

# INDUSTRY IDEAS- INNOVATION

# BusinessOwner

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## Helping hands for global workers on the move

WITH Australia in the grip of a labour shortage, the push to bring in skilled workers will only gain momentum.

And while highly paid executives are usually afforded star treatment — with relocation gurus holding their hand every step of the way — less senior workers are left to their own devices.

But help is at hand in the shape of an online relocation program.

With a career in nursing and as a flight attendant behind her, it was while working for a relocations company that Shani Alexander identified a gap in the market.

After working out the concept on butcher paper on the kitchen table of her Melbourne home, she launched her online relocation tool, Relocations-Made-Easy in September, 2004.

Described as a one-stop online program, Ms Alexander said it was a cost-effective way for overseas and interstate workers to navigate a transfer to Australia.

Ms Alexander said it was while working in the relocations industry that she noticed how much pressure that human resource staff and corporate executives faced when trying to organise a shift.

"I was amazed at how little information was online for professional people moving to Australia," she said.

"By harnessing the power of the internet with a simple and intuitive do-it-yourself model, staff looking at relocating to Australia have personalised information in front of them.

"It's totally liberating for them and for the employers who are bringing them to a new job."

Ms Alexander said because of the skills shortage there would be more workers coming from overseas who would need help relocating.

Relocation programs are finalised for Sydney and Melbourne and Ms Alexander is working on other capital cities and regional centres.

A mother of two teenage boys, Ms Alexander said her background showed her that customer service and procedure were foremost.

Ms Alexander said 90 per cent of the staff who were moved were not serviced by any type of destination service.

"What I decided to do was take that expensive process and apply it to the internet," she said.

She said people could initiate a move at one-tenth of the cost.

"I can't believe how right it is," she said of the product.

Ms Alexander said the program worked on a number of levels. People could buy a two-day pass, 30-day pass or six-month pass.

The shorter passes provided an overview while the six-month pass — designed for use three months before the shift and three months after the shift, offered a complete package.

Prices range up to \$500. The online program walks users through picking a suburb to live, schools, booking childcare, bringing pets, opening bank accounts, settling into the new job and a multitude of other issues that need to be addressed.

She is talking to Austrade about getting Next Step program assistance that might provide her with a mentor to help develop her export business.

In the meantime, Ms Alexander said to take the product to the next level she would need investment partners.

Net link: [relocations-made-easy.com](http://relocations-made-easy.com)



Global view: Shani Alexander helps people relocate. Picture: MIKE KEATING