

Shy Amber makes the cut

Estate agent Amber Werchon celebrates 10 winning years

By REBECCA MARSHALL

SHE has long been regarded as real estate's It Girl. Her name is often printed with the words "dynamo", "star" and "outstanding" alongside. But behind the awards, the image, the obligatory BMW (a Z4 convertible) and the impeccable hair and clothes, there is a woman who has taken a barrage of tall poppy-syndrome hits and who has a white-knuckle fear of public speaking, just like the rest of us. Amber Werchon celebrates 10 years in real estate this year.

She is 27. "I started out as a receptionist (at Ray White Mooloolaba) 10 years ago and I was a very shy, timid girl," she said. "No one believes me when I say that. And then, now, to know that I employ a lot of staff and lead and mentor and train other agents around Australia is incredible. "I think what has kept me interested is that there has never been a boring day. "There is always something

SECRETS OF MY SUCCESS

Amber Werchon

DETERMINED: "When I started, I would get feedback from other agents, mostly males, that I would get eaten up..."



going on and lots of change.

"I'm still shy in some areas, like public speaking, but I am working on tackling that.

"I have always been shy about that, but I want to be able to face it and jump over the hurdle."

Ms Werchon broke away from the Ray White stable in April 2008 to open her own agency. A Caloundra franchise opened in the

same month a year later, and a Noosa branch will open in weeks.

Clearly this time of the year is her most productive as it also marks her wedding anniversary and her official entry into the industry a decade ago.

She said there would "inevitably" be more franchises, most likely inland next, but her focus was on quality not quantity.

Apart from opening the Noosa office, Ms Werchon also celebrated her milestone with a family holiday to Hawaii.

"Those down times are really important," she said.

"I am the type of person that when you're on, you're on and I do more hours than anyone else I know.

"But when you're off, that's the

THE DETAILS

ESTABLISHED: 2008

STAFF: 28 at Alex, 15 at Caloundra, 4 and growing at Noosa

SECRETS: hard work, ability to build relationships and connect with people on different levels

time to get away, relax and reassess your priorities and direction."

Ms Werchon said her youth and her gender were seen as weakness indicators in the early days.

"When I started, I would get feedback from other agents, mostly males, that I would get eaten up and all that kind of stuff.

"Nowadays there are plenty of young successful women in real estate, but back then it was quite rare and I was quite young.

"But it's only an issue if you make it an issue, and I don't make it one."

And as for all those awards, including three consecutive REIQ Salesperson of the Year plaques?

"They're in a box," she said.

"I like to focus on today and the future rather than what's happened in the past.

"The greatest highlight was opening the doors with my name above the shopfront.

"I think success is loving what you do and getting out of it what you want to achieve."

Ms Werchon lives at Alexandra Headland with husband Paul McHugh.

PHOTO: BOB GOULD/1902240