



Manager's Report

Business Trust Marlborough 2015/2016

Overview of the Year

During the 2015/2016 year Business Trust Marlborough experienced a continued increase in demand across all services provided.

Key Events

1 July 2015: Business Trust Marlborough commenced operating as an independently from the Nelson Tasman Business Trust and contracted directly with Business Mentors NZ to provide Mentor Management services.

9 November 2015: Ian Kearney stepped down as Chair and was replaced by David Hall. Brendon Burns was appointed as Deputy Chair and Sue Avery as Secretary at the AGM held in November.

1 January 2016: the Mentor Manager function was reconfigured so this service is now provided under contract to the Nelson Regional Development Authority as the Regional Business Partner (RBP) contract holder. The reconfiguration has fostered closer working relationships with other providers within the RBP network and is aimed at providing a "One Stop Shop" for business support. Significant time was spent preparing an application in response to the Request for Proposals from the RBP. The response to this was disappointing and a meeting was held with Stuart Smith MP to provide this feedback.

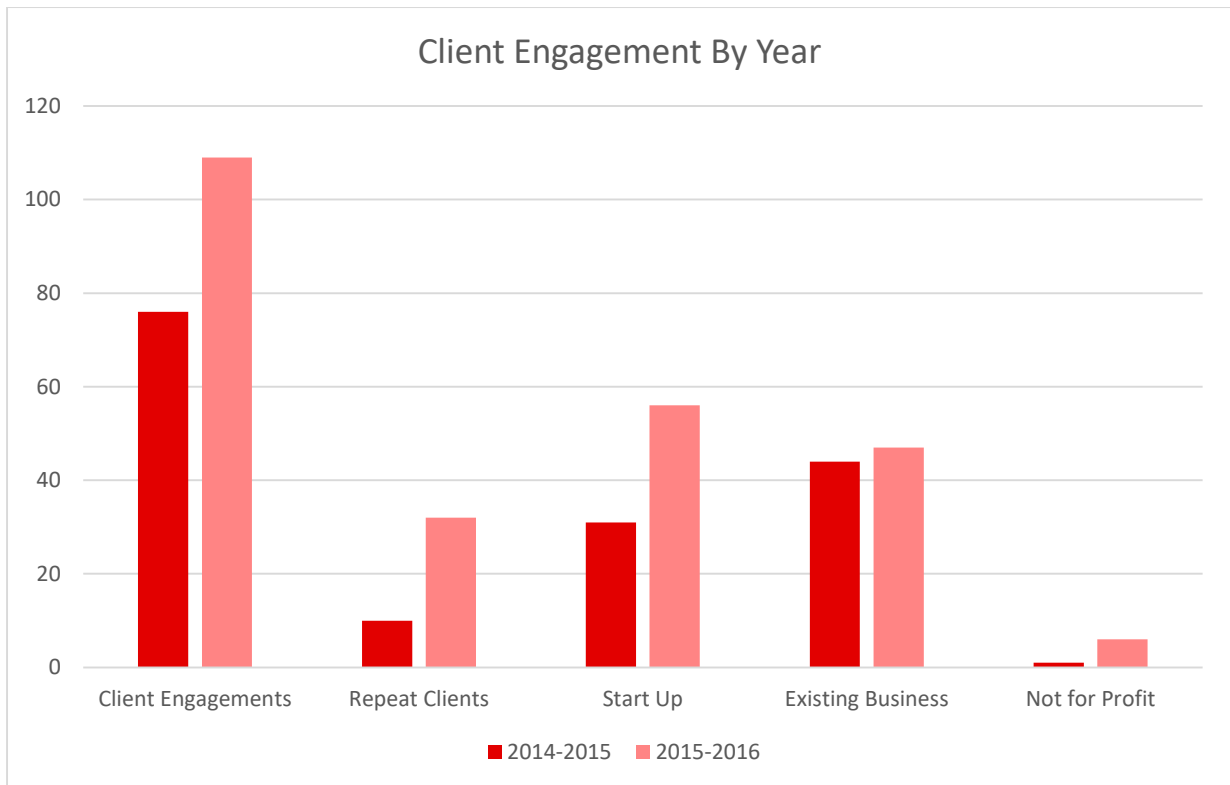
7 June 2016: Formation of a sub-committee for the purposes of forward planning. Members appointed were John Coull, Graham Gosling, Roger Gill and Sue Avery.

Services:

One to One Business Assistance

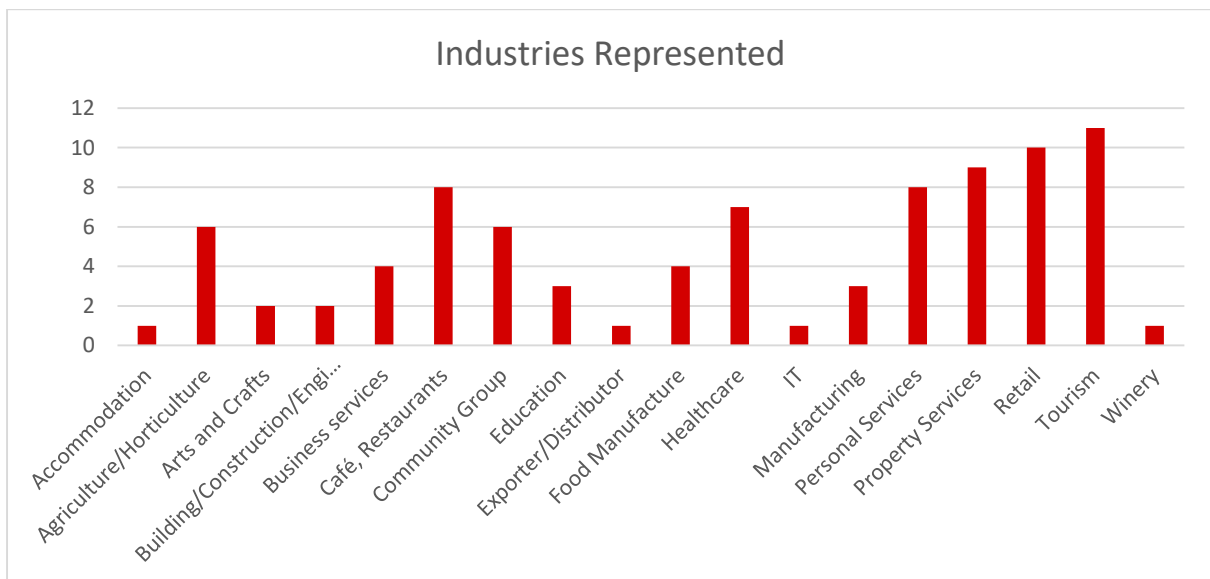
Client engagements totalled 109 for the 2016 year an increase of 38% over the 2015 year.

Repeat clients increased dramatically from 9 in 2015 to 32 in 2016. This is reflective of the number of start-ups accessing the service requiring more than one session.



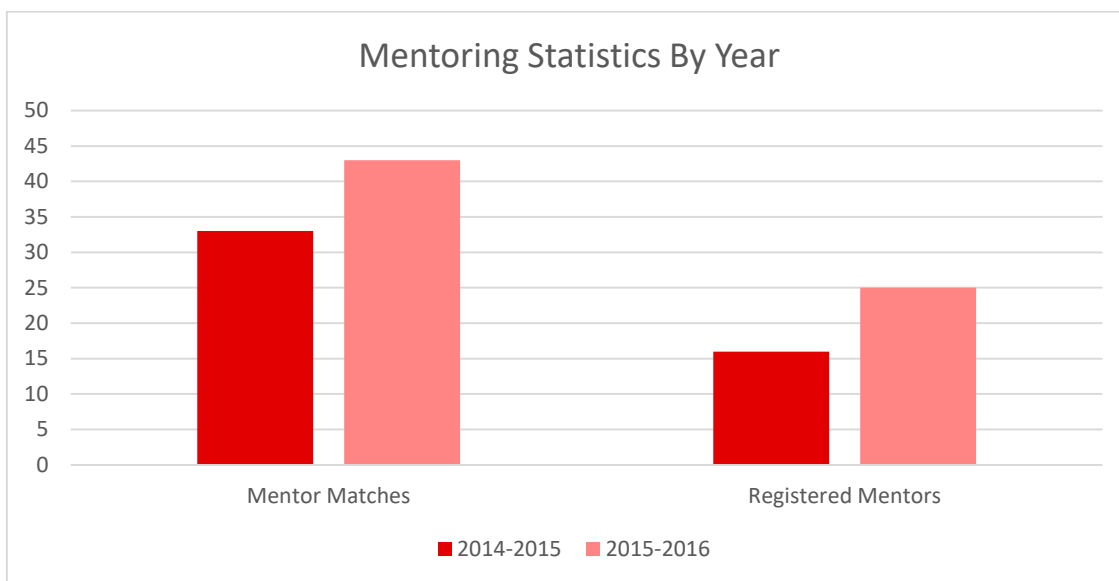
A total of 199 referrals were made to other support organisations such as the Smart Business Marlborough, Callaghan Innovation, Marlborough Research Centre, the Marlborough Chamber of Commerce, Destination Marlborough, NMIT, central government organisations such as ACC, IRD, Immigration NZ, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, WINZ and local business networking groups.

Clients accessing the service represented a wide range of industries with tourism based businesses and retail businesses being the most common.



Business Mentoring Service

As shown below mentor matches and the number of mentors available increased during the year.



Business Trust Marlborough was rated as one of the best Mentor Agencies in the country in a BMNZ client survey report released in June. The survey results showed 100% of respondents rated the service as good or excellent and 100% would recommend the service to others. Business Trust Marlborough was rated second equal nationally for meeting KPIs such as promptness of response, level of follow up, helpfulness of mentoring advice and overall satisfaction.

Not For Profit Groups: As part of the Business Mentors NZ Community Mentors scheme we have been contacted by several local not for profit community groups. We currently have four mentors engaged with not for profit groups the services of which include social services, employment services, support for migrants and newcomers to Marlborough and historic preservation and tourism interests. The Rata Foundation (formerly the Canterbury Development Trust) has contacted management and is now actively referring not for profit groups to Business Trust Marlborough for mentoring support. This is an area where demand is expected to grow over the next 12 months.

This is an area where I can see a need for more Mentors with specific experience in dealing with the issues faced by the growth of Not for Profits. I would like to run a specific recruitment campaign and am looking into the possibility of sourcing funding from the Department of Internal Affairs for this.

Business Training Events

Two “Kickstart Your Business” workshops were scheduled to be held during the year. Due to presenter availability the second workshop was held in July.

Both workshops were well attended, the second being fully booked at least a week beforehand. Feedback on the course content and presentation was overwhelming positive. It is envisioned that Business Trust Marlborough will continue to hold these events as the need is identified from clients accessing the service.

Looking forward I would like to change the format of these events and bring in different speakers, including registered Business Mentors speaking in their areas of expertise rather than outsourcing this.

Client Survey Results

A survey undertaken of clients accessing the service in the 2015-2016 year produced the following results.

- 96% of respondents would recommend this service to others
- 92% of respondents found the service either “very helpful” or “helpful”
- 48% indicated they were able to make more informed business decisions
- 44% indicated they were able to identify more business opportunities and increased motivation
- 32% of respondents were just starting out in business and 32% had been in business over 5 years with the remainder of respondents having been in operation for between 1 – 5 years.

Funding

An increase in the existing funding of \$5,000 was received from Marlborough District Council and confirmed for the following year also. The Rata Foundation also provided funding of \$10,000 which was an increase of \$5,000 over the previous year. Employment Support Marlborough has also been very generous with their assistance during the year.

During the year some effort has been spent seeking a permanent office space and the funding for this. Specific applications for funding to cover a lease were made to the Lion Foundation, Pub Charity and more recently Lifetime Financial Services. All were unsuccessful.

Appointments

Additional Trustees were sort, resulting in four new Trustees being appointed, John Coull, Neville Higgison, John Baird and Tony Jordan. A Council Representative Trustee, Roger Gill was also appointed.

Networking Events/Promotions

Profile among the Marlborough Business Community was boosted through attendance at some of the Network Room Business breakfasts, Blenheim Business Association meetings, Harcourts networking lunch, various Chamber of Commerce events, the MBIE Roadshow in Nelson and Callaghan Innovation events as well as meeting with individual Business Mentor, Jane Tito – MDC Smart Business Officer and Tracy Johnson – DM Manager.

A presentation was made to the Marlborough District Council Planning and Funding Committee in August and a meeting arranged with Stuart Smith MP.

Two mentor networking functions were held during the year to allow mentors a chance to discuss strategy and compare notes on mentor approaches. Both events were well attended.

I also attended the RBP training day in Wellington in March which provided some excellent contacts and resources.

During the year several newspaper articles have been written featuring Business Trust Marlborough clients and the help they have received from the service. Management has also been contacted for comment and quoted in articles on the current state of the business community in Marlborough. The MDC has also included promotional material in its section in the mid-week paper about our

services and the Mentor Client Survey results. In addition we have also been able to access a free advertising spot in the This and That magazine.

Connections

Business Trust Marlborough now has a database of over 180 businesses and client. Contact is maintained via emails which are targeted toward specific businesses and opportunities available. During the year a Facebook page has been set up and additions made to the website of News and Events pages as well Trustees' photos and biographies. Use of boosted posts on the Facebook page have been useful in publishing in our Kickstart training courses.

Business Trust Marlborough have also joined the Blenheim Business Association and Volunteer Marlborough during the year, relationships which promise to have mutual benefits.

Under the RBP arrangement quarterly meetings have been held with the other providers under the RBP top of the South contract.

A close working relationship with Jane Tito, the Smart Business Officer at the Marlborough District Council has also been developed and proved extremely beneficial.

Summary

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chair David Hall for his support during the year and indeed all of the Trustees for their guidance and backing. I would also like to acknowledge the input from our wonderful Mentors who do so much all on a volunteer basis.

Over all the 2015/2016 year was a year of growth in terms of client and mentor numbers and profile. I see a great deal of potential for further growth with this service and I look forward to the challenges of 2016/2017.

Sue Avery

Manager

Business Trust Marlborough