

Fresh breath for Nicolette

Thomas Nicolette, the US lawyer, entrepreneur and consultant who is nursing former HIV testing flop **Akers Biosciences** back to health and changing its formal name to ABI, exudes confidence these days, despite a still battered AIM share price. President of the diagnostic concern since last year and chief executive officer since April, he suggests pushing its 'platform technologies' into easy-to-use breath tests will grow it into 'a much bigger company', which could attract bids for all or parts of the business.

Nicolette, who previously floated several US companies in electronic security and steered anti-shoplifting tag pioneer Knogo Corporation to a \$400 million takeover, was asked to join Akers' board a few years ago through connections at Merrill Lynch. He has crucially sorted out the company's balance sheet and moved it into the new tests, one of whose strong suits is that they require no hospital or laboratory visits.

One, for alcohol, has been sold to the US



Thomas Nicolette, President/CEO of **Akers Biosciences** awaits corporate approaches

military, among others. Others on their way include tests for life-threatening allergic reactions to blood-thinning agent Heparin before surgical operation, a test for lung cancer and another for dangerous side effects of diabetic insulin treatment.

Nicolette argues selling the company might make sense, either outright or leaving a remnant drawing royalties, but only at a price that reflected its enhanced prospects. Since he is paid in shares and draws no salary, he can be expected to strike a hard bargain.