



10 JAN, 2023

More apprentices and other headlines

Daily Post, Rotorua Bay of Plenty

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MONEY YEAR IN REVIEW

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The Rotorua daily Post is taking a look back at some of the memorable stories of 2022 that featured in Money. Here's what made headlines from April to June.

Apprenticeship numbers soar in the Bay: April 16

Apprentice numbers in the Bay of Plenty building and construction sector hit record levels, climbing 70 per cent in two years.

Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) director Jason Hungerford said apprentice numbers were at record levels.

Hungerford said in March this year there were just over 1000 employers training apprentices in the region, up from 900 in March 2021.

"Employers are essential for training apprentices who are a great asset to their business.

"We're proud to be developing a skilled workforce for the building and construction industry."

Nick Matthews, NZ Certified Builders Pathways and Apprenticeship manager, said nationwide they were seeing increasing numbers of eager and trained apprentices entering the trades from a variety of backgrounds.

"We also encouraged our member builders to take on apprentices to help ensure there are highly skilled builders coming through to meet increasing demand."

Education Minister Chris Hipkins said more than 43,000 apprentices have been supported by the Apprenticeship Boost scheme, including more than 3000 in the Bay of Plenty.

Businesses face tough times with rising costs: April 30

Rising costs and skyrocketing inflation could send more businesses to the wall as customers tighten their belts and

close their wallets.

Retailer confidence was grim, as industry reports showed most were expected to increase their prices by 7.5 per cent, and 35 per cent were afraid they would not survive the year.

Priority One chief executive Nigel Tutt said the impact of rising inflation was being felt widely.

Rotorua Chamber of Commerce chief executive Bryce Heard said high government spending, rising wage expectations, difficulty with supply chains, gouging with international

shipping charges, shortages of supply and resources, and now the Russian invasion of Ukraine with the fuel price impact – "have all led to a perfect storm".

Retail NZ chief executive Greg Harford said businesses had seen "wild swings in sales numbers" and costs had substantially increased.

Many retailers had incurred additional debt to stay afloat and it was going to be challenging for some to recover.

"Many retailers are on a knife-edge."

Staff shortages hammer tourism and hospitality: May 21

Tourism and hospitality businesses are balancing their books as increased costs and staff shortages hit both their pockets and those of their customers.

Oscar and Otto co-owner Catherine MacLoughlin was in the process of

updating its menu prices.

The combination of wage increases and the cost of goods rising about 10 per cent needed to be reflected in the prices, she said.

The business had been impacted by a worker shortage in "almost every area", with the latest vacancy of a dishwasher being open for a month without a single inquiry.

"It's an unworkable situation."

Ash Gee, of Miss Gee's Bar & Eatery, was also working with fewer than adequate staffing numbers.

She was working almost full-time on the floor, which meant admin had been put off.

"It's pretty much been impossible, super hard."

There was high competition in the job pool and the long hours, exacerbated by the staff shortage, meant people were leaving hospitality, she said.

A Tauranga Business Chamber spokesperson explained it was a case of peak demand during a period of artificially restricted resources over the past two years, particularly relating to supply chain issues, border closures and Covid-19 restrictions.

The impact was that local and central governments had increased their investments, creating intense competition for a constrained labour market.

Residents pack bags for OE: June 18

The attraction of cheaper living, well-

paid jobs and career experience overseas was seeing young Bay of Plenty residents pack their bags.

About 50,000 New Zealanders were expected to leave the country over the next year for their OE or for work as the borders reopen after two years of Covid-19 restricting travel.

Rotorua resident Rachel Seamer was one of those thousands of people heading overseas, and left the city this month in search of adventure and life experience.

The 24-year-old described the overseas experiences as a "Kiwi right".

While she originally wanted to save money for a few years before travelling, she ended up working for four as Covid scuppered her plans.

But this, to some degree, worked in her favour; a few weeks before leaving New Zealand she won \$2000 playing Bingo, which added to her travel funds.

Her first stop was Camp America in Maine for three months, before heading to the UK for two years.



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Priority One workforce and policy general manager Greg Simmonds said the organisation expected young people from the Bay of Plenty would leave to seek opportunities overseas now that the border had reopened.

He said this had been backed up by local companies with younger staff, saying those who had put off their plans were heading away.

“This will further impact on what is already a tight local labour market, particularly in sectors such as retail and hospitality.”



Ash Gee, of Miss Gee's Bar & Eatery.

Photo / NZME