



Burns & Ferrall team members from left: Daniel Nation, Tom Thwaites, Kris Harvey, Michelle Guillemot, Troy Marshall, & John Naylor

“We don’t just tender on pricing either, we present a solution and at the heart of it is that the customer knows what they’re trying to deliver in a project. It’s not just about product and price, for us its around providing the complete solution end to end.

“Innovation can be challenging when you don’t have R&D and you’re not manufacturing. So our innovation is mixed with creativity in the way we’ve developed New Zealand’s first container kitchen, and produced a capability document written in Te Reo, apparently an industry first.”

These days, Burns & Ferrall is less focused on being number one in the market place. “We’d rather be number one employer of choice, achieving gender and ethnic balance and a skill balance so we’re not just hiring hospitality people. We’re working on getting a matrix of skills and they will drive the business forward.”

Staff morale is at an all time high, and Yammer is helping. It’s an internal communication service, like Facebook for companies. “It’s a great way to keep staff in touch with what’s happening around the country, linking staff in support roles with those more involved with our customers. Staff engagement and celebrating success are big things for us.”

Committing time and resources to the social enterprise Eat My Lunch and being involved with charity initiative Kiwi Harvest, which repurposes surplus food, is very important to the business.

If a company’s success is measured by staff loyalty, Burns & Ferrall might just be unbeatable. Several employees have worked there for nearly 40 years and one of those, since the day he left school.

### FUTURE FOCUS

Staying connected globally is one of the ways Burns & Ferrall retains relevance in a challenging environment and major predicted changes in commercial kitchens is going to be around space.

“You’ll still have your cooking and show kitchens but smarter equipment will deliver the food in a smaller footprint. We’re working with Cobb & Co in NZ and they’re really mastering it – getting their kitchen size down to around 5 square metres and doing 300 covers in a service.

“Now we’re factoring in requirements for Uber Eats and takeaway’s and ready to eat meals are going to be huge. I can see it coming, where one kitchen might service up to four restaurants, with the bathrooms for all four venues positioned at one central point.

In terms of future sales, the strong residential market and tourism industry are buoying business optimism. “We’re seeing more food trucks and pop ups, B&F is leading the way with container kitchens, and America’s Cup on the horizon is exciting too.”

One concern Tony does have is around foreign owned hotels bringing in equipment direct. Although the economy is growing and there are more hotels, there’s a chance local distributors will be cut out of the loop.

Burns & Ferrall though are certainly up for the challenges. “We’re pretty excited,” says Tony. “We’re really trying to focus on what we do. Historically the business focused on what our competitors were doing, but that’s a slippery slope. We want to believe in what we’re doing and do it well.

“We have some really cool customers out there doing cool stuff and we want to be around for another 70 years, continuing to drive innovation but not just with product. We’re challenging ourselves all the time, with the way we go to market, service our customers – we’re challenging everything and we’re loving it.” ■

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