

Fresh sparkle for jewellery outlet

A designer takes on the challenge of breathing fresh life into an exclusive jewellery outlet that has been a retail icon on the Sydney scene since 1942.

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How do you take the essence of a much esteemed 63 year old Sydney city icon and breath into it individually to strengthen the brand and carry it forward over the next 10 years?

This was the challenge put to me as I sat opposite Julian Farren-Price, son of founder J Farren-Price, discerning jewelers with a strong reputation for unique items and timepieces of the highest quality. Established in 1942, J Farren-Price is one of Sydney's most enduring exclusive jewellery businesses.

Their Castlereagh Street showroom has recently been re-opened after undergoing an extensive renovation and expansion, effectively doubling in size to 129 sq m of retailing space.

Our first step was to interview family members and gain insight into heart of the business and its values. We discovered that the success and the longevity of the enterprise had been underpinned by a strong commitment to best service and attention to fine detail. We also found out that whilst upholding these 'old time' values, the firm's principals had a strong commitment to contemporary ideas, technology and designs.

From this juxtaposition of tradition and contemporary vision was born the heart of the re-energised J Farren-Price brand. A new retail and branding concept was then designed to communicate this to clients and guests visiting the showroom.

The showroom design boldly mixes contemporary elements with old, traditional items. The main sales area has marble floors, intricate XVII century chandeliers, slim line consultation tables and modern lighting.

We have incorporated the Rolex zone dedicated to quality watches and the Patek lounge, which features Lois XVI antique furniture alongside a 42" plasma screen that demonstrates the finer features of custom-designed jewellery.

For the dual purpose of safeguarding privacy and monitoring security, entry to this exclusive showroom is afforded only by ringing a door bell or by making a prior appointment.

The protection of privacy was

further extended by creating a system of fold-away glass doors and an electronic privacy screen which can be adjusted individually to suit each guest.

Extensive window displays attract the attention of window shoppers from a busy street, whilst inside the showroom there are only few feature product displays – these are dramatically lit white stone cases framed by cascading sheer fabric.

The small number of internal displays reflects the fact that this isn't a browsing store! Every guest is greeted personally by a trained consultant and invited to sit and relax whilst jewellery pieces are brought to the table for them to see. Antique gold gilded guest chairs contrast the consulting tables' minimalist design.

Attention to design detail in-store reflects the attention to detail in product design in the jewellery workshop.

An integrated retail-branding programme was created in order to complement the interior ambience and communicate the brand values. At the heart of it are the modernised J Farren-Price logo mark and a brand positioning statement, together with a newly developed brand graphical pattern that utilises the acronym of the business' name. This pattern is used extensively in the interior design.

