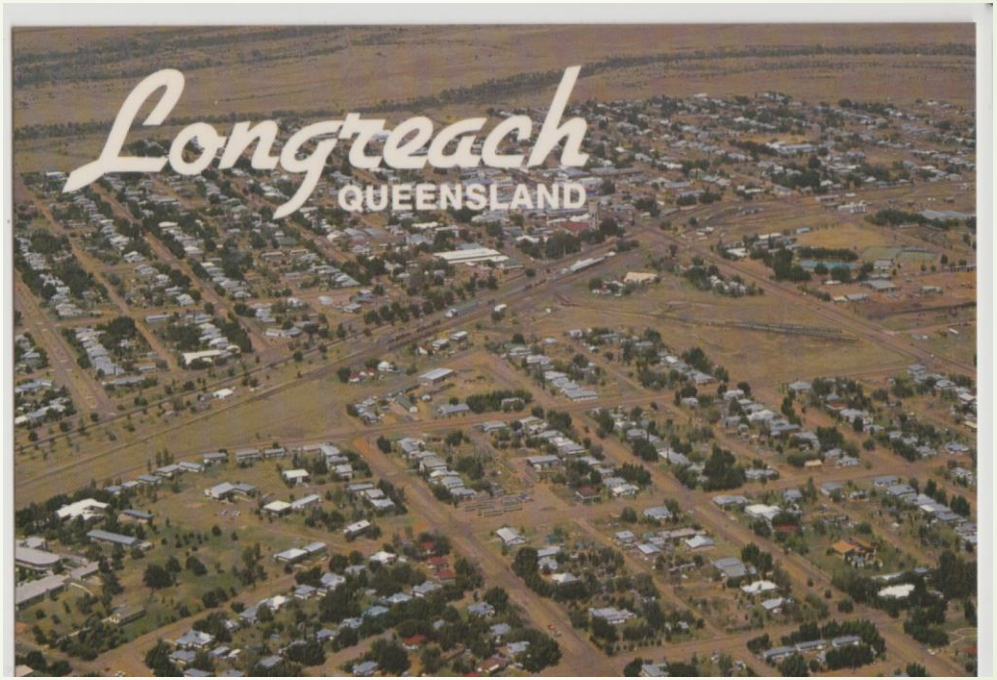
"Avoid the Bland: build community wow factor"

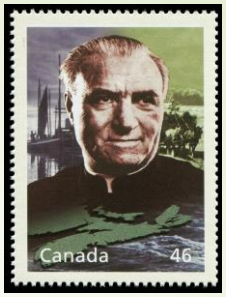


2026 National Small Town Reinvention Conference Presentation by Peter Kenyon



Longreach Main Street, 1971

Rev Moses Coady, Nova Scotia



"The person who has ceased to learn ought not to be allowed to wander around in these dangerous times"

Small Town Australia

1702 towns under 10,000 people containing 9.7% of total population

88 Towns 5000-10,000
526 towns 1000-5000
1088 towns <1000

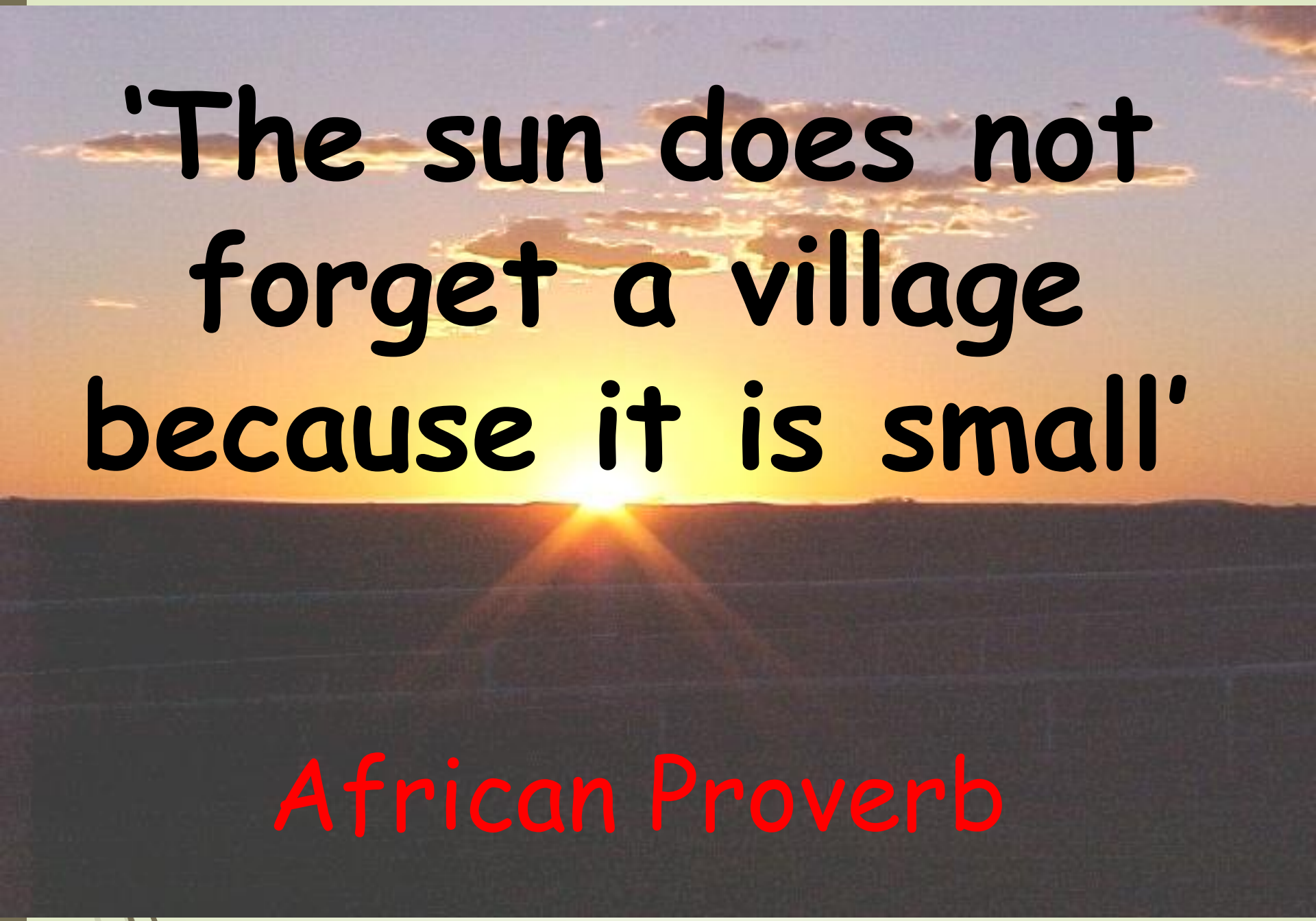
'The nice thing about living in a small town is that when you don't know what you're doing, someone else does'

-Source Unknown


OUR TOWN IS SO SMA
WE DON'T HAVE A TOWN
DRUNK SO WE ALL
TAKE TURNS

Richard Russo

'People in small towns, much more than in cities, share a destiny'


'The sun does not forget a village because it is small'
African Proverb

International Evidence - Small Town Reinvention

- Continually generate local leadership.
- Activate community engagement and connection.
- Ensure a positive and can-do community mindset.
- Be asset and opportunity obsessive.
- Build community WOW factor.
- Create livability appeal.
- Create support for entrepreneurial aspirations and initiatives.

Tip 1.

Have fresh eyes!

"The hardest thing to see is what is in front of your eyes"

-Johann Wo
von Goethe



OUR CHALLENGE

We become-

- town blind
- business blind
- Mainstreet blind
- town entrance blind….

Tired Signage






GOD BLESS
THE OUTBA


BRANXTON LIONS CLUB
WELCOMES
CAREFUL DRIVERS
We have
two cemeteries
no hospital
LIONS
L
MEETS AT
GOLF CLUB
BRANXTON

Tired Infrastructure





Empty Shops = Dying Town

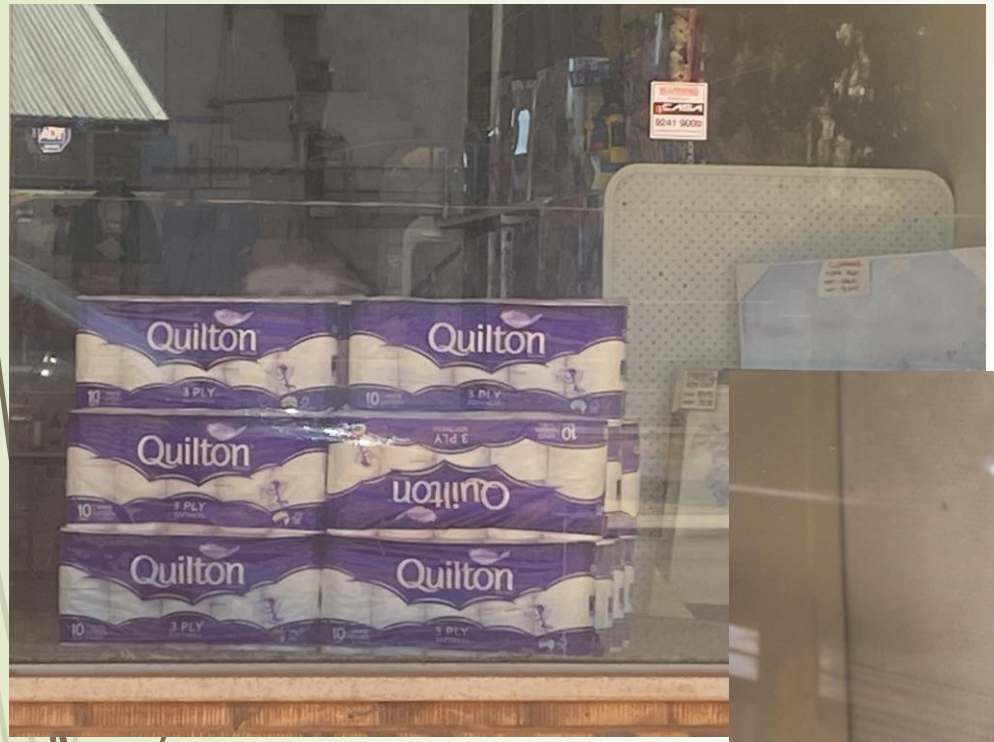


Fading Murals





Lazy Shop Window Displays





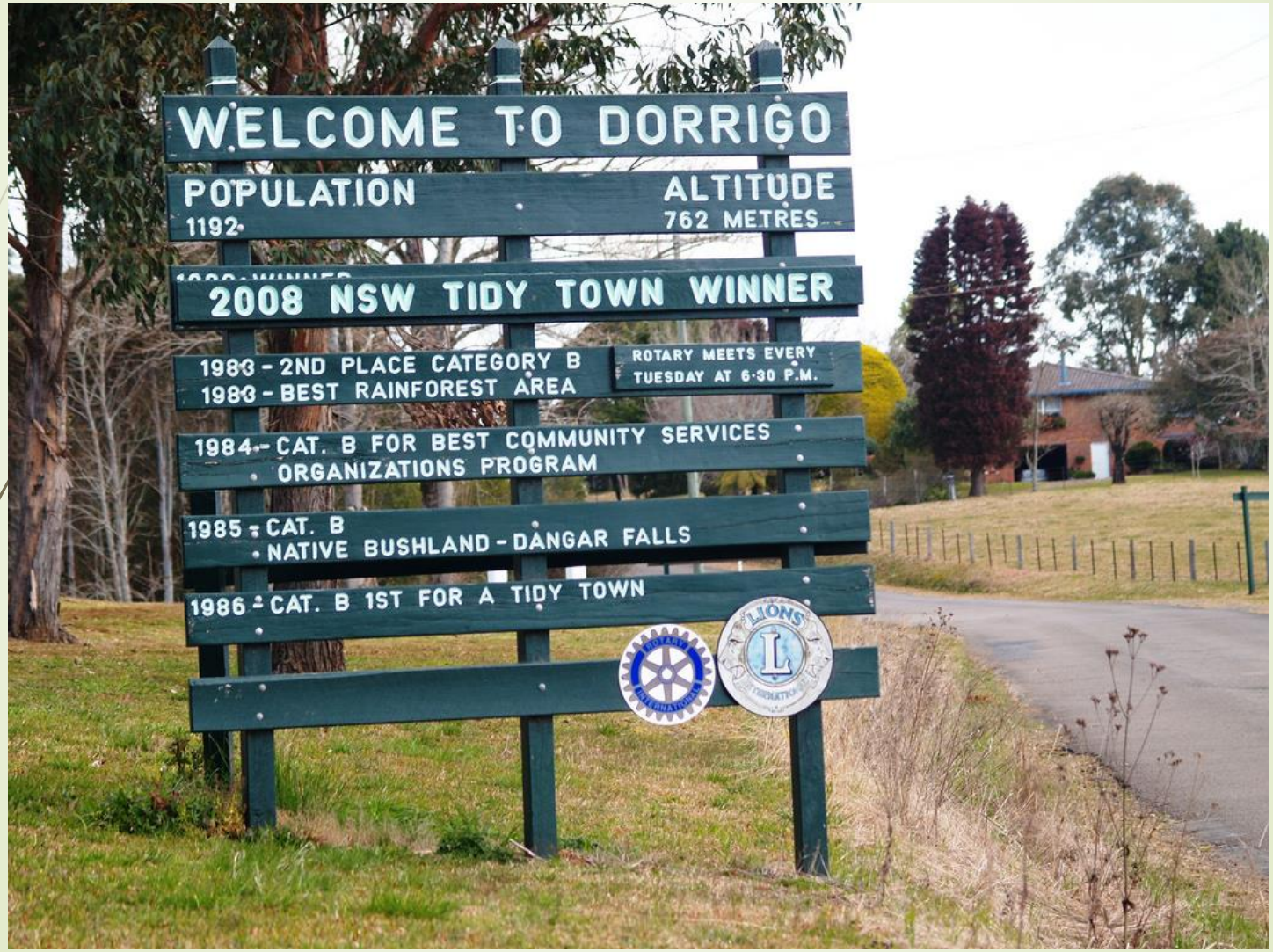

SALTED CASHEWS
SALTED PEANUTS
SALTED MIXED NUTS
Jubes
BUTTER SCOTCH
SLIPPERS


BERRI
FRUITS

First Impressions Matter!!



Irrelevant, Dated and crowded Signage



Tip 2.

Create experience and have fun! !

"If you're not having fun, you're doing it wrong"

-Alex Bogusky




CAKE SHOP
BAKERY
THE BEECHWORTH BAKERY
PIES & PASTIES
CAKE SHOP
BREAD & CAKES


Premier


CAL WINES
QUALITY LOCAL PRODUCE
OF FINE FOODS
LOCAL CHEESES
SMOKED MEATS
THE FINER THINGS OF LIFE
LARDER
NINE MILE MUSIC
CENTRAL
CLASSIC JEWELLERY
PIE EATING COMPETITION


Buy 1 sml
Beesting
get 1
for 10¢


SHOP
BEECHWORTH BAKERY
BAKERY
SURANCE SAVINGS INVESTMENT


Fashion
pictures

Tip 3.

Be quirky, stimulate curiosity & stand out!

'"What makes you different or weird, that is your strength"

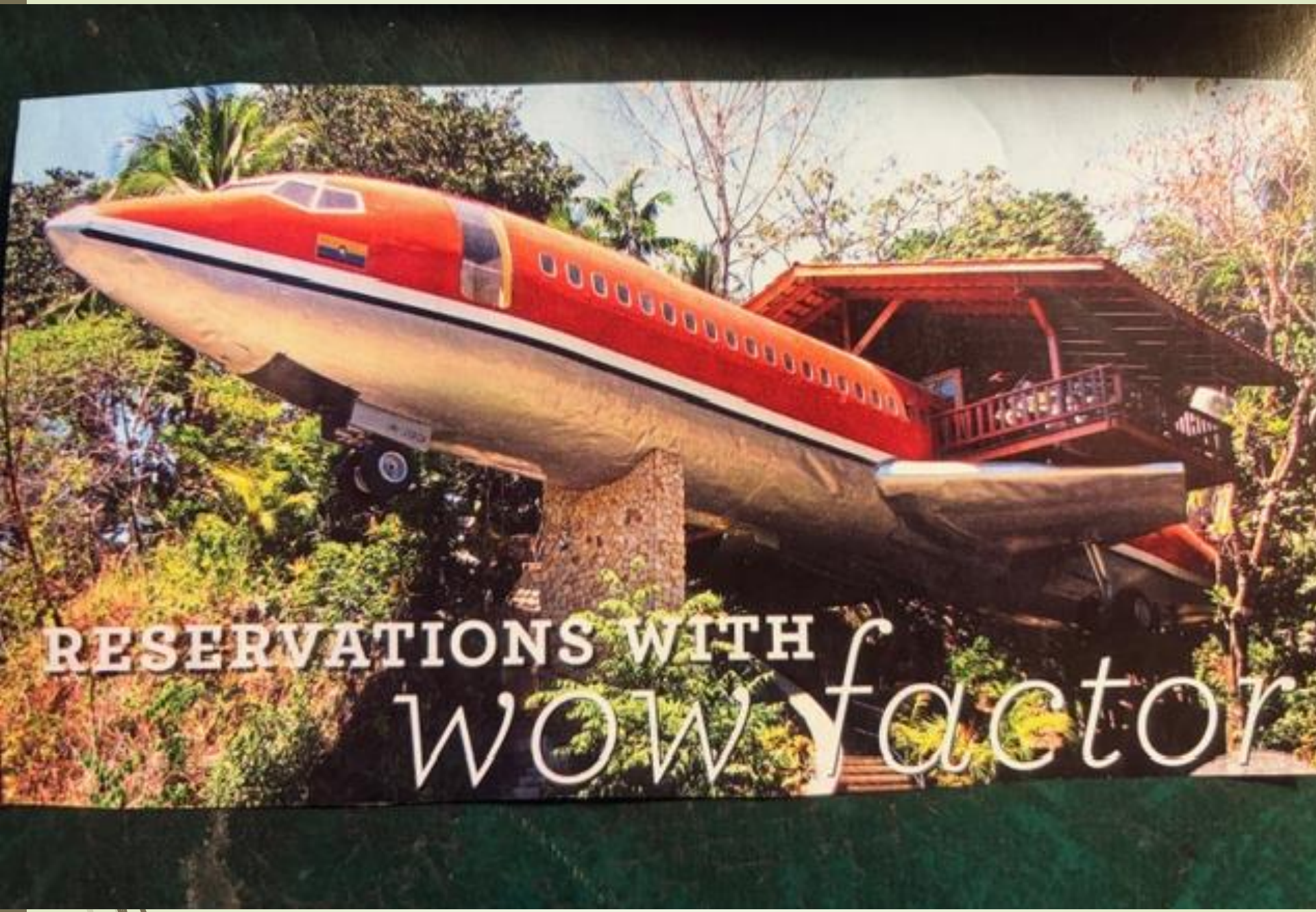
- Meryl Streep

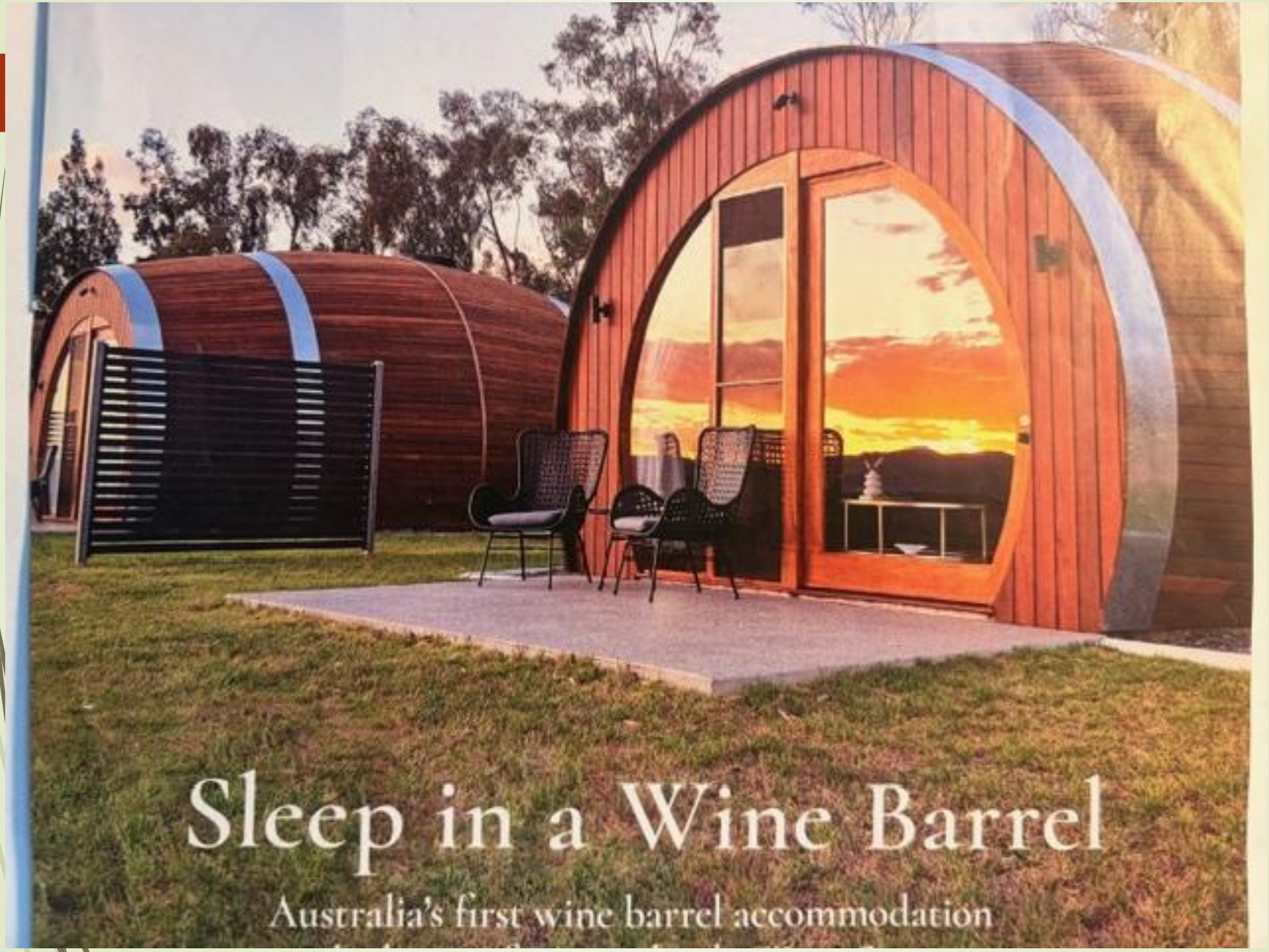


Rabbit Trap Hotel, Albert, NSW






RESERVATIONS WITH
wow factor


Sleep in a Wine Barrel
Australia's first wine barrel accommodation

Welcome Hime Restaurant, Longreach





Creative Town Entrance Statements

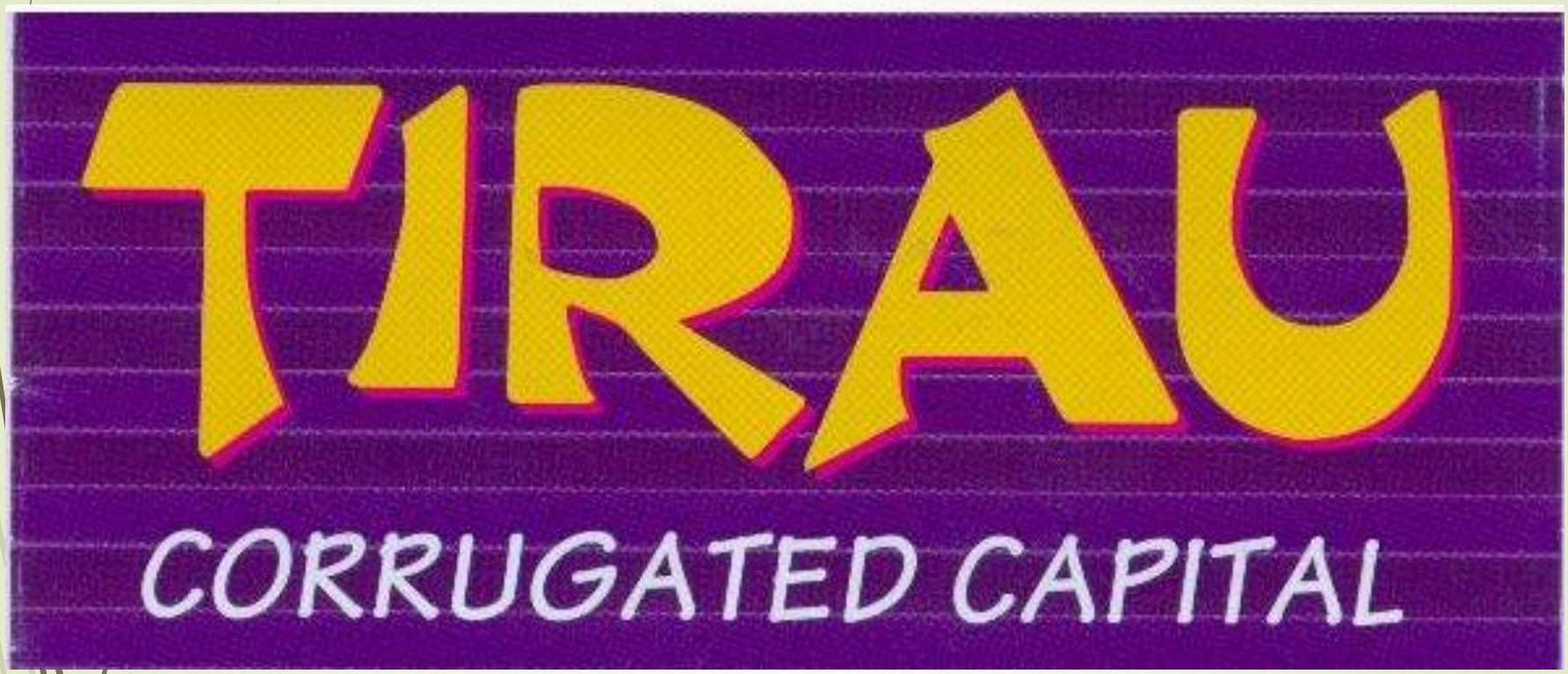


Hundertwasser Toilets in Kawakawa, New Zealand





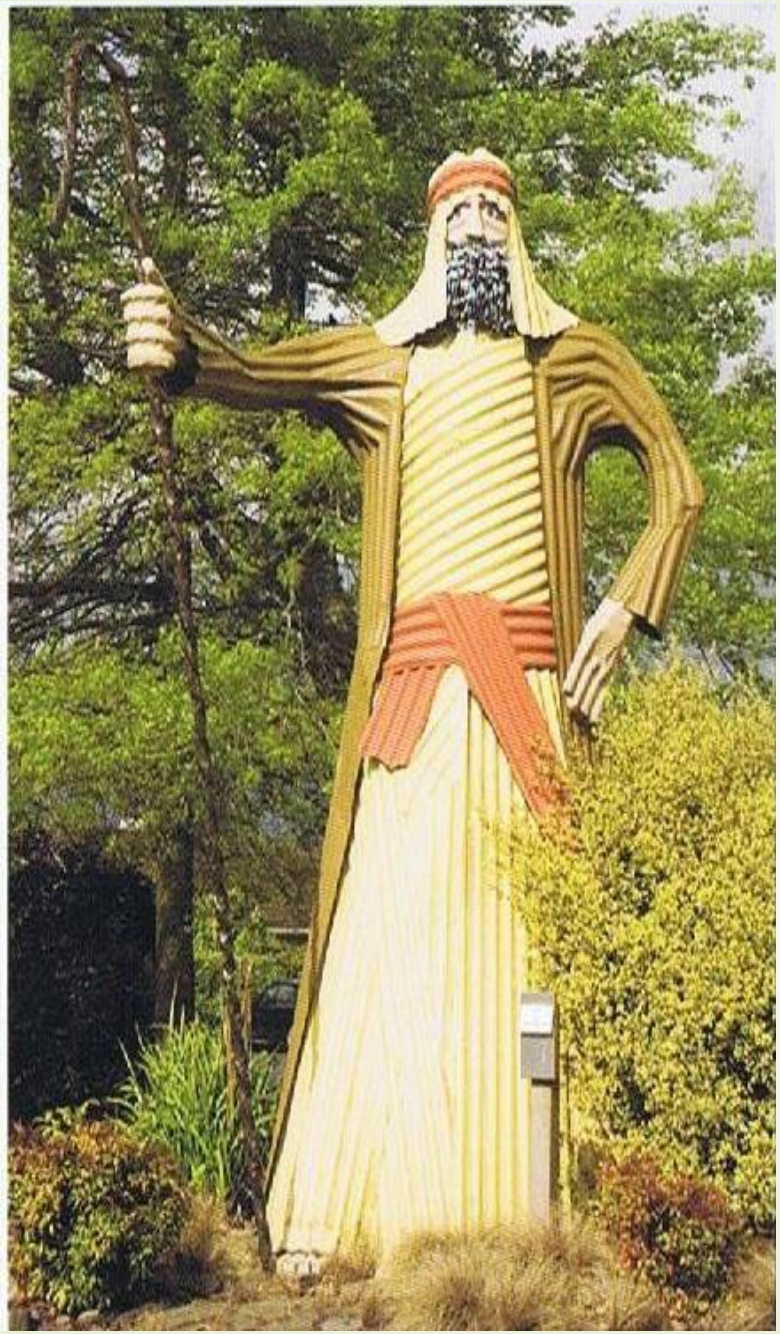


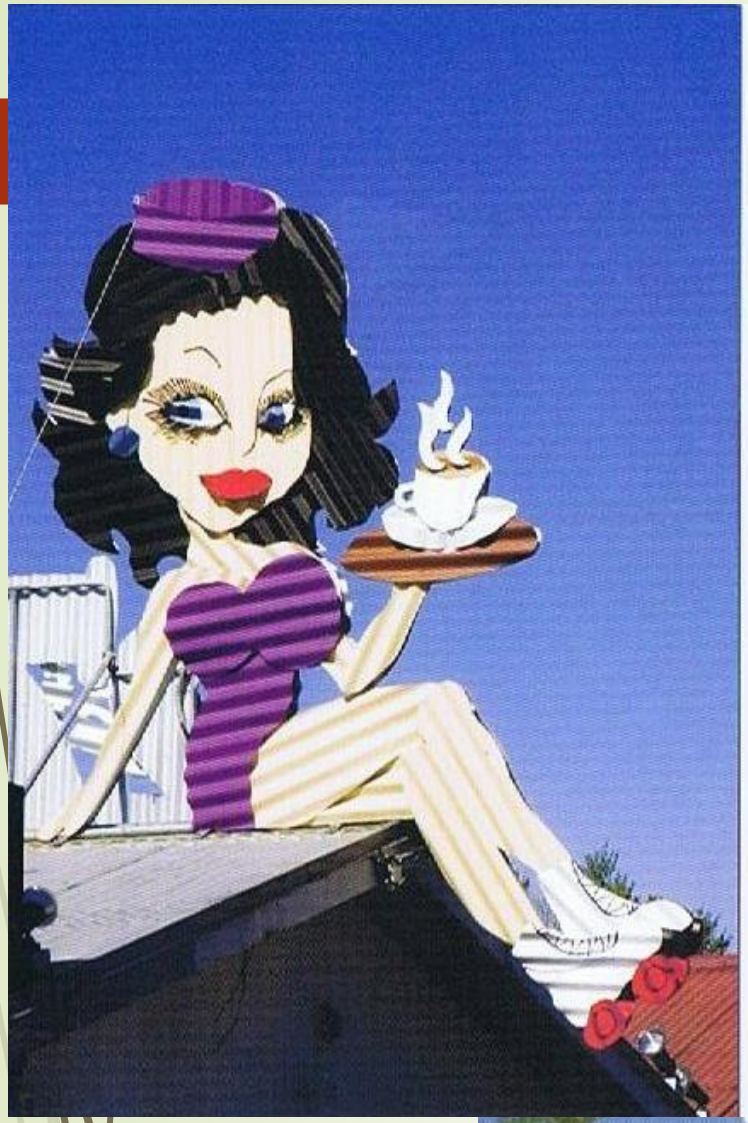

TIRAU
CORRUGATED CAPITAL

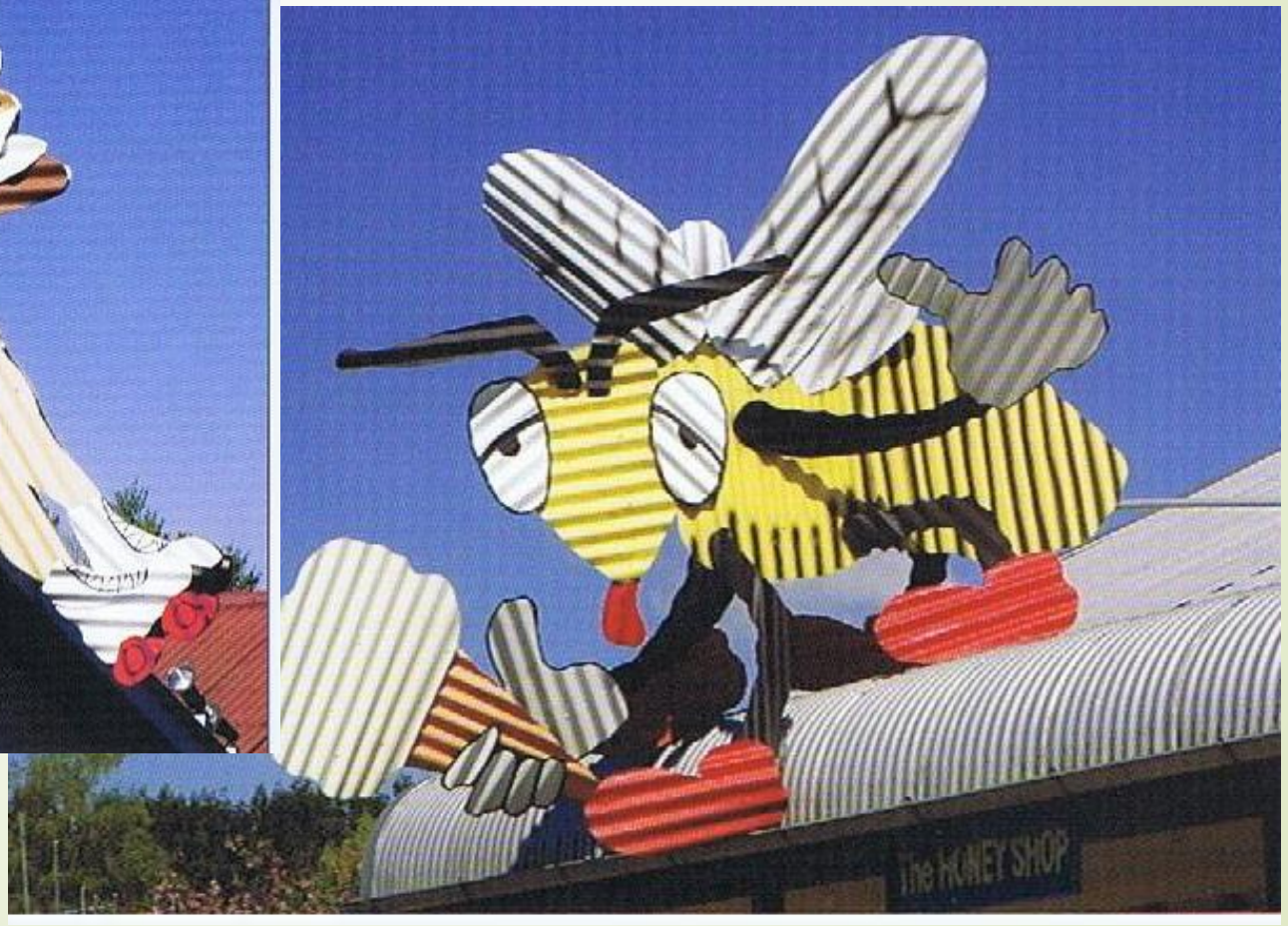



Information
Bookings
Travel
Accommodation
Tours \ Activities
Gift Shop
Visitor Information
C TOILETS
5pm Daily
rs Public Toilets available
ltex Service Station

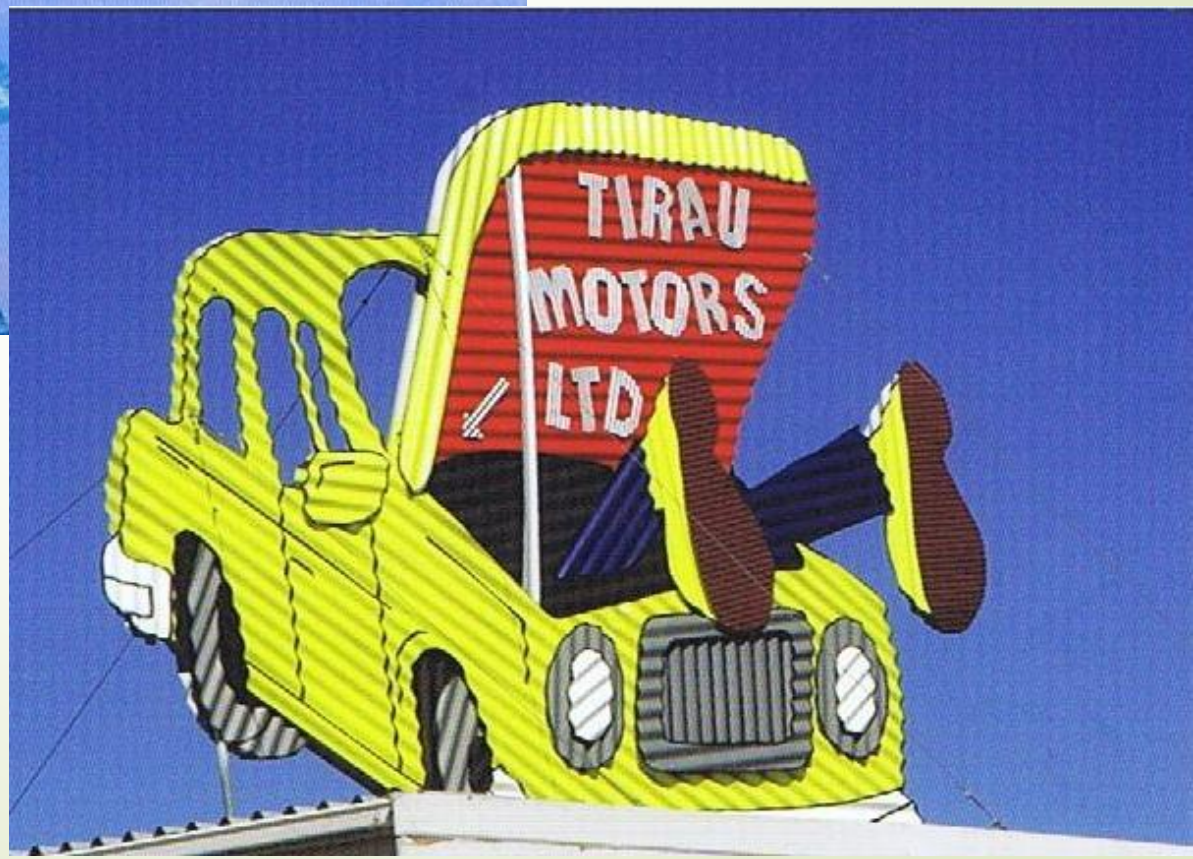







the HONEY SHOP




TIRAU
MOTORS
LTD


ART
&
CRAFTS
BOOKS
ON SAFARI


Fine Swine Cafe
Tirau
NZ


TIRAU SCHOOL
Tirau Primary School
2 LEARN

Tip 4.

Focus on people and streetlife, not cars!

"Design for people, and you will attract people.
Design for vehicles you will attract vehicles"

- Margaret River Shire planning document

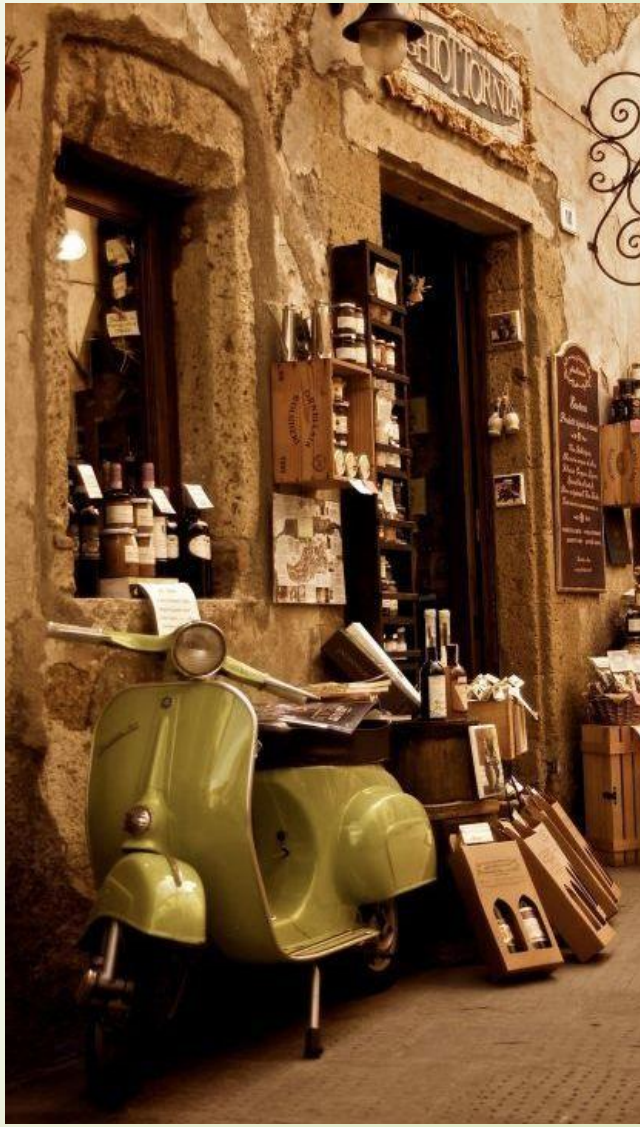

MISHIGUENE
MISHIGUENE



I love being in Tuscany, Italy





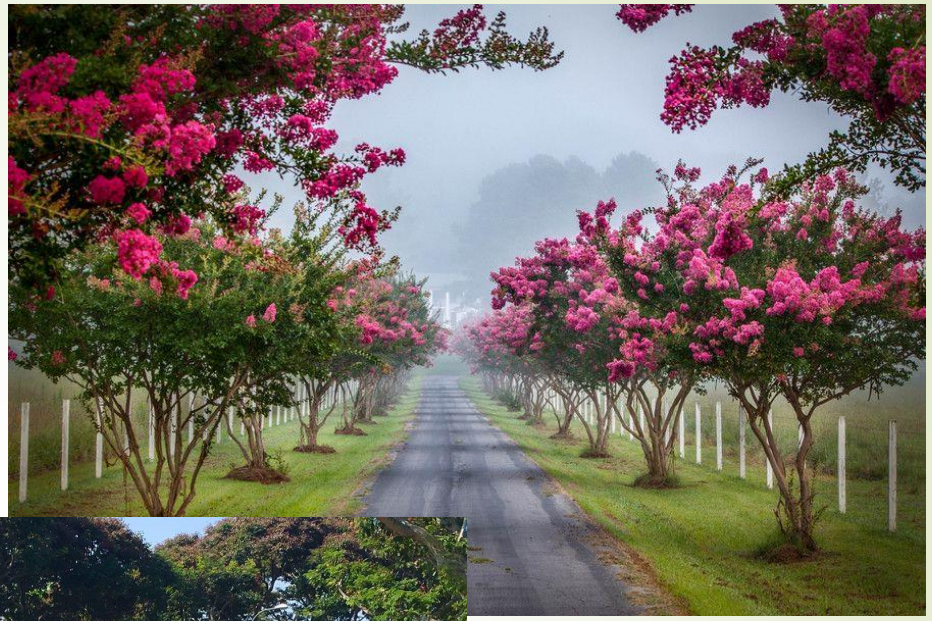


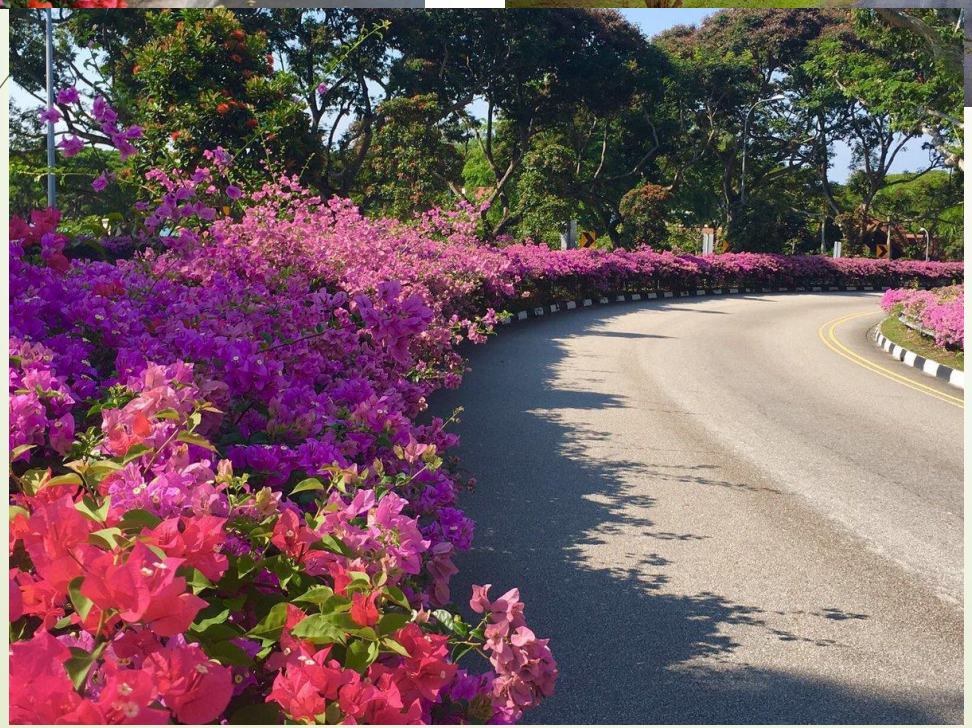

QUINCY
PHYSICAL
THERAPY

Invest in green spaces, trees and flowers…and lots of them!

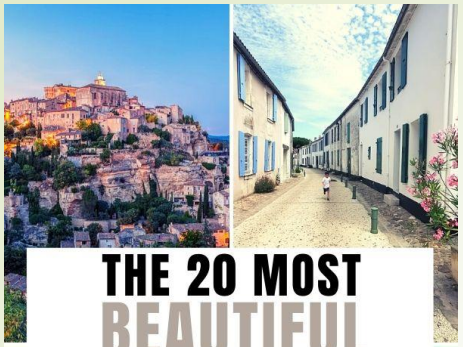












THE 20 MOST
BEAUTIFUL
VILLAGES IN FRANCE



Les Plus
Beaux Villages
de France®




Yvoire


Yvoire cité médiévale


Yvoire
Cité
Médiévale
fleurie







Edible Gardens in Hamilton, Victoria



"We want to be the most healthy, liveable shire, and this makes a real statement about sustainability." (Local Council)

Bassendean Mainstreet WA



Tip 5.

Don't forget humour!

'If I can get you to laugh with me you'll like me better, which makes you more open to my ideas'

-John Cleese




HAZELNUT
FRESH MUFFINS
NO SENIOR CITIZEN DISCOUNTS
YOU HAVE HAD TWICE AS LONG TO GET THE MONEY
http://go.funpic.hu

Wellshot Pub, Ilfracombe, Qld



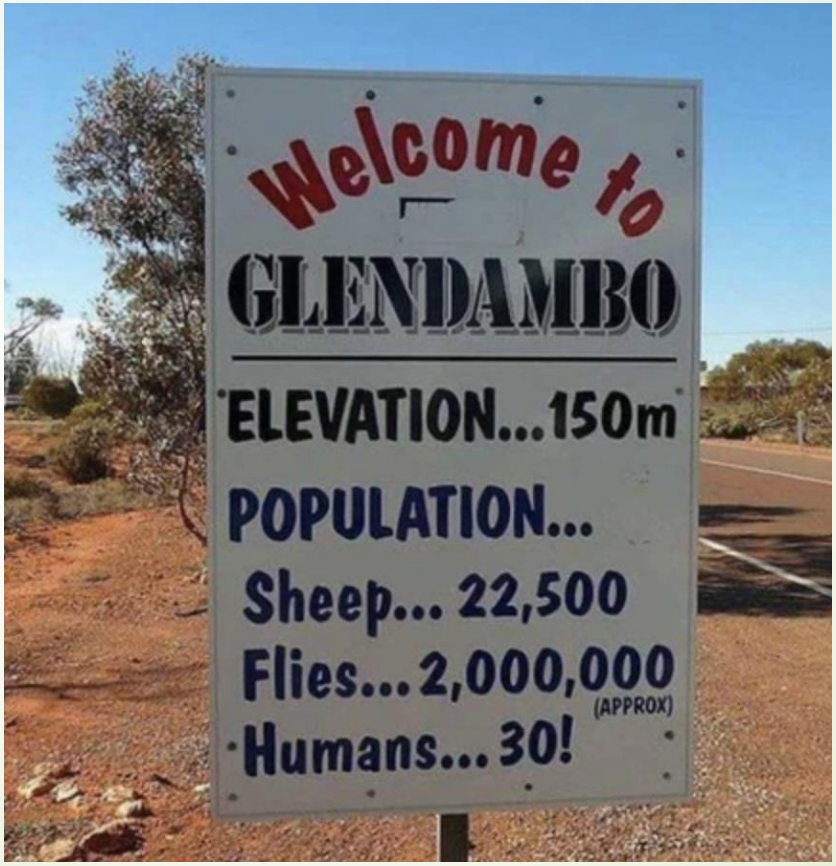


Longreach Caravan Park Toilets





Sometimes Humour can be very simply expressed!




BLAND SHIRE COUNCIL
west wyalong
League of Extraordinary Communities
Scotland
Dull
Oregon
Boring
NSW
Bland
Bland... far from Dull and Boring


OUR WIVES ARE
Still Shopping


"NEW YORK IS BIG..."
BIGGAR
SASKATCHEWAN
"BUT THIS IS BIGGAR"


VITERRA
PRAIRIE MALT
BOORTMALT
MASTERS OF MALT
MALT BIGGAR
24 HOUR
FUEL BIGGAR


HAMMOND
REALTY
HammondRealty.ca
(306) 948-5052
GROWING BIGGAR
BIGGAR
306-948-3376

Biggar Revitalization Project

"An evocative plan to reveal, invigorate and celebrate the business core. The transformation will weave Biggar's rich heritage, strong sense of community, and bold aspirations into inviting and cohesive spaces and opportunities.
New York is Big, But this is Biggar"
- Town of Biggar






Future home of the Biggar Revitalization
GRAND CENTRAL PARK
We are excited to be working alongside CN to develop and design this area.
NEW YORK IS BIG, BUT OUR FUTURE IS...
BIGGAR
Naming Opportunities are Still Available
306-948-3317 townofbiggar.com
"NEW YORK IS BIG...
BIGGAR
SASKATCHEWAN
BUT THIS IS BIGGAR"

Tip 6.

Use Key Powerful Words!!

"Language shapes the way we think and determines what we can think about."

- Benjamin Lee Whorf




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FREE
TASTINGS!
Market Specials Available
INTERNATIONALLY AWARD-WINNING
50+ awards for our products
Visit our website
daylesfordspirit.com.au
140 Church Rd, Mount Franklin, VIC


Free Samples
Prices
$7 – Not So Big Cup
$8 – Big Cup
$14 – 1 Liter Bottle
$22 – 2 Liter Bottle


STUFF
YOUVE
NEVER
SEEN
BEFORE
THIS
WAY


OPEN
and
Awesome


STELLA ARTOIS
REVIEW US
AND GET
5% DISCOUNT
follow
us

Tip 7.

Appeal to values and emotions

"When you take the high moral road it is difficult for anyone to object without sounding like a complete fool"

-Anita Roddick, Founder of the Body Shop




Save the drive
SHOP LOCAL
Keep Marble Bar Alive


Eat the change
you wish to see
in the world.
Blush Lane
ORGANIC MARKET


Organic
Icy Poles
$4.00
PURE
FRUIT


YOU'RE AT
CO-OP
HOME HERE
My Co-op
stands for...
LOCALLY INVESTED
COMMUNITY-MINDED
LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS


CO-OP
Homestead
Local.
100% of our profits stay in our communities.

Seattle Neighbourhood Local Co-op



Simon Sinek



"'People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. And what you do simply proves what you believe"

Tip 8.

Brag shamelessly!

"It's not bragging if you can back it up"

-Muhammad Ali




WINNER
AUSTRALIA'S
BEST
PIE
2021 & 2022

Sharp Bakery, Birchip – Best Vanilla Slice in Australia




AUSTRALIA'S BEST
PINOT GRIS
AS VOTED BY DAN MURPHY'S
NEXT TURN RIGHT
Tim Adams
CLARE VALLEY
Cellar Door Turn Right 300m

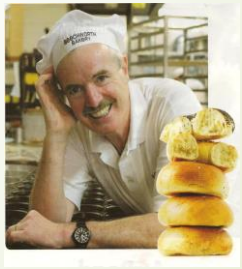

洗手间
Welcome to:
THE
HOUSE OF HONEY
Today our Staff speak
the following languages
Australian
Afrikaans
French
Spanish
Italian
Mandarin
Japanese


Queenscliff
Meats
Supplying Quality
Since 1922
Real Smoked Bacon
Sow Stall Free
QUALITY PORK
ed Beef
Wood
SAUCES
YELLOW CURRY
BUTTER CHICKEN
ROGAN JOSH
KORMA BLEND
CARIBBEAN COLOMBO
SEA SALT FLAKES

Tip 9.

PROVIDE OUTRAGEOUS CUSTOMER SERVICE!

"Your customers don't care how much you know – until they know how much you care"
-Tom O'Toole




PLEASE
WAIT
TO BE
TOLERATED

Why Retailers Lose Customers?

1%	Die
3%	Move Away
4%	Float from business to business
7%	Change business on recommendation from friend
8%	Chronic moaners and buy according to their whims
9%	Believe they can buy more cheaply elsewhere
68%	Object to the indifference or attitude of the staff

Key Tips for WoW!

- Have fresh eyes
- Create experience & have fun
- Focus on people and streetlife, not cars
- Be quirky, stimulate curiosity and stand out
- Don't forget humour
- Use key powerful words
- Appeal to values & emotions
- Brag shamelessly
- Offer positively outrageous customer service

Robin Sharma



'Dream big.
Start small.
Act now'


NATIONAL
Small Town
Reinvention
CONFERENCE
6-11 SEPTEMBER
2026
"Small Town Prosperity Through Building on Local Assets, Stories, Creativity and Community Connection"
LONGREACH
QUEENSLAND

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Winton Shire Council

BARCALDINE REGIONAL COUNCIL

mable

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OUTBACK PIONEERS
LONGREACH