



## Media Release

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### **Online and tech industries dominate business challenge**

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The online and technology industries have dominated entries to a business challenge, which has attracted 263 entrepreneurs, all vying for a prize package that includes \$100K and time with Sir Richard Branson.

Fifteen finalists from *BNZ Presents: The Virgin Business Challenge* have now been selected to enter the next phase of the competition to determine which 10 businesses will pitch to a panel of New Zealand's top entrepreneurs.

BNZ Director Anthony Healy says the high calibre of entries and enormous interest shown in the challenge is an encouraging sign for New Zealand's economic future.

“With two billion people connected to the internet globally and almost US\$8 trillion exchanging hands through e-commerce, it is heartening to see our newest Kiwi businesses setting their sights on this opportunity.”

Twenty per cent of entries came from the internet and technology industries, with the traditional manufacturing, transport and food and beverage sectors also with a strong showing.

“Stepping up to this challenge with such driving offshore aspirations is a true testament to the talent amongst New Zealand entrepreneurs,” he says.

The 15 stage-two finalists are:

- Roger Boyd, 1Above
- Angus Allan, The Collective



- Mark Christensen, FaceMe Ltd
- Robert Bell, Brett Waterson and Ross Peat, Klickex Corporation Ltd
- Hamish McLachlan, Konnect Net Ltd
- Kaila Colbin and Melissa Clark-Reynolds, MiniMonos Ltd
- David Darling, Pacific Edge Ltd
- Chris de Boer, Pingar Holdings Ltd
- Greg Cross, PowerbyProxi Ltd
- Peter Beck, Rocket Lab
- Mike Carden, Sonar6
- Ian Williams, WilliamsWarn
- Richard Justice, Photonz
- Kyle Dransfield, Highway1 Specialty Roding
- Jeremy Miocevic, Piper Drinks Ltd.

These entrepreneurs will now be asked to submit their business plans with the top 10 being selected to pitch to a panel of New Zealand's leading entrepreneurs.

*BNZ Presents: The Virgin Business Challenge* prize pack includes: time with Sir Richard Branson; a \$100,000 cash prize from BNZ; a BNZ business education scholarship; mentoring from top Virgin and BNZ executives; and access to Virgin meeting rooms worldwide.

Air New Zealand and Virgin Australia will also provide the winning business with a world of opportunity via an exciting travel package which includes a choice of domestic and trans-Tasman destinations, as well as flights to the global business capitals of London, New York and Geneva.

The winner will be announced at an awards evening in Auckland on December 15.

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## Ends

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