

SPAR Australia

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MEDIA RELEASE

Blackall wins 5 Star Store of the Year Award

Ian Kinsey suspected his decision to convert to 5 Star was the best thing he had ever done and was proved right last Saturday night when his Blackall store was named 5 Star Store of the Year at the 2009 SPAR Gala Awards, held at the Gold Coast Exhibition Centre.

As an owner of six retail businesses in Blackall, including a pharmacy, Retravisation store and clothing store, Ian is no stranger to dealing with wholesalers and suppliers, and says his experience working with SPAR has been one of the best.

“Turnover this year has surpassed any expectations I had, and I can confidently attribute that to the conversion to a 5 Star store,” Ian said.

“I’m involved in retailing from many angles, and when it comes to working with SPAR I feel like they are there to facilitate the best outcomes for all of us.

“SPAR is so easy to work with. The weekly promotions really help drive sales and the service from the warehouse is first-class. Things have gone so well that I’m planning to open another 5 Star store in the street in the near future.”

Ian acknowledges the part his loyal customers and enthusiastic staff have played in his success.

“I’ve got a lot of supporters in the town, and if it wasn’t for them I wouldn’t be here today,” Ian said.

“My staff are great, too. They enjoy coming to work and it shows in their attitude. They create a buzz and a specialness for the shoppers that keeps them coming back, and because of that they’ve been able to build a great rapport with our customers.”

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SPAR Australia General Manager for Retail Operations, Travis Cunnane, said that it was great to see someone who has invested so much in his local town recognised for his efforts.

“Ian is Blackall born and bred and has spent the last 28 years building up business in the town,” Mr Cunnane said.

“He employs many of the locals and devotes a lot of time to training his staff, so it’s great to reward someone who has given a lot to his local community.”

This year’s Awards were more challenging than last year and Mr Cunnane said he was impressed by the hard work and commitment shown by retailers.

“This is the second year we have run the Awards program and we made several changes to the scoring and questions to ensure they were reflective of the current retail environment,” Mr Cunnane said.

“We used external suppliers to perform most of the judging to ensure objectivity and we were blown away by how close the stores rated across the various categories – in many cases there was only one point separating the winners.

“There were a lot of new winners this year and more winners within each awards category which was fantastic to see. We want all of our retailers succeed and hope they will use the criteria as a benchmark for their staff moving forward.”

The SPAR brand is a global success boasting around 13,610 stores in 31 countries. SPAR is an acronym that means "Save" in Europe and last year, SPAR stores, all 100 percent locally owned, injected almost \$400 million in sales into Australia’s retail economy.

Worldwide, the SPAR group serves more than 10 million customers every day and supports local communities all over the world by sponsoring local sporting clubs, charities and community events.

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