



# DAVID EMBURY

LOGAN LEIGH

MAJOR AWARD WINNERS AT THE MANNING  
GLOUCESTER GREAT LAKES BUSINESS AWARDS.  
BUSINESS OF THE YEAR - EXCELLENCE IN  
SUSTAINABILITY - EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION

**C**hrissy Jones chatted with founding owner David Embury of Logan Leigh about the awards, his business now and into the future. Congratulations, David, on the success of Logan Leigh at the Business Awards night. You must be very proud of the achievement.

Thank you very much, Chrissy. Yes it was an amazing night for Logan Leigh to be announced winner of two awards, but to receive Business of the Year was truly a great surprise and overwhelming experience given the quality of businesses in our area. My wife and I give all credit to the wonderful staff at Logan Leigh for these awards.

**What do you think has led to the success of your business, especially over the last few years?**

Logan Leigh has been established for over thirty years, supplying benchtops and doors to the kitchen industry. Our turning point came three years ago when we recognised a very good opportunity to add Bamboo benchtops to our range. Through the development of a good website, we now have the Bamboo benchtops being supplied to all areas of Australia.

**Can you tell us about your work in connection with receiving the awards of Excellence in Sustainability and Excellence in Innovation ...**

Sustainability is easy to talk about, as Bamboo is fast becoming the most eco-sustainable natural fibre the world has known. Its fast growing capabilities from planting to harvesting of five years, place it ahead of comparable products. It's claimed that an area of Bamboo

forest has twenty times more environmental benefits than a hardwood forest, because of this fast growing. There are also many other environmental benefits associated with the Bamboo industry. The technology to process the natural Bamboo into a laminated product has only been available in recent years, and the building industry are now demanding these "Green" products.

The innovation aspect has been the interesting and challenging part of the Logan Leigh journey. Two years ago we recognised further opportunities with the laminated Bamboo and started developing a Bamboo structural beam in conjunction with the Engineering Testing Facility at Newcastle University. It became a very costly exercise, but finally in June this year we were given final approval, and span tables are being compiled so we can eventually release these beams to the Australian building market.

**Can you tell me about the Bamboo staircase I have seen in your showroom?**

One idea seems to lead to another. While we were developing the Bamboo structural beam, the idea came that we could use the beam to be part of a mono stringer or single beam open staircase that are very popular in today's modern homes. The Bamboo stair treads were easy for us to produce, but we had to face another challenge in that there was no steel bracket available world-wide that would connect our beam to the stair treads. Much development and many prototypes were tried and with the help of a local drawing designer, we came up with a very strong and aesthetically pleasing bracket that has now been patented.

The prototype of our Bamboo staircase as well

as all the Logan Leigh Bamboo products were featured at the 2015 HIA home show in Sydney. We had an outstanding response from the public, with our five staff members exhausted after the four day show.

**What does winning these awards mean for your business?**

First and foremost it is recognition for the managers and staff at Logan Leigh for all the hard work they have put in over many years. As the owners, Gay and I very much appreciate them, particularly as we have a part-time role. The awards also recognise the amazing Bamboo material that I believe will be a much larger part of our lives over future years. The credibility for our business that comes out of receiving these awards and finally we greatly appreciate the publicity that follows.

**What does the future hold for Logan Leigh?**

A very good question, Chrissy. Our vision is to establish a viable long term industry here in Taree based around the Bamboo products we have developed. We have the current Logan Leigh factory in Taree running at full capacity and are applying to both the State and Federal Governments via their grant programmes to build a large factory in Taree to house the new ventures. We have proposed that we cannot afford to go this alone, but have offered to match any grant dollar for dollar. Many, many

*“The managers and staff continually contributed ideas for our bamboo product development, and I greatly appreciate their achievements along the way.”*

months pass in this process, and it is very frustrating given that Taree's employment figures especially amongst young people, are the worst in the state. I'd greatly appreciate any support or ideas from anybody, as we have to make decisions on our future very soon.

**What would you say are the main characteristics of your business and business life?**

Honesty and integrity are the number one requirement in everything about business and yourself. Our 34 years of trading under one owner is testimony to this.

Flexibility is important when needing to diversify as markets change. We've had to introduce new products such as the Bamboo and others over the years. If we were only producing what we first were doing, then we would not have survived the long term that we have.

Perseverance. You have to keep going if you believe in what you are doing. Embrace the opportunity of seeking advice from others wherever possible.

**Thank you, David, for all of this about Logan Leigh, and congratulations again for your awards.**

Thank you Chrissy, and thank you to the Manning Business Chamber and all of the sponsors and organisers who have worked so hard for the awards night.