

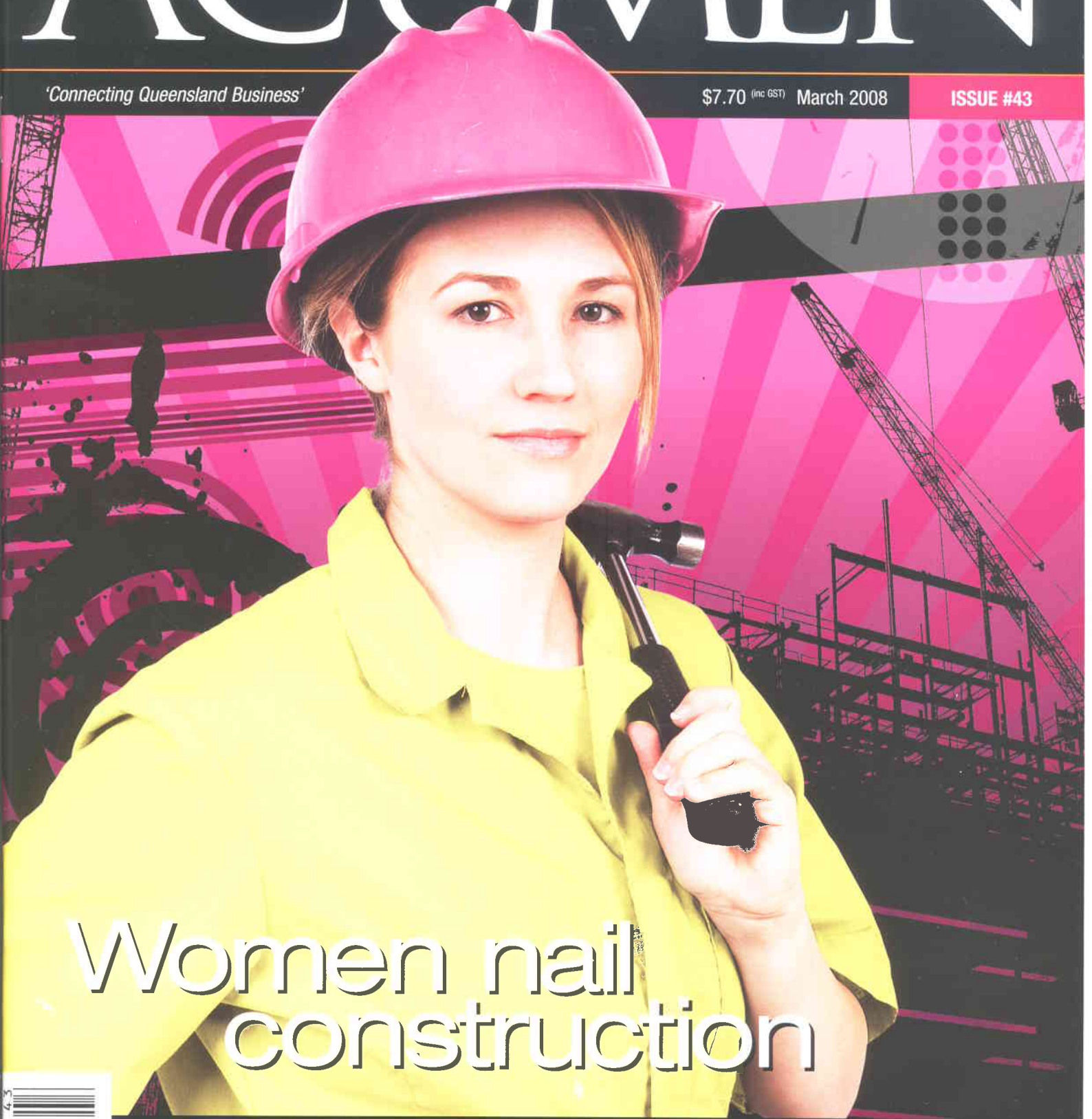
QUEENSLAND BUSINESS

# ACUMEN

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## Women nail construction

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# Paramedics develop life-saving Check Clip

The creation of a group of Gold Coast paramedic friends could save thousands of lives globally by cutting mis-administration of medicines.

The Qlicksmart Check Clip is a medication error reduction device invented by Gold Coast paramedics Michael Fletcher and Eileen and Neil Stead.

Realising that medical complications and deaths resulting from mislabelled syringes ran to the thousands each year, these paramedics came up with the ingenious idea of creating a clip that attached and labelled medication to each syringe.

Check Clip has been developed through Brisbane-based company, Qlicksmart. This small company, founded in 1994 by Princess Alexandra (PA) Hospital doctors Neville Henry AM and Michael Sinnott, manufactures medical devices. What's unique is that these devices are all the product of the experiences of Queensland health and medical workers with the intention of minimising workplace injuries and medication errors (see *Business Acumen* #42).

Dr Sinnott said medication errors

were a massive problem in Australia and overseas.

According to the US Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 1.2 million patients in US hospitals experienced an adverse drug event in 2004, of which almost 9 percent was because they were given the wrong drug or the wrong dose in hospital.

"The Qlicksmart Check Clip reduces the high number of 'syringe swap' and 'ampoule swap' errors by attaching the ampoule from which the drug is drawn to the syringe. This makes cross-checking a breeze," Dr Sinnott said.

Qlicksmart manufactures the devices and another company established by Dr Sinnott and Dr Henry, SmartStream Pty Ltd, coordinates the marketing and distribution of the product range.

"Across both companies, we currently employ four full-time staff and two part-time people in R&D and we distribute our products to about 20 countries," Dr Sinnott said.

He said the Australian Technology Showcase (ATS) initiative and the Queensland Government had helped the company to develop enormously.



The Check Clip saves lives.

"The ATS provided us with excellent advice and encouragement, particularly in our marketing," Dr Sinnott said.

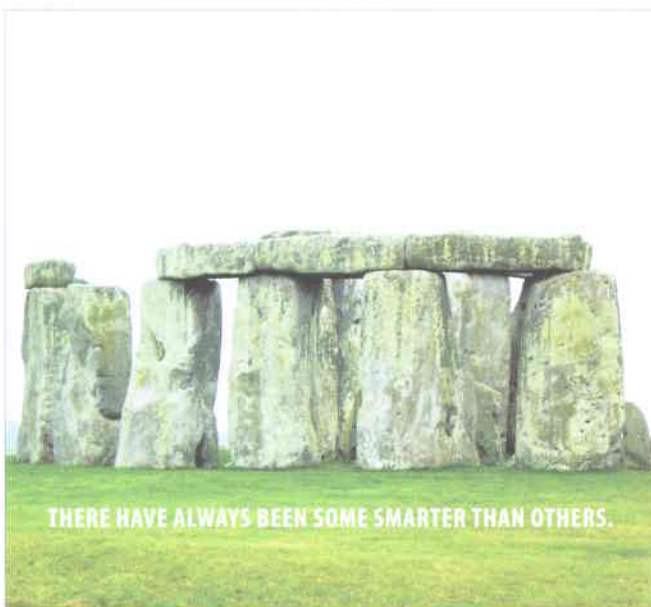
"What's really encouraging is Australian companies are producing some of the most innovative products on the market. I was in France just recently at an industry exhibition and most of the new medical devices on show hailed from South East Queensland."

He said given the fact that the domestic market for medical devices was small, for companies like Qlicksmart, their future really depended on overseas opportunities.

"This is why government support is so important to companies like us and why we see government as a partner in our business," Dr Sinnott said.

Australia's medical devices industry contributed about \$333million to Australia's gross domestic product in 2003-04 and employs about 10,000 people in more than 1000 companies.

[www.qlicksmart.com](http://www.qlicksmart.com) ■



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