

J. BLACK'S, Feel Good Lounge is one of the newest additions to the increasing popularity of restaurants and bars popping up on West Sixth Street, a growing area of town, especially for young professionals.

And for the local business community, J. BLACK'S Lounge concept offers much more.

Even though it recently opened in August, J. BLACK'S feels like it's always been there. "That was by design," said Brian Franzman, part owner of J. BLACK'S.

Franzman's background was in the management of Eddie V's, both downtown and in Scottsdale, and he brings his background in upscale food service and atmosphere to J. BLACK'S. "We wanted to create an environment that was comfortable, classic and timeless, so in five years, we won't need a facelift."

The J. BLACK'S concept was developed in part by Judson Sutherland, business and real estate attorney, Brian Franzman, former manager of Eddie V's, and Sean Fric, Eddie V's lead bartender since its opening in downtown Austin.

"Our vision was to bring the fine dining experience to a comfortable lounge experience," said Sutherland. Franzman added that in the bar's opening, a patron remarked about how comfortable it felt in there. "That was great to hear because we really worked hard to achieve that in the design," he said.

"The other theme for J. BLACK'S is connectivity among the patrons," noted Sutherland. "We've developed a lounge area that is fully equipped with its own audio visual—so you can hook your laptop up and view a PowerPoint on the big screen, or use the internet in your demonstration, or broadcast it on our large projection screen, all in a quiet, comfortable environment."

J. BLACK'S is very well suited for the business clientele, in that it can host parties, networking events, and private luncheons. "We think this is perfect for businesses to bring clients and prospects into a cozy, quiet location to work, instead of a colder, less traditional setting."

The architect of J. BLACK'S Feel Good Lounge is Randall Owen, partner at Hatch Ulland and Owen. The facility itself was built by Drake Construction, a company specializing in bar and restaurant build outs and remodels, and the interior design was



J. BLACK'S, Feel Good Lounge goes a long way to promote social networking and connectivity.

By Jason Myers



Left. Pictured left to right: Jeff Schneider, David Bravo, Judson Sutherland, Meredith Hastings, Randall Owen, Sean Fric

completed by David Bravo and Meredith Hastings, of Bravo Interior Design.

Owen notes that they wanted people to be able to completely see through the space, even driving by the front. "We tried to create something where nothing blocks the view of the front entrance," he said. "The bar is an oval shape in the middle, and no matter where you are sitting, you can see everything else going on and talk very easily. This design facilitates interactivity for everyone in the room."

Hastings said that many of the materials chosen for the design were durable and absorbed sound, especially in the lounge area. "We specifically chose cork in the lounge and on the panels in the middle so if it's noisy in the rest of bar, you can still hear in the lounge."

Cade Nelms, Drake Construction owner, stated that J. BLACK'S was a project that they had a lot of fun developing. "It's very satisfying to deliver the vision of the owners in a short time frame, especially in the downtown area where parking and staging materials can sometimes be challenging. But I love the end result, because this concept goes beyond the normal bar and restaurant and provides its patrons with visual and wired connectivity."

J. BLACK'S, Feel Good Lounge is located at 710-B West Sixth Street, and is open daily from 4:00PM to 2:00AM. Happy hour runs daily until 8:00PM and all evening on Sunday. Check out their website at www.jblacks.com