



Success stories – Strengthening Business

## Tess & Lil (formerly Treat It Naturally)

Accepting the challenge



### Getting the ideas out

The owner of Tess & Lil, Mel Bye, knew that if she wanted to stay in business, she needed to move forward, but how? In her own words, Mel wasn't sure how to convert the ideas in her head to reality.

### Fire on her doorstep

Whilst Mel tried to remain positive and keep her business running through what would have normally been her peak time, this became more and more impossible as smoke from the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires took over the township with fires literally burning at her front doorstep.

### Taking the leap

Mel began business as a massage therapist, hence the former name 'Treat It Naturally'. Over time her business has

become more about homewares, clothing and gifts.

When Mel started working with Chris Westwood, a Strengthening Business Facilitator from the Australian Government's Entrepreneurs' Programme, she felt more accountable to her business.

This accountability led to a conversation around re-branding the business to something more appropriate, enter 'Tess & Lil' – Fashion | Homewares | Accessories.

### Next Steps

Mel has quickly recognised that she is the sole provider of modern and on-trend clothing and products for Corryong and the surrounding districts.

As visitation to the region returns after COVID-19 restrictions lift, her daily sales are rapidly climbing, and she is looking to continue her growth and establish an on-line shop. Technology and computers

are a new challenge for Mel; however, she is accepting this willingly, increasing her social media presence and working with the Digital Solutions team and Chris

Westwood to set up a website with e-commerce.

Mel is a real leader in the Corryong business community and what she has done with her store in the last 6 months is driving others in the community to not only improve the appearance of their stores, but to better themselves.

"The focus & direction are awesome, previously I did everything on my phone and now I'm using spreadsheets & finding out about customers. With Chris' support I feel I can do this now," Mel Bye, Owner Tess & Lil.