

Platinum Electrical Contractors

2007 national winner of the Panasonic Australia Business Award

Joshua Nicholls (right) had only spent three years working as an electrician when he started his company, Platinum Electrical Contractors, an electrical trades group servicing Sydney's west.

Despite being just 22 years old at the time and having no previous business experience, Joshua had seen his parents manage a number of businesses over the years and felt that it was in his blood.

"My parents were supportive when I started - but nervous," Joshua said.

"I always thought that being a good tradesman equalled being a good businessman. I soon learned that the two were separate, and I had a lot to learn."

Once Platinum Electrical Contractors was established, Joshua's main challenge wasn't finding enough customers, but finding time.

"I would be out doing jobs all day, and then be in my bedroom until 2am each night



finishing the bookwork. I didn't have the systems and procedures in place to manage the business side of things - I had to learn all of that pretty quickly," he said.

Joshua hired his first employee within four months of starting up, and eventually gained the capital to move his office from his bedroom in his parents' home to offices in Sydney's west in 2003.

Fast-forward to 2008, and Platinum Electrical Contractors now employs over 30 people and has a turnover of more than \$3

million a year. They've just begun franchising the business with a vision of creating 50 new franchises in the next five years, with a total fleet of 150 vans.

"It's like starting out all over again - I'm the new apprentice in the world of franchising," Joshua said.

Platinum Electrical Contractors' national success at the 2007 Telstra Business Awards has given Joshua the confidence to move full steam ahead towards exciting new prospects for his business.

2007 TELSTRA BUSINESS AWARD WINNERS - NSW

- **2007 Telstra New South Wales Business of the Year:**
Brookfarm - St Helena
- **Australian Government Micro-Business Award** (for businesses with five or less employees):
propertybuyer - Forestville
- **MYOB Business Award** (for businesses with five to 20 employees):
Brookfarm - St Helena
- **Panasonic Australia Business Award** (for businesses with 20-50 employees):
Platinum Electrical Contractors - Blacktown
- **Hudson Business Award** (for businesses with 50-100 employees):
Scenic World Blue Mountains - Katoomba
- **AMP Innovation Award** (for businesses that have recently introduced an innovative product, service or process):
Unistraw International Ltd - Chippendale