

Access News

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Access Audits Australia

disability access advice training

Living A Life.....*Business*



Many aspects of my life involve dealing with businesses, whether it's a large multinational and their ever increasing bills, or buying bread and milk at the corner store. I, like everybody else, constantly make choices about whom I do business with.

The choices I make are influenced by a number of factors; these may include price, quality, customer service and access. The importance of these factors will vary, but on most occasions access will often be the key consideration.

When I asked my wife recently, why she always shopped at one particular supermarket her answer surprised me. "It's the only one with a twin trolley and wide aisles" was the response. This simple and effective customer service initiative generates hundreds of dollars worth of income each fortnight for that local business from our family alone and I am sure many others as well.

They say there are few certainties in life. One in my case is that I will have to visit my accountant at the same time each year. I choose this particular accountant because he provides me with great service, is flexible and professional in meeting my business needs and usually gets me a refund. Most importantly though, I can easily access his premises.

Money is something everyone has - in varying amounts; we all need to spend at least some of it, somewhere! I therefore often refer to myself as the "human ATM machine", regularly responding to requests for withdrawals. With three children this is just part of life, but where that money is spent is often determined by the level of access provided into and within the premises. If I cannot get in neither will my children, or the money they are so keen to spend.

Good Access Is Good Business and a major factor when people, particularly if they have a disability, go about..... *Living A Life.*

Volume 3 • 2003

Access Audits Australia

provides the following range of services to support improved access to the built environment and to the provision of goods and services:

- t Disability access training
- t Community consultation
- t Access presentations, publications and inspirations
- t Development and Review of Disability Action Plans, Development Access Plans, policies and procedures
- t Access Audits, Evaluations and Design Advice

Access Audits Australia is pleased to advise or assist you with any access issue.

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**The team at Access Audits Australia
wish you a happy, safe Christmas
and a successful 2004**



Our office will close from
23 December till 2 February 2004

If you would like each Access News emailed to you contact us at AAAaxs@bigpond.net.au

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Access to Footpaths ?

A recent addition to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity (HREOC) web site contains the following Question and Answer.

Q & A

Q Does the DDA cover access to the footpath?

A Yes. Under the DDA a footpath would come under the definition of 'premises' and would therefore be covered by section 23. A footpath should, as far as possible, allow for a continuous accessible path of travel so that people with a range of disabilities are able to use it without encountering barriers.

While a footpath necessarily follows the natural topography of the area, in the best possible circumstances a continuous accessible path of travel along a footpath should:

- * Have a gradient of no more than 1 in 20
- * Have a cross fall of no more than 1 in 40
- * Have kerb cuts with appropriate kerb ramps
- * Incorporate appropriate Tactile Ground Surface Indicators
- * Be at least 1.8 m wide and 2 m high with nothing encroaching into that envelope
- * Be as smooth as possible without raised or cracked paving or tree root damage
- * Be non-slip

These features of a continuous accessible path of travel are taken from current Australian Standards 1428 part 1 and part 2. This Q & A is at www.humanrights.gov.au/disability_rights/faq/Access/access.html

Access to Business Activities

People often immediately think of physical issues when discussing improving access to business operations, yet there are many other aspects that can be considered.



When looking at how to increase turnover, some business operators especially in a small business, may not consider how well potential customers are able to actually interpret their advertising, signage, menus or even product information. If this is not presented clearly, with effective print styles and contrasts, some people will not even bother to attempt to understand the content.

Similarly, if a cafe or restaurant is a high noise generator or has music playing at a level that could disturb some customers, who may prefer a quieter environment, then they may chose to spend their time and their money elsewhere. They could even influence the decisions of friends or family, yet the business operator may have no idea that these choices have been made.

With an increasingly ageing population, many of whom know what they want and how to achieve it, business operators will need to be aware of a range of access responsive strategies to ensure they maintain a competitive edge. Improving access to business can therefore involve looking at the total picture and not just the basic need for everyone to be able to get in and around premises.

One Person's View



When the local Council advised traders that they needed to provide a clear building line along the footpaths outside their shops, Tony expected that it would adversely affect his business. The Council was in the process of introducing a revised footpath trading policy to improve access for everybody using the shopping centre, including older persons and people with disabilities.

Tony had been operating his fruit shop for about 5 years, continually looking at ways to improve his operations, product quality and range, as well as service to his customers; many of whom are older local people. While he was initially annoyed by the Council's requirements, he then looked at the possible opportunities to be gained by

not only relocating his existing footpath displays, but also improving access into and around his shop.

He subsequently decided to replace the step at the entry with a small ramp and had new internal and external display units designed and built to his specific needs. In doing so, he achieved increased display space for his extensive range of quality fruit, vegetables, nuts, cheeses, fruit juices and various continental foods favoured by his selective clients.

These changes have enabled him to increase stock levels and purchase larger quantities. He has also managed to maximize the circulation space inside his relatively narrow shop.

Every day Tony receives positive feedback about the ease of access and the range of displays, from both his regular and ever increasing number of new customers, including some people using wheelchairs. He now has a clear path of travel along the front of his shop, larger sheltered display units on the footpath, but close to the kerb and an open, accessible shop interior.

Initially there were additional costs involved, but these were recovered in a relatively short time. His business turnover continues to benefit from his positive response to the Council's actions to improve access, for all users of his local shopping centre.

Auto Business

Automotive manufacturers around the world are experimenting with innovative door systems to improve ingress and egress, particularly for the expanding markets of older drivers. Recent international motor shows have seen the introduction of a variety of door opening arrangements, including front hinged systems and sliding doors on passenger cars, in order to make it easier to get in and out of vehicles, especially in crowded spaces.

Olympic Business

The Acropolis, one of the world's most famous landmarks, will have modifications made to ensure access is available for people with disabilities, as part of the preparation of facilities for the Olympic Games in Athens in 2004. The Greek government also plans to spend approx. A\$41m to improve access, for people with disabilities, to a range of other venues that will be used during the Athens Olympics and Paralympics Games.

Play Business

The Ray Bastin Reserve in Narre Warren, Victoria, within the City of Casey is a unique, integrated park that provides a great opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to exercise and socialise. The four-hectare site within landscaped parklands has been transformed into a play space that includes a space-themed regional playground, an exciting street-style skate park, BBQ facilities and a community events site. It received an award in the 2003 National Awards for Local Government and was also the winner of the Recreation Infrastructure Facilities category of the Kellogg Heart Foundation awards.

Did you know ?

- That some local Councils have allocated funds to sporting and community groups in a bid to encourage older adults to become more active.
- That the availability of a new photo identification card through the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority will assist many NSW residents with disabilities.
- That Microsoft plans to improve the next version of MSOffice so that it is more accessible to people with disabilities.
- That regular physical activity can improve the general health and well-being of many people, as well as minimise the risk of developing diseases, reduce stress, sleep better and improve energy levels.
- That the highest reading on some models of bathroom scales are being increased from 130kg to 150kg, in order to respond to the increasing levels of obesity in Australia.
- That Nillumbik Shire Council's HomeWise Kit is the inaugural winner of the Australian Government's Planning for an Ageing Community Award. The Minister for Ageing, Julie Bishop, said that the HomeWise Kit provided practical ideas on designing or renovating homes to take account of the requirements associated with ageing.

Bus Industry Transport Guidelines

Following the release of the Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport, which came into effect in October 2002, the Bus Industry Confederation has recently released the "Bus and Coach Operators' Guidelines for the Disability Discrimination Act". The guidelines are the first industry specific guidelines developed under these Australian Standards.

These Standards were developed after a long period of consultation with organisations representing people with disabilities and with various transport industry bodies. They prescribe practical measures to improve the accessibility of public transport to people with disabilities.



There are particular requirements regarding ramps and boarding devices, allocated spaces, handrails, doorways, controls, symbols and signs, paying fares, providing information, access paths, manoeuvring areas, belongings and more. The Standards apply to all new equipment and provide compliance targets for all equipment five, 10, 15 and 20 years after the date the Standards came into force.

Training and Publications booklet

AAA has produced a 2004 Training and Publications booklet outlining the wide range of training sessions available to community, government and commercial organisations. Also included are details about our Access Awareness Handbooks designed to assist specific business, corporate and government operations. This booklet can be obtained from www.accessauditsaustralia.com.au or by contacting the AAA Office on 03 9431 3472.

AAA Web site

Details about services provided by Access Audits Australia can be found on our web site at www.accessauditsaustralia.com.au

Our site is designed to be accessible for all users. It has AAA W3C level compliance and is AAA Bobby approved. Earlier Access News editions can be downloaded and there are also links to other relevant access related web sites.

Information contained in **Access News** is intended to highlight the importance of improving access for every person

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