The unique and rugged landscape that makes the West Coast New Zealand is enticing also presents challenges not faced by businesses and industry in other parts of New Zealand. Our physical location can isolate our region from potential markets, however the constant development of the digital age is working in the West Coast’s favour. Internet accessibility, and increased use, has gone a long way to shatter the constraints of geography, opening up new opportunities for a wide range of West Coast businesses and industries.

To highlight the potential of social media, DWC and Weka Films held a social media competition where local businesses were able to submit a picture and short profile of their business. Over 45,000 people viewed the various Facebook posts relating to the competition, and over 3,500 people liked, shared and commented on the posts.

The Hokitika Sandwich Company submitted a post about their amazing sandwiches which was viewed by around 13,000 people and received over 1,000 likes. For this they won a promotional video filmed by the talented Kumara-based Andrew Sinton-White from Weka Films. “It was a lot of fun working with Joseph and Denis at the Hokitika Sandwich Company. These guys go above and beyond with craftmanship and customer service. Their sandwiches (not to mention their coffee) are off the planet when it comes to freshness and taste - you've got to go and check them out!” says Andrew. “A huge thanks to Development West Coast for running the promo competition - it's forward-thinking, innovative initiatives like this that I'm sure our West Coast businesses stay alive and thrive!”

To further help build digital marketing capabilities on the West Coast, Steven Adams from ‘About Us’ will be holding free workshops in Hokitika, Greytown and Westport to support small business owners, aspiring entrepreneurs and community groups to get the most out of Facebook and Instagram and support a thriving and connected community.

This stunning photo taken by Linda Knipe has been selected as the theme image for the Development West Coast Leading Light Business Excellence Awards 2018. Entries for the Awards will open on 6 July 2018. Watch this space!

The graduates of Greymouth’s first Co Starters programme celebrated their success recently with a fun-filled event held at Tai Poutini Polytechnic. The participants of this business start-up and development programme completed the nine-week programme run by DWC and WestREP. The graduation evening showcased some truly inspiring new businesses and business ideas with each participant giving a short pitch.

DWC Chair Renee Rooney began the evening highlighting how the success of the programme is built on the collaboration, support and participation of the local business community. She praised the Greymouth business community for getting behind the programme and sharing their time and knowledge with the course participants as well as offering sponsorship and prize incentives.

The participants and orators included people who are new to the region and are matters identified as challenges for co-starters.

As you will see, the report highlights a range of themes. While not all of those themes or issues will be of relevance to everyone across the West Coast, there will be a connection that most people clearly recognise – that we must work on the solutions together in order for the entire region to benefit. Some of the big ticket discussion points are not going to be easy or quick fixes. National infrastructure and roading issues have long been an issue and in order for the entire region to benefit we simply cannot afford to address alone. Other issues such as the calibre of our employment schemes and on-the-job training opportunities are perhaps things that a region-wide focus can make significant changes in.

My team and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the report. You can call in to our Greymouth office any time or send us an email with your suggestions or comments. Chris Mackenzie Chief Executive

UpcomingEvents

Tourism Business Success Programme
17 JULY 2018 9-month programme Franz Josef
Contact info@smaarttraining.co.nz for more information
BOOST YOUR TOWN – Digital skills training for the West Coast
7 AUGUST 2018 5:30pm-8:30pm EPIC, Westport
8 AUGUST 2018 5:30pm-8:30pm St. John Hall, Greymouth
9 AUGUST 2018 5:30pm-8:30pm St. John Hall, Hokitika
Register online at www.dwc.org.nz

3:995+GST

Boost Your Town - Digital Skills Training for the West Coast

St. John Hall, Hokitika FREE
St. John Hall, Greytown FREE
EPIC, Westport FREE

www.dwc.org.nz/Business/co-starters.html

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Co.Starters Business Start-up and Development Programme
Expressions of interest: 9-week programme
Hokitika, Greytown, Westport
$250