



AkriL Case Study

ZAGAME: Ferrari & Maserati Showroom

Designer

Architects & Project Co-ordinators Pty Ltd

Builder

L.U. Simon Builders Pty Ltd

Overview

The Zagame Automotive Group is renowned for its passion for exciting motoring as well as its dedication to bringing the finest and most prestigious international automotive and motorcycle brands to Australia. Based in Melbourne, Zagame recently added to its established portfolio of dealerships with a brand new showroom located at 430 Swan St in inner-city Richmond.

The pinnacle of the Group, this automotive supersite represents the newest and largest Ferrari and Maserati dealership in the world. The 9,500m² spectacular state-of-the-art building boasts two storeys of vehicle showroom, one level of offices and boardrooms, a café area, service and petrol facilities, an on-site car wash and parking. AkriL, the innovative and versatile alternative to painted glass, features as wall cladding and splashbacks in all bathrooms and was also installed in the kitchen and café areas.

The Design

In keeping with Zagame's pursuit of excellence, architect David Earle of Architects & Projects Co-Ordinators, who specified AkriL, and project manager Matthew Rieniets of L.U. Simon Builders sought only premium building materials and interior fixtures, fittings and furnishings for the sophisticated multi-purpose facility. According to David Earle, although the colour scheme of the showroom was stipulated by Ferrari's corporate head office, the design of the building, including the bathrooms, was developed in consultation with the owner of the business, Bobby Zagame.

"Our client was very particular about the bathroom as the Zagame family has a 40-year history in the hospitality industry and understand the importance of the image the bathroom presents," David said. "So in that sense we 'over-toileted' for what was required in terms of regulations and the life of the showroom."

For both David and Matthew Rieniets, the Zagame project presented their first opportunity to work with AkriL, which was recommended to David by interior designer Libby Thornton.

"I had heard of AkriL but hadn't used it before this job as there had been no project previously that had demanded such a sophistication of finish that AkriL would give us," David said. "Our client is particularly educated in all things design and was as impressed as we were with what the product had to offer. AkriL is modern and contemporary, which suits the building down to the ground, and it is also good value for money and very easy to work with."

The Product

With a wide range of up-to-the-minute colours and finishes available, David and Matthew were able to offer their client a variety of options to suit both Ferrari's corporate style and Zagame's design brief. AkriL in Dulux Lexicon White gloss was selected for splashbacks in the bathrooms and kitchen and café areas, while two striking glossy hues were chosen for the bathroom feature walls – Bristol Conga Brown for the bathrooms on the ground and first floors and Red Ferrari Rosso for the mezzanine level amenities.

According to Matthew, the Akril sheeting was installed by carpenters who provided positive feedback about the product's workability during the construction phase. *"Our carpenters found Akril very easy to handle and commented on the fact that they could treat it just like MDF (medium-density fibreboard)," Matthew said.*

"Akril is easily drilled and can be cut to fit on-site, which makes it a very flexible material, more so than glass which does not allow any room for error and can break easily. There are also long lead times associated with glass installation and also the need for specialized glaziers.

"Tile also has associated issues such as join problems or bits leftover at the end. The splashback in the café area is a great example of that. Here we were able to fix Akril in one length, which ensured a perfect fit and created a very nice finish. Installing Akril is a very straightforward process."

Akril sheeting was applied with silicone directly to plasterboard walls which were battened out with Masonite strips. The fixed Akril panels were then caulked with a corresponding silicone colour. Installation was extremely quick with the process taking approximately 1-2 weeks.

"The entire project was initially estimated to take 16-17 months, however thanks to excellent client relations and communication, as well as products like Akril speeding up the job, we were able to finish in 12 months," Matthew said.

The Result

With the showroom opening only several months ago, feedback so far from visitors and customers has been very encouraging. According to David, not only were the building team delighted with Akril but their client was also very happy with the result the panels achieved.

"When the new showroom opened, the Zagame Automotive Group held a function here for 500 guests – 300 on the ground level and 200 on the first floor – and that 'test run' so to speak proved very successful, with all the furnishings and functions, including Akril, working perfectly," David said. "If another project arises where a product like Akril is needed I would have no hesitation in specifying it again."

Matthew agreed, saying he would recommend Akril to other clients if the project and particular application suited. *"Akril was very cost effective and much easier to work with than coloured glass. It has the added benefit of being able to be buffed to remove minor scratches or blemishes and the ordering and delivery of the material itself was painless and punctual. Overall, we are very pleased with the result as is Zagame Automotive."*

About Akril

Akril is a locally made, highly-engineered polymer enhanced with colour that offers a new source of design inspiration. This durable panel was originally developed as a cost effective alternative to painted glass but its qualities of versatility, flexibility and workability let it stand alone in all kinds of domestic, commercial and display situations.

Four years in the making, Akril has assisted in helping designers and builders all over Australia, and now the world, overcome many of the logistic and handling issues associated with glass.

Akril is readily available from distributors throughout Australia. For a list of stockists please visit Akril's website www.akril.com.au or call toll free 1800 464 728.

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