



## Modern furniture fitout for SIT's new creative arts centre

**Southern Institute of Technology's (SIT) new creative arts centre, Te Rau o Te Huia, is a beautiful blend of old and new architecture that's bringing Invercargill's historic St John's Church back to life.**

The centre comprises a new three-storey building connected to the 140-year-old St John's Anglican Church in Tay Street and replaces the old downtown campus. It's a modern creative arts and media centre complete with classrooms, computer labs, DJ booths, animation & movie-making facilities, and a café.

SIT's Facilities Manager, Craig McKenzie said OfficeMax was chosen to supply furniture for the café, computer labs, staff offices and breakout spaces, largely because it made the decision-making process easy.

### Results at a glance



Easy process with Specialist support



Flexible furniture solution



Reliable service

"The costings were similar to other companies, but the concept renders made it really easy to understand what we were going to get.

OfficeMax also gave us a good plan, including a timeline, so we knew what products would be available when. That helped us decide which ones to choose."

Craig McKenzie, SIT's Facilities Manager

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## The Challenge

The project featured some large, open spaces. Initially decision makers at SIT didn't have a clear vision for how the spaces should look, this was a great opportunity for OfficeMax to add value.

OfficeMax furniture specialist Sarah organised an initial meeting with Craig and other SIT stakeholders to go over the plans and get a feel for what was required. Craig commented that Sarah knew the plans "backwards and forwards" and took the lead to ensure she got the information she needed.



"Communication was a big point in OfficeMax's favour and I have to give a shout-out to Sarah because she was really good at keeping in touch to see how we felt about things. Sometimes it did take someone to keep us on track."

Craig McKenzie, SIT's Facilities Manager

## The Solution

OfficeMax's furniture team used the CAD tool to create a floor plan and 3D visuals, and Sarah "walked" the SIT team through the spaces to help them visualise the fit out, which included high backed sofas. OfficeMax also arranged for seating samples to be sent, so the SIT staff could test out the products before making their choices.

The timing was always going to be a challenge, with installation scheduled for December and 30-40 contractors on site when the furniture was delivered. Despite Covid's impact on the supply chain and approval taking a little longer than planned, OfficeMax managed to get all the furniture on site before Christmas.

## Going the extra mile

The furniture arrived at the campus destined for the facility's upper storeys. Sarah spent the day on site checking the codes against a master list to ensure each one was delivered to the right room, to save double handling. Along with one of the chair suppliers, she also joined the SIT staff in the physical work of hefting boxes up the stairs.

"That was pretty impressive, and something I didn't expect", Craig said.

Following installation of the computer desks, the SIT team realised they hadn't arranged the soft wiring and came to OfficeMax with an urgent request. Despite the fittings being special items, OfficeMax sourced and delivered them in time to meet the deadline for the grand opening.



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## The Results

SIT Invercargill is one of only 6 or 7 campuses open to public and a lot of people come through the café, the church and the building's main atrium, where they can see through glass walls into classrooms.

The computer suites are fitted to a high standard and people love being able to walk through and see what a modern campus looks like.

It's a unique facility for Invercargill and the campus staff, students, public and contractors alike have nothing but praise for the design and fit out.

"Every week I speak to people who say they're very impressed with the whole design and layout.

It's something we're going to try and replicate on other sites over the next few years and we'll certainly get OfficeMax to price those up for us"

Craig McKenzie, SIT's Facilities Manager



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