



EMA BEST GROWTH STRATEGY

ABANO HEALTHCARE GROUP

EXTENDING THE BUSINESS

Listed company Abano Healthcare Group is the largest private specialist medical and healthcare organisation in the country. The business began life as Eldercare New Zealand with a focus on retirement villages and aged-care services. It was established in its current form in 1999 and has evolved to be a multi-disciplinary group with services in audiology, dental, diagnostics and rehabilitation. Abano employs over 1000 staff and delivers specialist services at over 200 facilities across New Zealand and Australia.

Annual results, released in July, showed a record net profit after tax (NPAT) of \$7.8 million – a 56 percent increase on the previous year's NPAT of \$5 million. The improved performance was driven by increased returns from all sectors, supported by organic and acquisition growth, particularly in audiology, dental and radiology.

Company chair Alison Paterson said, when releasing the results, that despite the distraction stemming from external

corporate interest over the past year, Abano's core business continued to grow and was set to continue as the company enters a new phase of expansion into overseas markets while continuing its development in the New Zealand market. She said the business was forecasting an increased NPAT of \$10.5 million for FY09.

Managing director Alan Clarke says the company will continue to focus on growing its audiology and dental businesses, both in New Zealand and now Australia, and its radiology business in New Zealand. "Our clinical partnership philosophy and more recently, agreements with leading healthcare manufacturers, provide us with a strong growth platform and the ability to extend our businesses into new markets while mitigating expansion risks." **M**

NB: Late inclusions mean Abano was nudged out of the Top 200 list after judging. The company ranks 204th with revenue of \$124.7 million.

WINNER

ABANO HEALTHCARE GROUP

Abano's meticulously executed strategies for providing care for the elderly and growing the business have been so successful that the company's shares are constantly sought by suitors wanting a slice of its action. This very clever enterprise is bold about growth and constantly thinking differently about how to deliver its future. Abano keeps growing both its range of services, and the markets in which it operates, without sacrificing profitability. This year's outstanding performance was driven by increased returns from all sectors of the business. Bold and different sums up this company. Its success is the outcome of its strategic thinking and meticulous execution.

FINALIST

AIR NEW ZEALAND

It's not so long ago that Air New Zealand looked set to experience severe turbulence. Now look at it. The company has taken off with an effective growth strategy and along the way has been paying the Government back for the funds advanced to keep the national flag carrier airborne. A growth strategy that has been impeccably implemented.

FINALIST

DELEGAT'S GROUP

Delegat's stunningly successful growth strategy is focused on branding, product positioning, a determined commitment to growing market share and a passion for the business it is in – making world-class wines. Tackling the world's wine markets is a tough call. And it will get tougher in the next few years. But this company looks like it is up to the job.

JUDGES' COMMENTS