

# ORLANDO BUSINESS JOURNAL

## Bringing spaces to life is a core mission for JK2 President Julie Holmes

“Details, details, details” may seem like a catch phrase to some, but for a company that focuses on bringing themed spaces to life, it is most important.

That’s an area where [Julie Holmes](#) and her team at JK2 Scenic excel.

The firm is a custom fabricator of specialty themes in the retail, attractions, entertainment, hospitality and restaurant industries. Holmes earlier this year was named president of JK2 Scenic after it spun off from Apopka-based parent company, JK2 Construction.

JK2 Scenic is known for bringing life to some interesting Central Florida projects, including the highly anticipated Margaritaville Resort Orlando now being built and set to debut next year, as well as Orlando Science Center’s The Hive: A Makerspace.



*Julie Holmes, president of JK2 Scenic*

Here, *OBJ* talks with Holmes about the secret to her success, what’s most rewarding about her job, who she goes to for advice and more:

**What does JK2 Scenic do?** We design and build architectural millwork and custom props, and fabricate specialty themed items. When you walk into a room and see a lot of visually appealing casework, props and theme painted items that bring the space to life, that is the type of work we do. We bring the wow factor to any job through our finishing touches.

**What’s the secret to your business success?** Running a growing business takes a lot of time, dedication and perseverance. As a woman [in this industry], you have to have confidence, know all facets of your business and stand your ground. At JK2, we pride ourselves on always doing the right thing, being solution driven and staying one step ahead during the project life cycle.

**How did you get your first break in the industry?** I’ve been around construction my entire life, and in 2013, my father [Paul Holmes] convinced me to quit my job as a civil engineer, move back to my hometown of Apopka and join the family construction business. After running one construction job, I decided I’d rather work on the creative side of our business, which is JK2 Scenic. I’ve always enjoyed the construction process and being creative, so learning about different wood species, the fabrication processes and theming techniques has been an exciting and educational experience.

**What's been your greatest accomplishment?** Watching the growth and expansion of JK2 Scenic. Our leadership team has been focused on strategic planning initiatives to move the company forward. It is very rewarding to see your hard work and company visions become reality.

**What is the most rewarding part of your job?** Investing in people and watching young talent grow. With a tough labor market, you have to become creative in finding good hires. I love that we are willing to invest in people who fit our core values and have the willingness and eagerness to learn.

**When you need advice, who's your go-to person?** I am very lucky to have my father as the best sounding board. His business acumen, survival through the Great Recession and 31 years of business ownership is an unbelievable resource.

**What's the most challenging part of your job?** Growing a business is fun and exciting, but managing that growth can be quite painful. I have learned during this process the value of documenting your core standard operating procedures, and taking breaks to work on the business.

**What's the most interesting project you currently are working on?** If you like piña coladas, make sure you visit the Margaritaville Resort Orlando opening in early 2019. We are responsible for delivering the common area millwork within this one-of-a-kind resort.

**What's the riskiest thing you've done in your career?** Quitting my job, moving home and joining the family business in the construction industry was a risk and leap outside my comfort zone. When I made the decision, I wasn't 100 percent sure, but knew I would regret not exploring the opportunity. It has all been wildly worth it.

## JK2 Scenic

- **Description:** JK2 Scenic designs and builds architectural millwork, custom props and fabricates specialty themed items for the retail, attraction, entertainment, hospitality and restaurant industries.
- **Top executive:** [Julie Holmes](#), president
- **Founded:** 2008; legally separated into a standalone company in 2017
- **Headquarters:** 541 Live Pine Circle, Apopka 32703
- **Contact:** (407) 880-8400; [www.jk2scenic.com](http://www.jk2scenic.com)
- **2017 revenue:** \$4.29 million
- **Employees:** 32

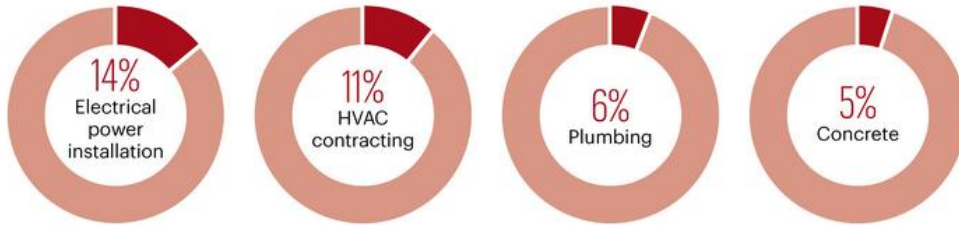
## Fast facts

### A closer look at specialty contracting

- Specialty contractors perform residential and commercial construction, and related work in a multitude of trades, including heating and air conditioning, plumbing, roofing, electrical, landscape architecture, tenant improvements and plumbing, to name a few.

- Geographically, more than 50.3 percent of specialty contracting work is concentrated in the United States, followed by Germany (27.8 percent), Brazil (11.4 percent) and other non-disclosed countries (10.5 percent), according to D&B Hoovers.

**TOP U.S. REVENUE-GENERATING SPECIALTIES:**



SOURCE: D&B HOOVERS