

• I'm always learning – the number one thing is knowledge – reading, seminars, DVDs, books. 9

- Joshua Nicholls

Secrets of their success

CHRISTINE O'MALEY

IMAGINE a business that grows almost 800 per cent in five years.

Now imagine the owner was just 22 when he started the business.

It might sound like fiction but it's the truth of the story that secured Blacktown businessman Joshua Nicholls an entire chapter in a new book.

Dale Beaumont's latest publication, *Secrets of Small Business Owners Exposed*, divulges the business tips of 15 of Australia's most successful small business owners.

Mr Nicholls company Platinum Electrical was named the 36th fastest growing start-up company in 2006 and awarded Australia Post Small Business of the Year 2005, so it is not surprising his tips are in hot demand.

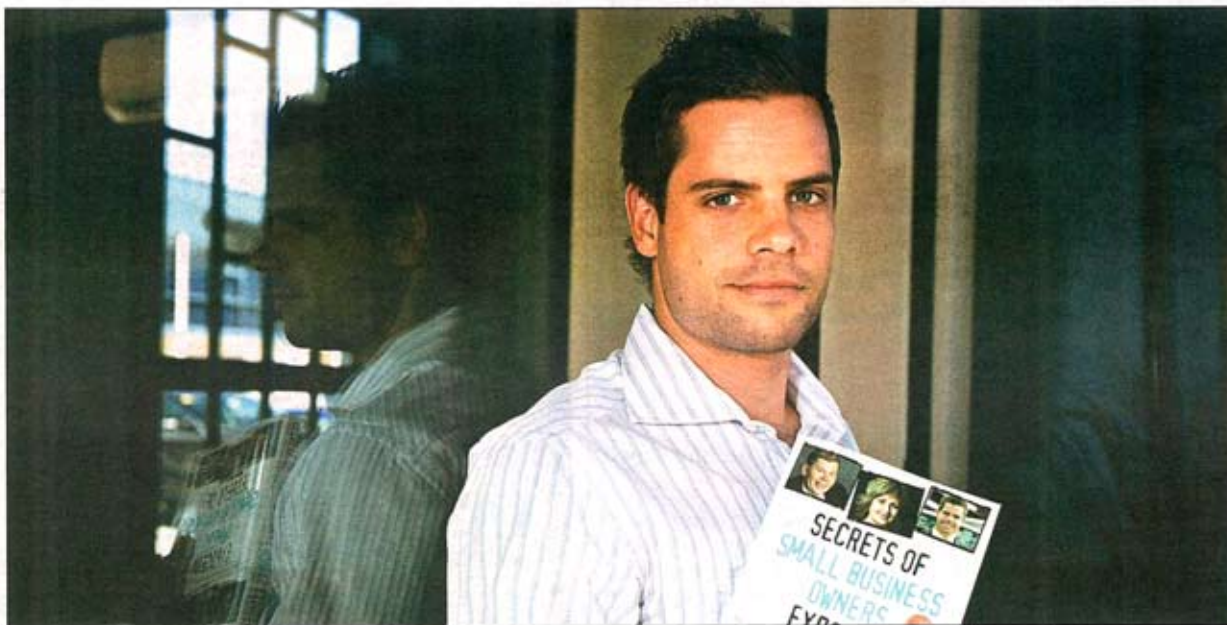
Since 2001, Mr Nicholls has grown his electrical business from one staff member to 30 – all before his 30th birthday.

And the secret to success?

"I thought, 'How can I be different?' My three things are superior service, professionalism and on-time every time," he said.

Mr Nicholls said a dedicated team is also crucial to success.

"One hundred per cent the biggest part is the team. I'm the front man



Platinum Electrical managing director Joshua Nicholls is one of 12 small business owners involved in a book called *Secrets of Small Business Owners Exposed*.

that steers the ship but it's the team that makes it happen," he said.

Mr Nicholls eye for detail has helped.

"Most electricians dress in blue. My tradesmen dress in platinum red, shirts tucked in, black King

Gees and leather shoes. We have a style guide," he said.

A business coach lends a hand and after five years in the business, he said he still seeks advice.

"I'm always learning – the number one thing is knowledge – reading, seminars, DVD's, books."

Mr Nicholls said the next step is to franchise the business.

He hopes to have 150 vans operating across NSW in five years.

In the interim he has started another business – Fusion Plumbing.