

Students help monthly markets to go online

PROSPECTIVE customers can now browse, at any time, through the contents of stalls at Armidale's monthly Markets in the Mall.

Students at the University of New England have helped stall-holders set up a website where their artefacts can be displayed.

Two of the stall-holders, Weemala Pottery and Stepping Stone Productions, are already featured on the website (www.armidalemarkets.com), and the students are expecting the site to develop as more and more stall-holders display their wares.

The team of students from

UNE's New England Business School reported on the project, called 'Armidale Markets Online,' at the national Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) competition in Melbourne last year.

The judges, impressed by the amount of support the Markets Online Project had received from local businesses and the links it had established throughout the community, considered it 'a great initiative.'

The President of SIFE UNE, Benita Wolfenden, said the project had won enthusiastic support from the Police and Community Youth Club (the organisers of the markets) and Armidale Dumaresq Council

(through the council's Visitor Information Centre).

The students have conducted seminars at UNE for the stall-holders, discussing the website and the marketing strategies it could support.

"Our aim is to enhance the business success of the stall-holders through initiating an online marketing strategy and helping them to use it," Ms Wolfenden said.

"The website can extend the stall-holders' access to their customers, allowing people to 'go to the markets' at any time.

"The Armidale Markets Online project promotes the global mission of SIFE, which is

for university students to make a positive difference in their communities."

Markets Online project leader Emma Falkenmire said the development of the website had been 'an exciting and fulfilling project throughout 2004.'

"We are looking forward to the growth and development of the project in 2005," she said.

In addition to Ms Wolfenden and Ms Falkenmire, the Markets Online team at UNE includes Andrew Kapinga (the project's IT Officer), Olivia Thurling and Grant Johnston.