



**4 June 2009**

### **Exporting dinkum Kiwi customer service to Oz**

Customer service the Kiwi way is due to be rolled out across the Tasman – with some adaption – after KiwiHost New Zealand announced they have acquired a 50% stake in the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) owned brand AussieHost, through a significant injection of intellectual property and capital investment.

KiwiHost New Zealand Managing Director, Jared Brixton, said that AussieHost is where KiwiHost was five years ago.

“We have some exciting innovations that will be perfect for the Australian vocational training market. And in these challenging business times, customers are becoming more discerning about service. Businesses need to provide higher levels of service than ever before; it’s a great time to be in service skills training.

“The KiwiHost website ([www.kiwihost .co.nz](http://www.kiwihost.co.nz)) provides an overview of the programmes and developments to be made available in Australia soon.”

Fellow KiwiHost Director, Simon Nikoloff will take over the role of AussieHost General Manager working from ARA’s Melbourne offices to provide much needed focus and experience to help grow the training provider network and introduce the extended range of programmes that will make AussieHost an even more exciting range for training providers to promote and sell.

CEO of the Australian Retailers Association (ARA), Richard Evans, said that as the owners of the successful AussieHost Customer Service Training programme the organisation has committed to raising the bar on customer service across Australia.

“A long-term License agreement commencing 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009 has been finalised with New Zealand Customer Service Training icon, KiwiHost.

“KiwiHost will take over management of AussieHost on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009 with a development plan that will see significant reinvestment in AussieHost, re-establishing it as the preferred Customer Service Standard for all of Australia.”

Mr Evans said that after reviewing what KiwiHost could offer it became clear that the resources, knowledge and experience of KiwiHost would provide ARA with the most effective solution to develop AussieHost to its full potential – something ARA could not do without reinvesting heavily and duplicating resources that is not core business.

“KiwiHost will provide much needed innovation by transferring knowledge, support, expertise and new training programmes. Their innovative and proven training programmes include the most up to date learning materials and training techniques.



“The programmes focus on creating effective attitudinal and behavioural changes in participants, while retaining the core values of fun, friendly learning that delivers vital service skills and productivity improvements for Australian service businesses of all kinds,” he said.

Communications and manufacturing technology allows KiwiHost Christchurch Head Office to provide total seamless production, back-office and marketing support for the entire AussieHost operation, which now sees KiwiHost as an exporter of educational and support services.

Final development plans and timetables are being worked through with details to be announced in the coming weeks.

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### **About KiwiHost**

Established in 1989, KiwiHost has made its mark in New Zealand as the Premier Service Training organisation through the development of some very innovative training programs, operational systems, quality control and distribution. KiwiHost has trained over 300,000 people and worked with 30,000 businesses of all types to deliver Service and Communication skills training using a nationwide network of training providers and trainers. The KiwiHost Certificate is still the most recognised Customer Service Qualification in New Zealand and is valued by both employers and employees alike.

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### **About ARA**

For over 105 years, the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) has been the peak industry body in Australia's \$292 billion retail sector which employs over 1.5 million people. As an incorporated employer body under the Workplace Relations Act and with a range of member services including business consulting, policy development, advocacy and education, the ARA promotes and protects over 5000 independent and national retailers throughout Australia.

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