

people

IT'S ALL WOOD

STORY **SARAH HOY**
PHOTOGRAPHY **JESSICA DEEKS**



DANIEL SPRAGUE

Sales Manager, Ottawa Valley Handrailing Company Ltd.

What makes your business stand out? Our company has grown over the past 30 years plus, primarily based on word of mouth. This means that we care about each customer equally and we ensure that we maintain our unequalled customer service from start to completion of all our projects. We are able to blend traditional wood staircases with metal or glass detailing. With over 30 years in the industry, we have the experience, knowledge and expertise to bring our customers' visions to reality.

What's your most unique piece? One of our most unique pieces is the blending of metal, wood and glass. It joins the cold feel of steel with the warmth of wood. By adding glass to these elements, it allows for a more open concept and modern look. We recognize the modern trend of square angles and open concept looks, but in a house, the warmth of wood turns a house into a home.

Why work with wood? Wood adds an element of warmth and natural aspect to all modern projects. The

Wooden floors, furniture, unique décor... we all have something in our homes made of the hard stuff. We talk to four talented business owners and managers in Ottawa about working with wood.

trend lately has been a steel and commercial look. But this typically uses more tile and steel. Wood brings that natural aspect to your project and reduces the cold feeling that is associated with commercial design. Metal is typically a machine manufactured product, whereas wood is manipulated by a true craftsman, sanded by hand and cut and sometimes carved by hand. Machines may be perfect, but often it's the slight imperfections by a craftsman that gives a project its unique character.

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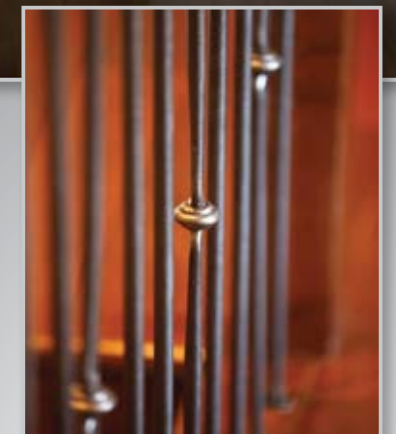
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KEN MCKAY
Owner, Furniture Affairs

What's unique about Furniture Affairs? Furniture Affairs is Ottawa's only one-stop furniture shop providing refinishing, upholstery, furniture repair and custom manufacturing of all types of home furnishings. We specialize in refurbishing furniture first and foremost to keep it out of the landfill.

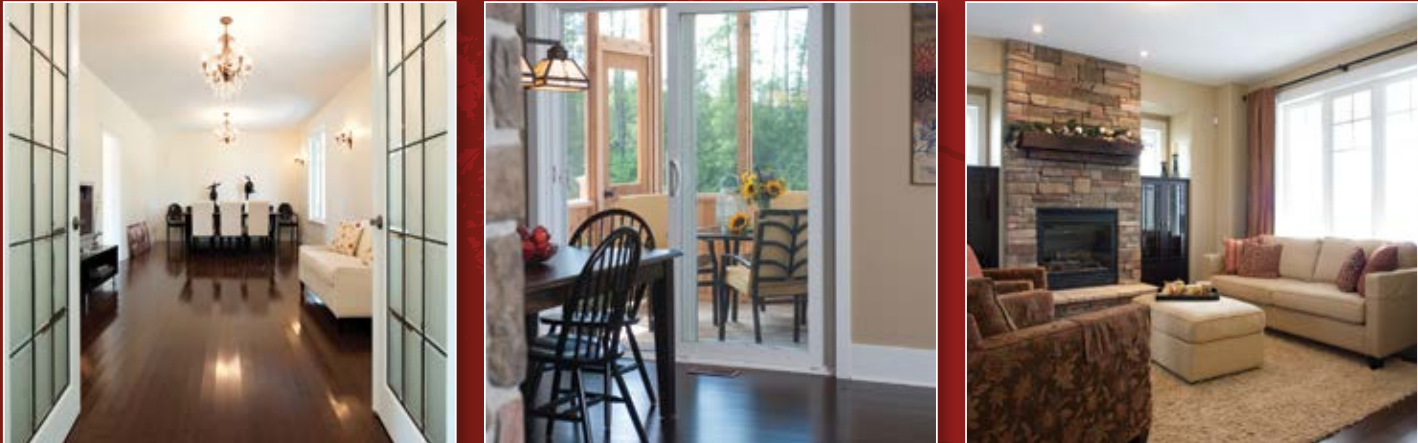
What's your favourite piece? My favourite piece is still our signature Ottawa River (log), "wooden" boardroom table in the Ottawa Convention Centre's executive board room. We made the most exotic table from logs pulled out of the river after 150 years. It's Canada newest heritage furniture! What can you do with donated wood? We will take any piece of quality furniture you don't want anymore to guarantee its long life and to keep it in circulation for decades to come by up-cycling it to current trends. We only use what shouldn't be wasted. *Continued on page 40*

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MARIO FALCONE
Owner, Barwood Flooring

What’s amazing about Barwood? We are the oldest hardwood company in Ottawa, and are exclusive to the top brands in the industry. Plus, I think we have the friendliest and most knowledgeable staff.

What’s your favourite wood for flooring? Maple right now is the in thing. Colour-wise, it is between dark brown and grey.

How easy is it to work with wood? Depends. If you get a product that is milled properly and stored in a controlled environment it can be very easy, just time consuming. Where we see people run into issues is when they get a product that is poorly milled, stored outside or in a un-acclimatized warehouse. They wonder why the boards are warped or have a very high waste ratio.



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NORMAN PIROLLO
Owner, Refind Edge Design

What makes your business different? I started Refined Edge Design to create unique, one-of-a-kind furniture following the style known as mid-century modern. I was drawn to this style of furniture, which features clean lines and is typically unadorned or embellished. The designs are timeless. Over time, I have added another component to Refined Edge Design by investing considerable time in the design of contemporary furniture pieces. I derive enjoyment in the process of sketching or using CAD to design furniture, then creating actual prototypes. The back and forth process of fleshing out designs is particularly exciting to me. My business is different in the sense that the work I generate is fairly unique, leading edge and either one-of-a-kind or low volume.

What’s your favourite piece? My favourite piece is a cabinet I created as commissioned work. I wanted this particular piece to feature a selection of highly figured veneer slices I had obtained. So I went to town on this piece, which was a cabinet on a stand. I applied the highly figured veneers to the vertical surfaces of the cabinet and oriented the veneers to have the grain match the sides and front of the cabinet. After applying a clear finish to the cabinet, the effect was wild and stunning; so much so that I named the cabinet “Chaotic Cabinet.”

Why work with wood? I liked that the possibilities of working with wood are fairly endless where every piece of wood has its unique characteristics. The journey of a few planks of wood converted into a furniture piece continues to amaze me even after 20 years of working with wood. **OH**

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