

MEDIA RELEASE

Victoria's best businesses embracing social media

22 June 2012 – The overwhelming majority of the State's leading businesses named as finalists for the 2012 Telstra Victorian Business Awards have adopted social media for marketing.

Analysis of the 23 finalists for this year's Awards – which for the first time includes a specialist category for small business start-ups – shows that all of the businesses have adopted social media, with the top platform being Twitter, followed by LinkedIn and Facebook.

Telstra Business Group Managing Director and Telstra Business Awards Ambassador, Will Irving, said it was clear that the best small businesses had taken to the internet and were using it to gain a business advantage.

The analysis also showed:

- All 23 finalists have their own website;
- Almost three quarters of businesses updated their website at least monthly, while more than a third updated their site at least fortnightly;
- Many invested in Search Engine Optimisation with 91 per cent of finalists having their website appearing on the first page, with almost half in the top three results; and
- More than 82 per cent of the businesses had a structured system to monitor their social media presence.

Mr Irving said: "It is also interesting to see that almost two thirds of Victorian finalists are using the internet as a way to better connect with their customers.

"They have embraced technology such as online surveys and social media platforms to broaden the reach of their business and communicate with customers in new ways and to find out about potential suppliers too.

"All businesses understand customer service is a key to success and it is great to see these leading businesses investing to better communicate with and serve customers in our increasingly competitive world."

According to the finalists of the 2012 Telstra Victorian Business Awards, they are experiencing a strong level of customer satisfaction, with an average of 94 per cent of their customer base satisfied.

The 2012 finalists include a beauty company providing grooming products specifically for men, an engineering business that designs and manufactures custom and purpose-built machinery, a hearing aid developer, retailer and distributor which specialises in online delivery of self-fit hearing aids and an SMS text messaging company that provides the technology as a business communications tool for the health and emergency services industries.

The finalists for the 2012 Telstra Victorian Business Awards are:

HTC Start-Up Award

Beaspoke Safety	Kensington
Beauty Mate Men's Grooming Products	Port Melbourne
Brownie Points Australia Pty Ltd	Melbourne
KeepCup Pty Ltd	Fitzroy
Lantern Ghost Tours	Williamstown
The Pets Hotel	Port Melbourne

News Ltd Micro-Business Award

b.box for kids	Carnegie
Firestarter Pty Ltd	North Melbourne
PlanCost Australia Pty Ltd	Research
Snowy Creek Engineering	Freeburgh
Vern Ryan's Pet Resort	Balliang East

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MYOB Small Business Award

Affirm Software Group	Melbourne
BikeExchange.com.au	South Melbourne
Blamey & Saunders Hearing Pty Ltd	East Melbourne
Key Business Advisors pty ltd	Essendon
Mobius Institute Pty Ltd	Merricks North
RIHAC	Maidstone

Commonwealth Bank Medium Business Award

Commercial Eyes Pty Ltd	ABBOTSFORD
Connective	Melbourne
Kiandra IT	Melbourne
MessageMedia	Melbourne
Odecee	Melbourne
SignManager	Ringwood

Telstra Regional Award

Brownie Points Australia Pty Ltd	Melbourne
Mobius Institute Pty Ltd	Merricks North
PlanCost Australia Pty Ltd	Research
Snowy Creek Engineering	Freeburgh
Vern Ryan's Pet Resort	Balliang East

Five Victorian businesses will also vie for the 1300Australia People's Choice Award with winners chosen by public vote. The finalists are The Coaching Institute from South Melbourne, Lore Tuition of Braybrook, Moo from Nunawading, RIHAC and Searchwords from Richmond.

Winners of the Telstra Victorian Business Awards will be announced at Docklands in Melbourne on 31 July 2012. They will receive a share of the \$500,000 in cash and prizes, become part of an exclusive national business alumni, and proceed to the national Awards in Sydney on 29 August, 2012.

Tickets to the event can be purchased by visiting telstrabusinessawards.com or call the Telstra Business Awards Team on 1800AWARDS between 9am and 7pm AEST Monday to Friday.

Media contact: Peter Habib 0417 100 191 Telstra
 Media contact: James Howe 0488 065 058 Telstra
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