



# Initiatives

**CYBI Inc.**

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Volume 2, Number 3

July, 2004



*Anna Silkeci—Amor Beauty Care*

## A Beautiful Business

‘I just couldn’t imagine life now without the rush of running a business,’ says Anna Silkeci. It’s nine months now since she started Amor Beauty Care, and it has gone well. ‘It’s a lovely business, clients are really established at the moment,’ she says.

Amor’s customers come from all over Canberra, looking for more personalised service. ‘Working from home, I don’t treat them as a number, like they do in the big salons. I’ve got more time at home to focus on the individual,’ Anna explains.

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Anna offers much more than the basics. ‘I do advanced facials, skin care and make-up.’ There’s also Swedish body Massage, Aromatherapy, Nail technology, Electrology, Waxing & Tinting, and Ear piercing. Anna is fully trained, and she keeps her qualifications up to date. In addition to her training, she has many years experience in the beauty business. ‘I started at thirteen,’ she says. ‘I worked in different occupations after that, but I always went back to beauty.’

‘I managed a few salons, so practical work and organising clients comes naturally to me,’ she explains. ‘It’s always been on my mind to go on my own, but it took about a year and a half from the time I actually started to plan it to have the business plan set up.’ The full year course Anna undertook in beauty therapy included some marketing and business planning, but she did a lot of her own research as well. ‘I looked at books, at the web,’ says Anna. ‘I was going out and seeing what others were doing, not pinching ideas, but seeing how I could make myself different.’

It was because of her practical experience and training that Anna was able to complete a business plan to CYBI standards. Normally, CYBI participants have completed the NEIS training scheme, but in cases such as Anna’s where they are not able to do that for practical reasons, CYBI can consider applications, as long as the applicant can show they have a workable idea, have done their research and have the necessary skills, and are willing to do the work to prepare and implement the plan.

‘CYBI meant everything to me. They really gave me a chance - without them, I couldn’t have done it,’ Anna says. Like many others starting their own business, isolation can be a problem. ‘I’ve not been in touch with any of the other participants, although I met several of them, they’re all in different industries. I’d like more of that,’ she mentions. ‘I do miss the crowd and all my colleagues, but I know that one day I’ll be where I want to be, so I’m hanging

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## Potential for Small Business

**R**on and Bronwen Davis of Davis Consultancies Pty Ltd have made it their business to focus on small business, a segment with tremendous growth potential in the ACT. They have recently agreed to supply CYBI's administrative support services.

'Small home-based businesses are growing at a most surprising rate,' says Ron. 'I'd suggest there's a higher rate here than in Sydney per head of population.' Ron credits the success to higher education levels. 'There's a bit more drive for people to improve themselves.' Small business operators have many different backgrounds. 'They could be a housewife with a job on the side, perhaps caring for children. Some have their own job and are doing this after hours. Quite a lot are retired public servants who aren't ready to retire. It's a tremendously fast growing and dynamic area!'

Ron started Davis Consultancies after a long business career overseas. 'I lectured in small business management at Warnborough University College in Oxford,' Ron says. 'Then, I was a freelance business consultant in the UK, and the senior marketing analyst for one of the big marketing companies there. In the USA, I was Director of an Aerospace business in Florida, and I spent 12 months moving around the USA for

a venture capitalist company providing independent analysis of various business ventures.'

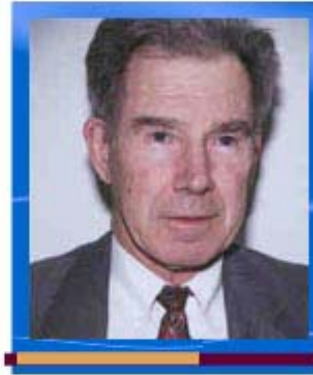
Ron saw his opportunity two years ago. 'One day, I saw some stats saying there were 15, 500 home-based businesses in the ACT,' he says. 'I knew there were a lot, but it hadn't dawned on me there were that many!' With his broad experience, Ron is able to offer a full range of services, from business planning to business mentoring, from the provision of virtual office services such as phone answering, mail address and boardroom hire to book-keeping and secretarial services. Ron's wife Bronwen provides expert

**'It's a tremendously fast growing and dynamic area!'**

*Ron Davis*

communication and editorial skills. Ron has also recently launched an innovative group mentoring scheme.

Of course, small business always has its difficulties. 'The big problem we see is cash flow, but they also have to have a product that's saleable, and they have to be motivated,' says Ron. Realism is important, too. 'You



*Ron and Bronwen Davis*

have to have a passion for what you're about to do, but be extremely pragmatic,' says Bronwen. 'You have to be able to see both the mountain tops and the valleys!'

The future for small business looks bright in the ACT. 'One of the real strengths is a very strong opportunity for networking,' says Ron. Of course, there is always some room for improvement. 'The ACT government is doing a good job, but I'd like to see the funding broadened to include more people. A lot of small businesses don't fit the template and therefore miss out,' explains Ron.

CYBI is happy to have Davis Consultancies Pty Ltd's support. Most of all, because our concept is very much a people-based one, we're happy that Ron and Bronwen believe in a personal touch. 'We're here to help,' they say. 'The coffee is always on, and you don't get menu trees when you ring us!' Their phone number is (02) 6285 1461 or web Page: [www.canberra-business-services.net.au](http://www.canberra-business-services.net.au).◊

### **Ponderings**

**'Failure is the condiment that gives success its flavor.'**

*Truman Capote*

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## CYBI focuses on Participant Support

In the last issue of *Initiatives*, we mentioned that we would try to include an update on the progress of some of our participants. Our feature story for the month updated you on **Anna Silkeci's** Beauty Care business. Tony Robinson reports that he has recently spoken to a number of other participants.

**Martyn Ellis** (featured in *Initiatives* September 2003) is going very well with his arboriculture business. He is working both for himself, and supporting a larger company.

CYBI recently accepted **Frank Wessing** and his iKandie business into the programme. Frank is a cartoon illustrator, who was working for Disney Productions for 6 years before moving to Canberra. He wants to buy a computer to produce high end animation for the major publishing houses.◊

## Effective communication

The theme of the free e-newsletter 'The Leading Edge Business Forum' for September, will be 'Effective communication - getting your message across.'

Marketing in general, and communication in particular, is often an area where small businesses fail to meet their potential. Another lively discussion in 'The Leading Edge' should produce some new ideas.◊



[www.cit.act.edu.au/bit/leadingedge](http://www.cit.act.edu.au/bit/leadingedge)

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## A Beautiful Business

in there!' This is a continuing area of focus for the development of CYBI's services to participants.

Like many others, Anna went into home-based business for lifestyle reasons. 'Because I have a young family, I like to be flexible and make time for the kids and me,' she says. 'The biggest challenge is managing myself, just being on the ball 24 hours. I'm always striving to satisfy customers, it's an ongoing challenge.'

Anna has a very methodical and determined approach to building her business. 'I'm growing and this is going to take a long time. Within the first two years, I just want to establish a sound foundation, and then slowly step up,' she says. 'Later on, perhaps I'll risk a bit more, but that's later. I want to have the foundation solid.'

Anna's advice to others wanting to start their own business? 'Take your time, really do your research, and set your goals, even if they're really short-term. They'll all add up in the end.' ◊

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