

# Sales Strategies



by Jared Davis,  
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## *Coffee & Framing: A Great Combo*

**P**eople love great coffee and socializing in cool coffee shops. People also enjoy retail shopping. So here's the question: can these two concepts work together in a way that enhances both business and sales for custom framing retailers?

The barista coffee market is booming, penetrating into the social lifestyles of today's Neo category of consumers. The integration of coffee into stores started with bookshops and hip retailers. In the past few years, this trend has leapt into more common retail businesses. For many consumers, shopping for lifestyle products can be an entertaining experience. With barista coffee also providing

*So, would you like a mocha with that shadowbox?*

to be an enjoyable part of people's lifestyle, is there an opportunity for framing businesses to combine these experiences? Here is how this idea has worked for a number of frame shops.

### **Masters & Mods**

Masters & Mods Framing Co. is located in an upscale shopping centre in Toowong, Australia, surrounded by fashion boutiques, salons, and department stores. When the store had to re-locate within the shopping center two years ago, owners Josh and Emily Elliot reviewed their options, "With the chance for a clean slate, we had a desire to make our business to stand out and make an impression. But also to attract more traffic from within the shopping centre as well," they say.



*Masters & Mods Framing Co. of Toowong, Australia, has a coffee bar at the front of the store that attracts more traffic and cross-sells the frame shop's core concept.*



*Emily and Josh Elliot of Masters & Mods Framing Co. offer a unique high quality locally roasted coffee as well as healthy gourmet food to match the refined taste of their target clientele for custom framing.*



Emily says, “Being a fan of great barista-made coffee, I noticed how hard it was to find a good coffee within the shopping center, so I thought, ‘Why don’t we consider adding our own coffee bar?’ Our store manager, Libby Herman, had previous hospitality experience which was valuable in helping establish the concept and get it going in the right direction.”

The coffee bar has created a warm vibe and atmosphere to the customer experience. As the Elliots hoped, they’ve become a regular destination for shoppers and workers in the center. In fact, they’ve seen more familiar faces filter into the custom framing side.

“We also discovered that our coffee bar has provided our business with a comfortable way to overcome the intimidation of being too expensive because everyone can afford a nice coffee—even at a business with a high-end look,” adds Emily.

To match its business atmosphere, Masters & Mods specifically chose to offer a unique, high-quality, locally roasted coffee. They also introduced locally produced healthy gourmet food options, which they found matches the taste of their target clientele for custom framing.

Emily and Josh also found their coffee bar to be a valuable tool for their staff by providing complimentary tea and coffee to clients when they are busy and a customer is waiting.

## Redcliffe Framing

Greg and Loretta Dries from Redcliffe Framing, Australia, recently relocated their picture framing business to an industrial building with an appealing open space that they adapted for their retail gallery, display space, and workshop.



*Since introducing a coffee bar into their retail location, Loretta and Greg Dries of Redcliffe Framing, Australia, have found their business is an ideal venue for event functions.*

“Moving our business was a big decision, and we were concerned about the possible lack of passing traffic in our new location, not being on a main road,” say Greg and Loretta. “We also identified a lack of nice barista coffee in our local area. Even though we weren’t certain the investment figures would work, we still felt that introducing a coffee shop into our concept could provide another reason for customers to visit us while also complementing our casual appeal.”

They gave the coffee shop its own identity for marketing called “Coffee on Oleander.” Loretta says, “We wanted to do it properly, so we also invested in an experienced barista as a consultant for advice and to help train us.”

“Although it meant we had to adjust our hours,” Greg adds.

“So we now open at 7:30 a.m. to cater to the first wave of morning coffee regulars.”

“It’s almost been two years since we introduced it,” Loretta says. “Even though it’s been a burden at times when we’re busy framing, it has definitely helped generate the extra traffic we wanted. It has also created awareness



*Introducing coffee into the frame shop has provided another reason for customers and locals to visit Redcliffe Framing.*



Frame Design in Cairns, Australia, has integrated a full service café into its business, called Frame Espresso, which generates a loyal clientele of its own.

for our custom framing, which is still our core business.”

By adding coffee to their unique space, Greg and Loretta have also discovered that the venue is ideal for functions. Greg says, “We now do well hiring out our space for private events. This also generates more awareness for our framing business.”

The Dries have also been surprised at how much more artwork they are now able to sell, which they could not do in their previous location and wouldn't be doing

now if they were just selling custom framing. “We're delighted that the growth of our framing business has exceeded our goals, but it also requires more of our focus. So we're currently considering whether to commit more resources to expand the coffee shop into more catering or sub-lease this part of the business to a suitable tenant.”

## Frame Design

Frame Design is a well-established custom framing business in tropical North Queensland, Australia. The business also operates a full-service al fresco café that serves high quality food and an exclusive brand of barista coffee. When looking to renovate in 2011, owner Eddie Hayes says, “I felt that custom framing as a single business concept was a little too specialized, and I wanted to find a modern and appealing way to make people want to come into our shop.”

It started with personal love for good coffee. “I recognized a growing demand in our market,” says Hayes. “I was also attracted to the notion of building a community around the business by providing specialty coffee. The investment was significant, and it also came with inherent risks, but my business philosophy is that




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you have to do things properly to succeed. Our goal was to not just have good coffee but great coffee. The key is quality. When it comes to barista coffee, you can't half do it. The market is too discerning. It has to be great, just like our framing. So we knew we had to spend money not just on fixtures and equipment but also on professional advice."

Hayes operates both the café and the framing business separately, with a dedicated manager and a professionally trained catering team to run the café. The café was branded Frame Espresso. "We wanted our core business to be an extension of its name and identity," says Hayes.

The business also offers a wide variety of homewares and gift items, such as luxury candles, beauty products, and jewelry. "With the additional traffic coming into the store," Hayes says, "we could increase sales by adding impulse consumables that people can buy for themselves."



Owner Eddie Hayes found that sales could be increased by cross-selling impulse homewares and gifts, supported by extra traffic coming through the door for the café.

The diversification of the business is now a strength, but Hayes cautions, "You still have to be careful not to water down what your focus is. You need a visual demarcation between both businesses for customers. With gifts and homewares, you need to adjust your range seasonally as well. If we didn't have our café, there's no doubt we wouldn't have the framing business we have now. Frame Espresso has

definitely provided our framing business with traffic and beneficial cross promotion for our gallery, homewares, and gifts." **PFM**

**Jared Davis**, has 25 years of industry experience and is the business development manager for Megawood Larson-Juhl in Australia as well as a consultant for Gunnar International. In addition to writing for PFM, Jared also travels extensively as an educator and speaker, teaching at many industry shows and seminars around the world including The National Conference. Jared also serves on the PPFA Board of Directors and is the author of the book "Getting the Most Value From Your CMC."

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