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CRAFTED WITH CAPRAL: FROM STAMPS TO SKYLINES ALBERT SMITH SIGNS STORY OF INNOVATION AND IDENTITY

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At the centre of this story is Rodney Smith, a hands-on CEO with deep roots in the business his family built. "I love making things," he says with a grin. "I still sketch ideas on whiteboards. I build prototypes in my shed. I've always liked solving problems with my hands – and I've never stopped doing that."

The company's evolution mirrors the shifts in Australia's industrial landscape – from fluorescent to LED, paintbrushes to powder coating, and sign writing to advanced digital printing. But while the

tools have changed, the philosophy has stayed much the same: do it properly, and do it with pride.

That commitment starts with materials. Aluminium, in particular, has become the cornerstone of much of what Albert Smith Signs creates. "Aluminium is beautiful to work with – it's light, strong, clean, and it doesn't corrode," Rodney says. "We form it, weld it, polish it, paint it, light it up – it's one of the most versatile materials in our workshop."

For over two decades, Capral Aluminium has been a trusted partner in that process. "I don't think we could do what we do without them," Rodney says. "They've always backed us. Even when supply chains were under pressure, they never let us down. And the quality of their product – the consistency – it matters. Because when a sign goes up on a McDonald's in Asia or a Shell station in Townsville, it's our name on it. We don't cut corners,



and neither do they."

Rodney has always believed in bringing together a wide range of talents under one roof – cabinet makers, boat builders, spray painters, neon glass benders. "A good sign maker isn't just one thing," he explains. "They're a bit of everything. And when you put a team like that together – when they're proud of what they're making – you can feel it in the final product."

That sense of pride runs deep, and it's part of what keeps Albert Smith Signs strong in a competitive global market. The company has manufacturing operations in Australia, China and the Philippines, and has produced hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of signage. Yet it still feels like a family business – one that takes pride in what they do and remembers where it came from.

"I've met people in our overseas factories who started with us when they couldn't read or write – and now their



children work for us too. That's legacy. That's what this business has built. If you've worked for us for 25 minutes, you can get a job in signage anywhere," Rodney laughs. "We train well, we set high standards, and we're not afraid to pass that on."

Innovation has always been part of the story, but for Rodney, it's about purpose – not novelty. "Technology's only useful if it helps you do something better," he says. "I remember once we hit a roadblock with a lighting component – the CAD guys had tried everything. I said, let me have a crack. I made it myself in the shed. Tested it. It worked. And I could sleep that night because I knew it was right."

It's that instinct for design, detail and durability that keeps customers coming back. "We're not a middleman. We make what we sell. If we put a warranty on it, it's because we know it'll last – not because a subcontractor said so."

That level of trust carries through to every part of the operation – from production to packaging, and right through the supply chain. "Capral's part of that too," Rodney says. "It's not just the product – it's the people. When you've got a relationship like that, it's not about chasing the cheapest option. It's about knowing someone's in your corner when it matters."

Rodney has travelled the world on behalf of the business. He's seen signs he helped design lighting up cityscapes in Asia, the Pacific, and across every state in Australia. And yet, he's never lost his sense of wonder at what a small idea can become. "I still get a thrill seeing our signs in the wild," he says. "It's a quiet kind of pride. We don't need a neon arrow saying 'We made this' – we just know."

Rodney's role is still evolving, But don't expect him to retire quietly. "I've still got so much passion for what we do," he says. "This industry has given me a

life, and I'm grateful every day. We've got a great team, great partners, and we're making things that last. What more could you want?"

Albert Smith Signs isn't just a story about signage. It's a story about craftsmanship, about relationships, and about what's possible when Australian manufacturing is done with heart. From a rubber stamp shop to a global name – it's proof that with the right people, the right materials, and the right mindset, you can build something that truly stands the test of time.