

# Balancing business and family life

■ It's hard enough starting a business at the best of times but one married couple decided to bring their life-long business dream into fruition when their twin babies arrived.

SilverStone Jewellery started three years ago and is the brainchild of Torbay's Lori Trigwell and husband Alex Achmad. Alex works part-time designing the unique and exquisite

Lori Trigwell



jewellery while Lori manages and runs the business on a day-to-day basis.

The business has tripled in turnover since its inception and is looking forward to continued growth. But it didn't come easy for the mother of three who has had no experience in starting or running a business.



Clever resource: The design and marketing of SilverStone jewellery is NZ-based while manufacturing is completed in Java.

## Support networks

Lori owes a lot of her business success to various networking support groups she has been involved with.

"I didn't know how to run a business. That's where all the networks came into play.

"When you're working from home it can be very isolating. You've got no one to bounce ideas off."

Enterprise North Shore has been instrumental in equipping Lori with skills to run her own business. She has participated in a number of free courses including, business planning, finance, advertising and goal setting seminars.

Lori found that many other new business owners were in a similar situation to her.

"There were 20 of us on one particular course from a range of different businesses and most of us didn't have any idea of what a 'break-even' point was."

Through these free seminars Lori was able to apply what she learnt to her business.

"Enterprise North Shore made me feel confident in what I do. There were a few holes in my business that needed to be plugged but they equipped me to fill those."

She was also a recipient of the business mentor programme facilitated by Enterprise North Shore which allowed Lori to gain a fresh and objective point-of-view from a successful business person.

## Family and Work

Lori comes from a background in sales at mid-management level but with the arrival of the twins a rethink was needed of where she and Alex wanted to go with their lives and what they wanted to achieve.

Family values are important and being available through

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the early-childhood years is of paramount importance to Lori. SilverStone Jewellery is an ideal fit with family life; the office work is completed while the twins are in kindy while marketing and selling of the jewellery is done in the evenings and weekends when Alex is available to care for the children. Most of the distribution of the jewellery is done through jewellery parties or fundraising events.

### Future plans

Currently three sales consultants run their own franchise promoting and selling SilverStone Jewellery and enjoy the business structure as they are all mothers themselves.

"It doesn't even feel like work to us. It's really quite fun because you get to work with lovely women and lovely jewellery," she explains.

Lori envisages the business will expand nationally with sales consultants across the country, while the SilverStone Jewellery website is being revamped to enable customers to view and buy their products on-line.

### Award winner

Lori's unwavering 'can-do' attitude extends to significant fundraising efforts for local charities including YWCA Future Leaders Programme, Make a Wish Foundation, Girl Guides and Recreate Auckland Trust. Recently, the company was officially

recognised for its commitment to local and international communities with a much-coveted Her Business award.

Lori is thrilled with the success of the business so far, but still has unconquered quests. "Our dream is to set up a jewellery manufacturing business in Java, Indonesia, where Alex was born. Ultimately, we want to help raise living standards of the

jewellers - and their families - employed through the business by providing housing, education and a reliable source of income."

**All pieces are hand made sterling silver featuring a wide range of gemstones and shell jewellery.**



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