



Scores on Doors

Case study: City of Sydney

City snapshot

As the largest and most densely populated city in Australia, more than 180,000 people live within the City of Sydney's boundaries and share space with some 20,000 businesses, 4,000 of which are retail food premises.

Every year, more than 2 million international visitors come to the Sydney metropolitan area. It is estimated a further 483,000 people travel to the City on any

day to shop, be educated, conduct business or simply be entertained. Another 385,000 people arrive daily to work in the local area.

The City conducts 3,500 hygiene and food safety inspections every year. Today, it has around 500 businesses participating in Scores on Doors, and that number is growing as the council evolves its strategy for the program.

An early adopter of Scores on Doors

The City of Sydney was part of the Scores on Doors pilot in 2010. The opportunity to balance enforcement with education and self regulation using Scores on Doors was too good an opportunity to pass up. Forty-eight premises signed up for the pilot. Participating gave the City the opportunity to provide feedback on the program, which at that stage did have its shortcomings.

In 2011, the Scores on Doors program expanded to a trial and the City again participated. Now, it has more like 500 businesses on board and growing. How did they do it?

Evolving the program, getting more businesses on board

Setting a target of how many businesses your council wants to get on board is a really good way to focus efforts on the program. Incorporating Scores on Doors as a positive message during inspections encourages businesses to strive for a higher rating.

The City started scoring every business at inspection, regardless if they are part of the program. Post inspection, they'll sign up businesses that scored an Excellent (5 stars), Very Good (4 stars) or Good (3 stars) ratings. All officers approach inspections this way, and





it ensures that a score can be given to any business, many of which are delighted at their high score and decide to join on the spot.

Make it easy. That's the one bit of advice Neil Williamson, Health and Building Area Manager for the City has.

"You need to make it easy for the business to participate in the program as well as for the officers conducting the inspections. We signed up premises (to the earlier Participation Agreement) on the spot, and gave them the certificate immediately after the inspection; that's the key," Mr Williamson said.

"With the recent improvements to the program, and businesses no longer needing to sign an agreement, it'll make our job even easier."

The City also offers discounted administration fees to businesses which receive an Excellent (5 stars) or Very Good (4 stars) rating. Businesses can save from \$85 up to \$420 if they participate in Scores on Doors. The success of the program has contributed to enabling council officers to focus on the poor performers in the area, while the complying businesses are given the opportunity to strive for a better score in their next routine inspection and save money.

Although this isn't possible for all councils, it demonstrates an innovative approach that has helped drive participation within the City.

The City has also seen greater consistency in officers' inspections as a result of the program and can meaningfully compare compliance amongst its retail food premises.

Local promotion

The City now has more businesses famed than shamed on the NSW Food Authority's penalty notice register, which it sees as a major success of the program. It is seeing wider knowledge of the program over time amongst its local businesses.

The City regularly publishes a list of participating restaurants on its website, and generates media stories for the Mayor and the website.

Looking to the future

With the City of Sydney's strong commitment to Scores on Doors, it wants to see the program grow to over a thousand businesses participating within the council area. Some initiatives under consideration include proactive release of inspection results on its website consistent with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA) and the development of an interactive map of Scores on Doors businesses on its website.

For more information about Scores on Doors

Contact the NSW Food Authority on: 1300 552 406 or contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au

www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/scoresondoors