Lights are on and everyone is home at Custom Neon

Custom Neon, a business that started as a maternity leave project for Geelong couple Jess and Jake Munday, has experienced international success in a very short time.

The 2021 Geelong Business Excellence Awards' Medium to Large Business Award, sponsored by Australian-owned and operated personal injury managers EML, is a testament to the incredible success Custom Neon has experienced since its inception three years ago.

Beginning in Jess and Jake's garage, Custom Neon now has a team of 15 Geelong-based employees working from headquarters in town, with an additional 18 international employees supporting those at the Geelong base. With a new office currently under construction and set to be complete in June 2022, Custom Neon is expanding its global influence and reaching new heights as an innovative technology company.

"We were pretty shocked to hear that we'd been nominated for a few awards this year – there are so many great businesses in Geelong and we were just really grateful," Jess explains of Custom Neon's inclusion in this year's Business Excellence Awards.

"It was a really good opportunity to go through our business with a fine tooth comb. It was nice to pause and reflect because we were really proud of how much we had achieved over the past 12 months.

"In the process of applying, we pulled together a lot of data and realised that there was an opportunity to improve the way we were recording and how we do our numbers."

The judges were impressed with the team's ability to effectively and efficiently use e-commerce capabilities and establish international manufacturing sites in both Shanghai and Los Angeles.

Watching the online awards as a team at Blush Bubbles Bar's outdoor wine garden in Newtown, the Custom Neon staff enjoyed a social and COVID-safe evening.

"The whole night was really fun, the team hadn't seen each other in so long so everyone was on cloud nine," Jess laughs.

On the night of the awards, Custom Neon also launched its new branding and designs, which involved considerable effort from both the internal team and an external branding agency.

"We were so excited to celebrate the new brand with our team at the same time as the Geelong Business Excellence Awards," said Jess.

In terms of the future, the judging panel encouraged Custom Neon to maintain its social corporate responsibility and to continue giving back to the community as the business continues to grow.

"We want to continue our growth seeing as the business has doubled in the last 12 months and we're now a global business," Jess explains.

"We're reaching out even further into the USA, UK and other new markets, and we want to expand our local manufacturing as well."

Elle Cecil

The Custom Neon team celebrated the Geelong Business Excellence Awards at local Newtown venue, Blush Bubbles Bar. **Bottom right:** Founders and owners Jess and Jake Munday started the business in their garage as a maternity leave project. (Pictures: Supplied)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

WANT YOUR EVENT LISTED? Community Calendar is made available free of charge to not-for-profit organisations to keep the public informed of special events and activities. Send item details to Geelong Independent Community Calendar, 1/47 Pakington Street, Geelong West, 3218, or email to editorial@geelongindependent.com.au. **Deadline for copy and announcements is 5pm Tuesday.**

RCH stall

The Royal Children's Hospital Geelong Auxiliary annual Christmas stall will be at Bellevue Avenue, Highton Village, on Thursday, December 16, 9am-1.30pm.

Christmas concert

Coryule Chorus, the Bellarine's popular community choir, will present a Christmas concert on Thursday, December 16, 2pm, at St James' Church hall, Drysdale. Entry: $5. In line with government regulations, please ensure you can use the QR check-in and have proof of both vaccinations.

Geelong Evangelical Fellowship

Geelong Evangelical Fellowship meets on the first and third Sundays of the month at 5.30 pm at Belmont Baptist Church, Mt Pleasant Road, in the Fellowship Room.
■ 0429 094 372

May'd festival

Creative Geelong May'd Festival will showcase local makers throughout Centre Point Arcade, 132 Little Malop Street, Geelong, on Saturday, December 11, 10am-3pm. The festival is an opportunity to meet local artists, makers and creators of all things made locally. Entry is free and all items are for sale.
■ http://www.creativegeelong.com.au/

Probus meets

Belmont Combined Probus Club meets at 10am on the first Monday of the month, except January. New members and visitors welcome. Friendship, speakers, lunch after meetings, dine out, Mahjong outings.
■ Pam, 5243 4042

Afternoon tea dance

Life Activities Club [Geelong Inc] will host an afternoon tea dance on Thursdays, 2.30-4.30pm, at Belmont Park Pavilion. Entry: $5. All welcome
■ 5251 3529

Christmas market

Support local makers at the Piccadilly Christmas Market on Saturday, December 11, 10am-3pm, Barwon Valley Activity Centre, 1 Barwon Heads Road, Geelong. There will plenty of Christmas goodies and lots of original gift ideas. Entry: $2 adults 16 and over. This is a plastic bag free event.
■ http://www.piccadillymarket.com.au/

There will be plenty of goodies at the Piccadilly Christmas Market. (iStock)

YOUR SAY

Healthcare privitatisation

In 1996 Medicare was held as a world class health system like the UK's NHS.

After two terms of snipping away at Medicare, Prime Minister John Howard declared in 2004 that he saw the American health system as the ideal for Australia and his government were striving to attain it.

Health Minister Tony Abbott declared that nobody wanted bulk billing anymore and that Medicare was designed as a welfare measure.

Retiring health minister Greg Hunt proudly asserted in early 2021 that the American Health system is what he had been working for as minister.

I am a pensioner and have relied on Medicare and recall how the unions and business agreed on certain industrial behaviour to aid the implementation of Medicare by the Hawke/Keating government.

I recently went to have an MRI for an injury and was informed by a most embarrassed nurse that I had to pay for it as it was a 'pre-existing injury'.

Now, where have I heard that American phrase before?

Derek R. Costello, Belmont

HAVE YOUR SAY

Geelong Independent welcomes letters to the editor as well as comments and story tips on our website and Facebook page.
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