

Dr Tim Cooper (left) is Managing Director of Coopers Brewery, a fifth-generation member of the renowned family of South Australian beer-makers.

Adelaide-based ANZ Relationship Manager Tom Rundle (right) has looked after Coopers' banking needs for over a decade, and learned much along the way.



Tim: The first time I met Tom was in 1994. What I liked straight away was that he's a personable banker who's focused on doing the right job for ANZ and his customers. He manages the interface well by having clear insights into how our business works. He and his colleagues know the personalities here and know our strengths and weaknesses. They're decisive and make quick, but measured decisions.

Building our new brewery at Regency Park and moving our operations from Leabrook in 2001 was a big ask for us. We'd bought the Regency Park property for \$5 million and preliminary work indicated we'd have to spend another \$30 million to build the brewery and relocate.

We already had some funds. ANZ also put their hand up and said they'd help us through the project. But as often happens, we ended up needing more funding beyond what we'd agreed originally. Again ANZ supported us.

My relationship with Tom is collegial in the sense we have dinner, attend evening functions and play golf together a few times a year.

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During 2005 we faced a hostile takeover bid by one of our larger competitors. We'd been considering a capital management program before that, buying back some of the shares, but the appetite among shareholders to sell increased with the focus on value coming through the takeover bid. So we committed to a multi-million dollar capital management program and, yet again, ANZ came to the party.

We've paid back what we borrowed for the new brewery. Now ANZ knows our requirements are more for capital management and working capital. We give Tom monthly information about how sales are going, our profit and loss and so forth. He knows if I tell him our requirements for certain circumstances, he can have faith in what I say. It works really well for both of us.

Open Dialogue

Tom: I'm a South Australian boy, so when I get off planes in Sydney and Melbourne and see Coopers signage round the place it makes me proud. I'm delighted to be able to support a South Australian business that's doing a great job in marketing itself on the eastern seaboard.

I've known the Coopers business and worked with Dr Tim Cooper and others in the company for almost fifteen years now. It's been a pleasure to see them grow.

It's truly a family concern. You go to their AGMs and the shareholders present are almost all descendants of Thomas Cooper, who started the business in 1862, and his 13 children.

Not only do they love their company, they're astute business people. When a larger competitor tried to acquire them two years ago, I don't think it understood the culture and the strength of the relationships at Coopers.

They're extremely loyal, which is why they've been with ANZ for so many years.

We've worked with them in many ways. When they've had challenging times we provided advice and funding, and as they grew, assisted with their relocation. The takeover battle in 2005 with their competitor added a lot to my understanding of their business.

I've watched the friendly way Coopers deal with their customers, for example – the hoteliers. It's part of their culture to be nice to everybody and it's one of the biggest lessons they've taught me, that nice people get ahead.

What Coopers do for the South Australian community in their sponsorships is inspiring and the way they conduct themselves is very much aligned with the no-nonsense South Australian market itself. You've probably seen some of Coopers' advertising. It's honest and straight to the point, and so are they.