georgina Wilson reported

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that the community was delighted with the range of healthy foods now available for women and their kids.

Angurugu reported an extraordinary \$246,000 worth of sales in one week recently. Strong sales are expected to continue, with royalty payments and Christmas on the way. The store committee is determined to beat its own record!

This will generate considerable profits to be returned to the community.

In Alice Springs, we have opened a new regional office at 25 Elder Street that will become home to the regional manager, business development manager, nutritionist and support team. The team includes our new relationship manager Eddie Miles.

The office gives us a more visible presence in Alice Springs and we thank the Alice staff for their tolerance in working out of their own homes for so long.

Also this month, we split our operations into northern and southern zones, which should take some of the strain off our support area managers, reduce the distances they have been traveling and improve efficiencies.

Regional Manager North is Barry Orr, while Bob Loughnan becomes Regional Manager South. Reporting to them are area and support managers respectively:

- » Andy Fleming and Darren Chawner - Tanami (Balgo, Yuendumu, Willowra, Santa Teresa, Wallace Rockhole and Tennant Creek);
- » Oran Mahoney and Ross McDermott – Desert Area (Imanpa, Nyirripi, Engawala, Epenarra, Canteen Creek, Dajarra, Ali Curung, Ti Tree and Leonora);
- » Anthony Gunther and Ron Heidke – Kakadu (Angurugu, Bagot, Bulman, Beswick, Barunga, Yarralin, Pigeon Hole, Kundat Djaru, Jilkminggan and Manyallaluk)

One of the good ideas to come out of the store managers' conference was a sales ladder for each store to track their progress compared with other stores, as well as an increase and decrease competition with the aim of increasing sales of fruit and vegetables and decreasing sales of confectionary, in line with our nutrition strategy.

The stores now have benchmarks and we will monitor their progress. Already Santa Teresa has won the 'mango award' for the best increase in fruit sales, after using good display techniques to turn the sale of a box of mangoes, into four, then a full bin.

That sort of outcome is rewarding - and a reminder that Outback Stores can bring big ideas and little changes to make an absolutely positive difference.

Bulman – a nine-month journey

Being in Bulman has been a journey.

We arrived to a sad looking Store that with tenacity, sweat and drive took shape into a true store that over time the people of Bulman grew more confident to shop in.

This was reflected in the smiles, the comments and of course in the sales. When we hit the \$30,000 mark it was very exciting. But it did not finish there, it just continued to climb beyond 30... 33... 35... 38 ... 40... 42... 45... 48... 49 and threatened the \$50,000 mark!

We've had good times, hard times and disasters, a pattern I'm sure is repeated in one form or another in all Outback Stores. Interesting experiences have been events like a horse in our bathroom (plus kitchen and toilet), donkeys invading the town, Buffalo chasing people, discovering a deep cave system with underground lake, finding art sites long forgotten and more.

Not so interesting was the power failures, blocked sewers, stock mishaps, chiller breakdowns, freezer shutdowns, numerous flat tyres, swollen knees and exploding gall bladders. Except for the last event we just got on with the job. The store is ready for 10 weeks of cut off roads with stock stacked to the ceiling.



Alan Klein

POEM BY ALAN KLEIN

Been in Bulman and 9 months have gone by
 When you're having fun, oh, how time does fly.
 We arrived to behold a scarred and ramshackle shed
 With dust-laden bare shelves and a community to be fed.
 So we got stuck in and created the Bulman Oasis
 The reward was to behold the locals' bright and shining faces.
 With paint and supplies humbugged from Government Stores
 We got the front all pained plus some signs and the floors.
 And with the help of a sparky we got the wiring set right
 And for the first time in years, the storeroom had light.
 With the sweat and the toil and the seeds we did sow
 We watched as sales climbed and the crowds continue to grow.
 We've got to know some great characters and got to know all their faces
 Got to hear some great stories and see wonderful places.
 Seen art sites long lost and an unexplored cave
 And animals galore to which some we would save
 Like Princess the horse and our toilet-dwelling frog
 The wild pig from next door and Woody the smiling dog.
 But there is also days not ranked with our best
 Where patience and temper are put to the test.
 Stock turning up smashed or an order incomplete
 Make me utter words that here I cannot repeat.
 Or a chiller breaks down or a freezer on a blink
 Overflowing sewage in the heat, imagine the stink.
 Numerous power failures sometimes up to a day
 All the wet season stock might end up being thrown away.
 With police and some locals racing against the clock
 On many occasions their help saved our stock.
 With the threat of floods cutting roads once the rain starts to drop
 Bulman needs food for the wet so we dare not stop.
 When a drama arises, we attack and push through
 Till the latest disaster there was naught we could do.
 An exploding Gall bladder causing all manner of strife
 'Cilla's flown twice to Darwin, second time it's under the knife.
 Out comes a stone, which is more like a rock
 It's no wonder she took such a serious knock.
 So we're down for the moment, down by not done
 Recovery is foremost plus some sand and some sun.
 Then back into the fray to do all that we can
 For the good folks of Bulman, where the adventure began.

Fresh fruit and vegetables in focus

Everyone knows fruit and vegetables are good for you and that we should eat some every day. But do you know how much we should be eating and are you eating enough? To promote good health, it is recommended that all adult Australians eat two serves of fruit (where a serve is the equivalent to the average apple, banana or pear) and five serves of vegetables (where a serve is equivalent to ½ cup of cooked vegetables or one cup of salad vegetables). Variety is the key and any mix of fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruit and vegetables will do. Think about what you ate yesterday ... how did you go?

Increasing intake of fruit and vegetables is one of the most significant factors which will promote health outcomes in remote communities.

On average, all Australians can improve on their fruit and vegetable intake. Surveys show that Australians are eating one serve of fruit and two-three serves of vegetables. In Indigenous communities, surveys indicate that people are eating ½ a serve of fruit and one serve of vegetables.

Increasing intake of fruit and vegetables is one of the most significant factors which will promote health outcomes in remote communities. Surveys in remote Indigenous communities show people's preference for purchasing fruit and vegetables as fresh produce.

Outback Stores Nutrition Strategy prioritises fresh fruit and vegetables. The policy outlines the importance of providing a comprehensive range of produce, of ensuring that it is sold in a way that meets people's needs and that transport and handling procedures maintain quality of produce.

Sarah Connally, Regional Nutritionist has been spending time with Store Managers on her visits to communities, understanding the issues they face in providing fresh fruit and vegetables.

Outback Stores aims to stock 40 lines of fruit and vegetables in each store. Sarah found 71% of the stores she visited managed to stock 35 or more lines; and of that 40% had 40 or more lines. This is a great achievement for Retail Operations

Wellbeing, Retail Operations and Merchandise will be working closely over the coming months to develop a strategy to address some of these issues and improve sales and therefore consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables in remote communities. The strategy will consider all aspects of the supply chain, from Outback Stores suppliers, to the individual stores and communities and working with partners to promote fresh fruit and vegetables.



Food Safety Plan

Our Food Safety and Environmental Health Consultant Alex Mullins has been working on the important Food Safety Plan to be introduced in all of our stores in the NT, WA and Queensland. The generic document will be presented in a user friendly format that can be updated. The plan will then be tailored to meet the specific requirements of each of our unique stores. Store Managers will be provided with 'one on one' training on how to use the plan. Supporting documents to the plan will include guides on how to for everything from using equipment such as temperature probes to cleaning a bain marie. You will find a great resource here which, when implemented, will further enhance the health of our customers through ensuring high standards of hygiene and food safety in our diverse array of stores. Alex is undertaking an internal and external consultation process with the draft plan to make sure that we are reflecting best practice while meeting needs within our challenging operating environment.

Welcome

Please welcome the following new employees to OBS:

Andrew Alford, Kylie Swan, Meg Ellis, Jade Vermaak, Brooke Meredith, Dallas Phipps, Sue Phipps, Mike King, Andrew Beohm, George Ambaras, Margie Groom, Sabra Budden, Sandra Darr, Carmel Ryan, Todd Brown, Marianne Antonio and Troy Criddle.

We also look forward to welcoming our second Regional Manager, Barry Orr, and Merchandise Manager James Thom in the coming month.

We wish all of our previous employees who have left us in the last quarter all the very best for their future endeavours



Jennifer and Alma with Sarah Connally at Barunga

Some of the key challenges in providing quality fresh fruit and vegetables include:

- » Limited refrigeration/ storage capacity
- » Limited display space in store
- » Old fridges which make it difficult to present the produce in an appealing manner
- » Limited shelf life of some items by the time they arrive in the store can make it difficult to maintain a variety of fruit and veg, particularly for very remote stores
- » Customers can be unfamiliar with new lines and therefore unsure what it tastes like or how to cook it



Relationship manager Paddy Stephensen explains the Money Story

Healthy Money Story important, too

At Outback Stores we say that a “Healthy store equals a healthy community”.



Wellbeing manager Julie Croft with Barunga store staff members Alma and Patricia Lee

A Healthy store needs a great range of healthy and nutritious fresh food at affordable prices but it also needs a healthy “Money Story” to make a store viable to be able to provide constant food security. Our promise to communities is to make real partnerships and provide open stories to help communities understand how retail stores work. We want to help store committees to make sound decisions about the running of their store with access to information they can understand. Money Story can also help Store Managers visualise the business and understand how what they do day-to-day affects the store.

Through our partnership with Little Fish and founder Hugh Lovesy we are finalising a process to provide quarterly store performance reports to our partner store committees using Money Story as a tool to communicate. Little Fish has lots of experience working with Indigenous people and communities to understand how to manage business and finance. Money Story is a pictorial and graphical way to present balance sheets, profits and loss and cash flow statements to help store committees understand their business. Money Story forms to the backbone of this information sharing but the delivery of the presentation really makes the difference.

Through Little Fish, our Store Managers and Relationship Managers will be accredited as Money Story presenters and in the near future a number of Outback Stores staff will be accredited as Money Story trainers so we can provide training “in-house” and on communities to our staff and member of store committees.

Recently, Outback Stores and information technology company CSG (our IT support provider) provided substantial funding to Little Fish to develop an automated computer program to take finance data straight from MYOB to produce Money

Award recognises Barney’s hard work



Barney Martin, of Engawala, won the award for best team member at the Central Region Store Manager Conference in Alice Springs.

“Barney is always smiley and friendly towards customers, keeps the shop tidy, knows the standard that we have at Engawala and that fruit and veg need to be displayed and shelves need to be fully stocked,” store manager Maz Lewis said.

“He helps people when they have questions. He can open the shop on his own, he has the responsibility, but most of all he is a happy, smiley face to everyone.”

Maz said Barney was very proud of winning the award and wanted to highlight what having a good team can do.

“He got people together to unload the truck and now kids come down after school and put rubbish in bin as they want the shop clean and tidy,” she said.

Motivation never wanes. Barney is a leading example of outback stores and their mission and he should be very proud.

Stories. The prototype program should be finished by Christmas and we hope to producing Money Stories “in-house” at Outback Store sometime in the new year.

Our Money Story program will become a substantial part of our promise to build real partnerships and provide food security in remote Indigenous communities throughout Australia. If you are interested in finding out more about Money Story feel free to contact Business Development or chat to Hugh Lovesy when you next see him.

News from the finance team

By Andrew Boehm
Finance Manager



New Stores are why we are here – to make positive differences to as many communities as possible.

Tennant Creek Opens



There has been a huge effort by many employees in preparation for the official handover of the Tennant Creek Foodbarn at the start of November.

It is Outback Stores' largest store yet, with seven checkout lanes.

Some red hot opening specials - rump steak \$7.99 per kilo, \$5.99 per kilo forequarter chops – will have contributed to high turnover in the first week.

NEW FACES

Many changes have occurred in the finance section as we recruit to cover growth and churn. We are delighted with the many people who have joined us as work colleagues and as we get to know each other, as friends. We are all getting much closer as space in the Darwin support office is at a premium.

In recent months, we welcomed Carmel, Sabra, Brooke, Marianne, Angela, Troy, Rachel and Camilla's daughter, Jade. As many are aware, we are delighted to hear of our Legal Manager Claire Denning's new adventures and equally saddened that these will see her move away from Darwin. We would like to welcome Jacqueline Puig who starts with us on the 3 December as her replacement.

BUDGETS

Great to have some budgets finalised albeit late and with some category allocation errors. We are thankful for Deloitte's assistance. Whilst every budget is out of date the day it is finalised, we are still pleased to have the budgets as indicative planning and control tools. Next year we intend to prepare budgets in a more timely manner and with greater precision on cost and revenue centre ownership.

SYSTEMS

One key objective for the balance of this financial year is to upgrade the financial system and integrate it with the Grocery Manager system. With a scalable finance system that has direct data extraction from the stores, we really expect the 2009/2010 year to be a great step forward for Finance.

A challenging agenda and time frame, with real capacity enhancing outcomes.

AUDITS

What is an Audit? This is where the books of each community store and the Outback Stores Company get checked by someone independent. Who is an auditor? These are accounting firms appointed by the store and OBS owners to do the checking (or sometimes referred to as the people who arrive after the battle and bayonet all the wounded). Louise Dutton and her team have been doing a fantastic job working through the Stores Auditor requirements. Elzabe Maartens from Deloitte has been equally fantastic in steering OBS through a successful audit.

NEW STORES

Here comes another one, and another one, and another ... as the speed steps up, Belinda Orme and her team have become more adaptive, efficient and effective. New Stores are why we are here – to make positive differences to as many communities as possible. Each new community means new mouths we can fill with healthy food. The finance side of the exercise in due diligence, administrative, legal and book-keeping is not as obvious as actually running the store, but is critical in risk mitigation and record keeping. We are really delighted with the volume of activity and the emergence of robust forward plans to assist in these tasks. Please welcome Hichem Demortier who starts with us in early December to do the financial analysis around new stores and assist with store budgets.



BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday to those who celebrated over the last three months – Annerieke Hams, Jan Loughnan, Todd Brown, Sandra Darr, Raquel Monkley, Eddie Miles, Martina Ramsden, Leo Hemara, Karl Kirgis, Ron Heidke, Gavin Moore, Bob Loughnan, Alexandra Mullins, Meg Ellis, Rosie Hewitt, Oran Mahony, Ruth Dare, Cherie Moore, Lawrence Watson, Steve Bryant, Louise Edwards, Brad Hutchings, Marilyn Lewis, Jacqui Napper-Bower, Kate Deacon, Kylie Swan, Kate McIntyre, Mike King, Darryl Lewis and Alan Hampshire.

Celebrating their birthdays in November are Peta Fraser, Jennifer Rasheed, Deb Hutchings, Megan Ferguson, Marianne Antonio and Jann Gilbert.

Hot topics in Human Resources

RECRUITMENT:

The HRM Team has been frantically recruiting across a range of occupations to keep up with the needs of our rapidly growing organisation!! In September we held our first centralised Store Management interviews using a panel of both Retail Operations and HRM over three days in Alice Springs. This process allowed us to fill our sixth Standard Training Program, which commenced on Monday, October 20, 2008.

The HRM Team had their hands full making the many detailed arrangements for this latest group of trainees and ensuring they all arrived at Berrimah safely and on time. We are now embarking on the next centralised Store Management interviewing panel in order to recruit for our 3 projected training Courses to run in 2009.

TRAINING:

Over the past eight weeks the Training and Development Unit has focused on improving the Store Manager Training Program along with creating an application for OBS to become a Registered Training Organisation!

The unit is in the final stages of developing the "In Store" Support Staff Training Program, which will be one of Outback Stores' greatest challenges but also one of its greatest achievements as we create more trained and long-term employment

opportunities within Indigenous communities.

Welcome to Training Facilitator Andy Alford who has recently joined the team as a trainer from Adelaide.



SMTP6 Group – (L to R) Dallas and Sue Phipps, Todd Brown and Sandra Darr, George Ambaras and Lesley Fraser. (Absent) Mike King.

TRAVEL :

Margie Groom, Travel Co-ordinator, is the central point for all company travel and has been streamlining the process along with saving money by creating a future budget that encompasses flights, accommodation and rental cars. Margie has been in heavy negotiations with various travel and accommodation suppliers. "The improvements made in turnaround for staff bookings are largely due to the increase in employees completing Travel

Request Forms. With forward planning and notification, this makes it much easier and is very much appreciated," Margie said.

PAYROLL:

We have been moving through some very big changes in Payroll and Tamara Thompson, Senior HR Officer, was our hands on deck co-ordinator! Tamara handled the transition of outsourcing our Payroll processing to an external provider (IR Squared). If you have been involved in any way, I'm sure you will agree that Tamara's has done an exceptional job! We would like to introduce Jasmin Forrest, Payroll Coordinator to the HRM Team and encourage you to extend a warm welcome to her. If you haven't already done so. Jasmin has implemented some excellent systems within Payroll!

VEHICLES:

Given our rapid growth, and building on the work already done, Outback Stores is taking stock of all its vehicle purchasing and management arrangements while continuing to support communities and store managers with the standard of vehicles and safety equipment necessary. Practical suitability of vehicles and safety equipment at the least cost is our single focus and all current users are being surveyed to obtain feedback on current vehicle and safety equipment suitability issues.

Point of sale solution on the way

By Scott Valentine

Information Technology news from IT Manager



The rollout will have delivered the new system to all store sites by the end of the year.

The project to deliver a new point-of-sale solution for the business is making good progress.

The new system has been rolled out to eight store sites - Angurugu, Bagot, Balgo, Barunga, Bulman, Engawala, Ringers Soak and Yarralin.

The rollout will have delivered the new system to all store sites by the end of the year.

Along with the new point-of-sale system, we are installing satellite broadband internet services, to both the store site and the store manager's residence in each location.

The cabling project at the Berrimah Training Centre has been completed, which has created new office spaces for the Human Resources, Information Technology and Wellbeing teams.

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