

## **Boutique bank on right side of fence**

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12dec06

IN a hot market, local private equity firm Momentum Pacific Group claims to have generated a blistering 155 per cent return for its investors in just two years, after it participated in the sale of temporary fencing business ATF-Deck Group for \$132 million last week.

Momentum, a boutique merchant bank owned by former Hoyts managing director Peter Ivany and former JP Morgan managing director Kevin Jacobson, held a 17 per cent stake in ATF-Deck Group, which was sold to Quadrant Capital.

"On an initial equity investment of \$5 million in 2004, Momentum investors took home \$22 million in just over two years," the company said in a statement yesterday.

Momentum bought ATF rival company Deck Guardrail for just \$11 million in 2004. A private equity fund was soon created to hold the investment, backed by "20 high net worth investors" with an initial investment of \$5 million.

Deck was then merged with ATF to create a national fencing business with annual sales of more than \$50 million.

"Our investors are delighted with the outcome and have encouraged us to continue to progress other private equity opportunities alongside our active advisory business," said Mr Ivany, who stepped down as Hoyts chief in late 1999 after the company was taken over by the late Kerry Packer's private company, Australian Consolidated Press.

Momentum plans to launch a second private equity fund in mid-2007.

"We have built up a good, cohesive team at Momentum over the past three years and expect to be doing more in the private equity space in the years ahead," Mr Ivany said.

"We unashamedly see better value in terms of acquisition prices at the smaller end of the market."