

JO PIGGOTT

MUM | BUSINESS OWNER | VOLUNTEER
SWIM TEACHER | TRIATHLETE



ENJOY THE JOURNEY

VITAL

HVAC + R INDUSTRY

A WOMAN IN A MAN'S WORLD

Challenges & Opportunities
Building Community

CAIRNS BUSINESS OWNER

Education & Health
Leading the way – Toxin Free Revolution

A WOMAN IN A MAN'S WORLD

Challenges and Opportunities | Building Community Spirit

Cairns A/C & Refrigeration was established in 2016. Our aim was to provide an income for our family and to contribute positively to our community, whilst providing Cairns & FNQ with a superior air conditioning and refrigeration business both within the domestic and commercial areas.

OUR MISSION

To provide expert, reliable, sustainable refrigeration and air conditioning solutions to all

We aim to complement our workmanship with premium customer service and to tailor everything we do, to best meet the needs of our clients.

We are a one stop shop for your air conditioning and commercial refrigeration requirements supported by our unlimited design licence. This means we are licensed to perform work on all aspects of this trade. Our core values are to always: *speak with honesty, think with sincerity, and act with integrity.*

A Woman Manager in a Male Dominated Industry

My first challenge was in creating a valid and valued position for myself within the business. As a manager and business partner in a man's world I knew I needed to be flexible, and use my diverse thinking to bring new and fresh ideas.

This is the first business I have run, and during the journey I have taken the opportunity to grow my skills and confidence by engaging myself with education, networking, listening, Toastmaster and fitness.

I am an active member of BNI Phoenix, Toastmasters Reef City, and the recently launched ElevateHER Lean In Circle, which supports women to grow their leadership skills. I also attend as many workshops and networking events I can, as I always take away something I can use, a new idea, or a new contact.

One of the advantages I bring to our business is that women customers aren't always comfortable speaking with tradesman, however, in many businesses, they are usually the ones to engage with them. I know myself, at times I have felt uncomfortable, silly and thought they have responded poorly. Quite often, women tell me how much they appreciate having a woman at the end of the phone. They no longer feel inferior or silly about asking their questions.

Since understanding this, I have now started writing a monthly newsletter, commenced advertising in Pakmag, and my business Facebook page is growing every day. People feel connected and they appreciate the tips that I pass on and I like being able to show them the authentic me. One huge personal goal achieved!

I am passionate about my role and it is always growing, as I am.

The variety is both challenging and exciting. In one day, I can be the trades assistant – standing on a rooftop handing tools, then marketing, then off to attend networking events, workshops and one of my favourite meetings, and then listening to our customers.

I feel like I have a brand new identity. I'm proud to be the A/C lady in Cairns.

ENJOY THE JOURNEY

A WOMAN IN A MAN'S WORLD

Fridgies

In the past two years, I have seen a positive change in people's understanding of what we do and feel proud to be educating and increasing awareness about this vital industry.

I found domestic customers knew little about HVAC + R industry and often their first thought would be to call an electrician. My purpose and core driver is to create awareness and education about the air conditioning and refrigeration industry, and bring that into the forefront of people's minds.

Look around you, can you see where we have been?



ENJOY THE JOURNEY

MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP STYLE

I CHOOSE TO RAISE THE BAR Practice what I preach | My authentic self

My team is what makes the business one of the most referred in Cairns. Without their experience, proven skill set, honesty, sincerity and integrity we would not be able to grow. I can network and market as much as I like, however if my team didn't perform and provide the service I guarantee we wouldn't survive.

Being a Fridgie is a huge responsibility, it's not only having the technical ability, customer service mentality and overall mental fitness, the team need to be physically strong and healthy also. They work in extreme conditions and their wellbeing and safety is my number one priority.

For example: They could be in a hot roof space one day, then the next day in a freezer room. I'm not sure of many other industries that experience these extremities. Therefore, it is super important that the team are provided with the right equipment, adequate water, electrolytes, and eat healthy food.

I have learned to be flexible with working day rosters, to give adequate break time as not all jobs are in working hours or ideal conditions. It's about being really situationally aware and putting myself in their shoes.

I have also brought on board another small local business – Knots and Niggles massage who provide fortnightly remedial massages for the team, which has been accepted with great enthusiasm. It not only relieves sore achy muscles, it keeps them feeling valued. Keeping myself fit and active is an essential part of my day. I feel positive, alive and motivated from keeping myself fit and healthy. My team and my family rely on me to motivate and inspire them, so I practice what I preach. I need to clearly show who my authentic self is, and to strive to be my best, so I can inspire the best out of the team. As their Manager, they know I value them and I've got their back.



ENJOY THE JOURNEY

BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY

Education and Health Focus | Leading the way – Toxin Free Revolution

The world is ever evolving and so is the HVAC + R industry. We believe in the importance of continually educating ourselves, to think ahead and be innovative. With our cutting-edge knowledge and experience in HVAC engineering, we give our customers the latest energy saving technologies, and are committed to the sustainability of our environment.

We are keen members of the newly formed Waste Wise Business group in Cairns, as we aspire to higher standards within our business to comply with applicable environmental laws. One proactive step we make is our Refrigerant Recovery Solutions for disposing of end of life equipment. We ensure that ozone depleting refrigerants are recovered responsibly and refrigerants are returned to the wholesaler for destruction. We all know well, and are being constantly educated on green house emissions, and the release of ozone depleting substances (refrigerant) therefore the safe recovery of refrigerants to reduce the effects of global warming is important for our future. This is why I educate the public by advocating to check your contractors licences, to look for the ARC tick. The tick identifies tradespeople that hold their National Refrigerant Trading Authorisation. This means refrigerant is only to be handled by licensed technicians. It frustrates me that unqualified and unlicensed people compromise this vital industry and endanger our environment.

Another way we actively care for our environment is through recycling copper and disposing of old air conditioners to FNQ recycling, where they are pulled apart for scrap.

Living in the tropics means air conditioning is not a luxury, but rather a necessity for our daily comfort, particularly in our summer months. With high use and without regular maintenance your air conditioner can become a hot bed for mould, bacteria and other air borne contaminants. They then potentially become less efficient, costing you more and often requiring repair and or replacement sooner rather than later. Would you drive your car for 5 years and never service it?

Traditionally strong chemicals are used to strip the air conditioner of these contaminants. For me having my family and staff breathing these chemicals didn't feel right. If they are not right for my family, they are not right for my customers. This motivated me to investigate and research about mould, the illnesses you could contract and explore another way, a better solution.

Undertaking this research led me to another small local business, My Habitat, located in Milla Milla. They have a product called mould master which is toxin free! I tested this product for a period of 6 months and was very happy with the results. Mould Master kills the mature mould cells, inactivates the spores so mould cannot grow. I have now collaborated with My Habitat and we use this product for hydro cleaning air conditioners. Furthermore, I have an agreement with My Habitat to supply our customers with small bottles of mould master with my business label on them. It has been such an exciting time with raising awareness of the hidden contaminants in our air conditioners and to educate our customers of the importance of regular maintenance. There are many other businesses in Cairns that have recently started promoting the hydro cleans, but which are expensive and generally toxic. While I acknowledge this is a sustainable income stream for the business during our slow period (winter) I believe it is vitally important to provide services that supports the positive health and wellbeing of our customers. I have chosen to offer this alternative, affordable yearly clean for our customers, and not follow suit with other businesses. I love the fact that I have collaborated with another local small business in our community to use their toxin free product. That's a win for local business, a win for our customers, and a win for the environment.

My mission and leadership role in our business is to increase our presence, both in the domestic and commercial market, by gaining further maintenance contracts through education and awareness of our cutting-edge, environment friendly services to our customers. I plan to have two fulltime tradesmen and employ a young person to join me in the office. I feel this goal is not too far away.

ENJOY THE JOURNEY

PERSONAL SUCCESS AND COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

Mum | Wife | Business Owner | Volunteer | Swim Teacher | Triathlete

My community spirit and contribution is a natural part of my life. I was brought up knowing the value of being an active and contributing member of the community. This strong sense of community that I have, has encouraged and connected my children to their community, something I am really proud of.

An example of this is:

In 2017 I followed my eldest daughter's footsteps and completed my bronze medallion in surf lifesaving. My youngest daughter holds her SRC and together the three of us are a part of a patrol group for Ellis Beach Surf life saving. I am also active during the nippers season as an assistant swim coach / water safety each Sunday at the club.

As a business, we also contribute to the club, in that we installed a new air conditioner in the girls dormitory, and we maintain all other air conditioning and commercial fridges free of charge for the club. I've enjoyed personal success with my involvement at the Studio A Health and Fitness Club. I gain a lot of my strength and motivation from this awesome team. I have been shown that combining my physical fitness with my mental fitness, I can achieve things I never thought I could.

As an example, this coming weekend I am participating in my first individual triathlon in Yungaburra to raise money for war vets. Through Studio A, I have participated in The Great Wheelbarrow race for the past 2 years, raising funds for MS.

In 2017 and 2018 the business is a sponsor of this team for Studio A. I feel proud that financially we can support charities / special events in our local community.

On a personal achievement note, I have participated in the 2017 Ironman 70.3 in a team as the swimmer / cyclist. This year I am the swimmer for a team and back up cyclist / runner.

I absolutely love training with my "fit fam" and gain so much from their positive, motivating and live-life attitude.

This attitude to live a positive life to the fullest, as fit as I can be, and to be involved and give back to my local community, is reflected now in all that I do. I am grateful for the amazing connections I have made in the Cairns Community, and for being nominated for a Cairns Business Women award.



ENJOY THE JOURNEY

COMMERCIAL SUCCESS

We are a relatively new business, having only started out in Cairns region in 2016. That said, our commercial success has been continually moving forward in a positive direction.

To best illustrate that:

- In 2016, when we started out, we needed to sub-contract to bigger companies. •
- By the beginning of 2017, the need to rely on sub-contracting jobs had dropped, as our name and reputation started to gain momentum in the community. •
- By mid-2017, we have had no need to sub-contact as all new work has been sourced directly by our business, or through referrals, and we are now servicing a range of regular customers.

Subsequently, we have had to employ several contractors, especially over the summer months, to complete all work.

Next week, I am sending the crew to Bamaga for a week. We have collaborated with a business on Thursday Island to build and refrigerate a cool room and freezer room at the Bamaga tavern. We will have one of our sub-contractors with us for this job, and I have had to engage another sub-contractor to service our ongoing work in Cairns.

It is an exciting growth time for our business, and we love being able to successfully contribute to the Cairns regional economy in this way.



ENJOY THE JOURNEY

JO PIGGOTT



ENJOY THE JOURNEY

VITAL

HVAC + R INDUSTRY

CONTACT:



cairnsfridgy@gmail.com



0434 627 410

REFEREES

Nicola Moore
0400193009
Property manager
Freeman's Residential
Nicola@freemans.property

Jace Piggott
0412918323
Business partner
Cairns A/C & Refrigeration
Cairnsfridgy@gmail.com