

cemac

commercial interiors

A Brief History

WAY BACK IN WWII

The Company from which the “CEMAC” name originated was a specialist manufacturer, producing plywood for use in aircraft production. This was founded by Messrs Chandler and Maclaren and registered in NSW Australia, towards the end of WW2.

“CEMAC” was their second choice of name after the NSW Companies office turned down their first name application of “CAMAC” derived from the names of the founders.

POST WAR

In the post war period, Cemac’s operations in Australia grew into several businesses concerned with Forestry, Mining, Veneer Slicing, Partition and Office Fit-out, Plywood Manufacture, Industrialised Building Manufacture and Sheet Metal work.

In the early 1960’s, the first NZ Cemac company was formed by Don Treseder, who operated a family-based group of companies based in Lower Hutt involved in Construction, Traditional Joinery and High-Quality Fittings.

Cemac Modular Industries (incorporated 1962) manufactured a range of demountable Office Partitions, Access Floors, Suspended

Ceilings and Toilet Partitions under Royalty Licence to Cemac Pty Ltd.

THE 1970’S

On to the 1970’s and Cemac Pty Ltd took a minority shareholding in the NZ operations owned by Mr Treseder, including Cemac Modular Industries, which was now a marketing, sales, product design and contracting operation, with branches in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

A relationship with JW Backhouse in the high-quality office furniture market, and a joint venture in Hong Kong with Jardine Mathieson and in Singapore with Sime Darby, all added to the product range and rich history of Cemac.

In 1974, Winstone Ltd acquired the NZ operations, and after 5 years sold the Commercial Interiors Fitout business company (Cemac Modular Industries Ltd) to Graeme Cromie.

CEMAC COMMERCIAL INTERIORS as a trading name was born.

Under Graeme Cromie, Cemac Commercial Interiors set the benchmark in interior fitout in New Zealand.

MARKET LEADER

With Graeme's property and construction knowledge, along with the international relationships Cemac had developed, the company took a lead role in the development of products and systems that are still being used in the market today

Series 9 Slimline aluminium Partitioning suite. The first custom designed lightweight interior specific aluminium extrusions that revolutionised the steel stud design industry the principle of which is still being used today. The Series 9 suite was further developed for use in the BNZ Tower fitout project in Wellington

Westinghouse Open Office Workstations; Cemac championed the open plan workstation concept in New Zealand. The Westinghouse workstation was used extensively

throughout New Zealand companies. Cemac became the first company outside of America to be granted a manufacturing license for the Westinghouse product in New Zealand.

Tate Access Flooring: Cemac has been instrumental in the development of the raised computer floor market. Starting as the need for mainframe computers grew and then developing into the general office market, Cemac's relationship with Tate (an American global leader in raised flooring) in the early 80's and still holds the New Zealand agency for the Tate product today.

Framac Chairs: Internationally designed office seating ranges, manufactured, upholstered and assembled in the Petone factory.

Graeme Cromie's other great strength was the development of IT and systems within the business. Although a small business, Cemac's systems and reporting were up with major corporations, and remain so today.



THE 1980'S

In 1985, the NZ wide Commercial Interiors business was acquired by Alex Harvey Ltd (who soon after amalgamated and formed Carter Holt Harvey). CHH then acquired from Hooper Baillie the Australian Commercial Interiors business.

Supported by Head Office and Factory in Petone, branches in Wellington, Auckland & Christchurch were joined by Hamilton.

In New Zealand, the CHH owned Cemac Group acquired/merged with other existing businesses; Including Michael Statham Interiors, MacRitchie Bros Joinery and Construction, International Shopfitting's and Precision Industries, forming the largest Interiors specific group in New Zealand.

PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

1993 bought to an end of public company ownership of Cemac, with the Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch branches of Cemac Commercial Interiors subject to internal management buyouts, as part of the CHH sell off of non-core, (forestry and manufacturing) businesses.

These businesses continued under individual private ownership, resulting in one of the steadiest periods in the Cemac history.



The five individual Cemac operations (Hamilton split into two in 2005), celebrated 25 years of individual ownership in August 2018.

Shown above enjoying the sun are John Swallow; Christchurch, Derek Finnigan; Auckland, Peter Sewell; Wellington, Paul Jones; Hamilton, Pete Walker; Wellington.