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HOT WATER



AUSTRALIAN HOT WATER

" The Hot Water Professionals "



EDWARDS





Australian Hot Water is an experienced hot water specialist with a reputation built on the provision of prompt, quality service at competitive rates. The group's first service centre was established in 1985 in Moorebank, a suburb in the Southwest of Sydney. Alan Bainsbridge, the company founder, had previously worked as a sales representative for the hot water industry throughout Australia, and realised the need for a third-party water heater replacement. "This was not a common option in the industry at that time, as the main people who would replace water heaters were the manufacturers, or local plumbers and councils," says Executive Director Dean McDonald. "They

all took far too long; it would be anything from a three days to a full week wait. It was too hard to get something installed quickly through the traditional replacement source." Australian Hot Water was created as a brand with same-day replacement, setting a standard that the industry soon followed. In 1989, the decision was made to expand and explore the opportunities of franchising, keeping the Australian Hot Water brand growing in proportion to demand within the Sydney Metropolitan Area. In 2004, the business was bought by its franchisees, 6 of which continue to operate as directors. At present, there are 7 service centres in operation within Sydney, and

2 more in Canberra, and Newcastle.

In addition to fast and reliable installation and service to all types of domestic and commercial water heaters, Australian Hot Water can provide customers with the most up-to-date knowledge of new, energy efficient products. "We can suggest an appropriate solution to what our customers' needs may be," says Dean. "We have licenced plumbers and electricians on hand to provide expert advice, backed up by dedicated office staff who are well informed of product knowledge." The franchise also offers a variety of gas, electric, solar, and heat pump products, enabling customers to make an

educated decision before making a purchase.

The Australian Hot Water franchise model has been constantly developing over the past 26 years, with a significant focus on innovative systems and strong franchisee marketing. Future franchisees will be offered a mix of proven systems that have been etched into the Australian Hot Water business model, coupled with new operating technologies that are evolving every day, including cloud management, scheduling, and accounting packages. "There will be new areas of growth in the Sydney area, and possible expansion to other states within the coming years," Dean says. "The future is very bright for our proven brand, with exciting times ahead, and Australian Hot Water will strive to stay at the forefront of the industry."

Australian Hot Water has set itself apart in the industry through its development of a culture based on seeking out and providing solutions to

customer requests, and solving any problem at an affordable price and with great service.

Many of Australian Hot Water's franchisees have won small business awards in their local areas, and have been consistently achieving sales targets set by the company's major suppliers. As well, many of the franchise owners are tradespeople, and have accreditation in specialised fields, such as plumbing, electrical, and environmental studies. All employees are also encouraged to improve their knowledge, and undertake specific training in personal development and improvement courses.

Both the franchisees and the franchisor maintain a keen focus on giving back to the community. In addition to every branch providing sponsorship to local sporting teams and community events, the head office regularly donates to various charities, such as juvenile diabetes, the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, and Beyond Blue.



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Australian Hot Water has placed great emphasis on the development of strong relationships with key suppliers and industry organisations, such as the Master Plumbers Association and the Jemena Gas Network, major brands such as Rheem and Rinnai, as well as local councils. "Such partnerships can be of great advantage to keeping our staff and franchise owners informed with the changes in both legislation and product developments," says Dean. "Aligning our company and building those relationships will ensure our ability to improve the products and services we can offer to our customers."

The overseas ownership of the major industry brands available in Australia is a subject of significant concern for Dean. "Product range could be sourced or procured offshore for cost savings by the major brands, and delivered with a reduced lifespan or less warranty," he says. "I would also expect more aggressive marketing by these major brands to maintain their market share." When also considering the rising energy costs for consumers, as well as the reduction and cessation of government rebates such as small technology credits, Dean worries that consumer incentive to change to more energy efficient products, or a more efficient energy source, will be severely diminished.

Dean McDonald began his career with Australian Hot Water in 1987. "I worked for a couple of years with the owner at the time, and found myself looking at buying the first franchise in 1989," he says. Dean is currently both the group's Executive Director and Secretary of Head Office, and has sat numerous times as Chairman and Vice Chairman on the board. He continues to run his own operating franchise in the Southland Shire: the Australian Hot Water South Branch.





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