

Rosie's glow helps win award

By GRANT WOOLLIAMS

A GENERATION ago, people travelled to see things: the Taj Mahal, Big Ben, the Grand Canyon, Ayers Rock.

But New Zealand? Unless you are Australian or East Asian, New Zealand has few physical attributes better, or more easily and cheaply accessible, than elsewhere. Not many would fly from the northern hemisphere just to ski the South Island when they can easily ski the Swiss or French Alps. So New Zealand's attractiveness as a destination has necessarily and successfully evolved around visitor experiences and promotion of Kiwi hospitality. Our hugely important tourism earnings rely in large measure on selling our "Kiwiness".

The value of promoting and reinforcing Kiwiness led to the development of the KiaOraMai customer service programme last year. KiaOraMai ("welcome to our place") encourages frontline staff to sell New Zealand, and our businesses, by expanding conversations with



ROSIE SHANKS

customers and clients by asking genuine questions, and providing answers that accurately impart local knowledge.

An example is Rosie Shanks, head receptionist of the Scenic Hotel Southern Cross in Dunedin, who was nomi-

nated for a KiaOraMai Awesome Service Award. Auckland Chamber of Commerce chief executive Michael Barnett judged Shanks to be November's award winner.

■ **When you experience exceptional customer service go to www.awesomeservice.co.nz and nominate the person who provided it. The KiaOraMai Awesome Service Awards are supported by the *Sunday Star Times*, *NewstalkZB*, the Chambers of Commerce, and APN Outdoor.**