



## People who move the world: **Woodland Management**



**W**oodland Management has thrived by keeping two things in focus: culture and customers.

Started in 2000 by Bruce Abrahams as a single site storage operation for apples, Woodland can now store up to 54,000 tons of product for customers across a range of cool, cold, dry, and dangerous goods sites.

"We're quite unique in that we provide a large scale storage network that can be scaled up or scaled down," says Bruce's son Dion, who has been Managing Director of the company since 2007. "We just bring new capacity on when we need it. Nothing's too hard for us."

Despite growing substantially in recent years, Woodland hasn't lost sight of its roots. "We are quite close...some of us are like brothers and sisters," says Samantha Street, who works in accounts and administration. "We have each others' backs," she says.

Cold Store and Operations Manager Karl McNeil agrees. "It's a small family-oriented company," he says. "Dion and his father Bruce, they believe in looking after the workers, and making the workers grow and putting the training into them."

McNeil himself started as a forklift operator and worked his way up to becoming what he calls 'the go-to man' around the company. Now he's invested in helping others build their own skills and careers.

"What gets me up in the morning is running an awesome crew," he says. "They come to me with a problem, I'm not saying that I'll have all the solutions, but I may have a couple. There's no use holding all that experience in. If you got it there, let it out to the team...it makes them grow."

But not everything has stayed the same at Woodland as the business has expanded. When he took over from his father, Dion identified technology as an area that was holding the business back from its full potential. "We used to run our business using Excel spreadsheets," says Abrahams. "As a business grows, the systems that are employed in the business become more and more complex, so you need a good computer software system."

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**Dion Abrahams**  
Managing Director, Woodland Management



[www.woodlandmgt.co.nz](http://www.woodlandmgt.co.nz)

Woodland Management has been dedicated to excellence and top quality customer service for over 15 years. Woodland Management goes the extra mile to look after customers, with service guarantees that mean you’ll always know where your goods are and you’ll never miss the boat.

**Founded:** 2000

**Country:** New Zealand

Their first major computer system was functional, but training was expensive and cumbersome. “[The system] didn’t have good user guides so every time we wanted to learn how something within the system worked, we had to get the creator of the system, then at great expense, to teach us the stuff,” says Abrahams. “Unfortunately only 50 to 60 percent of that knowledge was retained so we found six months later we had to get him in again.”

After three years, it became clear that a change was needed. “I was a computer programmer for 14 years, so I knew what I was looking for,” he says. “I wanted a system that documented very well, had great user guides, was easy to use, intuitive, flexible, and provided all the functionalities that we needed. I haven’t been disappointed!”

In the warehouse, a company-wide commitment to data accuracy within the system has allowed Woodland to offer more to their customers.

“The big areas that [our customers] are really are proud to be associated with us is our inventory system. We believe it’s bulletproof,” says McNeil. “It’s only bulletproof, as long as the team, the Woodland team, are all clicking together and making it happen.”

Once data is entered on the floor, Street is able to create automated inventory reports for clients and handle accounts, all from a single system. The confidence that every staff member has in the system and the team is reflected back in customer satisfaction. “Once we set up the report for a client, they can see, every week or whenever they request, what they’ve got in stock,” says Street. “Which also means that they’ll interact with us more because they’ll see ‘oh, we’ve got such and such more pallets in store.’”

Across the company, CargoWise One has brought benefits to staff at every level. Street has customized the system to work best for her and loves the ease and flexibility it offers. “It’s just so simple and so easy to understand and good to use,” she says. “It just reduces time as well. Because if you’re doing it a manual way or [using] another system, it can take twice as long. With the accounts system, it’s pure and simple,” she says.

For Abrahams, the system allows him to keep his staff and his customers happy. “Our job is to make it easy for our customers. So nothing’s too hard for us,” he says. “CargoWise has introduced a lot of efficiency into the business. To generate debit invoicing or input credit invoicing, both of those functions can fit around other tasks that we’re doing within our business.”

Now Abrahams can focus on the next chapter of his family’s business. “CargoWise One can help us with any expansion of the business. It’s just going to be easy,” he says. “We have a model that we can take and put it over any new site that we take on board.”

For his part, McNeil can’t imagine working anywhere else. “When I first got here 10 years ago we had systems in place. But to be where we are today, it’s just phenomenal,” he says.

“I can only see this company going forward because we got some dynamite people behind the scenes doing the work. I know that we are on the right track and that’s what counts.”