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**SPORTSMAN'S WAREHOUSE
REBRANDS**

AUSTRALIA'S TOP 50 FRANCHISES

PERSONALITY AND YOUR CUSTOMERS

Good sports

A three decades old retail sports and fitness chain gets a makeover to tackle a new challenge - franchising.

Sporting and fitness chain, Sportsman's Warehouse, is branching out.

After 30 years of successfully run company-operated retail stores, the brand has opened itself up to franchising in a push to expand its presence in the Australian retail market.

But that's not the only change for the retail stalwart. Along with the new company structure comes a new store format and branding.

With eight stores (now 10) across NSW, ACT and Victoria, Sportman's Warehouse MD, Sajat Mahajan's vision was to "help our core consumer to achieve a

healthy lifestyle and to promote further awareness throughout the community".

Enter retail design specialists, Design Portfolio, who partnered with Sportsman's Warehouse to create new concept stores in Orange, Albury (NSW) and Wangaratta (Vic) and updated graphics and signage in all stores.

The aim of the transformation was to present a Sportsman's Warehouse's range of branded products and information in a one stop, well laid-out shopping environment that inspires sporting and fitness endeavours and helps its customers feel good through

physical activity.

To do this, the chain carried out customer research to better understand the consumer groups that frequent sports stores and their buying patterns.

The brand positioning and layout of the store was then targeted at these groups to improve their retail experience.

From this starting point, Design Portfolio developed a

new concept and brand using a product merchandising strategy, shifting the focus to the activity the product is for rather than the product category.

New look

Departments are laid out based around the categories My Family - balls, table games, and bags; My Fitness - running, cycling, gym, swimming, boxing, golf, lifestyle

and casual; My Sports - field sports, protective gear, and court sports; and Footwear.

The word 'my' is used in department graphics to give a sense of ownership, linking back to the community values Sportsman's reinforces.

A learning centre was also included in the stores as a point of difference to ensure customers are better informed about the products they are purchasing.

The use of website terminals, brochures alongside product, instore talks, graphics, department signs, and information bays were integrated into the layout to inform customers and assist with navigation.

Challenges

The key challenges for Design Portfolio were creating a high quality look on budget, overseas



myFAMILY



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product sourcing, and flexibility of merchandising fixtures.

The new concept stores are primarily a larger format, ranging in size between 400 sqm and 650sqm, so cost was a primary factor, particularly in the franchise and roll out stage of growth.

To manage budgeting for the fitout, Sportsman's was willing to source from China and have some custom made fixtures and fittings.

The coordination of overseas and locally sourced products made administering the project more complex, but the cost saving was substantial, at around 15 per cent.

Design Portfolio is now looking at how it can streamline the sourcing process and cut costs further for future projects.

The large variety and seasonal changes of merchandise also presented a challenge.

All fixtures and fittings had to be multi-functional and designed



for wall bays and gondolas to accommodate a large range of merchandise.

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Sportsman's needed a system that was strong and adaptable, but

still looked good.

To achieve this, a mesh system was introduced, allowing for complete adaptability in size and display method.

Sportsman's Warehouse is now actively seeking franchise partners to open more stores around the country in 2012, with the addition of two new stores since taking on the new structure.

It plans to increase its foothold in the market by adding more physical stores to its portfolio and upgrading its online retail capabilities.

