

# Speak Out Loud:

## Stories of Strength from the Southern Downs

**EPISODE:** CONNECTION THROUGH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

**GUESTS:** Carmel and Adam Wooding, Empower Digital

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### SUMMARY OF EPISODE

Carmel and Adam Wooding join me on the podcast today to chat about how digital technology can help you thrive by connecting you with your friends, family and community, as well as how digital technology is helping rural, regional and remote businesses across Australia thrive by connecting them with their customers and their teams. Carmel and Adam established their own business, Empower Digital, during the drought and the bush fires of 2019 in Warwick, Queensland. They also had plans to travel around Australia with their business when the pandemic changed what was possible. Their story reflects how important it is to have goals in your personal and your work or business life. But most importantly, it highlights the value of being flexible in how you work towards your goals. The themes in this episode encourage you to connect and to be flexible in life and business.

Listen to the podcast conversation to hear Carmel and Adam share:

- their connection with the Southern Downs Region
- how they combined their interests in education and digital technology to create a family business in 2019 when the region was experiencing drought and bushfires
- why their business goal is to empower people with the use of technology
- how they planned to combine their business and family goals in 2020 by travelling around Australia with their three children and facilitating in-person workshops in regional and rural communities
- how the pandemic unexpectedly impacted their travel and business
- returning home during the pandemic enabled them to manage uncertainty, and rethink and adapt their plans so they could continue to work towards their goals
- the adjustments they made to their family travel goals that enabled them to return to caravanning and working on the road
- the surprising silver lining that COVID-19 had for their business
- technology as a tool facilitates connection between people, businesses and communities in ways that help them to thrive especially in rural and regional areas
- access to technology and connectivity is a barrier in some parts of Australia where there are limited mobile phone and Internet services
- fear or lack of confidence in using technology is also a barrier for many people

- adopting the mindset that everything in life is a learning process can help people access and enjoy the benefits of technology
- technology offers huge potential for people's lives and communities in rural, regional and remote areas to be transformed in positive ways
- the importance of individuals and businesses maintaining information literacy and remembering that everything you see on social media is not true or realistic
- being proactive with security measures is important
- practical tools to help you overcome some of the challenges with technology include:
  - keep software up-to-date with the latest versions of apps and programs you use
  - businesses should use a password manager to manage all their passwords – it can be a little bit of a process to set up but it's worth the time and effort
  - use a different password on every different account that you have
  - turn on two-step authentication wherever possible
  - be careful which links you click on and who you share sensitive information with
- supporting communities and businesses to improve connectivity and connection reflects the positive power of technology and facilitates self-determination
- COVID-19 has normalised virtual meetings and connections using technology

## CONTACT CARMEL AND ADAM WOODING

Empower Digital

W: <https://empowerdigital.com.au/>

## RESOURCES MENTIONED IN THE PODCAST

Knowledge Water <https://knowledgewater.com.au/>

Buy From the Bush <https://www.buyfromthebush.com.au/>

Southern Downs Regional Council <https://www.sdrc.qld.gov.au/>



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*The information shared in the podcast and handouts is intended for general information only. To the best of our knowledge, this information was correct at the time of publishing. Please consult with your doctor or health provider for support based on your individual needs.*

*Speak Out Loud: Stories of Strength From the Southern Downs Podcast*  
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