

## IN BRIEF &gt;&gt;&gt;

**WEIGHTLOSS FOR ASIA**

BRISBANE-BASED WEIGHT LOSS FIRM Adventures in Weightloss has expanded into Asia on the back of more than 300 percent growth in the Australian market.

In the past 12 months Adventures in Weightloss has tripled its Australian client base, doubled its number of clients in Singapore and opened an office in Malaysia.

Owner of Adventures in Weightloss and author of *7 Secrets the Weight Loss Industry Will Never Tell You* Graham Park said moving into the Asian market was a calculated business decision.

The expansion into Asia sees Singaporean and Malaysian investors purchase a licence to operate under the Adventures in Weightloss banner. As part of the arrangement, the blood work analysis and customised eating plans are prepared in Australia.

"Given the success we'd seen in Australia, we recognised the potential of the Asian market and sold a licence to a Singaporean business operator," Mr Park said. "With Singapore being such an international destination, the client base is drawn from other surrounding countries including Indonesia, China and Japan. This gamble paid off, with the Singapore branch also experiencing steady growth over the last 12 months."

Capitalising on this growth, a licensed Adventures in Weightloss recently opened in Kuching, Malaysia. Adventures in Weightloss now offers tailored diet programs in English, Bahasa, Malaysian and Chinese languages, depending on the client's requirements. Clients interact with the website to help monitor their progress." Mr Park once battled with his own weight and decided to take up the challenge to formulate a medically-based individualised weight loss program, losing more than 43kg.

[www.adventuresweightloss.com](http://www.adventuresweightloss.com) ■

**BASE back to base**

Shawn Godwin and Tim Stewart.

**B**risbane architecture and design firm, BASE Architecture, has overcome the industry's recent downturn through a clever 'recession-proof' strategy that has seen business steadily increase.

The significance of BASE's performance is borne out in the *Australian Construction Market Forecast 2009/10* which found that, nationally, one in six architects were concerned with the survival of their firm, and that architects in Queensland are seeing the fewest new opportunities – with the housing slump to blame.

Despite this outlook, the five-year-old Grange firm BASE has appointed three new staff to accommodate a growing volume of work.

BASE Architecture's managing directors, Tim Stewart and Shawn Godwin said their firm has managed to survive and thrive, following the implementation of an innovative approach to avoid the global slump.

"We're truly among the minority of Queensland firms that found more opportunities in the downturn as we identified and targeted the renovation sector as an area that was continuing to thrive," said Mr Stewart. The strategy focused on a number of online and offline initiatives pushing the firm's expertise and ability in the renovations sector – activities that saw the company's enquiries grow by 40 percent, and still rising as the market recovers.

"Our tactics to beat the recession were implemented over the past six to 10 months, but now that the mar-

ket is picking up we're focusing on larger jobs, for example, new houses and commercial," he said.

Mr Stewart said the renovation sector had never been a high priority for the company, although they had plenty of expertise in this arena.

"We knew that people would be likely to stay put in their existing home to upgrade, extend and restore. We shifted our focus to this sector for a good six months as we knew renovations were the key to surviving in this very difficult financial climate."

In turn, many architecture and building companies have struggled through the past 12 months off loading staff and operating at a bare minimum. Nationally, 43 percent of architects are expecting an improvement in their workload in the coming year while 18 percent expect a further deterioration.

Mr Stewart said, "To survive hard times, you need to be innovative and we believe that our resilience to get through this major slump has given us the know how to survive in any environment." The *Australian Construction Market Forecast 2009/10* said just three out of 10 architects think the downturn is creating new opportunities for them in the smaller states and territories.

"As this market recovers we believe we'll see increase in commercial projects and we're equipped with the design skills, personnel and experience to see through large commercial projects." ■

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