

LEE QUINTAL, APPRENTICE INSTALLER + WAREHOUSE COORDINATOR - BLINDS IN STYLE

Lee joined Sydney company Blinds In Style in late 2016 immediately after finishing high school. Clinching the role involved a stroke of luck, when an out-of-the-blue opportunity emerged through a chance discussion, all because Lee's parents used Blinds in Style to install blinds at the family home.

At that time, he couldn't have known where that initial opening would take him. That first role gave Lee his first introduction to the industry as an assistant to Blinds In Style's Installation Manager, and since then he's upskilled and grown his expertise.

"I have been lucky enough to work with some of the best professionals in the industry," says Lee. "Working under the guidance of Greg McKenzie, Installation Manager for Blinds in Style, has allowed me to gather invaluable on the job experience, both technical and customer service focused. I started by assisting Greg with installation jobs and now also manage the coordination of stock; deliveries, and assist with installations for the overall business."

Lee's average working day might include assisting the showroom team in setting up external display stock such as external awnings and shutters to ensure they are displayed professionally. "I check all deliveries against all booked jobs to make sure all stock for each order is in working order and correct. I also check our spare parts and tools are kept replenished and coordinate orders as required with the admin team."

"It is also important to ensure stock in our warehouse is stored efficiently to help streamline daily installations. Our daily installations will vary in amount, depending on the amount and kind of products being installed. Sometimes it might be a repair to an individual blind and other occasions a whole house of newly installed shutters and motorised curtains or a large awning on a commercial premises."

"An important factor I have learnt is attention to detail for each installation. Blinds in Style has a very high service standard which has been established over many years and as part

of the installation team I am conscious that we not only leave the customer's premises with an expertly fitted installation but also ensure cleanliness and

tidiness at the end of each job." "I really enjoy the variety of installation projects I am involved in within the company



and as well the opportunity to visit many areas of Sydney, participating in both residential and commercial projects. I particularly enjoy being on the tools and learning each day on a first hand basis."

The more challenging aspects of his role include the coordination of orders and stock, of prime importance particularly during peak periods when there is greater demand. "As my role involves the management of stock for customer orders it is important to ensure the timeliness of orders from various suppliers, to be able to manage and exceed customer expectations and ensure their products are provided as promised."

He adds that the Coronavirus pandemic has also brought with it a steep learning curve in terms of working within a business environment during a crisis, as well as continuing to offer a reliable and reassuring service.

"The Covid 19 crisis has been difficult for many people.

I'm really thankful that our business has been fortunate to overcome some of the obstacles and work together to operate efficiently through these conditions. As a business we carefully monitor and follow the appropriate procedures and are always considerate of any specific concerns from customers."

Looking ahead, Lee says his key ambition is to continue to learn about the innovations within the window coverings industry and develop his on the job experience. "In particular, the growing popularity of motorisation in the past few years has also been exciting and rewarding to be involved with. In the future I look forward to growing my opportunities within the business."

"I really enjoy working for Blinds in Style. It has allowed me to mature into the professional I am today and I'm really grateful for the opportunity my employers have given me."



Chris Nolan - BMAA President

Some good news at last for Victorians as some Covid restrictions are lifted. During the lockdown, the BMAA's Executive Officer, Lynn Potesil lobbied hard to gain our industry the recognition it needed to operate. She wrote four times to the Victorian Premier and the Department of Health and Human Services, following up with phone calls. She was immediately successful in getting our installers recognised as "Specialist Contractors" able to operate in unoccupied premises; and keeping a close eye on how the restrictions were being managed, she had further success in negotiating approval to install in occupied premises (subject to conditions) when Victoria moved to the Third Step, and more recently to open showrooms. Our sincere thanks to Lynn for driving this initiative. The decision of Messe Stuttgart to postpone next year's R+T Show for twelve months presented a challenge for the BMAA Board. Traditionally, our triennial SuperExpo has been held the year after the R+T event, which allows time for the new products displayed to filter through to the Australian market. It was clear that the planned 2022 SuperExpo, if it was held as planned just three months after the postponed R+T show would present both logistical and financial challenges to many of our major exhibitors. After consultation with both the 2019 major exhibitors, and our partners the Specialty Textiles Association (STA), the Board decided to postpone the SuperExpo to June 2023, which keeps the traditional cycle intact. Of course, not all members

supported this decision, and as a compromise, we are working with the STA to piggy-back on their annual convention. We have committed to jointly participate their July 2021 Convention in Sydney, which will have important presentations on both WincovER and the National Construction Code, as well as a small trade exhibition. If this format works well, we will consider similar co-operation in 2022 or alternatively host our own scaled down SuperExpo type event. The soft launch of WincovER is proceeding smoothly, with the test pilot companies Hunter Douglas and Ozroll completing the necessary product testing and preparations for the launch this season. BMAA's Director Robert Mayer has compiled the supporting marketing information, including a WincovER website; and will be closely monitoring the extent of consumer support. By next July, we will have a clear picture of the project's appeal and commercial viability. The fire regulations for multi-storey apartments and commercial premises continue to be a cause of uncertainty for members, with different interpretations of exactly what is or isn't permissible aggravating the situation, particularly in Queensland. The BMAA's submission to the Australian Building Code's Board will be lodged this month, and includes both technical arguments for change to the National Construction Code, and an assessment of the economic impact to our industry of the 2018 code changes. Our Fire Engineers Ignis Consulting are confident that we have a good case, which is also supported by the Institute of Chartered Surveyors, which includes building certifiers as members. Again by next July, we should know whether or not our lobbying has been successful. In the interim, our members can avail themselves of the "Performance Solution" option that has been developed by Ignis Consulting.