MEDIA RELEASE
Business Mentors New Zealand
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Free mentoring for small businesses hit by Microsoft outage

Business Mentors New Zealand's 1,500+ volunteer Business Mentors are stepping up en masse to support small and medium-sized businesses affected by the worldwide Microsoft email outage on Friday 13 November.

The mentoring gives business owners access to an experienced volunteer mentor who can help them with the immediate impact or review how they handled the outage and put practical steps in place to keep operating through future disruptions.

Friday's global Microsoft 365 outage disrupted access to Outlook and delayed email delivery for many New Zealand businesses. For small businesses that rely on email to take orders, confirm bookings, send quotes and invoice customers, the disruption will mean missed enquiries, rescheduled meetings and a backlog of work.

Business Mentors New Zealand Chief Executive Sarah Trotman ONZM says an unexpected disruption reveals how much of the working day depends on a single system.

"When your entire email system goes down, you quickly find out how much of your business runs through it. Can you still reach the customer whose job is booked for Monday? Can your team find the orders that need to go out today? Those are useful questions to work through while the outage is still fresh in your mind," says Trotman.

"A mentor can help you assess the immediate impact and look at what happened, what your team did to keep things moving and where a simple change would make a difference. That might mean keeping key customer and supplier numbers somewhere your team can reach them, or agreeing who will contact customers if email goes down again."

"We're offering an in depth session with an experienced mentor and access to our Digital Mentor, accessible 24/7, for up to 12 months. So business owners have someone to work through those changes with and support 24/7 when other business challenges arise," says Trotman. "If this disruption impacted cashflow, brought your business to a halt or showed you something about how your business operates that you'd like to change, we'd like to hear from you."

Businesses affected by Friday's outage can register their interest at businessmentors.org.nz registration, for 12 months mentoring, is normally $295. Business owners wanting to access this support should enter **BMNZDM26** at the payment gateway to by-pass payment.

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About Business Mentors New Zealand

Established in 1991, Business Mentors New Zealand is a not-for-profit organisation that connects small business owners, start-ups and community enterprises with experienced business mentors. Its nationwide network of more than 1,500 mentors all volunteer their time, offering confidential, one-on-one guidance to help business owners work through challenges and grow their businesses. The service supported by organisations including ASB, IBM and MBIE.

Digital Mentor is available 24/7 and draws on business insights from its mentors.

Business Pulse gives BMNZ real time access to anonymised macro insights, from mentoring meetings. These are available across any sector, issue or timeframe.

Media enquiries and interviews

Business Mentors New Zealand Chief Executive Sarah Trotman is available for interviews. To arrange an interview or for further information, contact:

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