



Wedding firm wins award for second time

Julie Taylor | 4th December 2010

Winning the Trustpower Customer Service Award at the Westpac Rotorua Business Excellence Awards is becoming a habit for The Wedding Guy.

Peter and Valeta Duncan built on their 2009 success to further improve on what they offer clients to pick up the same award again this year.

"[Last year's win] challenged us to look for ways to become better as a business," Peter told The Daily Post.

The couple have been streamlining their business model and re-entered the award to affirm they had created a leaner, more efficient company, without losing the personal aspect of the business.

Duncan said the 2009 win solidified The Wedding Guy's position, something that has been used to increase market share.

New initiatives have been implemented to add value to client experiences and to better capitalise on the potential for referrals.

These include an online "Dob a Mate" campaign, encouraging people to recommend the company to friends and family for voucher or discount rewards, the new Bridal Buzz bi-monthly e-zine sent out to clients and members of The Wedding Group network and the launch of a new Rotorua Wedding Adventures website at www.rotoruwedding.co.nz.

"We've also invested considerable time and resource in understanding and effectively developing a number of social networking groups via FaceBook to communicate with our existing and prospective clients.

"We also use these as thermometers of client interest of future ideas we wish to launch into the market."

Not content with organising and acting as celebrant for weddings, The Wedding Guy is in the process of setting up its first Rotorua Wedding Show to showcase wedding and special event products and services from across the Central Park area.

Running at the Rotorua Convention Centre on April 16 and 17 next year, it will feature everything from a ladies only "Honeymoon Masquerade" lingerie show, indigenous canapes by chef Charles Royal, ice sculptures by Sabretooth Ice's Logan Shipgood, a bridal fashion show, local DJs and bands.

There will also be a "mancave" retreat for "any bloke wishing to escape the wedding show".

Duncan believes it is the first wedding show of this type in New Zealand to feature an evening event, giving guests the chance to enjoy Rotorua's sights and activities during the day.

New wedding adventure packages are also in the pipeline, ranging from extreme adventure honeymoons to luxurious resort and spa get aways.

Duncan said one of the key elements of the company's customer service was access to The Wedding Group, which now consists of 46 wedding-related businesses.

"Ongoing growth of this network provides ease of access for our clients to highly regarded and experienced specialists in the wedding industry, without the need for brides and grooms to spend unnecessary time vetting photographers, florists and venues - as we've already done the work already."



Service: Peter Duncan is busy planning Rotorua's first wedding show. Photo / Andrew Warner

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The Duncans have not decided whether they will be entering the customer service category again in 2011, saying it is a huge investment of time and resources.

"If we were to put our hat in the ring again, it would be because we place huge value on this particular category.

"It's also a great opportunity to pit ourselves against our industry peers and remain on the competitive edge."

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1. Love your work every day and you'll never work a day in your life. If you possess a genuine passion for what you do, this is infectious.

2. Build the ethic of excellent customer service into your businesses core values. It's vital this takes a top/down approach, initiated at the executive level and filtering down to every employee.

3. Actively engage with your clients by listening to their needs and translating those needs into the outcomes that best match their original intent.

4. Go the extra mile - there's less traffic. People who consistently deliver great customer service are in a class of their own and highly sought after.

5. Communicate with your clients - past, present and prospective - on a regular basis with valuable information, tips, hints. An email newsletter is a great way to do this.

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