



PEOPLE Power

Manheim Australia and New Zealand credits people as the key to its success in becoming a leader in the provision of automotive remarketing services.

Images by Joseph Feil

Catering to the needs of a diverse range of industry sectors with an unrivalled range of products, services, and expertise, Manheim Australia and New Zealand is a leading player in the automobile and industrial auction space. Backed by Manheim Worldwide, a subsidiary of US-based Cox Enterprises, the business has set the standard for buying and selling vehicles at auction.

Managing Director of Australia and New Zealand Campbell Jones has been a member of the Manheim team for more than two decades. He started with the company when it was a small, family-owned operation called Fowles Auction Group in Melbourne and fell in love with the buzz and excitement of the auctioneering world. His entry-level position was transport coordinator for the salvage division, and within a year he had the opportunity to move to Brisbane as the business expanded,

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buying out a small enterprise in the sunny capital. That site grew to become the largest auction provider in that market and opened up prospects for further expansion throughout the state.

“We managed to take that business from start-up to market leader within three to four years,” Campbell recalls. “Once that had grown, then the company asked me to take on another division, the car auction business. I did that for a couple of years, grew that, and then in 2000 was asked to be the general manager of Queensland.”

After eight years in the GM role, Campbell relocated back to Melbourne with his family and took on a national position, joining the executive leadership team and running the salvage business across Australia. He was promoted to chief operating officer and then, in December last year, appointed as managing director for Australia and New Zealand.

“In all that time, the business has been a local business, a state business, a national business, and now a global business,” he says. “The key thing that I have learned throughout that period is that it’s all about the people. It’s all about our staff and the interactions that we have with our customers, our sellers, and our buyers. It’s critically important that we have a relationship focus for the long term, not the short term, and I think that’s where some businesses can get caught—when they go for short-term wins but sacrifice the future and the foundation for building long-term success and growth.

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Manheim’s staff receive ample training and development >



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opportunities. Campbell says a focus is to try to promote from within, a reflection of his own journey. The business wants to be able to provide its employees with the opportunities to progress and develop themselves professionally and to ensure they have the capability to be able to step up into new roles. To do this, there are a number of programs in place.

One is a leadership academy run globally by Cox Enterprises. Manheim facilitates those courses for senior leadership staff on a bi-quarterly basis. Another is the emerging leaders program, which is predominantly aimed at employees in supervisory or team leader roles aspiring to move up within the organisation. Then, in addition to an online training portal and structured mentorship programs, there is the employee values program which is celebrated on a monthly basis.

“We have nominations for employee of the month, and there is a state winner and then a national winner,” Campbell explains. “Then at the end of the year, we have a ceremony to announce the overall winner of that program. It is something that our staff have embraced and something that we are proud of and excited about driving forward. It all comes back to investing in our people because that’s what it is all about: improving their capabilities and empowering them to look after our customers.”

The importance of people is a common theme and forms the basis of Manheim’s core values and ideals. “We have a very big focus on driving the right values and behaviours within the organisation,” Campbell notes. “That’s what creates the culture of the organisation, helps retain talent, and attracts new talent. It also makes it a lot more fun for us all to be a part of because, at the end of the day, we spend a lot of time together in the workplace,



and I want that environment to be a good one for our staff, and obviously for our customers and our suppliers.”

According to Campbell, diversity and inclusion are important in the workplace, as are innovation and sustainability initiatives. Manheim also runs a number of community programs to give back and make a difference. Examples are the Donate Your Car program, which gives funds to Kids Under Cover to support its pursuit in reducing youth homelessness numbers, and Manheim Assist, which allows employees to volunteer at a not-for-profit organisation for one day per year.

Supplier relations are also a priority, and Campbell uses a partnership approach. “We are in a unique environment where we have two very important sets of customers—the customers that we sell automotive assets on behalf of, and the customers that buy from us. We need to make sure that we are working at our very best with our suppliers so that those customers are enjoying their experience.

“We have very structured and foolproof processes in the supply section. Take, for example, suppliers such as Pacnet–Telstra. They provide business-critical data-carriage services for us across Australia and New Zealand. Over a third of our business is done via digital channels, and Pacnet–Telstra is key in ensuring we provide highly reliable business-critical

services effectively. Up time is crucial for our online environment, and Pacnet–Telstra not only supports our business network requirements, but the high level of customer service and engagement they provide gives us the confidence to grow our business into the digital world. Digital is absolutely a key way forward for us strategically.”

In the future, Manheim will continue to recognise opportunities within its core operations, as well as through its parent company, Cox Enterprises. It has already launched the online car-buying service called sellmycar.com.au and is always on the lookout for other big breaks.

The automotive component of Cox Enterprises is playing a vital role in the direction of the company too. “It is an enormous organisation with about 25,000 employees globally,” Campbell says. “It’s involved with something like eight million vehicle transactions per annum. What the Cox Automotive vision is really all about is transforming the way the world buys, sells, and owns cars. We are looking for opportunities in Australia and New Zealand to expand our offerings to the automotive marketplace under that vision.

“We are very excited about the support that we get from our owners based out of the US, and they are here to help not only with the organic growth but potentially acquisitive growth as well.”

“Cotel aims to become a partner of our clients rather than a vendor. It’s nice that Manheim have the same vision. We both strive to deliver the best standard in our field and Manheim promotes great communication building a solid partnership.” - David King, Director, Cotel

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