

Media Release

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Record numbers using Sorted resources

New Zealanders facing tough economic times appear to be taking the sensible step of sorting out their personal finances, judging by the numbers using the financial information website sorted.org.nz and ordering free Sorted booklets.

Retirement Commissioner Diana Crossan says January's always busy on sorted.org.nz as people plan for the year ahead, but this January has set new records, with 163,000 visitors to the website - nearly a third more than January 2008.

That's on top of 1.2 million visits to sorted.org.nz in 2008, and over 5 million since the site was set up in 2001. Recent research* shows almost one in four New Zealanders (24 %) have visited the Sorted website since it was launched.

Sorted's free financial guide booklets have also been in demand, with nearly 25,000 ordered in January, on top of 220,000 ordered in 2008.

Diana Crossan says the information and calculators on sorted.org.nz and the booklets can help people take practical steps to sort out their finances.

"Many New Zealanders are feeling the impact of the global recession. As individuals, we can't affect the international economic climate, but we can get our own house in order, to be as prepared as possible for whatever 2009 may bring."

Diana Crossan says the first steps to sorting your finances are setting goals and making a budget.

The online [Budget Calculator](#) is one of the most heavily used tools on sorted.org.nz, with 430,000 calculations in January - up 80 percent on last January. That's on top of 1.5 million calculations in 2008.

The other top tool with users is the [Mortgage Repayment calculator](#), which can help people review their mortgages in the light of changing interest rates. There were 1.3 million calculations on this tool in 2008, and 216,000 in January 2009.

Once you have set your goals and made a budget, Sorted calculators can also help you plan how to [manage your debt](#) and [save](#).

In total, Sorted users made 6.1 million calculations in 2008.

Sorted user Bevan Bailey says the Budget calculator helped him by showing that his spending added up to several thousand dollars more than he was earning.

"I thought, that must be true and that's why I need to do something about it."

Davinia Thornley's another Sorted user who's pleased she's taken the first steps.

"Just getting the budget and cashflow on paper was huge. It gives you the confidence to take bigger steps."



Sorted user Sean Parker is one of nearly 160,000 people who have registered to use the secure *My Plan* section on Sorted to store his information. He says he goes back to *My Plan* about every six months, to keep on track.

The booklet: 'Sorted - Your guide to getting there' is available from ANZ and National Bank branches nationwide and some Pak'n Save stores in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch.

You can also order the free guide by calling 0800 SORT MONEY (0800 767 866) or online at www.sorted.org.nz/ordering.

**Survey of 500 people nationwide conducted by Nielsen for the Retirement Commission, margin of error 4.4 percent.*

Editors note: The Sorted users quoted are available for interviews.

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