

Centrestage

Keeping you up with the play in the Central City.

March 2nd 2008



CCBA
CHRISTCHURCH

CENTRAL CITY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Project City Mall

Works are proceeding through High Street mall but there is a growing feeling of discontent from the businesses and property owners on the speed of the works.

I have had a number of concerned people speak with me over the last week airing their concerns on how long the works are taking. Some business turnovers have been seriously affected and they are asking how can we speed things up.

Some have suggested that more work should be completed at night outside normal trading hours. Some believe there should be more workers on the job.

Whatever the answer is to those questions, Council will need to look at some viable solutions to ease these concerns. They will need to work closely with the businesses, listen to their concerns and address the issues quickly for this project to continue on a smooth route.

We all want to see the City Mall upgrade happen but not at the expense of losing businesses along the way.



Paul Lonsdale, CCBA Manager



Service lane foundation in place and pedestrian ways being prepped for paving.

Gaining a competitive edge

Too often we hear about the poor level of service being given to customers. It's a point of contention when people spend their hard-earned discretionary dollars and get poor service.

Spending discretionary money is meant to make us feel good but if we receive poor service while doing it, we'll think twice about repeating the scenario. It is important that retailers look hard at how they handle their customers. Customer experiences are how customers remember us and our businesses. It's the difference between customers coming back or not; recommending the business to others or not.

For many the experience starts and finishes with parking. How do our customers feel in our city car parks? Do the opening hours suit them? What are our competitors doing and do we compete?

The city's main competitors are, without a doubt, suburban shopping centres: open seven days a week with consistent shopping hours and free carparking.

Hard to beat? Maybe. I would like to think that we too can come to an agreement on consistent trading hours – it's critical if we wish to compete with our competitors. We also need to look at what else we can do to gain a competitive advantage. Ask yourself, when did you last have a great customer experience? If you can't remember, your customers probably can't either. We have a huge opportunity to change that and reap the rewards: giving ourselves a competitive advantage over others and giving customers a reason to talk about us to others.

Providing good customer experiences doesn't just happen. It requires planning,

decision-making and doing it!

The reward is a stronger relationship with customers, leading to greater loyalty and advocacy. For employees, it's the opportunity to work in organisations which encourage them to be the best they can be.



Keep your customers smiling and keep them loyal

