

## Elections and Small Business?

So we have an election in the near future !  
Does this affect Small Business and consequently Small Business owners and employees?  
There are clear business trends leading up to elections:-

@ the most obvious one is that the current government goes into caretaker mode and generally will not make any significant decisions or grant major contracts. If your business is one that relies on government contract you need to plan for this slow down to kick in at least 6 months before

@ one less obvious impact is on business to business trade. History shows that in the lead up to an election business to business trade also dries up. The effect doesn't appear to be limited to particular industries. There is no apparent logical reason for this to happen. Perhaps it just reflects the uncertainty businesses feel about election results and potential changes of government and any changes they may make to various policies.

**So - what can you do about it? Plenty!**

@ factor into your business plan for this period special promotions to keep the cash register full

@ there is a ready made theme for any marketing campaigns - e.g. *Vote 1 Focus Office Supplies*

@ use the marketing campaigns of the election as a guide to the latest in marketing trends and you may get ideas how you can promote your business better

@ you tube, video blogs via email or websites which not only gets your client's attention but also improves the search engine ranking

@ the major candidates need to use small amounts of time to get policies across and effectively are using an elevator speech to do that - look at the way they present their elevator speech to improve yours

@ take note of the layout of how to vote cards and all of the marketing material you will receive and look at the fonts, backgrounds and layouts and where and how they are photographed for effect. Card tables with the vote 1 signs on the side of the road combined with people under umbrellas reading books may not work. Plan ahead for the negative impact on your business so you do not get caught short. **Good luck!!**



## Price Bandits?

There is a well known story about a successful but independent men's hairdresser located in a busy suburban centre - they charged \$18 for a haircut. A chain of franchised hairdressers set up across the road from our independent hairdresser and to get market share rented a billboard nearby displaying the words "We do \$9 haircuts". The independent would go out of business if he tried to match this price and rather than do so, rented a billboard on their side of the road and in text and background much like the franchised operation displayed "We fix \$9 haircuts" - lateral thinking you must agree! "So what"? you may ask.

In the printer, fax and copier consumables world - toner and ink - much of the service revenue comes from service providers repairing damage caused by toner and ink cartridges which have been refilled or remanufactured by non manufacturer endorsed operators or third party (as the industry describes them) recycled efforts.

False economy it may well be to merely consider which brand of toner you should use based on the price alone and the fact that you are pleased to be doing your bit for the environment by purchasing a recycled product. *What is the real COST?*

- \$ - What is your cost per page?
  - \$ - How many pages does the cartridge print?
  - \$ - What happens with the cartridge when you are finished with it? Does your supplier support a Planet Ark disposal and component reusing programme?
  - \$ - Does the quality of ink or toner damage the fuser or printhead or any other part in your device?
  - \$ - If there is damage, who pays for the repair and what is the cost of the downtime - productivity?
  - \$ - Are there any odours coming from your laser device when the printer operates - when the toner is fused to the paper - ozone?
  - \$ - Do you get blotchy printing or are there parts of your printing missing?
  - \$ - Are you getting regular paper jams?
- Etc. the list goes on when it comes to things to consider on whether you are getting real value for your hard-earned cash !!  
Be aware and careful !!

**Cheap is not necessarily cheap!!**



## The Ten Commandments of Working in Big Bureaucracy

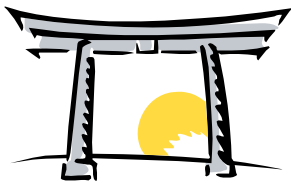
1. If it rings - put it on hold
2. If it clunks - call the repairman
3. If it whistles - ignore it
4. If it's a friend - stop work and chat
5. If it's the boss - look busy
6. If it talks - take notes
7. If it's handwritten - type it
8. If it's typed - copy it
9. If it's copied - file it
10. If it's Friday - forget it!



and, speaking of big bureaucracy .....

### Is there a crisis in Japanese banking?

Following last week's news that Origami Bank had folded, we are hearing that Sumo Bank has gone belly up and Bonsai Bank has plans to cut back on some of its branches. Karaoke Bank is up for sale and surprisingly it is going for a song. Meanwhile, shares in Kamikaze Bank have nose-dived and 500 back office staff at Karate Bank got the chop. Analysts report that there is something fishy going on at Sushi Bank and staff at Sushi fear that they may get a raw deal!



### Election facts -

*Australia has had 25 Prime Ministers - three of them have led more than once - Alfred Deakin, Andrew Fisher and Robert Menzies.*

**Both Deakin (Protectionist & Fusion) and Menzies (United & Liberal) represented two different parties as Prime Minister.**

*The shortest terms as Prime Minister were Francis Forde (7 days), Earle Page (19 days), John McEwan (22 days replacing Harold Holt who disappeared) and Arthur Fadden (39 days).*

9 of Australia's 25 Prime Ministers were born in Victoria, NSW - 7, Queensland, Scotland and England 2 each, Tasmania, South Australia and Chile 1 each.

*9 of the Prime Ministers were lawyers, 4 were unionists, Farmers - 3, accountant and school teacher 2 each, coal miner, shopkeeper, doctor, electrician and train driver one each - no women?*

Only 6 of the 25 Prime Ministers was Treasurer before becoming Prime Minister - the shortest term as Treasurer being Bob Hawke for one day.

### October 2007 Quiz

1. What party did the first Prime Minister represent and how many parties have Prime Ministers represented?



2. Who was the youngest prime minister and how old and who was the oldest and how old?

3. If John Howard wins the upcoming election he will move into his 12<sup>th</sup> year in the job. What anniversary will he celebrate (e.g. paper = 1<sup>st</sup>)

Email answers to [editor@focusofficesupplies.com.au](mailto:editor@focusofficesupplies.com.au) or fax to (02)95534077. **Win movie tickets for two with all answers correct.**

Your details:-

Name: .....

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**September Quiz Answers will be in the November Focus Times.**

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