

“I WENT TO OZ FOR LOVE. I STAYED FOR MY CAREER”

Ed Henry moved to Australia as a love-struck 23-year-old. He's now a serial entrepreneur with his own thriving practice

WORDS ANNIE MAKOFF-CLARK

Ed Henry emigrated from the UK to Australia for love. He was young, recently engaged and “starry-eyed”. He'd decided to throw caution to the wind. This was in 1971; he'd recently qualified as an accounting technician (he's an FMAAT now). The world was his oyster.

Henry's migration pushed his career to places it wouldn't have gone otherwise. He eventually became a serial entrepreneur, specialising in accounting software. But it was a hard slog to get there: employers were slightly wary of his qualification, which pre-dated AAT, so he had to resit his qualifications to prove his credentials. “When you arrive in a foreign country at the age of 23 with two suitcases containing all your worldly goods, you really have to fight to survive,” he says.

Henry ended up working across several industries, including meat, building products and pet food, before he started up on his own, launching several companies throughout his 40-year career.

One of the longest-standing businesses that Henry founded was Adept Distribution, which sold Sage products to businesses. At its peak, Adept managed the distribution of Sage 50 across Australia and New Zealand.



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The Sage distribution market is highly competitive, however. Sage South Africa suddenly decided to give the distribution rights to a different company, wiping out Henry's business instantly. It was the final straw. “I loved the Sage 50 product but I hated the way the distribution was managed,” Henry recalls. “It became obvious to me that desktop-based software was very limiting... I decided to change my business model entirely and moved 100% to the cloud.”

He started his accounting and consultancy firm 5mc in

2013. The business advises clients on their long-term business growth, offering support when transitioning to the cloud.

Henry is adamant he'd never have got where he is today, or gained such experience, if he'd stayed in the UK. “We're not bound or constrained by custom [in Australia] and this gives us more freedom to be innovative,” he says, explaining that businesses in the UK are more conservative and risk-averse. “I love being able to help other small businesses succeed and I get a real buzz from sharing my hard-earned knowledge with other bookkeepers who have yet to make it.”

What was your defining moment? Email mark.rowland@thinkpublishing.co.uk