

Press release for Derbyshire Cluster A

Series of marketing workshops gets off to a cracking start

A series of free marketing workshops or 'surgeries' to independent retailers across many parts of Derbyshire has started extremely well. "Inspiring", "so full of practical help", "great to have such expert advice" are just some of the delegates' comments.

A programme from the popular series "Retail Survival" and "The Shop Doctors" was devised by Main Marketing & PR Limited and is being presented by MD and retail marketing specialist Diane Jackson throughout most of 2009.

Aimed at supporting local businesses and creating prosperous towns, the programme is part of Derbyshire County Council's Market Towns Initiative, funded by the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP). Over 30 independent retailers from Bakewell, Matlock and Darley Dale attended the first series of four one-hour workshops in April at The Whitworth Centre in Darley Dale.

Inspired and motivated

In an independent survey of delegates after the workshops, retailers said they felt inspired, enthused and motivated to implement changes to their business which the marketing expert recommended, because they could appreciate the positive impact that would be made.

Kirsty Field from Designate Interiors in Matlock said, "The course completely inspired me. I am always relaying the content and ideas to my partner and my staff. I've changed the whole shop around since the course and I can definitely see the benefits. I'm now very optimistic for the future of my business."

The programme explored different facets of retail marketing, including injecting great customer service ideas into business, advertising and promotions and visual merchandising.

Practical help, great ideas

The more experienced retailers found it an excellent refresher. "The course was very useful and helped me to brush up. I used to lecture on sales and marketing many years ago and I found the course went through the A to Z of retail marketing. I was very pleased indeed" commented one Matlock trader.

Linda Froggatt from Spirit of the Andes in Bakewell said "It was a very good course – some ideas were new, some as a refresher, but all very useful, practical help. There was a great spirit among the delegates and it was great to have the opportunity to talk with them and bounce ideas off each other."

About to launch a new business in Matlock, George Durrant enthused, "What a well presented and very useful course – a great opportunity to take time out and think about these serious issues. It's helped me change some ideas as I plan to launch my new business and given me the confidence that I know I will get some things right before I even start!"

Florist Patricia Lane from Cherish in Darley Dale offered further insight: "It was good to meet with fellow traders; I've involved some in my business and display their cards. The workshop was really good for that. We have to help each other and the workshops encouraged that and gave us ways to do so."

The programme continues around many parts of Derbyshire until mid November 2009.

Project officers, councils, market town associations, regional development agencies and retail partnerships have all helped their local businesses with special workshops from Main Marketing, including The Shop Doctors, Retail Survival, Business Growth and Competitive

Edge. For practical advice and ideas on growing independent businesses, contact Diane Jackson at Main Marketing on 0845 129 9948, email her at shopdoctor@retailsurvival.co.uk or visit www.retailsurvival.co.uk

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Diane Jackson is the founder of Main Marketing & PR Ltd and is an acknowledged retail marketing specialist. Keen to promote good marketing skills and techniques to all, she has created and delivered many specialist workshops for retailers and small businesses around the country to great acclaim.

She first created Retail Survival Courses in 2001, as an integral part of the District Centres Regeneration Strategy for Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. In 2002 Diane won the Stockport Junior Chamber of Commerce 'Entrepreneur of the Year' Award for her work with retailers. To recognise her contribution to regeneration work in town centres, she was invited to join the Institute of Economic Development in 2008. Diane Jackson has written and had published various articles on retail marketing and market towns.