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# Your Business



Got a small business success story? Email Lucy or Nick at [ardernl@goldcoast.com.au](mailto:ardernl@goldcoast.com.au) or [nicholsn@goldcoast.com.au](mailto:nicholsn@goldcoast.com.au)



I knew when I set up that it would take time to build a business but it has been growing more quickly than I imagined

The Gold Coast's Jordan Stevens, 24, is the youngest Platinum Electrical Contractors franchisee in Australia.  
Photo: BRENDAN RADKE

## A switched-on sparkie

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SETTING up in business during an economic downturn comes with certain risks, not the least of them being that fewer cashed-up people are around.

However, for electrician Jordan Stevens, the move is paying dividends.

The 24-year-old is the youngest person in Australia to hold a Platinum Electrical Contractors franchise. He established his business after moving to the Gold Coast from Dareton, near the Riverina town of Mildura, last March.

Mr Stevens said he knew that the Gold Coast had been hit hard by the global financial crisis but talks with other Platinum franchise owners had

convinced him that it remained a city of opportunity.

"My parents grow grapes near Mildura and the family always came to the Gold Coast for holidays when I was a child," he said. "I would leave thinking how good it would be to live here."

After completing his apprenticeship and working in Mildura for some years, Mr Stevens decided to move.

"It had always been my intention to operate my own business but the more I thought about it, the more I was daunted by what was involved," he said. "I decided to go down the franchise path because of the back-up services that are available."

"Before applying to take on the franchise, I contacted a

number of Platinum franchisees in the Brisbane area, all of whom said they thought it would do well on the Gold Coast. They told me they received call-outs to do work in the city from time to time and regarded the Gold Coast as a place of opportunity."

The Sydney-based franchise chain was established 11 years ago and has operators in major cities and regional centres from Gladstone to Perth.

Franchisees have sole marketing rights for set areas and Mr Stevens' area stretches from Hope Island and Helensvale to Broadbeach.

However, he is free to work wherever he is asked to work.

Work has taken him to Chermanside and Indooroopilly. "I like to specialise in shop

and office fitouts. I did a lot of that in Mildura," he said.

"I also recognise the importance of bread-and-butter income and repeat business and have a strong focus on providing maintenance and repair services."

"I do regular work at a number of residential towers and a major holiday park and I also fix electrical problems at rental properties for real estate agencies."

"I knew when I set up that it would take time to build a business but it has been growing more quickly than I imagined."

Mr Stevens said Platinum's corporate office had stressed to him the importance of personal contact and he

regularly attended chamber of commerce events.

"I have found that, as long as I follow up, networking at such events works well," he said.

"Also, my business is listed in the Yellow Pages and jobs booked through the Platinum website by people and businesses within my franchise postcode areas come to me."

Mr Stevens said being part of a recognised chain offered significant benefits.

"There are regular business seminars and Platinum corporate is always there to call on for help," he said.

"Platinum assures me that I am doing well, given that the Gold Coast economy continues to be weak."

"I certainly don't have any plans to return to Mildura."

### Businesses urged to ride wave of Chinese tourists

GOLD Coast Combined Chamber of Commerce president Jason Deacon has called on local companies to prepare to tap into growing tourism markets like China.

"Recent figures found that 20 per cent of Chinese visitors to Australia go to the Gold Coast and we need to look at how to take advantage of China's growing outbound travel market," he said.

"Business needs to focus on how

to effectively target and appeal to the Chinese travellers and then make the necessary changes to be successful with this prominent visitor market."

Mr Deacon said Gold Coast companies should position themselves now to ensure they were accessible to the growing tourism group.

"The tourism industry is undoubtedly the most important industry on the Gold Coast, so the

city needs to ensure that it remains a key economic driver," he said.

"Beyond tourism, many other companies in the region have an opportunity to connect with this market and if they don't - they do so at their own risk. Both tourism operators and the other sectors will benefit from attracting a greater market share and visitor spending from the fastest-growing markets of China, India and South-East Asia."

### More women chase mining jobs

GOLD Coast-based company Reynolds Soil Technologies is reporting a shift in female workers applying for jobs previously filled by men.

Director Peter Parkinson said that more women were putting their hands up for positions in the engineering, technical trades or environmental science areas, while in the past most females worked in administration.

"We have seen an increase of about 30 per cent over the past few years of women moving into mining roles," he said.

"The work culture of mining is changing and we are seeing more females qualified or studying to enter into the mining sector."

"Although there is still a stigma around mining being a man's job, this is beginning to shift as more women enter the workforce."