

# Fastest 100

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## 7. ROSCH RECRUITING

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**LOCATION:** Victoria.

**STARTED:** 1990. Steve Sacks arrived in Australia from the United States in the mid-1980s and five years later, aged 32, he started Rosch with a \$20,000 overdraft,

**IDEA:** Sacks worked in the US as a head-hunter for the information technology industry. In Australia, he noticed that most head-hunters advertised positions. He believed it would be more effective to follow the United States practice of approaching people who were happy in their job. "You are then hiring successful people of a better calibre."

**STRATEGY:** Sacks settled on one niche, specialising in placing sales and marketing people in IT companies, particularly fast-growing ones. Five years ago, he realised that unless he expanded, Rosch would die. He took on a partner, Ron Lewis, who is strong in management and business development, and expanded into Sydney. This year, the company aimed at other niches, including recruitment for the legal profession and US companies keen to operate in Asia from an Australian base.

**EDGE:** Sacks says he is not afraid to question what type of person a client is seeking. "We might ask the client about the problems ... and their plans for tomorrow, and advise them that they need a different type of person to the one they envisaged."

**RESULTS:** Sacks says he expects turnover to reach \$20 million in 2000, compared with \$12 million last year. Rosch has 22 employees.

**SMARTEST MOVE:** Taking on an equity partner. Entrepreneurs Philip Weinman, David Payes and Alan Kras of Intrapac Projects (ranked fifth on the BRW 100) bought what is believed to be a significant shareholding in Rosch this year. Sacks says he is so focused on daily operations that he needs equity partners to spot opportunities for growth. "We are now ready to expand very fast and take risks."

FUTURE: The Internet has caused a rationalisation of the recruitment industry, particularly IT recruitment. Many big companies that previously used recruitment agencies now place ads on their own Web sites. Job hunters can apply directly. This has not affected Sacks. "The people we place are not looking for jobs, and so are not responding to Internet ads," he says. "However, large recruitment companies are trying to develop Web sites. This gives us a window of opportunity to do some exciting things while their eye is off the main game."

Amanda Gome

