

# MY INDUSTRY, MY MONEY, MY VIEWS

Bernadette Borg

With the voting down of the Rudd bank recently, major projects attempting to lift off the ground may find it difficult. The following 3 men all have one thing in common – They manage a successful business within the HVAC & R industry.

So this issue, we carry on from the previous, dig a little deeper and grab their opinions on running a good business in a bad time. I have asked them the following questions and these were their honest answers.

**Have we made mistakes during an indefinite slide?**

**Have we unnecessarily paused on what would be usual business decisions?**

**Finally, are we caught in the hype? Or is the slump serious with a "T.B.A." ending?**

Name: Kevin Marr

Company: Carel Australia Pty Ltd  
Silverwater, NSW

Position: Managing Director



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For the information available at the time earlier in the year we made appropriate decisions to cut non essential expenditure, we did not cut marketing or R&D investments or more importantly customer contact. Our business has not been affected anywhere near as much as our worst case planning but as good business people this was essential so I do not regret it.

We do not underestimate the magnitude of the global financial situation and still believe there are risks on the horizon, having said that our business is still growing substantially and we classify ourselves as cautious optimists, this is reflected on us currently seeking additional staff.

Name: John Mignano

Company: LU-VE CONTARDO  
Thomastown, VIC

Position: Managing Director



**Have we made mistakes during an indefinite slide?**

We only started to slow down at the last week of July, our stock levels have been kept slightly higher as we understand our competitors are reducing stock... some-one has to make the sale!

**Have we unnecessarily paused on what would be usual business decisions?**

No, not really in fact we launched some new products with an insert in Celsius.

We are also spending some time at the National Conference of the RWTa with a booth. Refrigerated warehouse and transport association.

We still sponsor the apprentice of the year with a trip to Chill-Venta in Germany. We still sponsor Melbourne Produce Market and many other fresh produce growers groups

**Finally, are we caught in the hype? Or is the slump serious with a "T.B.A." ending?**

What hype? If as a business man I listened to what our politicians or economists are saying I would be going around in circles.

One has to focus on the goal and work towards that goal.

Let me put it this way, in the food business the real players have money, are not reliant on banks, have long term investment strategies, the challenge is to link up with these guys and provide a valuable service to them.

And that does not mean we have to be the cheapest tender. It goes back to the first point ....you have to have stock, so you can shake the owners hand in the car park and tell him I can start the job next week.

Name: Jamie Davidson

Company: Coolparts  
Archerfield, QLD

Position: Managing Director



**Have we made mistakes during an indefinite slide?**

I think to make a successful business, if you do not make mistakes in any kind of environment you would not have a progressive business. The important issue here is recognising and fixing the mistake/s early and not to be too proud to admit this. Over the past 12 years of being in business, I have made many mistakes but at the end of the day I am still here and my company is doing very well.

**Have we unnecessarily paused on what would be usual business decisions?**

I would not say unnecessarily. I would say adapting to what our economy is demanding. I think we are more fortunate than other countries in the world. Australia is a growing country and our down turn will be short lived having said that, we need to understand our actions in business to spend only within our means.

**Are we caught in the hype? Or is this slump serious with a T.B.A. ending?**

I believe over the past 14 years we have experienced some very strong business growth, so it would not be hard to feel any kind of hype. I personally have experienced some good business growth through out those years. Let me tell you I have had a lot of fun and hype doing this. In saying that, I have not lost sight of what our market is doing. I do not like using "negative words" like "slump", to me it is just a slowing of business and personally I love it when this happens. As it challenges yourself to test your ability to keep your business a float. I have always loved competition and thrive on competing against my competitors. "So if you want to be a good business man work hard, if you want to succeed in business, work harder"

