

# Tim's a shining example of how to succeed

By NIGEL AUSTIN

TIM Austin believes strongly in the adage of "the harder I work the luckier I get".

This outlook has seen him transform the one-man cleaning concern run for years by his father, Conor, into a business that boasts a \$4.2 million turnover and employs 130 workers.

The rapid growth has been recognised with International Cleaning Services named one of Australia's fastest growing companies in the annual *BRW Magazine* Fast 100 list.

Mr Austin expects it to retain that status for at least the next year with a rapidly growing list of major clients.

"I didn't just get lucky, I



strategised my future through hard work," he said.

Mr Austin has about 500 domestic customers and also cleans the premises of about 120 commercial customers including the Radisson Hotel, Hyatt, Embassy, EDS, Detmold Packaging, Philmac, United Water, Thiess and Channel 7.

The hard work began when Mr



**CLEANING UP:** Tim Austin's number one concern is customer satisfaction.

Picture: MARK BRAKE

Austin ran his father's business for four weeks while his father took a holiday about seven years ago.

He quickly acquired a taste for it and admits to getting carried away with the thrill of responding to customer needs.

Soon he had a mobile phone and a rough filing system and a growing list of small clients.

"I saw a niche in cleaning people's homes when they moved out and I would do everything myself," he said.

"As soon as I finished I'd go on to the next one and you could say I worked 20 hours a day, seven days a week for a good two years.

"I wasn't getting a lot of sleep, but I just loved it because you can see the results straight away, which is quite rewarding."

As the business grew his reputation increased and the clients became progressively larger branching into major sectors including retail, hospitality, industrial and commercial.

Then he started expanding in Melbourne, winning the contract for the Grand Hyatt Hotel after 10 months of relationship building.

International Cleaning Services has 15 people working full time at the Grand Hyatt.

"We've got the structure to handle the big end of town but we can also handle the smaller end," he said.

"Our work in the hospitality industry with major hotels has given us a good idea of the day-to-day service required in other sectors," he said.

"Customer service is the single most important factor in the success of the business.

"We've got two senior customer service managers because I want to build a well thought of organisation."

He is constantly talking to customers, checking that their needs are being met.

Mr Austin expects to be employing 230 to 250 people within the next 12 months.

He has expanded into Melbourne with a move to Sydney and Brisbane planned for the next two years and is also considering the food and medical industries.

"If we can duplicate our success here, I don't see why we can't succeed in those markets," Mr Austin said.