

CASE STUDY

Hocking Stuart Ballarat

Open for business is a collaborative regional project by rural and deaf access workers in the Wimmera and Grampians Region to improve access to and within business for people with disabilities, enabling increased participation in their communities and increasing the customer base of participating businesses.

I'm Tim Valpied from Hocking Stuart Ballarat and we're at 1211 Sturt Street (Ballarat). 13 Years we've been going and so we've only recently relocated to this building.

Why did you relocate your office?

We were in a two-storey building which was awkward, it spanned across three shop fronts but only had a single shop front and we really only had one access point which was Sturt Street so we wanted to get everything on one level, just better for staff and obviously better for our clientele as well.

What have you implemented to help those with a disability?

Quite alot, previously, look it's fair to say and it's embarrassing to say we wouldn't have been able to cater for many people with a disability, particularly if they needed to use a bathroom or needed to access some of the parts of our office, we just didn't have that ability at all whereas here we have access both from front and rear.

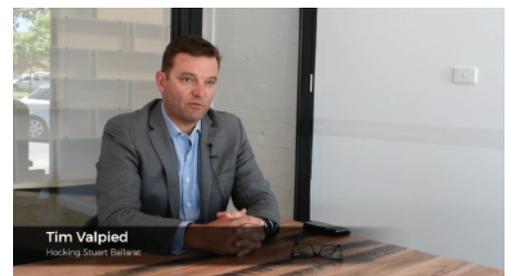
We also have a car space and ramp access as well, plus all the bathrooms are set-up for a disabled bathroom and an ambulant bathroom as well, so it's been transformed in that respect and all on one level, there are no stairs.

How have your staff changed to cater for those with a disability?

I think more than anything the staff have now, given what we've had to provide with the new building, I think the staff have become more aware and obviously the fact that we can cater for really anyone, now we are in a position and the staff are aware of that we have the ability to help people out and see them on the premises

Would you recommend other small businesses to implement similar initiatives?

I think from other businesses, if you are not catering for people with disabilities, you are really probably cutting your own business short as well but in respect to [the fact that] it's not always possible in some of the older buildings in Ballarat but if people have got the ability to do it, I would say make sure you do, absolutely.



OPEN YOUR BUSINESS

to 20% more customers

did you know?



1 in 5

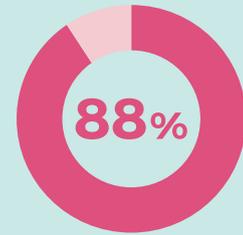
of your potential **customers** have a disability



1 in 3

are close to someone with a **disability**

there are many types of disabilities



of disabilities are not **visible**

how is this beneficial to your business?



MULTIPLY
your customer base



GROW
your business



INCREASE
your profits

how can your business be more accessible?

RESPECT
the customer

TALK
to the customer

PROMOTE
accessibility

POSITIVE
attitude

ASK
if you are unsure