

## MEET THE BOSS

# Finding a niche that's worth the squeeze

When Tom Griffith joined forces with his childhood friend Emma Welsh, it was a far cry from his early career as a chartered accountant, investment banker and corporate adviser.

But while on a skiing holiday in the US, Griffith discovered the fruit smoothies on which he has now built a business. "No one was doing it in Australia," he says. "The product is made of whole fruits; you need to keep it chilled like milk."

With 25 full-time staff, 20 trucks, and a presence in 2000 stores and supermarkets across Australia, Griffith knows his niche. "The chilled

juice category is worth about half a billion dollars [in Australia]. If we do a better product, we can have a share of it. As entrepreneurs, you don't have to necessarily do something new, just better. We're doing it better."

Although recent year-on-year growth of about 30 per cent shows the company has long outgrown its initial "mum and dad" status, Griffith says success hasn't come overnight.

"You have to be tenacious. It takes years and years of being reliable, showing great products day in and day out," he says.

**SUE WHITE**

# Curriculum vitae

**Name** Tom Griffith.

**Current position** Co-founder, Emma & Tom's.

**Responsibilities** Sales, marketing, financial and team management.

**Education** Bachelor of commerce, The University of Melbourne; associate, Institute of Chartered

Accountants; graduate diploma applied finance and investment, The University of Melbourne.

**Additional training/courses** Level two ski instructor; PADI medical and rescue diver.

**Professional associations** Institute company directors fellow – Financial Services Institute of Australia.

**Honourable mentions** Company won the 2011 Peter Mac Team community contribution award.

**Strength** I think I'm fair. If anything, a bit too nice! I let people make things their own and aim to be supportive and take a genuine interest in my team.

**Weakness** Perhaps not cracking the whip when it sometimes may have been required.

**Management style and tips** Lead by example.

**Work motto** Get up, get dressed, get out.

