



## Jodie McGregor Flowers

The florist industry is highly competitive. That's a given. So how do you stand out in a city such as, say, Sydney, with its myriad of florists that have virtually the same ability to send flowers from all over the city to pretty much anywhere?

A bright pink Mercedes-Benz Sprinter aside, it's about consistently giving each and every customer an amazing, unforgettable experience, according to Sydney-based florist Jodie McGregor Flowers, which first opened its doors in Annandale in 1999.

With this in mind, Stu White, Jodie's business partner, believes it's also seeing your competition as any service provider who provides something that makes people feel good. Pardon the pun, but quite a fresh approach, if you will.

"Just yesterday a customer called before close wanting an arrangement delivered

before 7.30am this morning," said White. "As our couriers don't deliver before eight (and that the shop doesn't open til then, either), I brought the flowers home and wrapped them first thing this morning before making a special trip from home in the Sprinter to deliver them by 7.30am. It's simply comes down to being all about the customer.

"The biggest feedback we get from our customers is that our flowers last so long. That's because if they're past their best, we'd rather give them away than sell them on. It's about building trust. Plus, the relationships we've forged with growers over the years mean we get access to unique, interesting flowers that you don't see in most florists."

White and McGregor now run two shops – the Annandale store, as well as one in Castlecrag – and employ a team of 10. While they send flowers around Australia, White

typically covers a 20km radius in what he calls the 'Big Pink Monster'.

After delivering in a 1955 Mercedes-Benz 180D for many years, then adding two older Toyotas, Jodie McGregor picked up the Sprinter in 2009 with a view of expanding the business further.

storage compartments come in really handy."

So has their choice of colour started to pay dividends?

"Put it this way. One family, a customer, plays 'Spot the Jodie van'. The Pink Monster scores 10 points and our two older Toyotas

**"Men who buy flowers to get out of trouble with the 'missus' is a bit of a misconception"**

So why opt for a Sprinter, then?

"Being associated with the Mercedes-Benz brand was a massive factor," added White. "Something that's definitely had an impact. Plus the dealer at West Orange Motors was a great guy.

"Reliability played an important part in the decision, too. Particularly given that we use the van for purchasing flowers as well. As for driving it on a day-to-day basis, it's comfortable, fuel economy's fantastic, it's incredibly spacious, which is critical, and the

are worth five and three points, respectively. Pretty funny. It definitely stands out when we deliver flowers – people get awfully excited when they see the van pull in their driveway."

And their biggest customers? Women, 25 to 50, who treat themselves to the odd bunch of flowers.

And the men?

"Men who buy flowers to get out of trouble with the 'missus' is a bit of a misconception," White said. "Most guys purchase for their wives and girlfriends simply to make them feel special."

