

Personal Service Leads the Way as Lejo Wins 40-Under-40 Award

An accountant with a passion for windsurfing and playing the saxophone has this year been included in the coveted *WA Business News 40-under-40 awards*, which were announced on 23 February at a gala ceremony held at Sir James Mitchell Park in South Perth.

Lejo Ouwendyk, the 32-year-old Managing Partner of successful mid-tier accountancy firm, Kennerlys, was a deserving inductee into this year's 40-under-40 alumni, stamping his hands-on approach to customer service into a role which he took on in 2006.

Since taking the helm, Mr Ouwendyk has quickly grown Kennerlys into one of Perth's most well-respected boutique accounting practices, with turnover on target for \$2.75m this year.

He said taking on the lead role at Kennerlys at such a young age was a challenging and at the same time exciting prospect: "In 2006, an opportunity came up to become Managing Partner of Kennerlys, and while I was obviously very excited, I knew I was going to face my share of challenges," said Mr Ouwendyk.

"Looking back, it has definitely been a fantastic career move but on a personal level it has also been very enjoyable - especially getting to know many of the loyal Kennerlys clients and their diverse businesses as well as helping to shape the Kennerlys culture, which is one of innovation as well as superior customer service," he said.

His passion for customer service excellence was also rewarded last year with Kennerlys being a finalist for two awards in the Telstra Stirling Small Business Awards in the areas of Quality Customer Service and Community Spirit.

After completing a Commerce degree at the University of Notre Dame, joined the Audit division at Arthur Andersen in Perth. Two years later he took up a Taxation position with Sothertons in West Perth and following this he was involved with setting up a number of small businesses, including his own accounting practice.

"This period of my life gave me invaluable experience and a first-hand understanding of business owner's needs, something that gives me a definite edge in my current role," Mr Ouwendyk said. "This experience means I can relate to our clients issues because at some stage I had probably faced them myself," he added.

Mr Ouwendyk is also a strong contributor to the local business community and regularly conducts workshops and seminars to small business owners. He is also the President of the Stirling Business Association.

Recently, with help from his family and the team at Kennerlys, Mr Ouwendyk raised enough money to build a 40 bed dormitory for an orphanage in Kenya, a project he said was very rewarding: "Being involved in this project, was one of the most rewarding things I've ever been involved in." he said.

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About Kennerlys

Kennerlys has been supporting and providing services to prominent and successful Perth business people since its inception in the 1970's.

Specialising in Taxation, Superannuation and Enterprise Development services Kennerlys are dedicated to helping clients achieve both their business objectives and personal ambitions. Kennerlys prides itself on delivering services within a professional, approachable and caring environment where team members have the opportunity to work with clients to truly become part of their clients businesses.

The Kennerlys team is currently headed up by Lejo Ouwendyk who has been Managing Partner since 2006, and Sue Peterson who is a Senior Associate and has been at Kennerlys since the 1970s. Supporting Lejo and Sue are a dedicated team of professional & administration staff.