



## *From Shells to Dollars: Moving into the cash market*

By Anne Stevenson



There are some very practical reasons for taking your business idea for a test-run in LETS. This article looks at how Korina Ivatt of Central Coast LETS has illustrated how LETS trading can help a member get their business into the cash market.

Korina joined LETS in August 2006 and has been trading her skin care and household products since October of 2006. She has recently started earning dollars.

### HOW CAN TRADING HELP?

Korina had been making her products for her own use and thought other members might be interested in them. She used the standard resources of LETS to publicise her products. That is, she listed them as an offering in the member directory and website and regularly attended Trade Days.

The LETS directory and website are handy but they are not the only point of contact with your fellow members. Trade Days and other get togethers are where members meet face to face and where much of the trading goes on. Trade Days are where a lot of the trading happens and where you can display your goods or services to the best advantage.

Some members prefer face to face dealings and rarely look in the directory or in the website listings. If you never set up your stall at Trade Days those members are unlikely to trade with you.

### GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO SHINE

At Trade Days Korina set up her stall on time and laid out products with a typed list of ingredients, instructions for use and prices next to her transaction sheet. She also answered any questions would-be buyers asked about the products.

Although Trade Days are a lot more relaxed than the cash marketplace, they do have certain things in common.

Both LETS members and cash customers are attracted to the neatest, well laid out stalls in prominent positions. Korina's stall was always well laid out with her neatly packaged products in rows and list of prices, instructions and ingredients placed at the front next to the transaction sheet and a working pen. She periodically checked and neatened her stall so it always presented well.

This made it easy for the would-be customer to look over her products, to find out about them, to find what the prices were and to pay. With that system running smoothly customers could browse and buy from the stall while she answered questions from other customers.

### WHY BOTHER?

Korina lists what she learnt from LETS trading as "confidence first and foremost" and "brilliant feedback ... understanding consumer needs, packaging ... conducting hands on research ... perfecting the product according to customer needs and wants."

That all makes LETS a very good place to test products to see how potential customers react to their ingredients, scent, colouring, packaging and other attributes.

### TRIED & TESTED

Korina's own words say it best: "...the LETS community is such a great place that I felt OK about conducting hands on research with members and just putting my product out there to gauge opinions and feedback". This led to "...realis[ing] I could actually sell them to anyone -- not just LETS members"

Through testing and refining her presentation and offers learnt to more clearly word her offers, mark her prices very clearly, to include her contact details so more customers could buy from her later. She also learnt how much her customers appreciated a list of ingredients and how to improve customer service. She also had the opportunity to provide other members with her products to use, such as a member providing facials. This earned her some extra publicity where the would-be customer could see her products in action.

### MOVING ON UP

Once Korina had gained confidence in her products and her ability to sell them, she was ready to move into the cash marketplace. Rather than wait until she had found a shop that would stock her products, she plumped for setting up her own website and selling direct to the public.

Selling through a website has much in common with Trade Day stalls. The products are displayed neatly in attractive packaging, the website design allows the customers to see your products clearly and easily and to get in contact with you (through email) if they have questions. The ingredients, instructions and prices are listed clearly next to the products and the automated payment system takes the place of the transaction sheet.

Selling through a bricks-and-mortar shop of course also allows you to transfer across the skills you have learnt as a LETS trader. That is, attractive display, improved packaging, ingredients, instructions and prices displayed clearly and customer service.

### CONFIDENCE, EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE GAINED

Korina gained highly practical knowledge and experience from trade. She learned what worked and what didn't and all without expensive forays into the cash market.

As Korina had previously only used her products at home, she had no practical knowledge of packaging. Direct feedback from LETS members taught her a lot about it and allowed her to test new packaging designs in the LETS marketplace.

### CONCLUSION

Korina now has her own website and so is able to sell her products with a minimum of fuss 24 hours a day seven days a week. She also has the option of marketing to local shops and others further afield in the future.

Those who know her products have little doubt her business will flourish in the cash market. Her success demonstrates how the budding businesspeople in our membership can succeed.

To see Korina's website for yourself go to [www.joliv.com.au](http://www.joliv.com.au) or ask a computer savvy member to show you. To see the Central Coast LETS directory of offerings log in at [www.centralcoastlets.org](http://www.centralcoastlets.org))

If you have moved or are moving from LETS to the cash market, I would love to hear about it. Contact Anne Stevenson 4342 3658, [mstevenson@tadaust.org.au](mailto:mstevenson@tadaust.org.au))

### *What do you Love about LETS?*

LETS members were asked What would they say to friends at a dinner party about LETS. Try talking about what you Love about LETS! It is so interesting when you talk about what you Love. Share what you enjoy and how you have benefited from LETS and gauge the reaction, it maybe infectious! Happiness attracts happiness.

I love how you can exchange things and offer services to people.

Sonja ccou0079

I love being able to receive a service from someone who enjoys their work, they take more pride in what they do when they willingly offer their services for trade.

Natalie Kuivanen

What I love about LETS is about connecting with people who are interested in something besides money - a very subversive concept nowadays! I know that it's very unfashionable not to want to be wealthy (financially), but - I actually love the idea of bypassing the monetary system altogether! As long as our community is based on transport involving petrol, we can't do without money, but who knows - before long, the LETS communities might have a head start on the rest of society!

Joanne Strauss



The thing I like about LETS is the facility to trade without money, to exchange the things you can do for the things you can't or don't want to do. My last sale was a guitar lesson, my last buy was some odds and sods at the trade day. I would like to find someone who'd trade massage for massage or for some of the things I offer.

Ian Betteridge.

What I most appreciate about LETS is the combined intent of members behind whatever it is they are offering to each other. With caring for others at the top of motivation rather than 'profit at all costs' makes for a very comfortable foundation in exchanging goods and services. I am amazed at the level of commitment by Korina and the rate of growth of Central Coast LETS I feel is mainly due to her caring leadership

Judy Fenton

I really enjoy meeting new people and feeling part of the community. And to be able to get and do things I would usually never do, because they just would be too expensive.

Rut Frolich

### *Korina and Hieden are on the move...*

Hieden and Korina have brought a house (yippee.... bit scary!) and will be moving 21<sup>st</sup> of March.

**We really need some LETS members to help out with a few things please.**

Tidying up the garden at our current house - we would really like our bond back! The cleaning we have under control.

And a couple of strong bodies to help load and unload the truck..... anyone?????

The garden tidying can be done anytime between Monday 17th and Saturday 22nd March.

The actual move is happening on Thursday 20th March so if you are free that day and feel strong.....

If you can help out or think you may be able to help out we would really appreciate it and will of course pay generous shells to all you lovely helpers.

Thanks very much, Korina - 4344 6185 korina@centralcoastlets.org

## **THE LETS MATCH MAKING GAME**

Read what some LETS Members have to offer and draw a line to those that would like their service. Be creative and have fun! Add your wants and offerings below and make the game even more exciting...

### **OFFERED**

I offer gardening, landscaping, tree services and bicycle repairs. Brendan Gulsonj

I offer child minding for children of all ages and I also offer cooking of home made main meals, desserts, cakes and chocolate crackles . Sonja ccrau0079

I currently offer three different services which I am either qualified and very good at: guitar lessons, computer training and handyman/maintenance services. Rendall Wagner

I offer seedlings cos i love helping people save money. Also card making and Scrapbooking workshops because I love teaching people skills. Pheobe Taylor

My offerings are helping people with Career Orientation, Writing, Media and Business Skills; Home Help/Gardening Nurturing. I'm happy to help clean, garden, cook, bake, help with kids, pick some flowers and put them ina vase - you know, do the things that time-poor people crave help with to make their homes into soulful places. (I better update my offerings on the Website!) Joanne Strauss

Bread making, mending, help with organising rooms, collections of clothes, paper, photos, etc Brita Beeston

Editing, proofreading. Bev Weynton

Herbs from my garden, simple mending and hemming, ironing, craft for kids. Kate Moore

### **WANTED**

More cooking and fresh produce. Pheobe Taylor

I think LETS would really kick off in a big way if there were more tradespeople involved, and more sellers of food, clothing, etc. A homeloan lender would be useful! Brendan Gulson

Firstly I wish that the OFFERS on the site were available. Many people leave their offers on the site, yet they don't offer that service any more. It's really disappointing when that happens and it happens too much we think.

I would love to see more essential items. Like many more people offering their backyard organic produce of fruit, veg, eggs, plants, seedlings. Possibly bread making, baking, cooking. Anything essential.

Cleaners! We need so many more cleaners in LETS, so if you only want to offer a cleaning service for a short time then do. We need more Trades people. The Trades people we have are flat out and we could always do with more.

Last but not least, gardeners. From Horticulturists to Permaculturists to backyard hobby gardeners. We could really use these services often. Karen & Peter McCarthy

I'd love to find a handy person to replace the hinges on a couple of kitchen cupboards. It's too small a job for a tradesman, but I can't find a LETS person who'll do it either - anyone??? Kate Moore

In a couple of months I'm looking for someone to do my lawn. Rut Frolich

Gardening, cleaning, homegrown, homecooked food. Brita Beeston

## *Handy Home Hints...*

### **Buzz Off...Replacing flyscreens:**

By Rendall Wagner

There are three different types of flyscreens commercially available that can replace your old torn flyscreen:

1. Nylon      2. Aluminium      3. Pet mesh

The nylon and pet mesh are the easiest to install taking under 1/2 hr per screen. Even though aluminium is slightly tougher than nylon it breaks very easily when installing, therefore taking longer to install and is totally useless for pets. It has one advantage in that it's non-flammable. So consider carefully which will suite your needs before wasting money on something that doesn't do the job.

Pet Mesh is by far the best if you have animals. Try not to buy pet mesh from a hardware store as there's a lot of mark up, instead get it from a security door supplier and you will get it for much less.

Tools you'll need: Safety knife, flat blade screwdriver and a screen installation wheel. Measure first to get the right size screen. It's best to remove the door and lay it down to fit your new screen.

### **Weed before Seed...**

By Brendan Gulson

Always try to control weeds before they set seed. The saying 'one years seeding, seven years weeding' can really be the case.

If any particularly nasty and difficult to eradicate weeds, such as Onion Weed, decide to take up residence in your garden, nip them in the bud, or you'll be cursing them for years to come. It's a matter of a 'stitch in time saves nine'.

The value of a thick (100mm) mulch cannot be underestimated when controlling weed germination - however, some weeds, such as Wandering Jew, can still grow through mulch. Mulching is best done when the soil is moist, as it will retain that moisture for a long time.

The use of black plastic weed mats is not recommended - the soil needs to breathe to remain healthy. In the same way, a mulch that is too woody with no bark/leaf matter, will sit on the top without enriching the soil beneath it.

Groundcovers can be used as a 'living mulch' - densely growing plants close to the ground don't leave much space for weeds to grow.

### ***FREE Natural Gardening Workshops and the Youth and Community Gardening Project***

Come to a FREE Natural Gardening Workshops and find out about the Youth & Community Garden Project (Woy Woy Public School) between 9am and 10.30am at Woy Woy Environment Centre, Old St Luke's Church, 267 Blackwall Rd (corner of Billabong St), Woy Woy. Wednesday, March 5, or March 12, 2008. [Book with Mia on 0417 043 165](tel:0417043165)

## ***INSPIRED TO INVENT A NEW PRODUCT...NATALIE DID!***

Natalie Kunevan found there was a lack of doggie treats which were free of artificial colours and preservatives. Dogs can't even see in colour so what difference does it make if their treats are naturally coloured or bright green! So she began making doggie friendly treats which contain cheese and garlic. Not only are they healthy but the garlic helps keep away fleas. When the flea bites the dog it can taste the garlic in its system and it doesn't like it.  
Treat your pet today!

## ***HAPPY TRADERS...***

Thank you to all I traded with today. It was great fun and good to meet so many of you at last! Anyone who has not been to a Trade day -GO!  
Thanks also to Pamela for her hospitality. I hope I can get to some others throughout the year.  
Happy Trading!  
Lorraine

## ***HOUSE MINDING***

We are going overseas from 25th April till 5th May and I'm looking for someone to either house sit in Woy Woy or Seven Hills (Sydney) to feed and look after our dogs or someone to feed them and maybe walk them or even have them at their place if this is a better option...any help would be appreciated.

Anyone interested can call me on 0408405465 or 96363326 or email me on [lisasimone9@bigpond.com](mailto:lisasimone9@bigpond.com).



## *Anne's Psychic Column*

Tarot \* Palmistry \* Psychometry \* Past Lives \* Dreams \* Protections  
Afternoons & Evenings, Monday to Saturday (02) 4342 3658

Welcome to Anne's Psychic Column by Anne Stevenson (0198). This is the first appearance of this column so I will explain the contents.

The first part is a Tarot card and its meaning. The second part is a Tarot Archetype related to that card. The card meanings are not within the context of a reading rather they are the basic meaning for that particular card and thus very easy to understand. The Tarot Archetypes are a very interesting new reading of the cards, brought to us by L. A. Lothian, giving the individual insight into the universal archetypes influence within their life, by way of the calculation of their birth-date, their Primary Soul Archetype (your assignment in life) and Higher Soul Archetype (those with a double load to carry), expressions of your soul energy. In a Tarot Archetype Report, your Year Cycles are also calculated, giving you information on the year or years ahead. And I'll stop there as I'm in danger of running out of space for the cards!

### **Tarot Card Basic Meaning**

Card: The Fool

Meaning: Thoughtlessness, folly, light heartedness, innocence. Purity of heart. Lack of discipline.

One seeking fulfilment and experience. Freedom, lack of restraint.

### Tarot Archetype (Your Primary or Higher Soul Archetype or Yearly Cycle)

Card: The Fool

Archetype: The individual whose Primary Soul Archetype or Higher Soul Archetype is the Fool has the characteristics of trusting the universe, of being a voyager and a vagabond, of adventuring through life. The Fool is the adventurer in the physical plane and through the other 21 archetypes. Along the way the way the Fool learns one thing above all others: the only constant is change.

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### *HELLO FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK*

I have been overwhelmed by the contributions for the LETS newsletter. I have been involved with many newsletters in the past and it has generally been difficult to attract contributions. Putting this newsletter together has been so refreshing, I was swamped with information. It is great how many people are willing to share and be an active part of our community and take the time and effort to share their experience.

I received so many contributions I had to edit them down or the newsletter would have been 18 pages! Thank you for the time you took to write your piece and sorry to those had their contributions edited. Please start thinking about what you might like to include next time as the more members that contribute the more fun it is to read. I would really love a feature article like the marvelous one Anne has done for this edition.

Please let me know what you think of the new format newsletter – how it can be improved, what you liked about and what you would like more or less of?

Next Newsletter is due out 1<sup>st</sup> June – deadline is 2 weeks prior. Email info to [chloe.rubbo@gmail.com](mailto:chloe.rubbo@gmail.com)



I will also take this opportunity to shamelessly plug my offerings! I offer a yoga class on Tuesday mornings in Terrigal from 6am – 8am. It is a wonderful experience with yoga and an hour of mantra (with live music until April!). If you are an early bird, come to this class! I have also been known to show my wings and attend fairy parties (See photo). If a few kids are interested in Children's yoga I would be happy to offer a class.

Shine Bright,  
Chloe Rubbo