

Case Study: Avoca, VIC

www.avoca.vic.au

Type of Location: Avoca is a town in the Central Highlands of Victoria, it is 71 kilometres northwest of Ballarat and is one of two main towns in the Pyrenees Shire.

Population: 951 (2006 Census)

Major Industries: Wine growing and tourism

Applicant Organisation:
Avoca Business and Tourism Inc.

Synopsis: Avoca is the latest in a stream of Victorian towns

developing their Community Geographic Domain Name (CGDN) to provide their community and visitors with information on their town. After attending the auCD information workshop in Creswick, Avoca Business and Tourism representatives registered their interest and began on their application for licensing www.avoca.vic.au straight away - a website that would be run by the community for the community of Avoca. Through the Ballarat community website group members from the organisation were able to learn how to develop a community website using the Opensource software Joomla and gain access to free hosting - a great example the CGDN 'community of communities' sharing experience and resources.



What they say:

The decision to get involved

"We had been looking at the possibility of establishing a website but didn't know how. I'd rung a few web designers for info and when we read about auCD information session in Creswick we decided to attend.

The session was great (even though our knowledge limited) and when one of speakers offered to help us for free and another offered to host the website for free we were hooked!"

Getting the community onboard

"Business groups were very interested as they could see it was a way of taking Avoca to the world. Bringing the rest of the community onboard has been challenging as many didn't understand how it would benefit them and were

scared of computers. We've had to think outside the square to try and bring them with us. Now that it is online things should start to happen."

auCD support

"The people at auCD were fantastic. Always answered my emails promptly and they were always at the end of the phone. Also checked out the auCD website to see what others had done and gain inspiration."

What they hope to achieve and the benefit for the community

"We hope to be able to use the website to promote sustainable economic growth in tourism, retail and industrial development.

Greater community awareness and promotion of events and activities is now available at the click of a button. We can keep people in touch with people, plus our geographical location is now accessible to the world."

Advice to other communities

"Begin the process with as many community members as possible as involvement will decrease as the venture progresses. Look at as many community websites as you can to gain knowledge of what works and what doesn't. The website needs to be clear and easy to use as many of your community members may not be computer literate. Involvement of youth is advantageous."

Marg Pilgrim, Avoca Business and Tourism Inc.