

CIIC Biztro: free business advice for the creative industries



Creative enterprises of any size can register for the ‘Biztro’ – a free 1 hour business consultation with an experienced Business Adviser.

The CIIC’s Biztro service was developed for start-ups, sole traders and small and medium creative enterprises, giving them the chance to consult CIIC Business Advisers on all aspects of their business during intensive 60-minute sessions.

Topics covered may include starting a business, strategic planning, finances, marketing, online/digital activities and intellectual property.

It was great to have the opportunity to discuss our venture with someone objective and experienced in all sorts of businesses – big and small, old and new.

Biztro client

The one-on-one session helped clarify some “fuzzy” areas of my business plan and establish what I need to focus on first.

Biztro client

We appreciated the creative approach and broad knowledge that the session provided.

Biztro client





CASESTUDY

Toolbox Graphic Design

Impartial advice; sharper business planning

Adam Carpenter was working at an established graphic design studio in South Australia when he decided to take the plunge and set up his own studio, Toolbox, in early 2006.

The studio grew quickly, attracting lots of repeat business and expanding from two to five staff.

But in mid-2011 Carpenter felt the market contracting at the same time as more players entered the sector. He realised it was time to refine his business planning skills, and signed up for a Biztro session with Stuart Davis, a CIIC Business Adviser.

“Stuart knows the industry well and his impartiality is a huge benefit. When the person giving you advice has no bias whatsoever and no imperative to seek more work or steer you in a particular direction, it’s quite liberating,” says Carpenter.

“Differentiation is one of the big things Stuart helped us with. When we explained our offering he would constantly push us: ‘But how is that different?’ We realised our point of difference lies in the way we immerse ourselves in our clients’ businesses so we’re essentially part of their team. There aren’t many creative businesses that do that well.”

“Each Biztro session would influence our internal planning sessions and help to keep things moving.

“We have since consolidated our offering to be more focused, as opposed to spreading ourselves too thin.

“We are looking to diversify by creating our own products, with a secondary business model providing ongoing product revenue instead of fee-for-service, which is limited by how much staff and resourcing you have. All of these changes came out of looking at our business model.”

Toolbox has now participated in five Biztro sessions, and is now making the final tweaks to its business plan.

“Our next milestone will be moving out of our home-based studio into a bigger office,” says Carpenter.

“This year the market in South Australia seems to have become tighter again. But because we’ve been through the Biztro, we’re in a much better position than we would have been. We are more in tune with what the business is doing financially. We are savvier in the way we market ourselves and leverage client relationships. We know which channels deliver, and we’re making them work harder.”

AT A GLANCE

Company	Toolbox Graphic Design
Location	Adelaide
Services	Graphic Design
Years trading	8
Staff	5
Structure	Proprietary Limited
Director	Adam Carpenter
www.toolbox.id.au	



Frequently asked questions

Am I eligible to attend a Biztro session?

If you:

- A) Have an idea for a creative enterprise or;
- B) Run a creative start-up or small business

Then yes, sign up for a Biztro session via the CIIC's website creativeinnovation.net.au.

There are no turnover or business size requirements for the Biztro service but you should be operating in one of these sectors: music and performing arts; film, television and radio; advertising and marketing; software development and interactive content; writing, publishing and print media; architecture, design and visual arts.

If you turnover more than \$1million per year you should consider the Entrepreneurs' Infrastructure Programme Business Evaluation.

What happens during the consultation?

You will discuss the most pressing issues facing you and your enterprise – either specific business issues, or issues that impact your creative enterprise as a whole. At the end of the session you and your Business Adviser will identify opportunities for improvement and action items to undertake.

What sort of experience do the Business Advisers have?

All CIIC Business Advisers have a solid grounding in business with many years of experience in the creative industries. They work with clients in a range of creative sectors from starts-ups through to big businesses.

How do I register?

You can register for a session via creativeinnovation.net.au.

Should I prepare anything?

There is no need to prepare anything, but filling out the registration pro forma to the fullest extent will help the Business Adviser assist you.

Should I bring anything?

Something to take notes. Plus all the information you have about your business/idea. And an open mind.

When and where are they held?

Biztro consultations are delivered in most capital cities each month through the Entrepreneurs' Infrastructure Programme. A series of sessions are also held in regional areas throughout the year, in partnership with local organisations. Check the website for listings.

What happens after the consultation?

It is over to you to consider the recommendations and next steps outlined during your consultation.

Is there a limit to the number of sessions I can attend?

No. Come back as often as you like.

If I attend a Biztro session am I excluded from the Business Evaluation service?

No.

Will your Business Advisers try to sell me other services?

No. Our Business Advisers offer impartial, free advice as part of the CIIC's mandate to support Australian creative enterprises.

SIGN UP FOR A BIZTRO SESSION

creativeinnovation.net.au

ABOUT US

The Creative Industries Innovation Centre supports the business of creative enterprise. It is part of the Australian Government's Entrepreneurs' Infrastructure Programme, and is supported by the University of Technology, Sydney.

The CIIC's website, creativeinnovation.net.au provides creative companies and practitioners with access to business services, resources and features.

FIND OUT MORE

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