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WRITE GEAR HAS THE RIGHT STUFF



Some people thought James Mentiplay was a little crazy when he left his comfortable job with a large, national stationery company seven years ago to go into business for himself.

After six years in the industry with major players like National One and Pedersens, he decided he could do it better and set up his own small business – Writegear - at home.

Focusing purely on the "corporate" market, James has built the business from a one man operation with a turnover of around \$200,000, to a highly successful operation with eight full-time employees and an annual turnover in excess of \$1.5 million.

Writegear now operates from its own office/warehouse facility in Willetton and has two sales reps on the road and its own delivery van.

The company guarantees delivery of products 24 hours a day and never charges for deliveries - no matter how small the order.

Writegear has built its reputation and success on an unfaltering commitment to service which is the cornerstone of everything the company does.

"We are operating in a very competitive market against people like Officeworks and Corporate Express and exceptional service is what distinguishes us from the majors," James says.

"We are a locally owned business and we look after our customers 110%, so if they need something as simple as a box of pens in a hurry, we will get it to them.

"As a business we will always match the prices offered by our competitors, but it is our extensive experience, personal service and timeliness that sets us apart."

True to his word, James still answers the majority of incoming calls at Writegear, a practice that ensures clients are always being well looked after.

He also regularly visits clients, which now include some of Perth's largest professional service firms, public companies and corporations as well as plenty of small businesses.

Writegear's association with Benchmark began about two years ago when the company was going through a particularly strong growth spurt and needed extra working capital.

A friend recommended Benchmark to James and the rest is history.

"They are excellent and have been a great help to our business," says James in summing up the relationship.

"We are a business that focuses on service and we get great service from Benchmark."

Writegear supplies all general office stationery, office furniture, computer accessories and canteen supplies. It also custom makes stamps.

For further information visit www.writegear.com.au



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THE LIFE OF A DAY TRADER IS NOT SO EASY

With the share market continuing to perform strongly the draw of becoming a "day trader" is appealing to an increasing number of small business operators and salaried employees.

However investors who decide that day trading could earn them more than their business or an ordinary salary have been warned by Australia's corporate regulator ASIC not to be too hasty.

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) says a person who earns about \$50,000 in their normal business or job would need about \$164,000 in working capital and a return of 30 per cent a year just to replace their wage.

In addition, if they borrow against the family home and then pay about seven per cent interest, the further expense would have to come off any profits made.

Technical analysts have also warned that the costs of many training programs and software packages

targeted at day-traders are not worth the money.

ASIC says to reach the lifestyle advertised in brochures for day trading software, a person would need about \$300,000 a year which would take capital of \$1 million to achieve.

In a recent article in The Courier Mail, ASIC director of consumer protection Peter Kell said active trading was primarily suited to people who had the time and expertise to devote to trading and who were prepared to bear losses as well as make gains.

In the same article personal finance consultant Noel Whittaker issued a similar warning.

"You should understand that share trading is a very difficult business. For every winner, there is a loser," Mr Whittaker said.

Neil Costa from the Australian Technical Analysts Association said investors did not need to expend large sums to embark on trading in their own right.

He said there were excellent courses and seminars available to assist technical analysts and traders, such as the highly respected courses conducted by the Securities Institute of Australia.

Mr Costa said investors did not need to spend more than \$2500 to obtain a training program and data packages which could provide such tools as tracking indicators and real-time share quotes.

ASIC says there are four recommended steps for investors thinking of buying trading software.

- Work out your investment needs and whether you need a computer trading program.
- Learn the basics of the share or futures markets before deciding to buy.
- If you still want a trading program, find out what it does before purchase.
- Shop around for good value and reputable providers.

BENCHMARK OPENS IN BRISBANE



Benchmark is delighted to announce the opening of its Brisbane office run by Business Development Manager Patrick McMaster. Patrick has had wide experience in Australia and overseas in International and Merchant Banking, and has over eight years experience in Debtor Financing in Queensland. His interests include

bush-walking, four wheel driving, and photography.

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MORE NEW FACES AT BENCHMARK



Welcome to Barjinder Singh who recently joined the Perth client service team. Barjinder previously spent 3 years with Cash Resources as an account manager and her skills and experience will further enhance the services offered by Benchmark's Perth office.

IS YOUR COMPUTER MALE OR FEMALE?

According to accountants MGI Bridge Partners, these are the clues

Why computers should be considered masculine:

1. In order to get their attention you have to turn them on.
2. They have a lot of data but are still clueless.
3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they ARE the problem.
4. As soon as you commit to one, you realize that, if you had waited a little longer, you could have had a better model.

Why computers should be feminine:

1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic.
 2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else.
 3. Even your smallest mistakes are stored in long-term memory for later retrieval.
 4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your pay-cheque on accessories for it.
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