

Firm scrubs up in the contract cleaning trade

A SWANSEA contract cleaning company is celebrating 20 years in business.

Solo Service was started from scratch by former Penyrheol Comprehensive School student Stephen Hammett in April 1990.

The business now operates with an annual turnover of around £30 million and serves some of the UK's biggest commercial names, including hardware chain B&Q, electrical giant Comet and bus company Stagecoach.

Solo also counts motor insurance firm Admiral as a key client, and has cleaned for the company since it first arrived in Swansea.

Mr Hammett said: "We

have come through two recessions and difficult times in the early days, but we stuck by our core values.

"Fortunately, I have a strong management team around me, including some who have been here for more than 15 years."

Solo's first account was with the former South Wales Electricity Board, now known as Western Power Distribution, which it still holds today.

Contracts

The company is now run with a staff of between 4,000 and 4,500 throughout the UK including 1,500 in Wales.

It started concentrating on developing national accounts, including B&Q, across 180 locations from Edinburgh to the Midlands

and the South West. It has also signed contracts to serve clothing retailer Matalan and entertainment store HMV.

Solo is based at Axis Court at Swansea's Riverside Business Park, and also operates from regional offices in Bristol, Oxford, Sittingbourne, Birmingham, Liverpool and Glasgow.

In the past two years, it acquired London-based Blue Diamond Services and Whites Cleaning Services in Oxford.

Mr Hammett said determination is the key to success in business.

The 41-year-old said: "As long as you are determined about what you want to achieve, and work hard at it, there is every chance you will succeed."



HARD WORK Steve Hammett founder and managing director of Solo service group which is celebrating 20 years in business.