



# ROCKETING ALONG

Chris Ryan and Adam Rockett

At just 26 years of age Chris Ryan and Adam Rockett are already pulling in over \$10 million, but it is not telecommunications they are passionate about, it is the pure exhilaration of running a business that keeps them rocketing along.

**WCM:** How did you get started in your current industry?

**Chris Ryan:** Adam and I started our own business distributing wine from the Barossa and South Africa. The business could be described as 'shaky at best' as we were both lacking the acumen and funds to do it correctly. One of the clients we were buying from in South Africa asked if we were able to supply them with telecommunications equipment. We sourced some stock from Hong Kong and sold it to South Africa. This was our first deal. We quickly dropped the wine distribution business and began to wholesale telecommunications equipment. Adam and I were contracted to a company in Hong Kong to set up their international wholesaling department. We lived and worked in Hong Kong for six months. After this we returned home with a lot more confidence and knowledge and started *Strike Group Australia*. We now wholesale to 72 countries worldwide and are one of two authorised LG distributors in Australia. We are also the sole LG distributor for the Pacific Islands.

**WCM:** Was it something you always wanted to do?

**CR:** Adam and I are not all that passionate about telecommunications. We are passionate about good businesses running

efficiently. We gain satisfaction from acquiring and developing great team members and creating a culture of success, good ethics and fun. A good company relies on its team.

**WCM:** Was your time in Hong Kong helpful to your current position?

**CR:** The time we spent in Hong Kong prepared us for international business. Without this experience we would not be in the position we are in today. Our time in Hong Kong was challenging and fun all at once. Working hard and playing hard is the way it works in Hong Kong.

**WCM:** How did you get *Strike* up and running?

**CR:** With money saved from working three or four part time jobs. We also borrowed money from a few brave investors.

**WCM:** Did you have a business plan? If so, has it changed?

**CR:** Yes we began our business with an extremely simple business plan. This now has evolved and is a constantly evolving document. In our experience we believe that to maintain a successful business you have to be willing to change your tack when required. With this in mind our business plan is updated twice a year. If you plan too specifically for a long period of time you risk your plan becoming obsolete.

**WCM:** What is the purpose of the business – what do you hope to achieve?

**CR:** To achieve financial freedom and gain satisfaction from building an organisation which is dynamic, profitable and a great place to be a part of.

**WCM:** How much capital did you invest?

**CR:** Initially \$60k.

**WCM:** What were your fears and how did you overcome them?

**CR:** We feared failure and falling behind the pack. Adam and I both left university early, Adam was studying IT and I was

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Adam Rockett and Chris Ryan have struck a telco goldmine.

studying teaching. It was a big call to leave university. In the end it was the right call.

**WCM:** Did you experience any failure early on and if so what did you do to turn things around?

**CR:** After about two years in business we employed too many of the wrong people too quickly. Further to this we had extremely poor human resource systems in place. We enlisted the services of a business coach and worked hard on our human resource systems. Now I believe our number one asset is our HR systems. The team at *Strike* are the heart and soul of the organisation. Our HR processes have been the key to finding these great people and keeping them satisfied.

**WCM:** What makes a good leader?

**CR:** A person who continually makes decisions. A person who leads by example when required. A person who knows themselves well enough and has nothing to prove.

**WCM:** What are the key ingredients to building a solid company?

**CR:** Getting a great team around you. You can have the greatest idea in the world but without the right people a business will not work. Also, thorough documented systems. They are of particular use in training. Having a clear vision for the company and accurate measurement of an individual's performance.

**WCM:** What do you believe is the most important aspect of business success?

**CR:** To gain satisfaction. We enjoy setting lofty goals and trying to achieve them.

**WCM:** Where do you see yourself in the big picture – what are your aspirations?

**CR:** We are currently on the acquisition path. Further to this we are looking to mentor and fund start up businesses or businesses which are struggling. In the long term we intend *Strike* to be a diversified industrial. We see ourselves as managing *Strike* from a board level and continuing to attract excellent team members to do their jobs better than what we can.

**WCM:** What is your Unique Selling Point?

**CR:** Price, first class logistics and being honest with our customers.

**WCM:** What is the current turnover?

**CR:** \$11.5 million

**WCM:** What anecdote could best describe the growth of the company?

**CR:** In our first year of business we had an opportunity to do some business well outside of our financial capability. After a while we were able to obtain sufficient funds through investors to execute the opportunity.

**WCM:** How have you managed this growth?

**CR:** With all growing companies occasionally the amount of opportunities is limited to your available funds. We were fortunate to learn early the importance of looking after our investors. We have found through paying our investors on time, with good dividends and comprehensive reporting, we are able to access funds so growth is not hampered.

**WCM:** What are your staff numbers?

**CR:** 12 team members.

**WCM:** Are you living your dreams?

**CR:** Most of our dreams involve the Swedish Bikini team. So unfortunately not. Apart from this life is pretty great. We feel fortunate.

**WCM:** How do you relax – what is your work/play split?

**CR:** We both surf to relax and enjoy extreme sports. Adam enjoys meditation. We also spend time with our friends and loved ones. We both work no more than a standard work week.

**WCM:** Chris, thank you for your time. [wcm](#)

### CHRIS' KEYS TO SUCCESS

1. Get an excellent team around you. They are the key to success.
2. Be ethical. It is better to do the right thing and be able to look at yourself in the mirror.
3. Never stop making decisions.
4. Always listen to yourself.
5. Know yourself. Your own strengths and weaknesses.