

# GLCH goes social to engage

Since its launch earlier this year, Gippsland Lakes Community Health's Facebook page is attracting more attention than was envisaged, all in a good way.

GLCH's marketing strategy focuses on delivering specific messages to pre-defined target groups. It consulted via surveys, evaluation and focus groups, but by and large it was 'show and tell'.

With marketing rapidly evolving to become more of a conversation rather than a lecture, GLCH realised that a big chunk of its target audience is, in fact, no longer an audience at all - they are now active participants who want to be involved in a constantly evolving conversation.

"Consumers are talking - like they always have; only now they are talking online to more extensive groups of their peers," GLCH's executive manager aged care services, Leah McFadzean, said.

GLCH said it needed a social media presence where it could listen, engage and foster relationships, and interact



Gippsland Lakes Community Health's executive manager aged care services, Leah McFadzean, (centre) with Karls Mega Sports Inland Surf managers, Mel Tarling and Dave Townsend, who assisted in the launch of the GLCH Facebook page earlier this year. K1095-5319

with the communities they serve.

So in May this year they launched a Facebook page.

"At the end of the day, our customers are going to talk about us, our industry, and our competition regardless of whether or not we choose to be involved," Ms McFadzean said.

GLCH hopes that their Facebook page will:

- \* Make it easier for people to find and share information about its services and programs.

- \* Find new customers and strengthen relationships with existing customers by engaging in conversation.

- \* Generate excitement and maintain momentum around new services and programs.

- \* Take advantage of free publicity for up-

coming GLCH events.

- \* Have a forum to promote exciting GLCH news.

- \* Build brand awareness by letting followers know what makes GLCH unique.

- \* Show that GLCH really listens to its consumers - by seeking and taking on feedback.

Posts are added to the page five days a week and may include infor-

mation about healthy lifestyle options, new services and programs,

such as its brand new four-year-old kindergarten program in Lakes Entrance; upcoming events; service and program information and updates; random posts including organisation initiatives;

state and national health weeks; and projects of interest that their

staff are involved in.

"We've been amazed at the number of likes and shares we've had so far," Ms MacFadzean said.

"More than we thought we would.

"Now we're interested to see how the Facebook page is shared."

To attract fans to its Facebook page, GLCH ran a competition during the month of May inviting community members to 'Share their secret to a happy and healthy lifestyle'.

The winning entry - "Always remember the simple things in life are often the best. Appreciate what you have, show kindness to others including your own mind and body" - attracted a \$200 gift card from Karls Mega Sports Inland Surf in Bairnsdale.

Karls managers, Mel Tarling and Dave Townsend, were keen to support GLCH's strategy and donated half of the card's value.

"We'll like GLCH's page, and they in turn will like ours," Mr Townsend said.

"It's a great way to get the word out to a great range of people."