



## HOW I GOT HERE: TINA COPLAND

Founder Jax Wax

### Tell us what inspired you to launch Jax Wax Australia?

"Jax Wax was started when my husband and I decided that we no longer wanted to be just employees after returning from living in the USA. When we got back to Australia, we had no current job, so the decision was relatively easy to make. With more than 20 years' experience working with wax the natural choice was a wax business. The business was named in 2 parts – Jax after our son Jack and wax as that is what the business is. Apart from wax for the beauty industry we also manufacture waxes for other industries

The brand Jax Wax Australia was chosen after our original trademark Adam & Eve was not allowed in Europe. This allowed us to focus on a name that more represented who we are, where we are located and what we stood for."

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### Have you always had an interest in the beauty industry? What inspired this?

"Yes, I think I was three when I started to "borrow" my mother's lipstick and never looked back. One of my first jobs was working for a contract manufacturer in the cosmetic and toiletry industry."

### How have you seen the industry change over the past decade?

"I have noticed a lot more interest in alternative, natural, organic and vegan products which has been brought about by greater social awareness from consumers. People are now considering how their purchase impacts the planet.

There are also more machines for an ever-expanding myriad of beauty treatments. Consumers are asking more questions and are better educated on products and procedures. They want and expect genuine visible results without all the marketing hype."

### What are some of the major trends you can predict this year?

"I wish I knew but I don't have a crystal ball! But what I have noticed when I was at Cosmoprof in Italy is there was a considerable number of "passive" exercise machines the customer sat inside that were supposed to remove weight. I also saw mirrors that evaluate the customers skin and could be used to program a regime of products. There were also a lot

of new machines for removing pigmentation and blemishes. Naturally there was plenty of skin care products and many brands incorporating high tech ingredients and there was also a notable increase of vegan and natural type products on previous years. Lashes appear to be the replacement for nails at expos in previous years."

### The waxing industry is extremely competitive – how has laser affected the waxing business?

"I would not be honest if I was to say that there had been no impact from laser. In Australia there are plenty of laser clinics, although I would like to see more regulation and education for this. Too many horror stories of untrained operators using substandard equipment leaving customers with injuries. This is not necessarily the same in other countries where the regulations are stricter and there are more controls on who can operate laser machinery. Not everyone can be treated by laser and I believe that there will always be a market for other hair removal methods."

### What are some of the best tips that you can offer businesses to boost revenue?

"Upsell! It's about applying the McDonalds training philosophy of "would you like fries with that". Sell after care products, implement an incentive program to get customers to rebook before they leave. Offer an extraordinary service and make the customer feel truly valued so that they will spread the word about your business. Get known in your area as "the" place to get a treatment. People come to a salon to escape the everyday and have a bit of "me" time, so make it special for them."

### Tell us your most memorable awards moment during your career?

"Applying for my first job that advertised for a male applicant (that shows how old I am) and getting the job. I went onto become General Manager and part owner of the company. Proving that women can and do achieve anything they put their minds to. These days I get involved in mentoring and am particularly happy to help young women think outside the traditional square if I can.

There are so many career achievements however the one which stands out is being a finalist in the Telstra Business Awards. Applying for this national award really made me think about what we had done and how we got to where we are. Another moment is when I meet people around the world who use our product, it is very humbling to find such enthusiasm for a product we create here in Australia."

### What is your favourite part of the job?

"There are many parts of my job that I enjoy. Solving challenges, mentoring staff, nurturing ability and meeting customers. I try to show that level of trust to my staff so they can also grow."

### Are there any challenges/downsides?

"Running a small business is continual hard work. When we first started Jax Wax, we did not have enough money to afford staff, equipment and advertising; there so many challenges just to even stay afloat. It wasn't until we had been operating for three years that it dawned on me that we were actually going to earn a living out of the business and that made all the hard work worthwhile. I guess most business owners would have the same issues that we have, juggling work and family commitments. Like so many working mothers I still feel guilty about the lack of time I spent with my son Jack. He jokingly says I have 2 children; him and Jax Wax, and he was not the favourite."

### How hard was it to manage the business when it grew?

"As the business grows there are other challenges we face. Managing a growing team but still remaining family friendly and being able

to care about all the people that we deal with – staff, customers and suppliers.

Industry regulations also continually change. As a business owner I need to make sure that we are up to date on our OHS and employment responsibilities as well as our and overall legal obligations. Exporting into so many countries just adds to the challenges."

### How is it working with your partner Geoff?

"We have worked together for about 30 years and so far, we still manage to stay married. I love working with my husband however we both have very different roles within our business. Sometimes it's a bit tricky as technically I am in charge – but don't push that too much. The downside would be that we are never away from work, so it is sometimes hard to let go and have a break. Even when we take holidays there are always work issues and ideas to discuss. Geoff always has my back and really understands the issues that we face in running a business and I think that working together has made us stronger – I would not change it for the world." ■