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New Thinking, New Directions – Building Innovation Capability in Australia

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## designedge Innovation Festival 2011

The designedge Innovation Festival 2011 which is partner festival of the Australian Innovation Festival will launch on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April 2011 at the City of Belmont Civic Centre from 6pm to 8pm. This festival is one of the largest community national Innovation Festivals staged in Australia during the Australian Innovation Festival and the event coincides with the launch of the 2011 Belmont Small Business Awards.



Seventy five workshops and events will be presented during the designedge Innovation Festival across Australia, and will bring together small business owners, inventors, innovators, designers and communicators in all industries. The festival will run from 18<sup>th</sup> of April to the 31<sup>st</sup> of May with national webinars, workshops, seminars and networking events.

This year's focus of the designedge Innovation Festival will be on assisting businesses improve their skills in website development, web marketing strategies, online shopping sites, sales tools and social media techniques that will assist to increase brand exposure, increase sales & profitability through the Australian government Small Business Online Program.

In Australia, only 36% of Small to Medium Businesses have an online presence, and this is well below international levels (*source: ABS Cat No. 9129.0 Business use of Technology, 2007 – 2008*). It is important that Australian small businesses do consider their current eCommerce strategies because 96.2% of people with internet access search the internet for businesses & services (*source: Nielsen NetView*).

The Australian government Small Business Online Project has enabled The TCF Australia Online Training & Mentoring Project to operate and provide FREE access to eCommerce, web site and social media business workshops, webinars, online mentoring, 'Ask an Expert' forums and a helpline for all small businesses with less than 20 employees, who have a current ABN. The focus of many webinars & workshops are to assist small retailers to take up a visual presence online.

Many of the designedge Festival events this year will be provided as webinars, so that small business owners across Australia can log in and enjoy the events from their homes or businesses over the internet, especially small businesses located in regional and remote Australia. Webinars are live, interactive seminars conducted via the internet that allow users to participate through chats, file share, or ask questions via their computer.

Carol Hanlon, Founder of the designedge Innovation Festival said, "Small businesses are keen to improve their skills through webinars with Social Media topics being extremely popular for businesses to gain new aspects into marketing and promoting online". All website and social media workshops and webinars are no cost for participants with ABN's

designedge Innovation Festival, now in its seventh year is staged annually by Belmont Business Enterprise Centre (BEC), Textile Clothing Footwear Resource Centre (TCFWA), TCF Australia and the designedge Fashion Incubator. For a full schedule of events and activities associated with the 2011 designedge Innovation Festival, please log onto [www.tcfaustralia.com/2011innovation](http://www.tcfaustralia.com/2011innovation)

Also, as part of the designedge Innovation Festival festivities during 2011, a very exciting upcoming event for W.A. will be highlighted – the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference of Fashion Incubators. This conference will offer new opportunities for all those that support and promote the Fashion Industry from around the globe to discuss best practice and expand marketing and promotional opportunities. The conference will be calling for the submission of papers during the designedge Innovation Festival. For more information on this event which will be happening in Perth in September 2011, please log into [www.fashionincubators.com](http://www.fashionincubators.com)

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