

MARSH MOST IMPROVED PERFORMANCE AWARD

WINNER SKY Network Television

It is impossible to switch off to the numbers. A 4854 percent profit increase for the year says it all. SKY Television is a business whose time has come. It is the ultimate signal that, after years of writing results in red ink, SKY Television has moved into the black and looks set to tune into making more money for its shareholders in future. This profit turnaround is the result of the company's strategy to build its subscriber base until it reached critical mass. The huge depreciation costs of the past have also faded. Growth is now credible and the company should benefit from the stronger New Zealand dollar. SKY has invested in its future for years and now it is the only player left in the pay TV market. It has built the brand and positioned itself to reap at leisure the seeds sown to ensure its future success. With its improving financial results the company is now paying off debt. It is suddenly one of New Zealand "low risk" businesses. This year, SKY Television is a picture of financial health.

FINALIST AFFCO Holdings

A beefy 231 percent profit turnaround at meat company AFFCO signalled a dramatic change in fortunes. The performance, according to the judges, shows the strength of the restructuring and re-engineering of a long established company reportedly close to slinging its hook a year or two ago. Now this 100-year-old company is back in business, modernised and re-managed and focusing on business

basics. In a tough industry, AFFCO has trimmed overhead and management fat leaving it in better condition to deliver sustainable profits and manage the vagaries of the meat industry. Currency appreciation ate into the company's revenue, down 10 percent, but the enhanced profit was achieved after allowing for almost \$4 million in structuring costs. With astute strategic and governance direction from the top and new management in place, AFFCO looks set to tackle its next century of business in prime condition.

FINALIST Navman

Navigation equipment company Navman is smack in the middle of charting its course for global growth. It lifted sales revenue 100 percent and profitability 358 percent on the back of a strategy to build growth through an international sale of the business. To take Navman's clever electronic products into the global marketplace the company needed access to worldwide distribution networks and the finance to build international recognition and brands. It has done just that and is now set on a bearing that sees a billion-dollar business on the horizon in the next five years. The jury is out on whether that business will still be able to operate from New Zealand. It may have difficulty finding the people needed to grow at such a rapid rate. The company's approach to financing its future through a successful international trade sale could serve as a model for others to follow.