

It's been a busy few years for Glenn Roberts Electrical.

Under the ownership of Josh Roberts and his partner Nichola Strom, the business won Westpac Nelson Tasman Chamber of Commerce business awards on three consecutive years including the Supreme Award in 2013, and in 2012 it was named the ECANZ Regional Master Electrician of the year. In 2013 it spawned a new entity, Solar Smart Energy, and this year the company has moved to new purpose-built facilities in St Vincent St.

"If you rest on your laurels, you go backwards," Josh says.

Josh's parents started the business in 1992. He trained in Christchurch and spent 11 years working as an electrician there and overseas before returning with Nichola & purchasing Glenn Roberts Electrical in 2007. His father Glenn continues to work in the business also.

"My father and I have a great working relationship that continues to this day," Josh says. "We didn't try to reinvent the wheel and they let us make the decisions that we needed to make once we purchased the business in terms of operational changes.

"We wanted to carry on the good name it had in Nelson and improve on that."

Josh continued his parents' tradition of belonging to the chamber but he and Nichola spent five years at the helm before entering their first business awards.

"We thought it would be a good way to have an overall look at the business," Nichola says.

"It was a good platform to step up to what we wanted to do next."

The process of entering the awards helped them crystalize their strategies and goals. They incorporated all their staff and sought client feedback as part of the process. Nichola was the one who pulled the information together into winning entries.

They believe the awards have helped secure out-of-town clients who don't otherwise know what businesses to trust locally.

Josh says it's always rewarding to see projects through completion and they've particularly enjoyed their involvement with the development of the NMIT Arts and Media Building, the Saxton Pavilion and the lighting and infrastructure upgrade to Trafalgar Park.

"That project led us to being the electrical contractors for both the Rugby and Cricket World Cup projects for the Nelson regions which has been a certain highlight."

Josh says the industry hasn't changed much over the years although it is becoming increasingly competitive and products are changing with things like home automation and a lot more servicing contacts than were previously allocated. Repeat clients have always been of huge importance to their business and the chamber's business awards prompted them to focus more heavily on that.

"After the first year, one of the judges said they would give their right arm to have that much repeat business. That was what we didn't show in our first submission. We've developed a lot more marketing around that."

Josh now serves as a Chamber of Commerce board member. Thinking about the awards or business in general, a common piece of advice springs to his mind.

"It's the old story – you get out what you put in," he says.

FACT BOX

Glenn Roberts Electrical

Residential, commercial, retail and industrial electricians

Based in St Vincent St, Nelson

Founded in 1992, purchased by Josh Roberts and Nichola Strom in 2007

Employs 20 staff

Westpac Nelson Tasman Chamber of Commerce medium business award winner in 2011 & 2012 and supreme award winner in 2013

Entries for the 2015 Westpac Nelson Tasman Chamber of Commerce Business Awards close on 25 September and winners will be announced at a gala dinner on 6 November. For more information see

www.commerce.org.nz

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