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VISION: Interwork chief executive Rosemary Wallage and chairman John Harvey in their office at Hilton. **Picture:** NAOMI JELICOE

Interwork aims to double impact

DISABILITY employment services provider Interwork is preparing to expand interstate, as it aims to double the number of people it helps over the next year.

Newly-appointed Interwork chairman John Harvey says each year, the organisation helps about 1800 people with disabilities, and those disadvantaged, to find work. By next year, it hopes that number will have risen to 3500 and reach 5000 by 2012.

"There are bigger opportunities for the company (in the eastern states) and the company has a really strong balance sheet," Mr Harvey says. "To reach those ambitious growth targets, we need to be in the bigger markets."

Late last year, Interwork merged with UK-based Shaw Trust to expand its services and opportunities for job-seekers. Interwork has 18 offices in metropolitan and

regional SA. Chief executive Rosemary Wallage says the merger has proven beneficial for both organisations.

"We wanted to have access to new resources and new materials," she says. "We wanted to bring some of the best practice from overseas and we have retained that ability to relate to the Australian market."

With support from Shaw Trust, Interwork hopes to have a presence in Queensland and Victoria by the end of the year. It is looking to establish partnerships with interstate organisations.

Mr Harvey says one of Interwork's main goals is to ensure the contribution disadvantaged and disabled workers can make to business is appreciated. "We encourage employers to see qualities that make a great employee, such as loyalty, honesty and enthusiasm," he says.

— Alexandra Economou

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