



# Pilates put staff on the right track

## SHAPE UP

WORDS: PETRINA BERRY

**PILATES** started off as the weird sounding class that only the curious tried but now it's so popular purpose built pilate studios are popping up all over the place.

It is also becoming popular in the workplace.

Recent trends in health and wellbeing have made a happy and healthy work environment one of the most important investments a firm can make.

Figures from The Health and Safety Executive show more than two million employees in Australia are suffering from illnesses aggravated or caused by their job.

This is why city recruitment company Talentpath is paying for staff to do pilate classes once a week.

Director Jody Fazldeen said while the company was young and growing she wanted to put in place a culture of health and wellbeing.

"As well as strengthening and conditioning, it's really great mentally for us as there is no room for other thoughts we have to concentrate on our breathing and muscles," she said.

Mobile massages and even yoga were popular initiatives introduced in the workplace.

Julie Campbell, director of Revive pilates studio on Mary St in the City, said she received a lot of interest from the corporate world.

"I have plenty of inquiries from employers but haven't had them sign up yet," she said.

"More and more groups are coming in but it's not an initiative of their employer."

Liz Quinn of Paddington pilates and

physiotherapy centre Pulse said a functional work environment began with changing the culture of the workplace and supporting a fitness regime for staff.

"It is important to encourage fitness in the workplace, because the real bottom line is that happy staff will feel good doing business for you," Quinn said.

**POWER PLAY:** Revive Director Julie Campbell works with Sian Robinson.





# Grocery giant provides food for thought

## STOCK UP

WORDS: STUART WARREN & ALISTAIR MILNE

**SUPERMARKET** giant Woolworths is planning to significantly increase capital investment in its stores to drive organic growth even harder.

It comes at a time its major competitor shifts investment away from its stores into its supply chain.

Last week, Woolworths reported a 27.5 per cent increase in financial year 2007 net profit after tax (NPAT) to A\$1,294 million, slightly ahead of market expectations.

The company also gave and guidance of a 25-27 per cent increase in NPAT for financial year 2008 with food and liquor margin expansion the key profit driver.

The key highlights of the result included the improvement in Australian Supermarket earnings (up 24.2 per cent) – boosted by a combination of a higher gross profit margin and lower cost of doing business, a significant improvement in free cash flow generation and a more aggressive investment profile to drive growth.

One of the highlights of the result was the increase in investments planned for financial year 2008. Woolworths has increased its capital expenditure plans for financial year 2008 by 48 per cent to drive organic sales growth from all

of its retail formats. The most significant change is the substantial increase in refurbishment activity, both in existing businesses and the recently acquired New Zealand supermarket operations. It is clear Woolworths seeks to take advantage of the weakness apparent at its major competitor. Woolworths has set an impressive 'organic' growth target for financial year 2008, in our view, which may be supplemented further by a potential acquisition or at very least a capital return.

Either of these events represent upside risk to our forecasts during the next 12 months.

In addition, the issues being faced by Woolworths' largest competitor are likely to ensure strong underlying growth should continue for most of financial year 2008.

Given the accelerated strategies for growth, we increase our 12-month price target to A\$32.95.

**Stuart Warren and Alistair Milne are Authorised Representatives of the Milton Office of ABN AMRO Morgans Ltd (AFSL 235410). For further information email Milton@abnamromorgans.com.au.**

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**BREAD WINNER:** Booming earnings for Woolworths makes the company a wise investment.



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### Reaching a bigger pond

Tools and technologies for connecting communities are the focus of the inaugural community engagement national showcase. The Reaching a Bigger Pond showcase will be held at the Cairns International Hotel in Queensland on 6 November. It will feature examples of how communities are embedding e-learning to support economic and regional development. For more information go to [www.flexiblelearning.net.au](http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au)