



NEWMARKET.



Retail is tough but opportunities abound

Newmarket Business Association CEO, **Mark Knoff-Thomas**, *pictured*, brings an eclectic business background to the precinct champion role he's held since 2014.

He has worked for start-ups, small-to-medium-sized businesses and multi-nationals at an executive level across sectors including education, broadcasting and employment.

"I think my experience in the recruitment sector has been invaluable for town centre management," said the leader of the eight-person team which represents over 1900 building and business owners.

"Recruitment exposes you to a vast multitude of business sectors and requires the constant need to connect and network widely. I garnered diverse business insights and network connections that I have drawn upon in my role at the NBA."

During his four years on the job, Newmarket's fortunes have fluctuated.

"I have seen the precinct rocket up \$60 million in annual sales, however for the past financial year (2017-18) our overall spend took an 11.5 per cent hit – this is wholly attributable to the closure of Westfield Newmarket," Mark said.

"In spite of this, our average transaction value has held strong (at \$66.42), and our overall profitability has actually increased."

"Generally speaking since 2014/15 we have trended above \$600million per annum and Westfield accounts for about a quarter of that.

"We expected to be down 25-30 per cent since the mall closed in February 2018, but actually we have been down around 18 per cent, which is much better than we had forecast.

"When the new development opens, we expect to see the precinct's total consumer spend exceed \$1billion.

"I think these changing times are evolutionary from a business perspective. Retail is tough. Retail has always been tough, but opportunities abound," he said.

NEWMARKET AT A GLANCE

- There are over 1900 business locations in Newmarket. Of Newmarket businesses, 28% are professional or technical, 18% retail and 11% financial and insurance.
- Big names such as Witchery, Country Road, Stolen Girlfriends, Adidas, Glassons, Bendon, and Nespresso have all chosen Newmarket for their flagship stores.
- Newmarket is also home to many big corporate headquarters such as 2degrees, Flexigroup, Vector, Watercare, Fidelity Life, Griffins, Roche, Tegel NZ and Arnott's.
- Newmarket has 4,000 car parks
- Newmarket is the second major public transport hub in Auckland
- Newmarket train station is the second busiest in Auckland

“The advent of e-commerce and digital channels provides a 24/7 global presence - which we didn’t have a few years ago.

“New Zealand has probably been quite slow on uptake of e-commerce, but now some of our smart retailers have jumped onto this and are reaping the rewards.”

Mark does not, however, subscribe to the bricks and mortar is under threat school of thought.

“Bricks and mortar retailers are having to adjust to a new landscape though, and identify ways to diversify their offering, so they can capture a wider market through as many channels as possible.

“In fact, bricks and mortar is becoming the great differentiator and one of the best ways for meaningful customer experience delivery, especially at the higher end of the market.

“What is true, and has never been truer, in retail is that you absolutely must have a point of difference. If you don’t you will suffer. Period.”



Parking in NEWMARKET

Newmarket has over 4,000 public car parks,



Newmarket harnesses the power of video in its multi-channel, multi-lingual communications.

“Video is a great visual medium to capture people’s attention on their devices on the go,” Mark said.

“One of the offshoots of our Development Response Strategy implemented in response to the Teed Street upgrade last year (2017) was a Precinct Strategy which aims to give more exposure to areas of Newmarket that consumers may not necessarily be aware off. Video provides a visually appealing way to do that.”



Newmarket Development Series

WATCH

- [Video 1](#) (November 2017)
- [Video 2](#) (July 2018)
- [Video 3](#) (September 2018)
- Video 4 will be out in early 2019.