



Small Business Victoria

workshops and seminars

Murrindindi Shire

'Cluey's Cleaning and Safety Products **Moving into the main street**



Challenges I faced

Like all new businesses, Rod needs to build a solid customer base. He's confident sales can be increased across the Shire's diverse industries which include agriculture, wine, tourism and hospitality.

"I've had great support to date and it's just a matter of getting to know and understand what people need. I'm really enjoying what I'm doing so that's not a problem for me."

Segmenting his markets has helped Rod better understand his potential customers and he's building his business networks across the region

Rod Clue grew a home-based business into a successful retail store with help from the Victorian Government's Small Business Victoria workshops.

How I started

Rod Clue got the idea for his business while working around Murrindindi Shire, north east of Melbourne.

"I noticed there was no local supplier of cleaning and safety products and everyone was going elsewhere to get them. I reckoned there was a gap there I could fill."

Rod started Cluey's Cleaning and Safety Products from home, keeping his day job and slowly growing trade by door knocking local businesses in his spare time.

A turning point came six months later when he found himself out of work. Rod decided it was time the business became his full-time occupation.

"I'd always been 'waiting for the right time' and this was it. With support from my wife Teresa, I decided to put my heart and soul into something that belonged to me this time."

Assistance I sought

While Rod had some management experience, he wanted to make sure his business had the best chance of success. The Small Business Victoria workshops he's completed to date through Murrindindi Shire have all helped.

"Everyone has something to learn in business. I've got something new and positive from every Small Business Victoria workshop I've done. I've met a lot of really experienced businesspeople and I've even left workshops with a few new customers."

What I learned

The Small Business Victoria workshops helped build Rod's confidence in himself and his business.

"The workshop presenters are all experts and pack a lot of information into a short

period of time. I've now got a long-term vision and goals for the business and I've thought a lot about what I actually need to do if I'm going to achieve them."

With plans to move the business into its first shopfront, Rod found the marketing and networking workshops came at the right time.

"I realised that having a shop meant I had to change the way I'd been meeting and selling to customers. I got a better idea of how important relationships and networks would be for growing sales and getting good return.

My business today

Rod opened Cluey's Cleaning and Safety Products in the picturesque main street of Yea in early 2008.

Business has increased steadily since, with a growing household customer base adding to rising business sales.

"There's been a few teething problems but nothing that can't be sorted out. Word is spreading that I'm open and people are popping in to say G'day. In places like this word of mouth can be your most important advertising."

Where to from here

Rod plans to expand his market into surrounding regions over the next year.

"I plan to keep building sales in the local area but I've done some research and I reckon there's gaps to fill in a few other places too. I'll have my website up soon and I plan to be selling online within a year of that."

"I'm really happy with how everything is going. The future looks good."