

## In the boss's chair

Sarah Pittendrigh is managing director of Simply Bows and Chair Covers, a North East-based company providing high-quality covers and accessories for the wedding and corporate markets.

### Tell us a bit about the company's history?

I started the company in October 2008. After working in the event industry firstly as brand manager for Land Rover and Jaguar Cars, then as director of sales in Corporate Events, I identified there was a gap in the market to deliver high quality chair covers and event linen with a creative edge to the wedding and corporate sector.

In November 2009, I franchised the company to meet national demand. Our franchisees are all event specialists, with years of experience delivering both weddings and corporate events.

We now have offices covering an area from Berwick to North Yorkshire, and across to the Lake District. We are currently dealing with enquiries from potential franchisees to facilitate the Midlands and south of England.

### What kind of services do you offer? What area do you cover?

We provide high quality table linen, chair covers and accessories for weddings, corporate events and private parties.

We currently have five offices in Northumberland, Newcastle upon Tyne, County Durham, Sunderland/Teeside and West Northumberland/Cumbria. We will be opening an office in North Yorkshire within the next month.

### Is there such a thing as a typical day 'at the office'?

No one day is the same. We work in fabulous venues such as Close House, Rockcliffe Hall, Doxford Hall, Wynyard Hall and the Baltic, to name but a few, delivering weddings.

Other days we can be working on large charity balls such as the Princes Trust, the Sunflower Ball for the Journal Sunshine Fund and the Buttercup Ball for the North East Special Needs Network. This variation is why we love our work so much.

One of the highlights of the job for me is working on a one-to-one basis with future brides and corporate event organisers, creating a theme for their special event.

We have a great contact in Beverley Hills, Hollywood, who deliver the Oscars every year and provide specialist linen to many of the A list celebrity weddings. They support us in R&D and work with us to create innovative ideas for chair treatments and table linen.



### Have there been any really unusual client requests... and have you been able to deliver?

We don't really get unusual requests, but last New Year's Eve at 7pm we were called out by a venue, which urgently needed extra table linen for New Year's Day. We had to step out in 3 ft of snow to get to them and they were over an hour and a half away, but we delivered on time, returning home just in time for midnight!

### What are your plans for future growth? How can the corporate sector capitalise on your services?

Our future growth will all be based around franchising the company, and by finding professional franchisees with the same passion to develop the brand as I have. Our franchisees have professional backgrounds in either corporate events or wedding event management, and a wealth of knowledge of how to create a magical wedding or a corporate event that stands out from the competition.

### What aspect of your job gives you the biggest buzz?

Client satisfaction, because then the clients will return and refer.

Find out more at [www.simplybowsandchaircovers.co.uk](http://www.simplybowsandchaircovers.co.uk)