CIO AWARDS 2014: Rod Drury honoured for Outstanding Contribution to Technology in NZ

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Rod Drury was honoured for the Outstanding Contribution to Technology in NZ at the CIO Awards, held at Sky City last night before an audience of 500 of NZ’s top CIOs and business decision makers.

The award was formerly known as CIO Lifetime Achievement, but soon became apparent from the calibre and range of contribution of the recipients — include Sir Ralph Norris (2012) and Rob Fye (2013) — that the award was more than just a celebration of achievements but also the impact and contribution to the industry and the New Zealand economy.

Introducing the award, Graeme Riley — NZ MD for sponsor SAP — said Mr Drury is is one of New Zealand’s leading CEO’s and business entrepreneurs.

In 1995 Rod established Glazier systems, a software development company which was acquired by Advantage Group in 1999 and operates today as Intergen. He then founded and was CEO of AfterMail which was acquired by Quest Software in 2006. It went on to win Best Exchange Product at the Microsoft TechEd awards in 2006 in Florida.

In 2005 he joined the TradeMe Board as an independent director of another NZ success story.

In July 2006 Rod founded Xero to provide "beautiful" accounting software to small businesses.

In order to do the Research and Development to make Xero a long term global player Rod boldly listed Xero as a public company with only 100 paying customers. It is now also dual listed on the ASX and has 17 offices spread around the world and around 800 staff.

In a short time Xero has well over 100,000 customers in New Zealand and 300,000 world wide and is the leading online accounting software provider in Australia and the United Kingdom.

In March Xero reported annualised revenues of over $90m, with over 70% coming from offshore. Xero has moved from a New Zealand company to a global one exporting strong kiwi values.

Listing Xero early has shown a new playbook for growing technology companies from New Zealand with...
growing number of tech listings building on Xero’s success.

Xero’s leadership is also evident from the Xero ecosystem with over 300 other software companies, and many young New Zealanders building their own technology businesses and creating jobs in the growing Xero network.

In May, Forbes ranked Xero #1 across the World’s Most Innovative Growth Companies, a truly global recognition.

Rod is no stranger to awards. In 2006 and 2007 he was awarded the Hi-Tech NZ “Entrepreneur of the Year” award. And in August 2008 he was conferred the title of Honorary Fellow of the NZ Computer Society.

In 2012 he was the New Zealand Herald Business Leader of the year.

In 2013 Rod was named EY Entrepreneur of the Year. And he has just returned from representing New Zealand at The World Entrepreneur of The Year in Monte Carlo, where he just missed out to Uday Kotak and Kotak Mahindra Bank.

Rod has been a long time advocate of the New Zealand technology scene and led the adoption of the New Zealand Business Number and is currently working with the IRD to deliver web services for GST and numerous other Business to Government projects.

Working with the ASB and other New Zealand banks Rod is defining a range of new banking innovations and services which are being noticed globally.

Rod got the bug for computing back at Napier Boys High Schools and has sponsored technology into 4 Hawkes Bay primary schools to give children without technology at home the chance to see the magic of computing.

Rods open style on social media and in person have inspired many New Zealanders to think about careers in technology and the importance of exporting.

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