



Q. You were already running a successful business, so what prompted you to start Western Caravans?

A. Yes, I was a caravan repairer for 7 years and was doing a lot of warranty work for eastern states manufacturers. However I saw a need for both another WA based product and a product that offered customers a better standard of finish. With my experience I felt I knew how we could deliver this and create a better product.

Q. How many caravans do you build a year?

A. We are currently building around 48 caravans a year – that's about one per week. We've had a great response to our vans and the demand has resulted in the business needing to expand, which we are currently doing - but we are very conscious of ensuring this expansion is gradual as we don't want to grow too fast.

Q. How many people work at Western Caravans?

A. There are currently 8 people employed in the Western Caravans' team.

Q. How much bigger do you plan to grow the business?

A. The future size of the company is not something we are giving our attention to at present. We are a family business and our main focus is on the product not size or profits. So as long as the product continues to evolve as it has been and maintain an excellent standard then we will be happy.

Q. What makes your product so appealing?

A. I think when people invest in a caravan they're looking for strength, reliability and the ability to individualise it through customisation. We build our product very strong. We are able to screw the furniture of the caravan through the wall frames and this gives a very strong rigid finish. We also use strong parallel axles on a box RHS chassis which will give years of trouble free travelling. In addition there are many ways we can customise our caravans to suit people's individual needs, but the most obvious is the huge range of colours available for our upholstery, laminates and curtains. This means Western Caravans' customers can choose their own personal and unique colour scheme to reflect their tastes and make their van different to others.

Q. I've heard a lot about your attention to detail. Do you coat the underside of your floors?

A. Yes. We use exterior ply that has been coated with solar guard paint to keep moisture out. We don't use any particle boards or MDF. Even our seat tops and all our bench tops are made from exterior ply.

Q. Do you use the new compressor fridges in your designs?

A. We don't use them as a standard fitting because most people are still wanting to have a 3-way fridge (the 12V / Gas / 240V) but we have fitted them in the past when someone has asked us to. They are especially good if you want to incorporate a solar system. I think they are a superior fridge but you need to get used to the fact that they do hum. However, if someone wants a solar system we run all the wires and can fit different lights and a compressor fridge to suit their needs.

Q. So are you happy to use a particular appliance or feature that a customer wants?

A. Yes. We are flexible and want the customer to have what they want - whether they have seen it in a magazine or a friend has told them about it - we can access it. While we have chosen all the parts in our vans because we know they are reliable and have great back-up service, if you want something in particular to be different we can accommodate that too.

Q. Can people contact you and buy directly from you?

A. People can contact us via email or phone and I would be happy to discuss any changes with them but we don't sell factory direct. They have to go through one of our dealers to buy a Western Caravan.