


Billionaire-backed Whizz buys Rocket Removals ahead of IPO

EXCLUSIVE

By **DAVID SWAN**, TECHNOLOGY EDITOR

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Whizz, the home services start-up backed by rich listers including Goldman Sachs Australia boss Simon Rothery, Tony Gandel, Alex Waislitz's Thorney and former KPMG executive Jon Adgemis, has acquired Rocket Removals, ahead of a proposed IPO on the Australian Stock Exchange.

Rocket Removals was an obvious acquisition for Whizz, according to its CEO Anthony Pettiona, who said that the move would instantly increase Whizz's removalist marketplace by 300 per cent, giving it 150 removal companies on its books.

Rocket Removals is one in a pipeline of acquisitions happening over the next 12 months, the executive said, with Whizz setting its sights on new additional services categories as it moves to position itself as the leader in all home services.

"We're now offering a full end-to-end platform for consumers. We're dealing in a lot of categories that were very fragmented, with lots of small and inefficient small business operators, and making them more efficient at what they do, and aggregating them up into a marketplace," Mr Pettiona said.

"We're now one of the leading Australian on-demand home services marketplaces, primarily targeting cleaning and removal categories.

"We had thousands of customers moving home every month, so it made sense to us to look at how moving and relocating could complement our traditional cleaning offerings and we could bundle those together."

He said that the acquisition, for an undisclosed sum, would be a net positive for the company's financials.

Whizz has not disclosed its valuation but is growing quickly. Its platform allows cleaners and movers to find jobs, bid for and accept payments all in one place.

“We were attracted to the people, the technology, the opportunity to introduce operational and marketing efficiencies, as well as the opportunity to extend our categories with an already established platform and digital marketplace solution,” he said.

“This deal allows us to combine two unique front-end models to provide our customers with innovative on-demand offerings. Rocket Removals, and in particular their removal technology software component – Fleet365 – sees an immediate opportunity to drive growth.”

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The Rocket Removal Fleet365 technology will provide Whizz with real-time data on the movement and load capacity of its supply network, Mr Pettiona said, creating an opportunity for the company to maximise revenue particularly on valuable interstate routes.

“Furniture removals are worth upwards of \$2 billion dollars in Australia, Rocket Removals founder Nicholas Yialas said.

“With Whizz’s expertise in on-demand marketplaces, combined with our category knowledge and proven track record, we are well positioned to disrupt the relocation industry in Australia. As a consumer, the ability to spend less for a better service that is stress free is a real game changer.”

Whizz ultimately wants to become the company that can handle any outsourced task for your home.

But first, it’s looking to launch an IPO sometime in the foreseeable future.

“We have a very aligned shareholder group, and we have people that are in this for the long haul,” Mr Pettiona said.

“We’re an unlisted public company now and we’re ultimately on a path towards a float. But we’ve also got the right support and we’re not pressured into any of that by our key shareholders.

“Alex Waislitz, through Thorney Investment Group, has been a big personal supporter of the business and they believe in what we’re doing. We’re very grateful to have an amazing

shareholder register and one that is very aligned as well.”

DAVID SWAN, TECHNOLOGY EDITOR

David Swan is Technology Editor for The Australian. With deep experience across start-ups, business and tech David is uniquely positioned to cover Australia’s fast-growing technology ecosystem and how it’s chan... [Read more](#)

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