

# The Sun-Herald

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## Sunday's best magazine

Keeping your New Year's resolutions  
getting kids' pocket money right

LIFE - INSIDE TODAY

PRINCESS IN WAITING?

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# Life

Sunday  
The Sun-Herald Magazine

CLIENTS

5 TARGETED  
NEW BUSINESSES

January 7, 2007



**The sticking business:**  
Expert ways to keep your  
New Year's resolutions  
in love and work

Pocket money:  
How much is  
too much?

Classic Karen Martini  
and simple summer Thai

# New year, new me

Want to shape up? Sort out your finances? Balance work and family? Build a better business? Our experts offer foolproof advice for a successful 2007. *By Karen Heinrich.*

## "I want to expand my business" James Nash, 31, web designer

In four years, James Nash has built up his business, Nashweb, a multimedia design company, from a one-man operation to one with a staff of four. At first, his management consultant wife, Emma, 34, was the breadwinner while he "barely scraped a living" establishing a client base. But since launching Nashweb in 2002, Nash has driven a fourfold increase in gross profit and a threefold rise in turnover, attracting a host of new clients through word of mouth.

Nash, who emigrated from London six years ago and is a new dad to two-month-old Henry, works 60 hours a week from his home office in Sydney's Queens Park and wishes to develop Nashweb by focusing on key clients, sharpening Nashweb visual branding and targeting lucrative new clients.

Strategist Anthony Mitchell, of advisory firm Bendelta, says James's strong account-handling and interpersonal skills, combined with the fact he loves what he does, is a boon for his business. But he could make some changes. "The way he's been operating is very reactive," says Mitchell. "As he's got more work, he's tried to cope with it by working longer hours. But the problem is, you spend all your time responding to crises and the wishes and demands of others, and no time determining your own priorities and making them happen."

In Nash's case, being busy with plenty of work might mean that he never has time to do what's

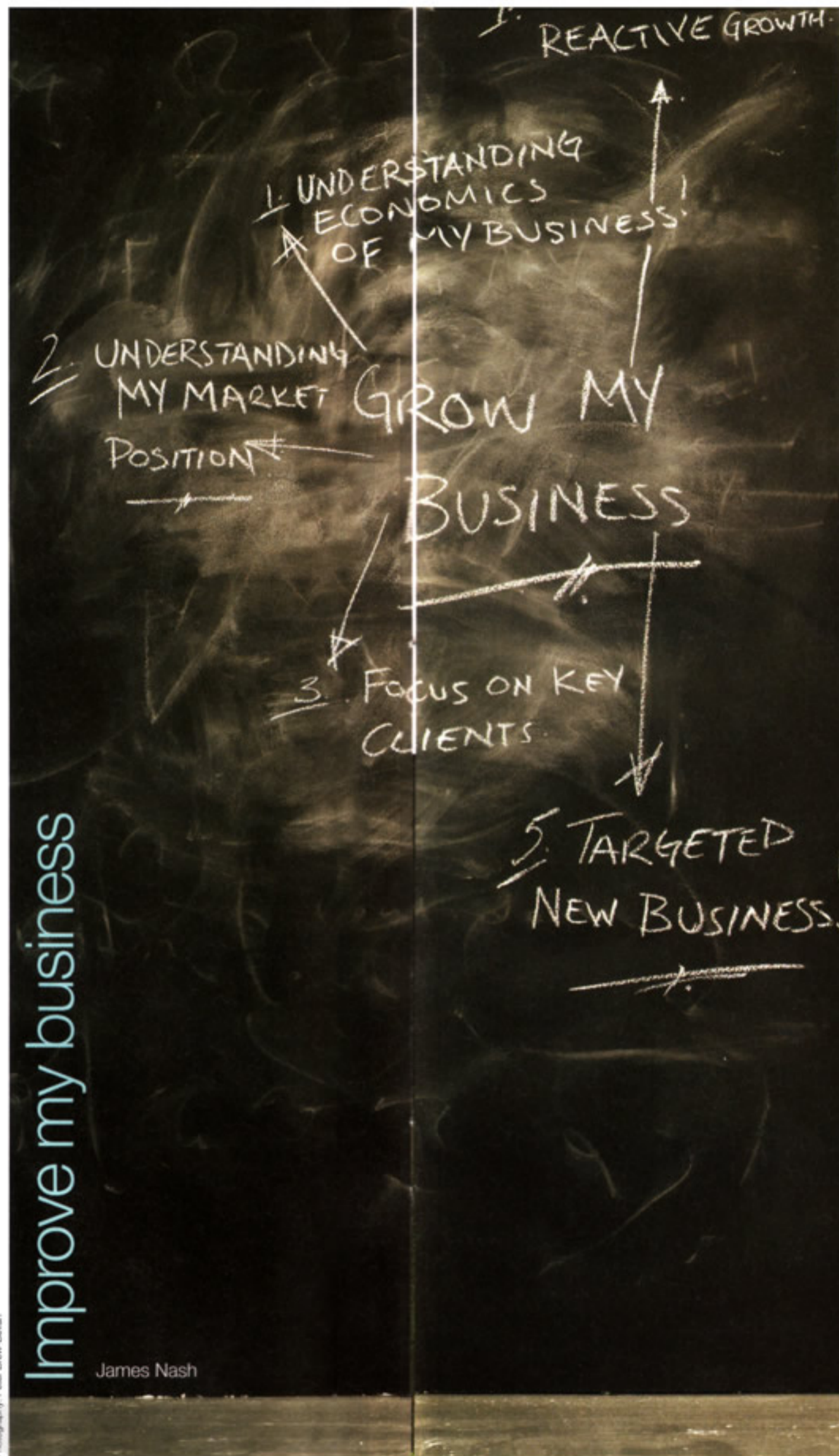
most important for the big picture, says Mitchell.

"Long-term projects – such as re-designing his own website, pursuing new clients and hiring a print-specialist staff member – might never happen," says Mitchell. "The result of being reactive is that all of your time is spent on urgent, relatively unimportant matters and no time is spent on important, non-urgent matters."

Improving his website will "help to create congruence in a potential client's mind, just as we would wish to see a healthy doctor or well-dressed fashion designer," says Mitchell. Nash should raise his margins and finetune his fee structure; his rates, at half those of the big agencies, are too low. "He should select the clients that don't mind paying for quality and target 'nuclear events' – things such as product launches – that clients are happy to pay a bit more for because they're one-offs," he says.

Most importantly, Nash should go out of his way to cultivate the existing clients who have been most lucrative and/or have given him valuable referral business. "The first thing I'd be encouraging him to do is to think long term. Once you set goals in place, suddenly you start working towards the 'how'."

To do this, Nash – and indeed anyone who wants to take their own business or career to the next level – should pen a two-page narrative of where they would like to be in 2009. "Write down things such as what your office is like, who's working for you, who your clients are, what projects you're working on – and really let your mind go," says Mitchell. "It's a fantastically empowering thing to do."



Improve my business

James Nash



## "I have too much going on and I want to slow down"

Paul Hammett, 47, customer service manager. Like many working parents, Paul Hammett packs a lot into his day. Rising at 7am, he helps to make lunch for his two children, drops his 10-year-old daughter, Georgia, at school and "fits a 12-hour workday into eight hours" by multi-tasking and limiting his lunch break to just 15 minutes.

After collecting Georgia from after-school care, Hammett cooks dinner for the family three nights a week while his wife, Tracey, a therapist, works. In between, he picks up Georgia from dance lessons, collects son Asher, 15, from taekwondo and oversees renovations on their Lane Cove home in Sydney. At weekends, he gardens, cleans the house and prepares for the week ahead. During the week, his only free time is between midnight and 5am. "Yesterday morning I was up at 5.30 drilling curtain rods to the wall – it was the first time I could do it," says Hammett, 47, and the result is, not surprisingly, "not connecting as much as I should. Instead of racing in the door, cooking, getting homework done and flopping into bed, it would be nice to enjoy some leisure time together."

Psychotherapist Dr Jackie Furey recognises Hammett's situation and says it's high time he took stock. "Our greatest strengths can be our biggest limitations and we have to work out where that is," says Furey, who hosts a relationship show, *Bedrooms To Boardrooms*, on Sydney radio station Mix 106.5FM. "If you show me someone who is incredibly caring, when they cross the line, they become a rescuer. Paul sounds like an incredible giver so when he crosses the line, he becomes a prime candidate for burnout."

To avoid this, Hammett needs to prioritise and consider whether he's looking for quantity or quality time with his family, says Furey. Most importantly, Hammett needs to take time out to reflect on what he needs and how he's going to get it. "Some people do that by having one or two sessions with a therapist and sometimes they do it by watering the garden," she says. "Other times it might be as simple as having a coffee somewhere quiet where they can just sit and contemplate what they need."

"He might enjoy cooking dinner three nights a week but maybe two of those nights it would be he cooks what he wants to cook. Often the big changes come by addressing the little things. We think it's the big things but it's not." Slowing down and cutting back on his responsibilities can be as simple as asking for help, says Furey. "Next time he drops his daughter at school, he could take 10 minutes to talk to other parents about the possibility of starting a car pool," says Furey. "He needs to stop and say, 'I give all of these things to everybody; where do I get my mental, physical, spiritual and emotional fuel from in order to do this? And, 'What small changes can I make to make big changes arrive?'"

Furey recommends Hammett practise a mantra along the lines of, "No matter what I do, it's not