



Out of town: Neil Willis, who runs Sydney Commercial Kitchens from his new home in Los Angeles, back in Australia this week

Picture: Justin Lloyd

**sole trader**

## Use your time well

Megan Tough

DO YOU have too much to do and never enough time to do it? Try these steps to improve your work rate.

Decide when you work most and least effectively.

If you're not familiar with your own rhythm, try to figure it out. Rate activities as low, medium or high on the "brainpower" scale.

Obviously it makes sense to work on high brainpower activities when at your best.

Take action that improves your business. Decide which three things will have the most positive impact on your business this week and schedule those things first.

Assign boundaries around time. Decide what time is for business and what time is for non-business activities.

Accept low-energy days. We all have them.

Megan Tough supports and inspires Australia's solo business community at [flyingsolo.com.au](http://flyingsolo.com.au)

# A distant success

Jenny Dillon

ONE of the last questions on entry forms for the Telstra Business Awards asks what system was in place if something happened to the business owner and they could not be there on a daily basis any more.

How would the business survive?

Neil Willis of Sydney Commercial Kitchens was amused as he answered that question — since June last year, he has spent just 25 days in Australia.

He now believes it is the fact he runs his business out of his new home in Los Angeles that was crucial to him becoming a finalist in the awards this year in the micro-business category, which is sponsored by *The Daily Telegraph*.

"The team here does the sales, the books, the day-to-day stuff. I still do the marketing but the only difference is that I'm not here.

"It comes down to having good systems in place."

He believes the secret to his business success is his website.

"It's very powerful. I've been online since April 2000. I guess the fact that I've bothered to learn how to use the internet to my advantage has helped.

"I'm now a skilled internet marketer and I've worked hard to increase that knowledge. This year I've changed my whole marketing strategy based on what I've learned this year."

Another finalist, Technical Solutions principal Bernard Fehon, however, is very much a face-to-face businessman.

The former designer and engineer became a financial adviser about 10 years ago and has applied philosophies of his former profession to his new job.

"There is no point in finding the solution until you understand the problem," he said.

"And instead of being profit centric, my business is client centric."

His clients might want wealth creation and wealth management, but Mr Fehon's goal as a financial planner is to help them make the most of what they have. It is a way of thinking he picked up from work with the St Vincent de Paul charity.

"Vinnies help people make the most of what they've got, help them find their talents and help them get back on their feet," he said.

The winners of the 2010 NSW Telstra Awards will be announced this Friday

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Tops: Nugan

## Nugan's handy year

RIVERINA vintner Nugan Estate continues to impress on the international scene, scooping the 2010 Decanter World Wine Awards in London.

Its McLaren Vale Shiraz 2008, sourced from Matthew Nugan's personal Ilha McLaren Parish Vineyard, won

the strongly contested trophy for Best Australian Shiraz/Red Rhone varietal over \$15.

The win follows the estate's elevation into the top 20 wine exporters at 11th place.

"The last year's been very tough with the global financial crisis," Mr Nugan said.