

National Small Business Summit

Melbourne, Monday 26 June 2006 - Opening Dinner
Tuesday 27 June 2006 - Summit and Business Exhibition

The impact of e-business and the convergence of internet and telecommunications technologies will be amongst the issues to be addressed at the Virgin Blue National Small Business Summit being convened by the Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia (COSBOA) and *My Business* magazine.

The 2006 Summit will include presentations from business leaders in the e-business, franchising and retailing fields, including the CEO of eBay Australia, Simon Smith.

Brett Godfrey, the CEO of Virgin Blue, will address the Summit as well as senior executives from Google and Sensis who will outline the radical impact on business of the convergence of telecommunications and internet technologies.

The sweeping changes to employment conditions, which have been triggered by the new WorkChoices legislation, will be reviewed in detail, and there will be industry-leading presentations from top economists and business analysts about the economic outlook. A number of prominent entrepreneurs, including Wotif's Managing Director, Graeme Wood, will also address delegates.

The Summit is the peak small business event of the year and will be addressed by prominent political, business and entrepreneurial leaders including the Chairman of the ACCC, Graeme Samuel, and the Federal Opposition Leader, Kim Beazley.

The Summit will be held at Melbourne's Carlton Crest Hotel on Tuesday June 27 and will be preceded by the Summit Dinner at the Carlton Crest on the evening of June 26.

Managing Editor of *My Business*, Peter Stirling, said that the Summit is usually attended by more than 350 business leaders including CEOs of business associations and chambers of commerce.

Virgin Blue is the principal sponsor of the National Small Business Summit. Business sponsors include the Volkswagen Australia Group, Optus and Metcash.

Details of the Summit can be found on page 15 in this issue of *My Business*.

For more information, including registration details, please visit www.mybusiness.com.au/summit or call 02 8923 8003 Email events@mybusiness.com.au

My Business TV Show a hit

THE MY BUSINESS TV SHOW, now being screened on Channel 7 on Sunday mornings at 11am, is continuing to set new audience records with more than 200,000 people watching the program.

Hosted by journalist and personality, David Koch, the program is now in its third year, having been spun out of the *My Business* magazine in 2004. It is enjoying an extended season this year.

Show producer, Kylie Merritt, said that *My Business* TV has drawn a larger audience than *Business Sunday* on occasion and viewers were clearly attracted to the format of the show with a range of experts endeavouring to assist small businesses in a relaxed, informal environment.

Debtor finance growing fast

The Factoring and Discounting industry is continuing to show rapid growth with the March quarter registering a 27% growth over the same period last year. The industry is now running at an annualised rate just shy of \$40 billion.

The number of businesses using debtor finance facilities has grown by 12% over the period to 4665, and the size of the average facility drawn upon by those businesses has also expanded.

The Chairman of the Institute of Factors and Discounters, Mr Peter Langham, said that the growth in the number of businesses indicated that the uptake of this financing facility had climbed "rapidly and consistently over the past four years. By comparison ten years ago there were only 1760 business users."

He said that Australia was following world trends, which showed that factoring has expanded by 18% in the last year. Mr Langham said that an area of potential growth for Australia was in the import/export industries which were the fastest area of international growth for debtor financing.

Government to push ahead with contractor legislation

The Federal Government will pass legislation to remove contractors from the impact of workplace laws, which was promised by the Howard Government during the 2004 election campaign.

The Independent Contractors of Australia (ICA) wants the legislation to distinguish between 'employment' as defined by workplace laws and 'business' as conducted by independent contractors whose work would be regulated by commercial contractual relationships.

Unions are opposing the legislation on the grounds that employers would take advantage of the legislation to push employees to redefine themselves as contractors, thereby taking them outside the traditional employee benefits and entitlements.

The ICA Executive Director, Ken Phillips, said that independent contractors were often paid at a higher rate to compensate them for not receiving superannuation and other leave entitlements. Kevin Andrews, the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, said the Independent Contractors Bill would provide new protections for the estimated 1.9 million contractors in Australia.