

CLOTHESLINE

Business overview

Clothesline, a family-owned business in Havelock North, New Zealand, has been styling women in designer clothing for nearly 40 years. Specialising in handpicked New Zealand clothing labels, Clothesline also keeps styles fresh with the latest European, particularly Danish, designs. Committed to offering exclusive selections, Clothesline prides itself on delivering a curated shopping experience alongside personalised service.

Clothesline was established in 1987 by Christine Lougher. Tennille Flood joined in 2017, partnering with her mother, Christine, and in 2024, Tennille fully took over the business, determined to carry on her mum's legacy. The Clothesline team understands how important it is for customers to feel excited about their purchases, and how they'll feel when wearing them, ensuring each item fits seamlessly into their lives.

Business evolution

In its early days, Clothesline ran on pen and paper, and Havelock North had only a few stores, keeping the shop busy. Over time, the team quickly realised that staying ahead was essential. The onset of COVID-19 offered an opportunity to expand online, helping the business continue to grow.

Fashion at Clothesline has evolved from the traditional two seasons to embracing the European model of four seasons, offering variety and exclusivity. Clothesline curates unique labels that follow common trends while still offering a point of difference, ensuring customers stand out, whether at work, play, or weekend events. With in-house alterations from seamstress Alison Challies, all items are guaranteed a perfect fit.

Today, Clothesline serves clients who appreciate fashion with a conscience, seeking quality, style, and versatility. Tennille continues to expand the business's online presence and collaborates with other businesses to boost revenue while fostering strong community connections.

Challenges and lessons learned

The business has faced challenges, including the impacts of both COVID-19 and Cyclone Gabrielle. Throughout these tough times, Tennille's positivity and the unwavering support of the local, and national communities played a vital role.

This year has been difficult with the economic downturn, but Tennille's resilience, combined with a strong network and loyal customer base, has helped Clothesline push through.

Despite the economic climate, designers remain open to feedback and collaboration, and although New Zealand is far from the world's fashion hubs, Clothesline's insights do reach these international designers.

One of the most important lessons Tennille has learned is that even the toughest hurdles can be overcome.

Future plans

Looking ahead, Tennille dreams of attending trade fairs in Denmark, soaking up the fashion vibes, and discovering new labels to bring to New Zealand. Clothesline plans to further expand its online presence, continue collaborating with other businesses, and maintain its focus on conscious, high-quality fashion.

The value of relationships

Tennille's support network includes her mum, her team, and a circle of positive, like-minded individuals.

Recognising her strengths has been a valuable insight, allowing her to delegate tasks effectively.

Zoe from Zoe Barnes Marketing manages her social media and email communications, Kath from OMG Solutions oversees her website and encouraged her to step out of her comfort zone to explore networking opportunities, while Alison from BM Accounting provides crucial support with the books. Her father, Colin Flood, is always there to offer additional assistance.

And, Christine who is now enjoying a well-earned retirement still consults and works at the store on occasion, while engaging in charity work and travel.

Clothesline is all about building lasting relationships with customers, designers, and suppliers. The store has served families for generations, from grandmothers to mothers and daughters, creating a strong community bond. Tennille maintains close ties with designers like Caroline Sills and Juliet from 17 Brands, ensuring Clothesline remains vibrant and full of life.

Visit Clothesline in Havelock North to experience personalised service and exclusive fashion. Step into the store and feel at home while discovering pieces that reflect your style and fit seamlessly into your life.

Article prepared by [OMG Solutions](#) as part of a client spotlight feature.