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## Ecobulbs put growth light-years ahead

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Picture: THE PRESS



Light show: Energy Mad directors Tom Mackenzie, left, and Chris Mardon check out one of their 20W Ecobulbs. The company topped the Fast 50 list.

BUSINESS fast movers are making quantum leaps to leave their predecessors behind, the 2007 Deloitte Fast 50 index shows.

The annual index, launched last night in Wellington, shows this year's leading company, energy efficient light bulb manufacturer Energy Mad, clocked up 2746 per cent revenue growth, nearly four times what last year's top company scored.

Wellington's top Fast 50 company, mobile communications experts Run the Red, topped the IT national category with 1120 per cent revenue growth.

The top 11 Fast 50 companies each had more annual revenue growth than last year's top performer.

"It increasingly gets harder to be at the top of this list. That just tells me that markets are moving faster than they ever were before," said New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development chairman Nick Main, who spoke at the Fast 50 launch.

Energy Mad, based in Christchurch, was joined by six other environmentally focused companies on the index, indicating a progressive shift in consumer choice.

"Interestingly, all these companies export. They are harnessing the value of Brand New Zealand with its perceived 'pure, green' qualities. We can only expect a lot more from them in the future," Deloitte partner Greg Anderson said.

Almost 30 per cent of New Zealand consumers were buying with environmental factors in mind, Mr Main said.

"It's not a group of people with beards and cardigans, it is much broader than that. You ignore that group at your own risk, and that applies to anybody who supplies into any market."

The driver of costs for organisations was changing with the shift in the cost of energy and the more agile companies could make the most of that. "People talk about the fast movers having an advantage, well, you are seeing it here."

The mark of the solid fast mover was repeating a spot on the index, and 16 companies made a return appearance this year, including Wellington companies Trade Me, in its fifth year, Trilogi, Observatory Crest and Run the Red.

"The people that have been there for a long period of time need to be congratulated, achieving multiple 100 per cent in growth for a number of years — that is really challenging," Mr Main said.

The breadth of companies on the index was also diversifying from a traditional heavy weighting of technology companies.

Companies making soup, coffee, finance solutions and light bulbs, as well as a bank and a timber processor, feature in the Fast 50.

"What you are seeing here is you can be a fast mover in some of the more traditional areas as well," Mr Main said.

Speedy distribution networks and word of mouth advertising helped leading manufacturers and services companies keep up with the techie companies.

"As long as you have the right product and your distribution channels and communication channels are working, you can still do a physical product over software or options sites."