

AWISA THE MAGAZINE

FOR THE CABINET, JOINERY, FURNITURE, TIMBER AND PANEL INDUSTRIES

PUBLISHED BY THE AUSTRALIAN WOODWORKING INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION LIMITED

AWISA 

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suppliers of machinery, materials, fittings,
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DEAR READER,

The headline on the article written by economist Geoff Bills in this edition reads: "Building prospects improve", and I guess that is part of the reason for the success of the AWISA 2014 exhibition in Brisbane. Maybe the headline on the whole magazine should read: "Woodworking industry prospects improve." To the surprise of some, and maybe even to the relief of some, the industry attended in droves, and in a mood to buy. But enough is written about this elsewhere in this edition.

The important news is what happens now to the AWISA exhibition. When the association was formed in 1986 the intention was to alternate the exhibition between Sydney and Melbourne. The facilities in both cities were fairly basic compared with today's exhibition centres. But Sydney beat Melbourne by eight years in the race to build a modern centre, and after experiencing the new centre at Darling Harbour in 1992, the association decided to keep the show in Sydney.

So for ten exhibitions, AWISA, its exhibitors and visitors, pumped tens of millions of dollars into the Sydney economy. Then came the decision by the NSW state government to redevelop the Darling Harbour precinct and AWISA's strong connection with this location was broken. We went to Brisbane and have had a great show, and in 2016 we go to Melbourne. It will be 26 years since the exhibition last took place in Melbourne. AWISA 2016 will take place at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre from 6-9 July 2016. The intention is then to be back in Sydney in 2018 with a return to Brisbane in 2020.

This is the final 2014 edition of this magazine. We brought the issues forward this year so that three came out before the show. The next edition will be out in March 2015. It's a bit early for festive season's greetings, but to help put you in the mood for summer read all about wooden boats in the centre pages of this edition.

Geoff Holland

General manager
Australian Woodworking Industry
Suppliers Association Limited

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FRONT COVER:

Panel storage and handling systems are now available from a number of suppliers. The cover shows Winstore from Biesse at AWISA 2014.

by John Halkett

2014

AWISA 2014 - a new venue and a successful show

YES - I KNOW the big question after AWISA 2014 is did the decision to take the show to Brisbane pay off? The move from Darling Harbour was, of course, a necessity because the past 'home' of AWISA, the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre is being demolished to make way for an even bigger complex. So this year the AWISA show needed to find a new venue.

Brisbane was a compelling choice with the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre ticking all the boxes as far as staging the show was concerned. Plus, the venue was complemented by local amenities, an excellent range of accommodation and plenty of other things to do. Brisbane's South Bank is a vibrant locality with entertainment and dining, and the cultural hub of the city.

So now the Brisbane show statistics are in - what conclusions can be drawn? Certainly from an exhibitor space perspective the display space was all booked and occupied. This was a bold act of faith on behalf of exhibitors that the move north to Brisbane would be worth their gamble not to mention cost.

In terms of visitor numbers - the expectation at the outset was that numbers would be lower than the last Sydney show. Why - because on a percentage attendance basis it has always been the case that visitors from the 'home' state dominate and NSW has a much larger industry 'population' than does Queensland. And that was again the case this year with about half of all visitors listing their state-of-origin as being Queensland. For many of these Queensland visitors AWISA 2014 was their first visit to an AWISA. Let's hope that they return to visit future AWISAs wherever they take place.

So while overall visitor numbers were down, total numbers attending AWISA 2014 did surpass expectations. Why was that? Well, apart from all the promotion in this magazine, speaking to people doing the rounds at the show, and confirmed by exhibitors, the dominant reason was that people were at the show to buy. This reality was also reinforced by an analysis of 'job function' and 'business type' attendance statistics indicating that company owners, managing directors and senior staff visited the show in greater numbers, percentage-wise than previous shows.

In reviewing the Brisbane effort an examination of economic data is also helpful. It confirms the strengthening nature of the housing market, especially in NSW, with Queensland and Western Australia still performing well and Victoria remaining steady. Predictions indicated that on an annualised basis dwelling starts across the country will approach 200 000 for the 2014-2015 financial year. The Housing Industry Association is predicting that housing

starts; "... will surge by more than 20 per cent in the 2014-15 financial year."

Further, although alterations and additions work experienced a softening in 2013, it is predicted this will turn around with alterations and additions anticipated to be in the \$8-9 billion range for the 2014-15 year.

So, overall it seems fair to conclude that after a somewhat 'flat' period in new housing and renovations markets where understandably companies were cautious about investing in new machinery and equipment, the positive trends now emerging provided the catalyst to buy that new machine or piece of equipment that had been on the back-burner for some time.

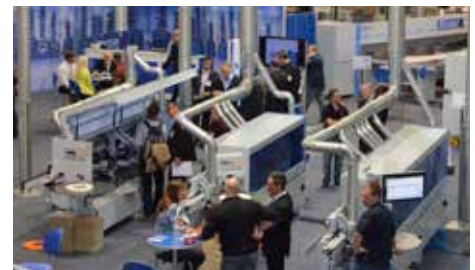
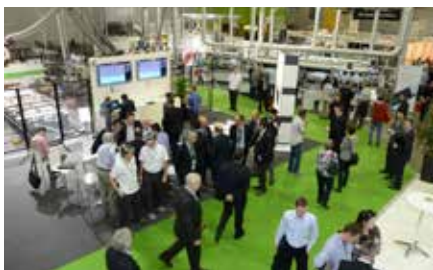
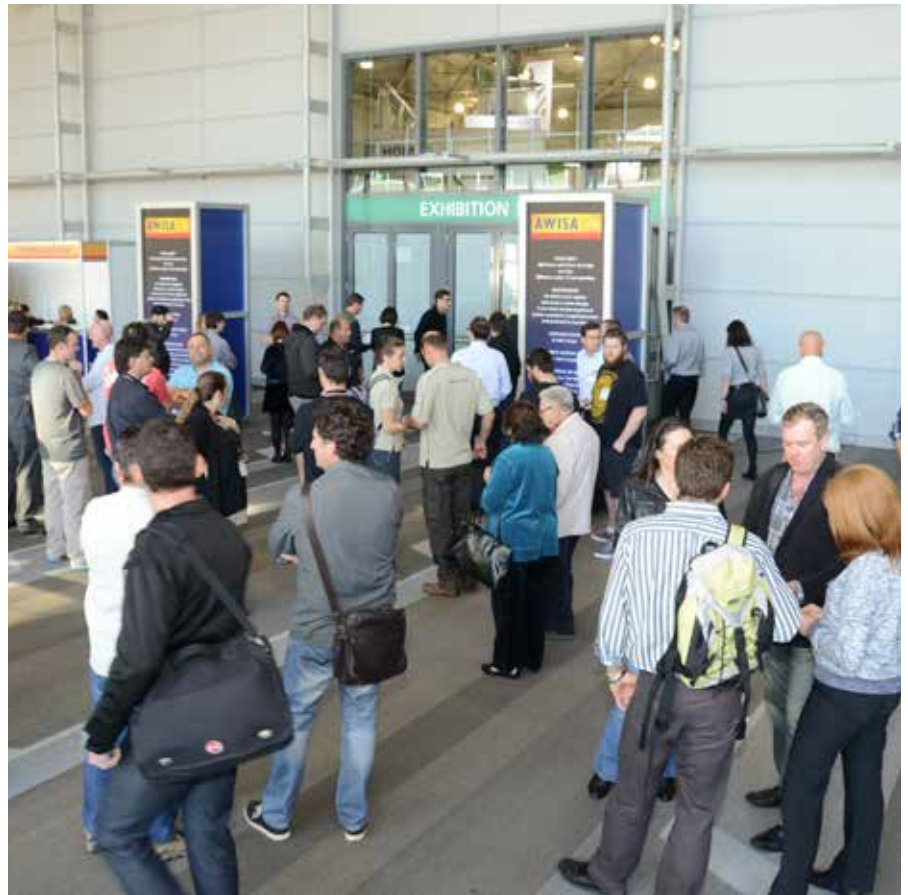
Also, substantial advances in machinery innovation and technology and the related benefits to increased productivity just could not be ignored in current competitive cabinet making and furniture industries. As an owner of a window and door manufacturing company



said; "...yes it's about time – I am here to buy – can't stop and talk."

While not necessarily an overall reflection of exhibitor sales, larger machinery exhibitors expressed delight at the pay-back for the considerable effort and costs they outlaid in planning and running their stands. Some not only sold every machine on display, but took orders for multiples of machines. "This has been our best show for as long as I can remember. It is a big and costly effort for us to be here, but it has well-and-truly paid off - thanks."

Well then so much for Brisbane - what about the next AWISA show? Despite the strong attendance and exhibitor satisfaction, well before the Brisbane show was held the decision had already been made to share the love around and take the show to Melbourne next time. So see you in Melbourne in 2016.



AWISA 2014: The John Tiddy Memorial Award



The John Tiddy Memorial Award winners, from left to right:

Adam Bredhauer of Mitcham, Victoria

Ezra Loechel of Elizabeth West, South Australia

Christopher Richardson of Toowoomba, Queensland

David Terpstra of Armadale, Western Australia

Craig Jones of Fraser, ACT

Mohamed Valibhai of Dunedin, New Zealand

Robert Appleby, friend and business associate of the late John Tiddy. Robert presented the awards to the winners.

Right: Tasmanian winner Leigh Hill was unable to attend the AWISA Celebrity breakfast. Leigh is at left with his employer, John Lewis of Trimview Pty Ltd.

Opposite: Mohamed Valibhai's 'apprentice piece', an internal door that helped win awards on both sides of the Tasman Sea.

SIX SLIGHTLY NERVOUS apprentices went on stage at the AWISA Celebrity breakfast at AWISA 2014 to receive their awards on Friday 8 August, but by the end of the function they were well and truly relaxed, once they, and the rest of the audience, had been entertained by guest speaker Sam Kekovich. Sam's presentation combined both amusing anecdotes, plus serious comments about industry, the latter being based on his long experience working for the meat and livestock industry.

AWISA established the John Tiddy Memorial Award in 2008 to commemorate the late John Tiddy's contribution to the Australasian furniture and woodworking industries. The awards are made to one apprentice in each state of Australia, and in NZ. The applicants must have completed at least two years of training and among the list of criteria is that they must be of good character and be highly regarded by their employer. The winners receive an all-expenses paid overnight visit to the AWISA exhibition, plus \$2000.00 towards their training course fees.

The New Zealand winner was Mohamed Valibhai of Dunedin. Mohamed works for Stevenson & Williams Ltd and also won a number of prizes at NZ Master Joiners Apprentice Awards 2014. Judging for both the NZ Master Joiners awards and the AWISA award took place at about the same time, neither organisation being aware that each was making a similar decision.

Mohamed wrote to AWISA to thank the association: "I had an awesome time checking out the range of different tools, machines and hardware. The show allowed me to bring back some innovative ideas to share with fellow colleagues at work. The show has given me a wealth of knowledge and ideas on how our joinery industry is working here and around the world." ■





A MAJOR Queensland developer has cancelled a \$12 million shipment of kitchen and bathroom components from Asia after warnings the products could be blacklisted by Australian building authorities and the CFMEU.

The Asian manufacturers were unable to guarantee the joinery fixtures – ordered for the fit out of five 30-storey towers and apartment buildings on the Gold Coast – would meet Australian standards for structural safety and formaldehyde emissions.

This is believed to be the first group enforcement of its kind in Australia. Certificates showing compliance with Australian building codes and standards were demanded by the project builders, joinery and shop fitters, the site manager, the construction company, the contract administrator and the powerful CFMEU. The Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, representing the building and construction, forestry and furnishing and mining and energy sectors, has more than 120,000 members and employs around 400 full time staff and officials.

Confronted with the list of building standard requirements and the possibility that the imported building products could be condemned before they left the container ship in Brisbane, the developer decided to choose kitchen and bathroom products manufactured locally.

“By using the imported products which were sure to fail Australian standards on all fronts, the developers probably only would have achieved a saving of around \$500,000,” one industry analyst observed. “And had they gone ahead, the cost of non-compliance would have cost millions.”

Demands on the developer got tougher every day; the CFMEU warned if the components were not ‘legal’ they would be banned from entry to the building site and if any kitchen or bathroom component installed showed emissions higher than Australian standards they would be ripped out.”

The general manager of the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia, Simon Dorries, was heartened by the group action on imports.

EWPA is in the middle of a consumer campaign that guarantees Australian and New Zealand engineered wood products are tested to conform to safe emission levels demanded by health authorities.

Group enforcement of standards prevents dodgy imports from Asia

The campaign, in association with the Furnishing Industry Association of Australia, includes the distribution of thousands of flyers to FIAA members carrying the message products manufactured by EWPA members are certified Super E0, E0 and E1 under a strict JAS-ANZ accredited system.

Mr Dorries said laboratory tests by EWPA had shown some imported wood panels had emissions greater than 3 mg/L, well above safe levels recommended by the federal government’s National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS).

“Random testing reveals unsafe materials are still entering the Australian market – a potentially serious problem,” Mr Dorries said.

He said plywood and veneer wardrobes and joinery items imported from China and installed on a multi-unit building project in northern NSW were condemned after the Department of Housing found emission levels had “soared through the roof” and the health and safety of occupants was put at risk. The project cost the developers an additional \$1.3 million to replace the furniture and employ plumbers and electricians for a complete re-build after the non-compliance order.

NICNAS, which is responsible for the assessment and safe use of industrial chemicals, has advised construction workers and wood panel users against the use of products that contain formaldehyde exceeding the low emission limits of E0 and E1. Products meeting E0 and E1 are considered safe in all applications including indoor and poorly ventilated applications.

The EWPA maintains NATA-accredited laboratories to test for formaldehyde emissions. All EWPA certified products are tested on a monthly basis. The schemes are accredited by the Joint Accreditation System of Australian and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ). The average formaldehyde emission for all structural and Type A exterior plywood products produced by EWPA certified mills is only 0.14mg/L or one-third the permitted level for E0 and approximate to the natural formaldehyde emission from timber. ■

It’s Australian-made, and we’re sticking to it: Dean Brakell, general manager, Furnishing Industry Association of Australia (right) discusses the FIAA-EWPA low-emissions sticker campaign with FIAA director Brad Willis of Clarence Valley Kitchens, South Grafton, NSW, during AWISA 2014 in Brisbane.

by Peter Kreitals
Furniture Cabinets Joinery Alliance Ltd
Policy advisor

Second FCJ industry leaders forum builds positive momentum

THE SECOND in the series of FCJ (furniture, cabinets, joinery) industry leaders forums was held in Brisbane on 6 August, in conjunction with the AWISA exhibition at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, and it continued to build on the positive momentum initiated at the first forum in Sydney in April.

The forums are being conducted jointly by the FCJ Alliance (FCJA) and the federal government's Department of Industry, with the intention to develop an agreed policy framework between government and the FCJ industry to help secure the industry's future and on-going development.

As with the first forum, industry interest was high and participation was cut off at 50 delegates for the event (given the original intention for these forums was to facilitate high level dialogue with around 20 leading industry executives in each state, it shows just how strong the industry interest is in having a say about its own future prospects). Participants again included senior executives from major companies in the cabinet and kitchens industry, windows industry, wood and panel suppliers and the shop and office fitting industry, including a strong contingent of Queensland based manufacturers.

Richard Brooks, deputy chair of the FCJA opened the forum together with the Industry Department's Andrew Trainer.

Richard highlighted that FCJA was formed as a strategic alliance of all key industry bodies dealing with these industries to help develop strategies and policy initiatives to foster a stronger and sustainable FCJ sector. The forums are an integral component in ensuring that there is strong engagement between the industry and government and Richard noted that the government's participation in the forums highlights its recognition of the true significance of the FCJ sector to the Australian economy.

Andrew reinforced this view, stressing that the government is happy to engage at the FCJ level as it is dealing with the one peak over-riding industry body for the sector that is presenting with a cohesive united



FURNITURE CABINETS JOINERY

voice. He reiterated that the government is not interested in engaging with individual sectional interests and only wants to talk to people that can talk on behalf of the whole sector on a national basis.

Andrew stated that the Department is very pleased to be working cooperatively with the FCJA on the forums and that they were delighted with the industry response and support to date. He indicated that the forums build on the government's earlier review of the industry and the FCJA's Strategic Plan for the industry, both of which came to the same conclusions. The forums now provide an opportunity to get industry consensus on those issues of prime importance and will enable the development of an appropriate policy agenda for the industry.

Dr Sasha Alexander from the University of Western Sydney opened the presentations session of the forum proceedings, exploring value chain collaborations and identifying the vital ingredients to make them work. Sasha stressed that effective collaborative partnerships must start with trust and then the partners must continue to build on that trust (especially with regard to IP). And of course the customer is an important component of the chain as that is where the money is introduced into the framework. And finally, there must be at least one dedicated "change champion" in the collaboration to ensure momentum is maintained (Sasha suggested that this could be a role facilitated by FCJA or the government).

A crowd favourite at the forum was undoubtedly Jim Snelson, CEO of Borg Manufacturing. Jim also stressed the importance of sharing and trust, highlighting that this was a major philosophy behind Borg's (Polytec's) dealings within the industry.

However, he also emphasised that Borg's success stems from the strong work ethic and innovative culture epitomised by Borg's founders and owners, John and Michael Borg. To get meaningful results means putting in the hours, putting in the effort, committing to heavy investment and inevitably ...to making a lot of mistakes in the process! The key lies in looking at long-term (20 year) horizons and investing accordingly in latest technologies, strong brands, rigorous management systems and proactive customer service.

Jim's final message to the forum was – "focus on where you still need to improve, not on where you have already succeeded".

Peter King, who leads CSIRO's Design Led Innovation Initiative, then challenged the forum participants to consider how they can create value through design in their manufacturing processes, and more importantly how they can capture that value. Peter drew on the recently released report he developed in conjunction with UTS on "Design for Manufacturing Competitiveness" which consistently found from various studies around the world and of successful Australian companies that investment in design was not only integral to a company's success but the return was a significant multiple of the actual investment.

Peter concluded that for companies to truly create significant value they must invest in and develop a mindset that embraces design led innovation. And this means that greater focus needs to be given to developing the necessary skills and capabilities to underpin the successful adoption of design led innovation across the organisation.

The Australian Window Association CEO, and FCJA board member, Tracey Gramlick then presented a compelling case for the need for strict policing and enforcement to ensure all products comply with Australian standards and regulations. The breadth of non-compliant product in the Australian market place is staggering, with a 2013 AIG survey reporting that 92% of all respondents (222 companies) could provide

examples of non-conforming product in their market sectors.

Agata Evans, the ACCC's small business education and engagement manager responded with an outline of the industry's rights and obligations under the current ACCC provisions. Agata stressed that there is significant recourse for corrective action through legislated requirement that companies cannot "mislead" or "deceive" consumers and under the "Consumer Guarantees" that automatically apply to the sale of all goods and services to be used for personal, domestic or household purposes or business purchases under \$40,000. Amongst other things this guarantees that goods are of acceptable quality and are fit for any disclosed purpose. Agata added that should businesses want their staff to be up to date with Commonwealth competition and consumer protection laws, they can do this via the free ACCC online education course: www.ccaeducationprograms.org.

Finally Melissa Anderson, the Queensland state director of the entrepreneur infrastructure program, outlined the federal government's new integrated delivery model for its proposed industry support programs (as announced in the 2014/15 Budget). Melissa stressed that the programs are specifically designed to help enhance the global competitiveness of Australian SME companies and that she and her team were ready to help any interested company in accessing the schemes most appropriate to them.

The forum then focussed on intensive round-table discussion about the future prospects for the FCJ industry and the priorities that should be pursued. There was valuable contribution from all participants with insightful comment being provided by a diverse range of industry executives, including Lewis Saragossi (G James Glass and Aluminium), Ray Coulin (Laminex Group), Martin Gane (Hettich), Brad Willis (Clarence Valley Kitchens), Brett Ambrose (Blum), Peter Inglis (Carlton Industries), Allan Cox (North Coast Joinery), to name a few.



As with the Sydney forum, all participants overwhelmingly endorsed the value of the forums and commended the FCJA and the government for the initiative.

The next FCJ industry leaders forum will be held in Melbourne on 22 October 2014. Anybody interested in attending should contact Peter Kreitals, FCJA's policy adviser at peterk@kreitals.com.au. ■

Top: Gerard Ryan, CEO, Australian Shop and Office Fitting Industry Association; Sasha Alexander, University of Western Sydney; Jim Snelson, CEO, Borg Manufacturing.

Above: Brett Ambrose, chairman, AWISA Ltd; Tracey Gramlick, executive director, Australian Window Association; Richard Brooks, CEO, Cabinet Makers and Designers Association; Peter Kreitals, policy advisor, Furniture Cabinets Joinery Alliance.

Australian companies take it to China



The story of how two Australian manufacturers took on Chinese competitors.

Compak Furniture is an Australian manufacturer specialising in developing, designing, producing, and marketing modern furniture. From their head office in Sydney, they supply to a global market from their production facilities in Shanghai and Fujian in China. Unlike many manufacturers that move part of their facilities off-shore, Compak Furniture maintains strong links to Australia and Australian manufacturers.

Managing Director of Compak Furniture, Mr John Stibbard, explains some of the history of his company. "Compak

When asked what made the decision easy for him, Mr Stibbard replied. "First and foremost, Multicam machines are purchased directly from the manufacturer, not through a dealer network. This means that support comes straight from the source by people that have a vested interest in providing top level equipment and backup. Also, the Multicam Routers have a proven track record for reliability, are of superior construction and provided ease of use and safety features that aren't available on other machines. A good example of this is the fully enclosed tool changer where operators are protected from moving parts and sharp tooling."



Managing director of Compak Furniture, John Stibbard with Multicam technician, Matt Krainz.

Furniture had its beginnings in NSW where we manufactured custom furniture for domestic and commercial clients. Business was good, but our goal was to get in to large scale production for retail outlets. From the beginning we knew that, in order to achieve this, we had to offer world class service and products and this meant tooling ourselves up with equipment that would be up to the challenge."

"We knew that computerised machinery was the only way that we were going to be able to achieve our goals, so we looked to CNC routing machinery for all of our flat panel work." says Mr Stibbard. "To us, reliability and support of the machinery we bought were going to be paramount in our decision making process, so we did extensive research on CNC routing machines. In the end the decision was pretty easy and we chose a Multicam CNC router."

Compak Furniture moved its production facilities to China, but kept the head office in Sydney. The move was made for economic as well as logistical reasons and seen as crucial in order for the company to better service a growing international market. Unusual for this kind of relocation, they took their most important machines with them.

"The Multicam Routers had proven to be invaluable to our business and were too important an asset to leave behind. The reliability of the machines and the technical support we received from Multicam added to our confidence." The decision has proven to be very wise, so much so that a

further two Multicam Routers were purchased and shipped to the factories in China. "We looked at other CNC Routers in China but didn't believe they were anywhere near the same caliber as the Multicam Router, a view that we still hold." added Mr Stibbard.

"As an Australian based company we are proud to support other Australian companies in taking on the world. The Multicam Routers have been key to our success and the technical support guys at Multicam have been able to assist us directly on the factory floor when we have needed them. The fact that the machines are in China has not proven to be an issue as far as back-up is concerned." concludes Mr Stibbard.

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by Geoff Bills

outlook

Building prospects improve

Building activity stronger

Having grown very little in 2011/12 and 2012/13, Australian building activity increased quite strongly during 2013/14. Measured in constant 2011/12 prices, the value of work done on new housing and non-residential building increased by nearly 8 per cent over the year to the June quarter 2014, to a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of \$81.8 billion.

Over this period, the value of work done on new houses increased by 9 per cent to a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of \$27.8 billion. Work on multi-unit construction rose by a much faster 16 per cent to an annual rate of \$18.9 billion. Non-residential building activity, the biggest component, increased by 3 per cent to an annual rate of \$35.2 billion.

Among the larger states, the biggest increases in house-building activity were in Western Australia (21%) and Victoria (9%). The other states experienced more modest gains of around 5–6 per cent.

There were some very big increases in multi-unit construction over the year to June: 70 per cent in Western Australia, 30 per cent in Queensland, 27 per cent in New South Wales and 12 per cent in South Australia.

In non-residential building, there was significant growth of 12 per cent in New South Wales and of 10 per cent in Victoria, but virtually no growth in Queensland and South Australia and a fall of 7 per cent in Western Australia.

Trends in housing

One of the features of the Australian housing market in recent times has been the strong growth in multi-unit construction. As we noted above, over the year to June, whereas work

on flats, units, terraces and apartments increased by 16 per cent, work on detached houses rose by only 6 per cent.

Over the last five years, multi-units' share of all work done on new housing in Australia has increased from 30 per cent to 40 per cent. In New South Wales their share has increased from 41 to 52 per cent, in Victoria from 24 to 43 per cent, and in Queensland from 31 to 36 per cent.

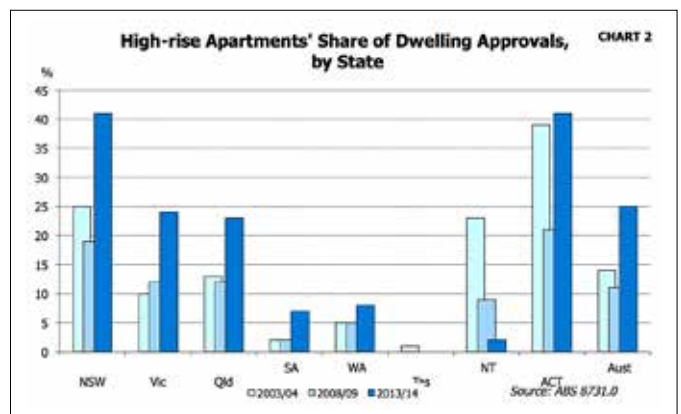
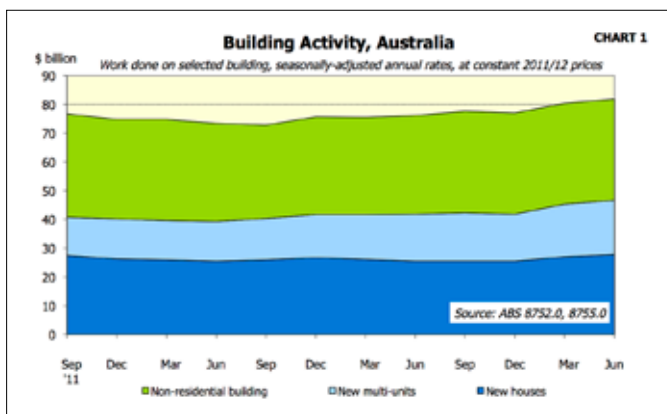
Recent approvals suggest that this trend will continue in the current financial year. In 2013/14, multi-units' share of all dwellings approved in Australia rose to 44 per cent. In New South Wales it increased to 57 per cent, in Victoria to 44 per cent, and in Queensland to 46 per cent.

Another notable trend is that an increasing proportion of these multi-units has been of flats or apartments in buildings of four or more storeys: of high-rise rather than low-rise buildings.

As a result, as Chart 2 shows, high-rise apartments' share of the new housing market has risen sharply in all of the large states.

Most of these high-rise apartments are being built in the inner areas of our large cities. There are several reasons for this:

- The price of vacant house blocks has risen rapidly, driving up the cost of suburban detached houses. Over the past decade, the median price of a vacant block of land in Melbourne has increased by 56 per cent: nearly twice the 30 per cent rise in the general level of consumer prices. That encourages building up rather than out.
- At the same time, rapid population growth, lower car





Geoff Bills

Geoff Bills is an independent economist with long experience analysing and forecasting economic activity in Australia.

prices, and the failure of governments to build adequate public transport, have all contributed to the traffic congestion and increased travel times that make outer suburban living more costly and frustrating.

- That is especially so for many young business and professional people, who are attracted to inner-city living for both work and lifestyle reasons.
- Overseas influences have been important too. There are now some 340,000 students on overseas visas living in Australia, 60 per cent of whom are enrolled in higher education. These students, 22 per cent from China, 12 per cent from India and 33 per cent from other Asian countries, provide a significant market for inner-city high-rise living. Foreign investors, many of them Chinese, are playing an increasing role in financing and building these apartments, which they see as sound investments in attractive cities.

Although the current boom in high-rise construction may be near a cyclical peak, the long-term trend remains clearly upward, and stronger than ever.

The outlook for new housing in the year ahead remains positive. Despite rather weak consumer confidence and some recent decline in affordability, we expect new dwelling starts to increase by 4 per cent to 189,000 in 2014/15 and by a further 4 per cent to 197,000 in the following year.

As the Reserve Bank noted in its August Statement on Monetary Policy: 'Dwelling construction is expected to continue to expand in the forecast period in response to low interest rates, strong population growth and only limited construction over the past decade.' (p. 71.)

Non-residential building

Preliminary estimates suggest that non-residential building activity increased by 4.8 per cent to \$35.2 billion in 2013/14.

Forward indicators strengthened a bit in the March quarter but remained mildly negative: work commenced in the year to March was 3 per cent less than work done. At the end of March there was nevertheless a substantial pipeline of work yet to be done: equal to 8.6 months of work compared with 8.5 months in the previous quarter.

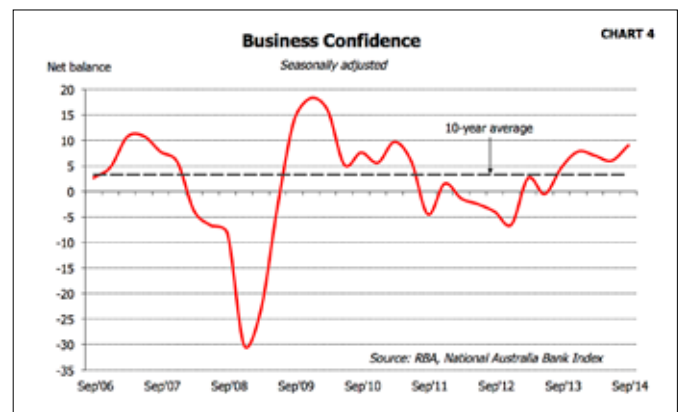
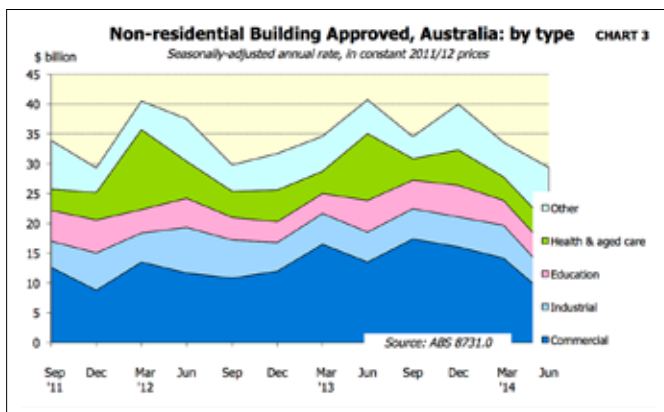
However, as Chart 3 shows, national approvals fell sharply in the June quarter: by 13 per cent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$29.3 billion, 28 per cent lower than a year earlier. Commercial approvals fell by 46 per cent, industrial by 32 per cent and education by 2 per cent. Approvals of health and aged care buildings, however, increased by 9 per cent; and other buildings by 65 per cent.

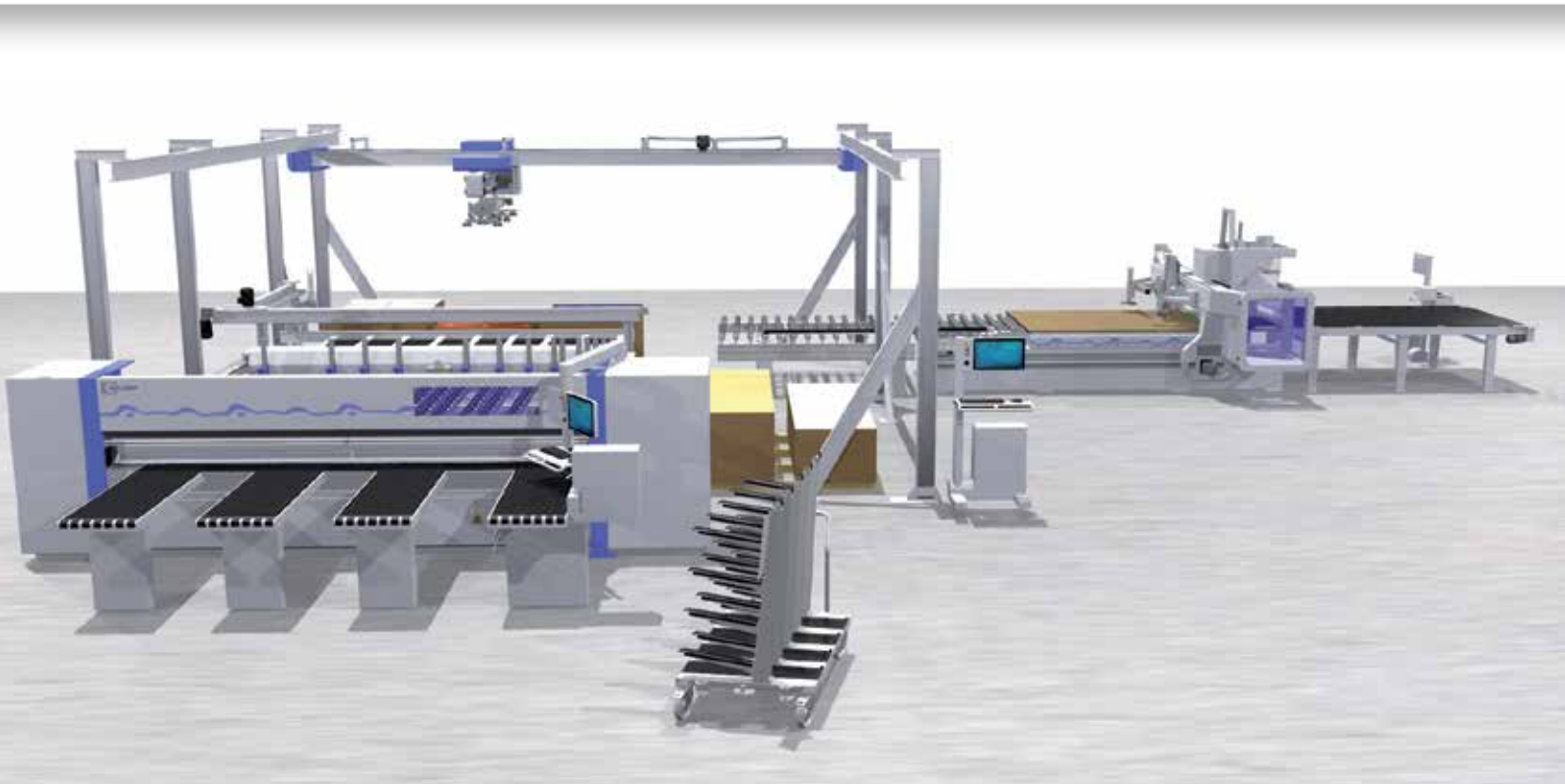
The big lift in other buildings occurred in New South Wales, where entertainment and recreation projects worth more than \$1 billion were approved in June.

Total work approved in 2013/14, at \$34.4 billion, was about the same as work approved in 2012/13.

The NAB Monthly Business Survey for August reported that business conditions (sales, employment and profits) remained positive in July and August. More importantly, it showed that business confidence rose to new highs, 'with construction firms the most optimistic by a large margin'.

We think that approvals will pick up in the year ahead and are forecasting rises in building activity of 2.5 per cent this year and 2.8 per cent in 2015/16. ■





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Platinum Joinery – guiding a business through change

Business is going great for Platinum Designer Joinery. Frank Ammirato is a hands-on type of owner, who still loves getting into the factory and going onsite. Based in Croydon Park, South Australia, the business has been operating for 8 years. Alongside his team of 4 workers, Frank focuses on complete house fitouts that includes joinery for the kitchen, wardrobe and laundry. Some of the latest work included completing an installation at the Ronald McDonald House in Adelaide.

Their manufacturing was running smoothly, however things were not perfect. Frank wanted to improve the efficiency of his manufacturing. Frank explained “The information coming out of the office was accurate, but sometimes the boys couldn’t understand my drawings and notes. This meant problems were arising down in the factory. We were looking for software that would eliminate this”. The information coming out of the office was rushed, which just created more bottlenecks in the factory.

Having met Tony Vella, South Australia territory manager for Planit, through an industry contact, Tony began to understand the bottlenecks that Frank was facing. Frank also shared with Tony some of his plans for the business, including that he wanted to purchase a CNC. “Tony suggested to start with the drawings and cutting lists, and then add the CNC when we were ready, advising us not to rush things”. Tony understood that for Frank, it was important to do things in stages; not just with software, but his whole business.

So Frank started with Solid Essential and began to build his skills in drawing his designs and producing cutting lists. Throughout the whole process, Planit was there to help guide and assist them through the whole process, to ensure everything went smoothly. The bottlenecks that Frank experienced with the flow of information to the factory were removed thanks to easy to understand drawings and the reports Cabinet Vision was able to produce.

In 2013, Frank had his new SCM nesting machine installed into his factory. One of the key factors in making a smooth move to a CNC for Frank was that he already had the drawing skills in Cabinet Vision, and therefore it was simply a matter of integrating the software with his machine. Solid Standard gave him the functionality and control of the machining requirements that Frank needed. With the integration complete, he was able to increase his factory’s productivity by 15% and keep up with the amount of work they had. Frank began to benefit from the ease of drawing the job and being able to send it to the machine in the one program.

At the beginning of 2014, Tony caught up with Frank to assess how they were doing with their software. During their discussions, the pair spoke about some of the limitations that Frank was finding, and discussed the options available. Frank

joked “Tony’s always asking us why? He’s always asking ‘why do we need it?’ But it’s a good thing, it means we’re sure about the next step”. The next step for Frank was to upgrade to Solid Advanced, allowing him greater control over shaping cabinets and adding greater detail for high-end jobs.

Looking back at the journey he has taken, Frank makes the comment that doing the software in stages “is probably the best way of doing it because I wouldn’t have appreciated what I have now, because I understand what we have, and value what the software is doing”.



For Frank, he feels comfortable knowing that as his business continues to grow, he has Planit there with him. Frank feels confident knowing Tony and the rest of the Planit team are there to support him. Adding a final comment, Frank says “Tony is fantastic, he is always there for us, and I felt comfortable through the whole process. He never pushed us to get something we didn’t need”.

Above: Planit’s Tony Vella with Platinum Joinery’s Frank Ammirato.

Frank Ammirato and the team with his new SCM nesting machine.

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Machine innovation and new-age software

AWISA

Four days of set-up, 70 tonnes of machinery, over 1000 square metres of floor space - just a few statistics to describe Biesse's huge effort at AWISA 2014.

Playing a dominant role at the Brisbane show, Biesse Oceania was supported by a well-credentialed contingent of experts from the company's Italian head office.

Chief executive officer Luke Tenaglia said he really appreciated the confidence reflected in Biesse's Oceania operations by the attendance of such a strong group of Italian technical experts and senior executives at the Brisbane show. "I most certainly acknowledge the major contribution they made to the success of Biesse's efforts, customer liaison and sales at what was for us an extremely busy and worthwhile show."

"I am delighted at the results and look forward closing this financial year from a position of strength and growth," Mr Tenaglia said.

Italy-based general manager-executive director Stefano Porcellini who attended AWISA said customer relationships are everything to Biesse. "We have really focussed our energies on delivery and improving our technical support, spare parts immediate response and customer support to provide the reliability and support our customers want and deserve."

Standout aspects of Biesse's offering at the AWISA show in Brisbane were the inventory of industry-leading CNC machines and advanced, interactive software. Visitors and customers to the Biesse stand were able view the largest selection of Biesse machines ever displayed in Australia in the one location.

Machines were powered-up and ready for demonstrations including the fully automatic labelling flat bed nesting machines; 5-axis CNC machining centres; wide belt sanders; a range of edgebanders, including the latest no glue line Air Force system; vertical drilling and routing machines; Winstore integrated board storage and handling system, and CNC stone and glass technology.

The rear loading beam saw with head cutting and twin pusher that has an exclusive patent for all Biesse panel saws was a real show stopper.

The Intermac CNC stone and the latest water-jet technology for glass struck a chord with kitchen manufacturers and joinery companies who saw just how easy it was to expand their business and produce kitchen benchtops and glass splashbacks.

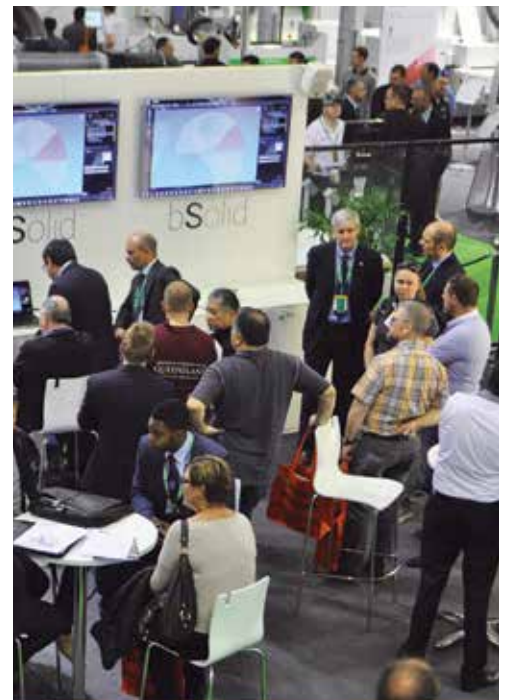
Commenting on Biesse's presence at AWISA, Italy-based corporate marketing and communications director, Raphael Prati stressed the priority Biesse placed on technical innovation.

"It is really what is behind each machine, both before and after the sale to a customer that is important. We are very focussed on looking after customers - we are not just selling machines."

"I think it is more than fair-to-say that Biesse is the world leader in CNC technology. In addition, in recent years we have put in a huge effort into software systems development and integration - linking machines together. This is increasingly important for our larger company customers - not just loading and unloading - but entire manufacturing systems and processes."

He added that for a long time Biesse has been known for its innovation in technology and its new

BSolid unparallel collision detection technology with a 3D on-screen simulation in real time contributing to real cost savings in labour and a dramatic reduction in waste.



an extremely busy and
worthwhile show



Biesse demonstrating its standing as a world leader in CNC technology and software systems integration technology.

a range of features that are in demand from customers



Part of the well-credentialed contingent of Biesse technical and executive staff from the company's Italian head office.

software is no exception. "Our BSolid software utilises the research and development experience of both Biesse and Intermac software departments and combines various exciting applications that have never before been available all within the same package."

"I'm excited about the direction of BSolid. It's been in the making for many years and encompasses a range of features that are in demand from customers wanting to keep up with market trends and advances in technology," he said.

"Complex, but not complicated," was the way Mr Prati described Biesse's software machine interface systems. "We have made a substantial investment in developing our own software and operating systems. Systems that integrate individual machine intelligence are now most certainly a leading component of our software offering to our customers."

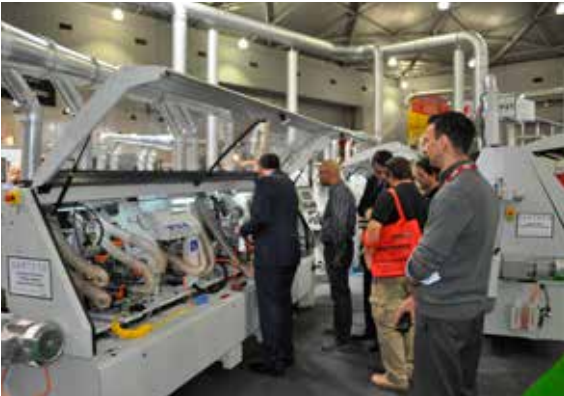
"We have been able to 'filter down' machine design trends and software systems developed with our larger customers, such as Ikea to smaller machines and manufacturing operations," said Mr Prati.

One of the most impressive features of the BSolid software platform is its ability to virtually test run a job with a 3D on-screen simulation of jobs in real time. This sophisticated aspect of BSolid allows for monitoring and minimises the impact of programming errors by predicting any issues and allows interception prior to job being run on real materials with real tools.

Biesse Oceania's software specialist said virtual machining simulation allows operators to verify data, prevent tooling issues, minimise human error in programming and to check, manipulate and modify the project before transferring it to the machine.

"The BSolid unparallel collision detection technology can save operators a lot of trouble. If there's a tool out of place, or something is in the way of the tool path, it will show up in the virtual simulation with a collision warning. The error can then be rectified and a machine crash has been avoided."

"Obviously this can mean big savings on time and wastage. This is all made more accurate by the detailed 3D modelling of the machine, the individual tools and various machining



Stefano Porcellini
Italy-based general
manager-executive
director with Australian
chief executive
officer Luke Tenaglia
... leading Biesse's
contingent at
AWISA 2014.

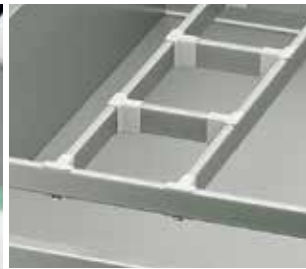
components," Biesse Oceania's software specialist said.

"This ability to virtually test run a job with a 3D on-screen simulation in real time contributes to real cost savings in labour and a dramatic reduction in waste."

"Importing and sending your designs to the machine is really easy and it provides greater flexibility in working and designing methods," he said.

"I am absolutely enthusiastic about the direction of BSolid. It's been in the making for many years and encompasses a range of features that are in demand from customers wanting to keep up with market and advances in artificial intelligence technology," said Luke Tenaglia, chief executive officer.

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by John Halkett

Blum Australia founder – courage and strategy

THE MAN BEHIND the establishment of Blum in Australia, Richard Small said a couple of the secrets to his business good fortune were firstly something akin to 'who dares wins' and secondly developing an Australian-centric marketing strategy.

Faced with the usual family responsibilities back in the 1960's Richard had the courage to turn his back on secure employment and strike out on his own into cabinet hardware industry. From the spare bedroom in the family home he built an Australian-wide cabinet hardware importing and distribution colossus.

Secondly, defying conventional European wisdom at the time he designed and implemented a marketing formula tailored to Australian conditions and based around developing a network of distributors that is still in place today.

Along with his drive, vision and courage Richard laid down and built on the foundations of the Blum operation – a global leader of cabinet hinges, drawer systems and recent new solutions for overhead cabinets.



Its use required new assembly techniques and fittings so that cabinets could be assembled without nails and screws," said Richard.

"So I went into business initially working out of the spare bedroom at home then graduated into a small shared warehouse in Newtown. A key to this early activity was the new concealed hinge that was revolutionary in terms of the emerging kitchen cabinet making

industry. I had opportunity to join a tour of leading German kitchen cabinet manufacturers to experience mass flat panel construction procedures and learned how concealed hinges and assembly fittings dovetailed into those procedures," said Richard.

Moving forward, Richard's love affair with Blum really started when he visited the Blum stand at Interzum in 1969. "I saw Blum as a rising star at least in a European context and I identified strongly with the people and their product, plus their potential in Australia," he said.

"So back in Sydney I aligned myself closely with Blum and adjusted my business to focus on Blum hinges and became the Blum representative in Australia."

"My first employee was Ron Redman, and I am proud to say he is still with Blum today," said Richard.

With new material and fittings technology, the Australia market was "exploding" in the early 70's. "Although other well-established hardware companies were already servicing the industry and doing it well we started to succeed very slowly. I recognised the need to reach and service potential customers all over Australia."

"This was a big ask for a new business. My solution was to align with strategically located and established cabinet hardware distributors," he said.

Richard said when he first visited them, Blum's Austrian management was fully engrossed with growing European markets and Australia seemed to be well down their priority.

"So for a start I had to convince them that for Australia I recommended a different marketing model than selling directly to manufacturers as was the common practice across Europe at the time."

"When I compared Australian distances and population spread with Europe they were literally surprised and agreed

the furniture makers were my professors

Reflecting back on his early years Richard said that wholesaling of cabinet hardware in the 1960's was principally about dealing with furniture manufacturers. "So I got to know the furniture makers – second generation Aussies and many new arrivals starting up – all extremely good people – in fact they were my professors."

"It was really my admiration for and the relationship I developed with these interesting hard-working people that got me started on a career in kitchen hardware – hinges in the early days," he said.

He said that in the 60's kitchen cabinets were considered to be pieces of free-standing furniture. "However, with the advent of particle board and new appliances kitchen cabinet makers quickly learnt and followed modular design trends, materials and fittings that were sweeping across Europe."

"Particle board was starting to make an appearance and be used for kitchen cabinet construction and other applications.

Above: Richard Small, Blum Australia founder ... well pleased with what he has been able to achieve and the legacy his time has left for the business.

Legacy

with my solution which is still today part of the Blum business model," said Richard.

"I deliberately sought out and worked directly with strategically-placed privately-owned cabinet hardware distributors. The formula started to work and I was eventually able to establish a network of distributors around the country," he said.

"Yes – it certainly gives me some satisfaction that this marketing strategy, established in the 70's has worked so well it is still essentially in operation today with several second generation personnel and recently a third generation employee with a Blum distributor that joined the team about forty years ago."

Richard pointed out that over the decades Blum has continually placed particular importance on continued research and innovation in hinges, drawer systems, overhead cabinet hardware solutions and electronic products. "Blum has also placed a strong emphasis on adding-value to its product range with a deliberate focus on organisation, function, ergonomics and design."

"So today Blum is clearly an global industry leader and innovator," said Richard.

Richard retired in 1997. Employee Brett Ambrose who had risen through the company's ranks was appointed managing director of Blum Australia and remains managing director today.

"At that time I recognised the desirability of generational planning and making room for younger people. I was very content with what I had achieved."

Richard said that he liked to think that during his time at the helm at Blum, and still today, product and people loyalty is a standout aspect of the culture of the company. "I have tremendous pride and satisfaction in what I was able to achieve and the legacy that my time there has left for the business and the people working for Blum Australia and for the network on Blum distributors," said Richard.

Commenting on Richard's legacy to Blum in Australia, managing director Brett Ambrose said a significant part of the progress he made in the early days was due to the emphasis he placed on developing what have turned out to be enduring relationships with family-owned businesses.

"Richard saw the opportunity and had the guts and vision to develop it. Also it seems he clicked ▶



Blum continues to recognise that the modern kitchen look and style needs to be supported by quality hardware based on sophisticated ergonomics and research.

▶ with Blum's founder Julius Blum when he first visited him at Blum's headquarters in Austria."

"Also Richard was certainly the first to recognize that developing a well coordinated distribution network across the country was the right recipe for Australia even though this was considered to be a major departure from the business model developed by Blum in Europe."

"Today our distribution network remains strongly grounded on personal relationships that continue to be based on respect and loyalty both ways."

Brett said today Blum continues to recognize the critical importance of kitchen design and function to housing and renovations markets where product innovation, quality and

performance are key ingredients. "It is a given that the modern kitchen look and style needs to be supported by quality hardware based on sophisticated ergonomics and research." ■

Blum Australia management team ... David Noakes, director sales and marketing; Brett Ambrose, managing director, and Ron Redman, business development manager.



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The pocket rocket and prostate cancer

ENTERING Homag City at AWISA 2014 visitors were confronted with a comprehensive line-up of state-of-the-art woodworking machines all alive and operating. These included what Homag Australia managing director Ross Campbell described as; "the pocket rocket", referring to the Vantage 100/480 CNC compact nesting machine in gantry design.

The Vantage 100/480 CNC routing and processing machine is a fantastic compact machine, high quality with an excellent basic equipment package at an affordable price. The configuration is extremely flexible and can be combined with a selection of smart extras, such as loading and off-loading tables to create unlimited production scope to expand and diversify to meet changing operational needs.

Ross said the Vantage 100 was clearly one of the best nesting machines on the market and ideal for the small-to-medium size cabinet-making enterprises. "It is really easy to use and comes with a great software operating system, but is also capable of interfacing other software systems if required."

Prostrate cancer support was high on the agenda for Homag at the AWISA show. Ross said that rather than throw material used to demonstrate the Homag range of woodworking machines in the waste bin, they made and sold German-style cuckoo clocks, bottle caddies and wooden pen holders. "The panel for the products was generously donated by Borg Manufacturing and the items were sold to exhibition visitors. The money raised was matched by Homag and donated to the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia"

"The items proved to be popular and with Homag matching the amount raised dollar-for-dollar we are able to make a valuable contribution of nearly \$2000 to a very worthwhile charity of strong relevance to the thousands of male visitors to our Homag City stand at the show," he said.

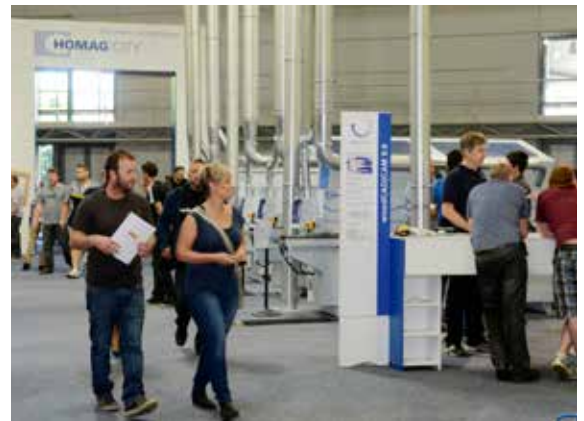
The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia is a broad-based community non-profit charity and the peak national body for prostate cancer dedicated to reducing the impact of prostate cancer on Australian men, their partners, families and the wider community.

Ross added that Homag demonstrate machinery at 60 to 70 trade shows around the world each year. "Wherever possible at these shows articles made during demonstrations are sold for a modest sum, the amount raised is then matched by Homag and the total amount donated to a selected charity."

"This serves two worthy causes - minimising waste from live machinery demonstrations and raising funds for essential local charities," said Ross. ■

Left: Robert Hensby, Homag's director, Asia/Pacific congratulates Ross Campbell on the funding raising effort for prostrate cancer support.

Visitors to Homag City confronted with a comprehensive range of state-of-the-art woodworking machines alive and operating.



Outstanding thinking at AWISA 2014

AWISA 2014 is over for another year. Häfele was overjoyed with the turnout of over 4000 people checking in to see what was said to be its best stand yet.

The theme this year was 'Thinking ahead' and over the four day exhibition, Häfele chose a unique way to deliver a big impact.

Over an area of 288m², the front section of the stand focussed on running a series of technology-based display pods. Visitors were able to see innovations first hand from European heavyweights such as Grass, Kesseböhmer, Hailo, Salice and Linak.

The cubist drawer system, Vionaro, along with the Tiomos hinge system from Grass, was a great hit. The sequential louvre overhead system - Climber from Kesseböhmer did nothing short than impress and an array of fittings from Salice - the Futura runners and Lapis hinge fittings were in operation among many other featured products that are new to the Australian market. Presenting the latest trends from Europe in this setting allowed visitors to drill deeper into product specific benefits without the distraction of a fully operational display.

The front section followed with what was considered to be the highlight of the stand – a purpose built 'Grand Kitchen' where everything came together and was presented in exactly that, a 'Grand Kitchen' that simply saw the audience in awe.

Decorative herb gardens and fresh bread may have set the scene, but there was an audible gasp from the crowd as Häfele debuted the real stars of the exhibition. In fact, it's not an understatement to say that electronic fittings by the likes of Häfele's own Lift + Turn E-senso, Linak actuators – presented in a drop-down cabinetry system and Climber from Kesseböhmer were welcomed most enthusiastically by all.

Feedback from the event has been overwhelmingly positive, which indicates those who attended AWISA in 2014 received great benefit from the demonstrations and thoroughly enjoyed being part of the event, almost as much as Häfele enjoyed exhibiting their latest and greatest.

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Hettich innovations lead to success at AWISA 2014



From left:

The ArciTech platform concept provides cost effectiveness in using various side elements.

ArciTech with the innovative push to open Silent opening function.

The new Sensys zero-protrusion wide-angle hinge makes it possible to fit internal drawers without spacer profiles, preventing trapped fingers no matter what position the door is in.

InLine XL make doors very easy to open from the outermost edge.

Over 5800 visitors across Australasia travelled to the largest woodworking exhibition in the southern hemisphere AWISA in Brisbane from 6 - 9 August. The 240 square metre stand stood out among the crowd and drew in thousands of engaged and interested visitors.

"The 2014 AWISA exhibition was the platform for presenting new products and trends from the drawers, hinges and sliding and folding segments. Visitors experienced the new innovative range of high-quality premium sliding doors", says marketing support manager Corene Roberts. The InLine XL system for flush fitting cabinets provides maximum design flexibility, functionality and is aesthetically appealing. It is one of the first sliding door systems that manages without handles, the doors open in response to a light pull on the door's outermost edge. You can now expect to find InLine XL not only in wardrobes but also pantry units for kitchens."

ArciTech impressed with the new colour range of silver and anthracite and the innovative function that combines a mechanical push to open drawer opening system with the luxurious feel of the soft-close Silent System. The result: handleless design, a standard drawer, no electricity, narrow front panel gap – all combined in one product.

The Sensys profile door and wide-angle hinge were presented for the first time at AWISA. The multi award winning product gives cabinet doors a wide opening

angle and closes them evenly and gently. Zero-protrusion hinges make it possible to fit internal drawers without spacer profiles, preventing trapped fingers no matter what position the door is in. The Sensys wide-angle hinge has received the iF Product Design Award 2014 and the Red Dot Award Product Design 2014.

"Visitors were able to see and experience for themselves how Hettich products could work to make living spaces work beautifully. We couldn't be happier with the success of the AWISA exhibition in Brisbane and look forward to Melbourne in 2016," says Corene.

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Lincoln Sentry says thanks with 'Open House Celebration'

Lincoln Sentry treated over 460 industry guests to a casual feast under the stars on Thursday 7 August 2014 at its 'Open House Celebration'. The Queensland Gallery of Modern Art was transformed into an industrial chic backyard barbeque and the city lights reflected on the Brisbane River providing a luminous backdrop to thank guests.

Lincoln Sentry's Open House Celebration was all about saying thank you to customers, industry partners and staff. Customer initiatives such as GO Rewards, brand new product catalogues, merchandising material and new key products are examples of the positive changes focused on improving Lincoln Sentry's service and offer to customers.

"We wanted to thank our customers, industry partners and Lincoln Sentry staff with a relaxing night out. In the end, it is the people that make Lincoln Sentry and they should be celebrated. Without their support, feedback, hard work and dedication we wouldn't be where we are today. We measure our success by their success", says Kevin Bruce, Lincoln Sentry national manager cabinet hardware.

AWISA 2014 marked Lincoln Sentry's first major event as a company proudly owned by the DuluxGroup. DuluxGroup is a business that likes to think of itself as helping homeowners imagine and create a better place. The 16 businesses within the Group are built on the strength of their brands, innovation and customer service. Lincoln Sentry service over 11,000 trade customers across Australia, distribute products from 340 suppliers from around the world and have 360 staff that proudly represent the company.

"DuluxGroup is delighted to have Lincoln Sentry in the family. We invest in businesses around brand innovation and customer service and keep them for the long run. Lincoln Sentry is evolving and we are interested to see what they along with the cabinet making industry and key suppliers can do to transform an exciting part of the home improvement industry in Australia", said Pat Houlihan, managing director and chief executive officer, DuluxGroup. Lincoln Sentry managing director, Ivor Timmins explained, "We are investing in our business and thanks to our customers we are growing again. We are upgrading our branches and including showrooms for customers to utilise. We are building a specification team with plans to expand our Sydney Design Centre into other capital cities. It is important for us to provide the best service and advice through our capable team".

Alan Schull, owner, Kitchen Shop commented, "It was one of the best events I have attended at AWISA and I have attended every AWISA since 1988. It clearly shows DuluxGroup's commitment and its success in business and management".

Lincoln Sentry is a leading specialist hardware distributor and has been supporting the building, renovation, furniture-making and shop fitting markets since 1986. Supplying leading brands such as Blum, Vauth-Sagel, Hera, Lamello, Assa Abloy, Breezway and many more ensure Lincoln Sentry deliver quality products with specialist advice to meet customers' needs.

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Queensland Gallery of Modern Art opened its backyard to Lincoln Sentry's Open House Celebration. Lincoln Sentry thanked over 460 industry guests with a gourmet barbeque under the stars.



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L&S Lighting - illuminating European design now available for all

Wilson & Bradley is excited to welcome L&S Lighting into its premium range of European branded products. L&S LED lighting is a world renowned brand known for attention to detail, advanced product development, and above all else, its standard of quality.

The extensive range of LED lighting now available at Wilson & Bradley includes strip lighting, cabinet down lights in a variety of designs and colour contrasts, sensor lights,

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A sensational feature of the range is "emotion" technology. Emotion allows lights to be set to cool white or warm white, giving the lights a huge breadth of use. Emotion also includes a dimming function meaning the luminous intensity of the lights can be adjusted, making them suited to all applications.

To view the complete range of L&S LED Lighting available, as well as installation instructions, visit Wilson & Bradley's website.

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Show visitors enticed by Blum's innovations and comprehensive product offer



When the AWISA exhibition for 2014 came to a close, Austrian fittings manufacturer Blum reported strong visitor numbers of more than 1200 on its stands over the four days; and embraced overwhelmingly positive feedback on its latest innovations in products and services.

For the first time, Blum supported two stands. The primary stand, measuring over 430 square metres provided visitors the opportunity to touch and experience the next generation of Blum drawer systems – Legrabox; under the banner of 'experience elegance' and featuring revolutionary design and functionality. Blum received overwhelming enthusiasm around this latest innovation, with stand visitors excited for the future. Legrabox Pure with matt, metallic surfaces and an elegant design will launch in the Australian market in June 2015.

Appearing alongside Legrabox, for visitors to experience for the first time, were a number of Blum innovations including the prototype Servo-Drive Flex for easy electrical opening and closing for fridge doors and dishwashers; and the latest wall cabinet solution on display for the first time, Aventos HK-XS, offering the market design differentiation and individual sophistication. Guests on the stand were enlightened with engaging demonstrations of Blum's ideas for practical kitchens – Dynamic Space, along with the new online product configurator.

"AWISA 2014 has definitely exceeded expectations at all levels. Our customers were excited to see the full range

of our Legrabox drawer system; to feel and investigate for themselves the differences and provide their feedback. Conversations flowed, attendees intrigue was answered, with confidence in the future of Blum cemented. Our visitors enjoyed the opportunity to connect with our team and our products", states Blum director, sales and marketing David Noakes. "Importantly our Servo-Drive Flex prototypes received sensational feedback and drew an intrigued crowd when included in our Dynamic Space demonstrations."

The new assembly stand allowed Blum to showcase its Minipress P and Boxfix E-T assembly devices, along with the interface capability of its Dynalog cabinet planning software with Homag's CNC machine, on a completely separate stand. This provided exhibition visitors an opportunity to experience Dynalog and a number of devices designed specifically to support the assembly of Blum products. Visitors picked up the tools and assembled entire drawers thanks to the Boxfix E-T, while appreciating the "perfect assembly". David confirmed: "AWISA 2014, with the new Brisbane venue was a huge success for Blum and AWISA. We look forward to preparing for AWISA 2016 and sharing the opportunity in Melbourne."

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No perfect motion without perfect assembly



Boxfix E-T from Blum provides simple yet precise Tandembox box system assembly. Cabinetmakers benefit from straightforward assembly assistance both in the workshop and when onsite at a customer's location.

Boxfix E-T is a manual device for assembling Tandembox drawers and high-fronted pull-outs; ensuring perfect assembly. Blum's Boxfix E-T was well received by visitors on the Blum assembly stand at AWISA 2014, as they experienced the convenience and ease of use.

Assembly possibilities: Tandembox Intivo and Tandembox Antaro.

Accessories: Self-centring drill bit and extension rod.

Advantages of using Boxfix E-T for Tandembox assembly:

- Fast and convenient. All drawer parts are assembled in an efficient and economical way.
- Ensures a high quality and precise end result.
- Easily transported and used on site.
- Can be used to assemble a range of drawer sizes; nominal lengths of 270mm to 650mm and cabinet widths from 275mm to 1200mm.
- Easy assembly.

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Stay classy with the SCM S630 Class thicknesser



"Solid timber machining at its best," that's how Simon Nanni, product manager with Gabbett Machinery, describes the SCM Class thicknessing machines.

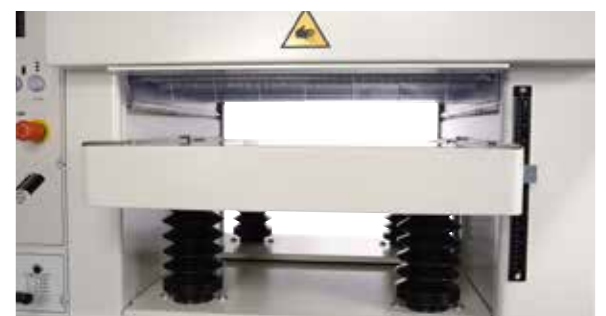
"SCM Group has been making thicknessers for over 50 years. Worldwide its one of its strongest lines," commented Simon. "We were lucky enough to have one on display at AWISA 2014 in Brisbane – which proved to be a crowd favourite."

Being Italian designed and engineered, the machines look stylish, as well as being practical. All the control functions are centralised, with automatic rise and fall, variable feed speed and digital displays being standard.

"But it's the basics that SCM get right," said Simon. "A massive, solid cast worktable which moves on 4 oversized supports give a working platform that is always 100% accurate."

The table that Simon refers to gives the zero point for any machining that is done on the machine. If it is not constructed correctly, then the machine will never perform correctly. It's the sort of detail that needs to be seen to appreciate the size and mass of the casting that is used.

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BIESSE AUSTRALIA

Preliminary determination on the dumping of imported stainless steel sinks welcomed

THE AUSTRALIAN government Anti-Dumping Commission's announcement on preliminary affirmative determination (PAD) and imposition of securities on China-imported, pressed stainless steel sinks has been welcomed by Tasman Sinkware. The Commission has stated that it is satisfied that dumped goods have caused material injury to the Australian industry.

As a result of this preliminary finding, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service will take securities on future exports of deep drawn stainless steel sink from China. The rates of security range from 19.4% to 61.5%. Adelaide-based Tasman Sinkware is Australia's sole manufacturer of pressed stainless steel sinks under the Oliveri brand.

Earlier this year, Tasman Sinkware lodged an anti-dumping application alleging that the Chinese stainless steel sink industry benefits from the subsidies and policies of the Chinese government that reduce the cost of stainless steel sinks made in that country, and that pressed stainless steel sinks were being exported to Australia at dumped prices.

Tasman Sinkware general manager Mark Freeman says "that after a lengthy investigation process to reach this stage, the preliminary decision vindicates our position and supports the allegations that we have been competing against unfairly priced imports in the Australian market".

"The level by which Chinese exporters have undercut us in the Australian market has substantially reduced sales of Australian-made sinks since July 2009, and our profitability has declined significantly," Mr Freeman says.

"This decision improves the business case and increases our confidence to re-invest in our Australian operations to boost local production levels and to create more jobs. We are encouraged that we can move forward with new product innovation and development, and now plan to release a new locally made sink range later this year."

"We are a proud Australian manufacturer and determined to fight for our local manufacturing base and to keep providing local jobs for our people across Australia. The investigation is not due to be completed until later this year and we hope that the timeline outlined by the Commission can be met without any further delays to ensure we can implement a new investment and growth strategy."

Recently, Canada's anti-dumping administration, the Canada Border Services Agency, determined Chinese

government subsidies account for up to 60% of the export price of stainless steel sinks exported from China to Canada.

"Our hope remains that the investigation will help achieve a level playing field in the market, ensuring the Oliveri brand continues to be synonymous with Australian manufacturing into the future."

Tasman Sinkware had assistance from the Australian Industry Group in making its application to the anti-dumping commission. ■



Holzma sets trends at its 2014 in-house exhibition



Holzma destacking concept with new software, redesigned parts buffer, new chopping edge, revised feeding and destacking aid, and new scissor-lift pallet truck with automatic height control (HuGo).

Once a year prospective buyers, customers and business partners from all over the world come to Holzma Treff in Holzbronn, the home of Holzma Plattenaufteiltechnik GmbH. "We set the trends" was the theme of the in-house exhibition, which took place from 23 – 26 September.

The new 5 series

The Holzma 5 series stands for cutting-edge technology. The high-end model has always offered impressive stability, precision and performance. With this new series, which features numerous enhancements, Holzma has once again set the standard in the top league of panel-dividing saws. This has been achieved most notably by design innovations in the area of dust extraction at the saw and a clear improvement in ease of maintenance and servicing.

Power Concept now available in a basic version

The Holzma Power Concept is now also available in a basic version especially for the HPP 300. The advantage: The new Power Concept Basic is almost as powerful as the large-scale solution, but lower in price. Just like the Holzma Power Concept first launched in 2007, the basic version is also able to cut several strips into different lengths simultaneously. This can increase the efficiency of the saw by up to 40 percent.

2 series special model

The saws of the 2 series are versatile, reliable, affordable and popular. The sales figures speak for themselves: Holzma has already supplied more than 2,000 HPP 230 or HPP 250 saws to customers all over the world. At Holzma Treff this record was celebrated with a special model HPP 250.

HPP 300 MultiTec: drilling and routing on the saw

Holzma launched the HPP 300 MultiTec at its in-house exhibition. This new development addresses, in particular, the needs of manufacturers producing facades and partition walls. In addition to cutting to size, the saw also completes the routing and drilling work. This is much more ergonomic, faster, more precise and more cost-effective than the usual way of manufacturing at several processing stations.

The Holzma destacking concept

This concept guides the operator. It shows on which pallet and in exactly which position parts should be placed after they have been cut. Additional hardware components, including pallet truck 'HuGo', parts buffer, swiveling printer and a buffer for headcuts, round off the destacking concept. Holzma demonstrated the practical advantages of this systematic approach to destacking: increased efficiency, improved ergonomics and, above all, parts arranged in the right order for further processing on other machines.

Impressively efficient: S to XXL solutions for handling offcuts

Holzma, together with Bargstedt, presented innovative solutions, from S to XXL, covering every aspect of offcuts handling. The focus was on the intelligent combination of software and hardware in tailored concepts. The spectrum ranges from simple shelving with automated offcuts management to fully automated return of offcuts to the Bargstedt storage system.

Holzma CombiTec – fully automatic recuts

CombiTec now makes industrial batch-size-1 production even more efficient. At the in-house exhibition, Holzma showed how this works on a HKL 300 angular saw unit. Equipped with the CombiTec option, it deals with recuts fully automatically in throughfeed mode.

Partners from the Homag Group

Sister companies from the Homag Group also exhibited at Holzma Treff 2014. In this way, Holzma illustrates to its guests a key advantage of the Group: All the products are powerful, stand-alone solutions that, as they harmonize perfectly with each other, can be combined to provide first-class system solutions.

- Bargstedt demonstrated, among other things, its fully automated horizontal storage system TLF 411.
- Brandt showcased no less than five edge banding machines at the exhibition. Innovations such as the new EasyTouch control system, and AirTec.
- Under the traditional Butfering brand name, Weeke presented the latest innovations for wide-belt sanding machines.
- Homag exhibited highlights in the area of edge banding technology and CNC processing.
- Homag Eolution presented version 10.0 of WoodCADCAM.
- Ligmatech demonstrated how tailored packaging can be produced just in time on a VKS 200 cardboard cutting machine with PowerTouch and flexible combination cardboard feeder.
- With the BHX 200, Weeke presented vertical CNC technology for the most demanding requirements.

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Homag honoured with top innovator award

Homag Holzbearbeitungssysteme GmbH was awarded the "Top 100" seal at the Deutsche Mittelstand Summit (German SME Summit) held in Essen on 27 June 2014. With the "Top Innovator" award, Homag joins the ranks of Germany's most innovative companies.

The leap up to the Top 100 followed a tough selection process by the innovation researcher Prof. Nikolaus Franke of the Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation of the Vienna University of Economics and Business. The examination focused on innovation management and innovation success.

Amongst other aspects, the award underscored Homag's innovative power combined with the company's direct links and proximity to its customers as well as the environmental alignment of its products. In the company's history spanning more than 50 years, Homag has developed, realized and established numerous revolutionary ideas in the market. This includes the continuous refinement of edge processing – from the world's first edge banding machine to zero joint technology with LaserTec and AirTec, which became the established standard in record time – or the revolutionary control concept PowerTouch, that enables control over all machine functions by directly touching the display.

Dr. Christian Compera, managing director of Homag Holzbearbeitungssysteme GmbH emphasizes: "We view this award as acknowledgment of our joint efforts within the company and, in particular, as a prize for our employees. After all, our many years of success are based on people with ideas and vision, and the courage to implement them with passion and dedication. That is how we have become a global market and innovation leader, a position we want to build on going forward."



by Rob Ditessa

Wooden boats resurgence

SINCE IT FIRST dropped anchor in 1994 in Hobart Harbour, a biennial festival that celebrates wooden boats for the skills in making them and for their charm, has attracted ever-bigger crowds. Organisers expect more than 200,000 visitors from around Australia and the world at 2015's "MyState Australian Wooden Boat Festival" to inspect some 650 boats, exhibitions, and trade displays. The show will include an International Wooden Boat Symposium. While the festival is one of a number of events in Australia celebrating wooden boats, organisers say the Hobart festival is the biggest maritime event of its kind in the southern hemisphere and second only in the world to the tall-ships festival held every four years in Brest, France.

Interest in the festival reflects a growing demand by people to learn the old crafts and skills of the traditional boat-builder and shipwright that, like so many other occupations, were being overtaken by new technology-based processes. Fortunately, many of these skills have been retained and passed on to new generations, especially in Tasmania. As an island state, it has relied on the maritime industries and has developed a culture and reputation for exquisite wooden boat building, Daryl Peebles, a spokesperson for the show, tells AWISA.

Andy Gamlin, inspired after a visit to Brest, established the Tasmanian festival with two fellow enthusiasts, and the support of local authorities. Today, Gamlin manages the Wooden Boat Centre located on the banks of the Huon River near Franklin, some forty minutes from Hobart. The centre encompasses a school with a nationally accredited Certificate course and a gallery that showcases the traditional craft of wooden boat building. The school began as the Shipwright's Point School of Wooden Boatbuilding in 1992, thanks to John Young, then a lecturer in environmental issues at the University of Adelaide, Gamlin explains to AWISA. Young, who was also teaching wooden boat building and the business around it, drew together local ageing wooden boat builders into the venture. Gamlin reflects it created a lot of enthusiasm because there had not been much in the way of wooden boat building for a very long time.

After seven or eight weeks working on building their boats, students, 15% of whom are women, have a lot more skills and a lot more knowledge about boats, and at the end they go home with something that is very valuable. "The wooden boats will probably last a very



Above: Photos from Eastwood's workshop and boat school. Photo: Rob Ditessa.

Opposite: Image courtesy Daryl Peebles Tasmanian Boat Festival - Calm reflections early morning.





Wooden boats are craftsmanship at its highest order

► long time. We've just restored a boat that was 120 years old, and put it back in the water. It was floating before. Now, it's floating better."

Amongst the timbers that makes Tasmania special are celery top pine, King William (Billy) pine, and Huon pine. Gamlin explains Huon pine contains oil that gives it long lasting qualities. For particular applications, builders import Oregon, and spruce from Canada. Understanding the nature of the wood is vital in traditional boat building methods, stresses Gamlin. "These traditions come from as far back as the Vikings, fifteen hundred years ago. They used their skills and knowledge of the wood to make the boats water tight. That's what we call traditional boat building."

Gamlin used to sail on Pittwater in Sydney, today home of the Pittwater Wooden Boat School, which Larry Eastwood established. Standing under a catspaw dinghy strung to the workshop's ceiling, Eastwood tells AWISA that as a longtime owner and admirer of wooden boats, he wanted to build a boat himself. Discovering no boat building schools in Sydney, Eastwood decided to set up his own, with the aid of traditional wooden boat shipwrights Simon Sadubin and Ian Smith. The catspaw is an all-round rowing boat and sailboat of American design. Students at Newcastle Technical College built this one but it never saw service, and fell into disrepair. Eastwood intends to fix it up at some stage.

While Eastwood anticipated the school would attract people like himself, transition-to-retirement baby boomers, most students are men of all ages in full time work and interested in traditional construction. As well, a number of students have come to the school out of an interest in wood and its potential uses. A pinewood furniture worker found he had accumulated a large amount of timber under his house. He decided to tackle building a boat. The idea of taking his grandchildren on a boat he built appealed to him, as it does to many people says Eastwood, although the student never had owned one, and knew nothing about boats, especially how to build them.

In selecting timber, Eastwood looks for one that is going to be happy living in water, a quality defined by the density of the wood. He explains, there are not many of those timbers and some excellent timber comes from the logs left behind when the Franklin River was dammed, and now being resurrected from the bottom. There are only a few specialist timber suppliers in Sydney, and they also supply exotic or imported timbers to specialty timber workers. Eastwood will visit a yard and sort through a whole stack of timber until he finds a length with the right grain running in the right direction.

Walking over to his stockpile of timber, he explains he keeps a minimal stock, which at the moment, contains Oregon from America, a beautiful spotted gum from a dealer up the coast, and rose gum. It is a hardwood he likes because it is relatively light, and saves weight in the boat. One of the issues for boat builders, unlike for furniture makers, is the need for long lengths because they prefer to put long lengths onto a boat rather than scarf them in a long tapered join. He continues, "Some people like to build boats with lots of different woods. I don't like to because they can look like a chocolate box. Lightweight softwoods are usually used for the planking with various hardwoods used for the structural timbers. Often these structural timbers are required to be laminated. You're changing its timber type, and it's nice to have a bit of contrast. Over in this boat we're going to have Syrian cedar which is a beautiful red timber, and then the structural element is silver ash, which has got a very white toning."

Because engineering standards demand it, Eastwood muses, there is more glue than wood in most construction timber, but in his school they are trying to build the other way around, using as little glue as possible. Pointing to one boat project, he says they will use only Sikaflex adhesive and no other glue, because it remains flexible, and he goes on to talk in comprehensive detail about different building techniques.

In the traditionally built clinker boats, overlapping timber planks are shaped over an upside down mould and fastened together with copper nails



and roves. Sikaflex is used as a sealant where in days past lead paint and lead putty would have been used. With the planking complete, the boat hull is turned over and the ribs are installed. These along with the thwarts and knees give the hull its strength and structure. The fine timber ribs are steamed in order that they take up the internal shape of the hull. With the fit-out complete, the fine timbers are sealed with an epoxy wood sealant or paint.



A more modern technique invented by the New Zealanders, is strip planking, where epoxy glue joins strips of timber edge to edge. This method of hull construction is both fast and light. In larger traditionally built carvel planked boats, the timber is again fastened over a frame and ribs, but the planks are sealed with caulking. A combination of cotton caulking and caulking sealant screws or cooper nails or roves are used as fastenings, but they are usually set into the planks and later plugged with timber. Caulking tools remain unchanged from past centuries.



Eastwood's most interesting challenge? "When I successfully hand planned my first spiralling bevel onto a 20 foot inner gunwale, on a boat that had a very flared bow and huge tumblehome at the stern, I felt a certain amount of satisfaction. And, yes we still work mainly in feet and inches."

Boats must have some of the most weird and wonderful names for their parts, and joinery, he suggests. The use of modern battery handheld tools and power thicknessers and bandsaws makes for an easier life than the life of yesterday's shipwrights. Some of the most used tools have not changed. A low angle quality block plane is essential along with all other hand planes as well as sharp quality chisels, and Japanese saws, for instance. Specialty tools such as the roving tools for turning copper nails into rivets and caulking tools are hard to come by and remain cherished. However, he has more power sanding machines in his workshop than any other tool.



Wooden boats are craftsmanship at its highest order, and different to all other wooden manufacturing because there is hardly a straight line, or a right angle. Everything is on a curve. "We start off with a template and we get the right shape. The final thing we do is to look at it by eye because in the end it's the eye that counts, rather than a measurement. That's the key. Does it look right? Is it sweet? You've got to have a sweet line," Eastwood says. ■

Photos from Eastwood's workshop and boat school. Photo: Rob Ditessa.

First Super makes superannuation easy

While best known as the industry super fund for the timber, pulp, paper, furniture and joinery sectors, First Super is open to anyone who is eligible to join a superannuation fund.

This includes full-time, part-time, casual workers, contractors, people who are self-employed, and individuals who are not currently employed.

First Super makes superannuation easy, letting employers get on with the job of running their business.

Why use First Super

First Super provides employers with streamlined and efficient administration processes; support, information and updates; dedicated superannuation coordinators; education services for employers and workers; and payment options to suit an organisation's needs. With First Super employers can avoid the red tape.



Challenges ahead

So what are the superannuation challenges ahead for business? And how can First Super help business through the process?

One of the first superannuation hurdles for the new financial year is the federal government's new SuperStream system. Under the new system, employers must make super contributions on behalf of their employees by submitting data and payments electronically in a consistent and simplified manner.

The new requirements, being progressively phased in from 1 July 2014, require employers with 20 or more people to make super contributions in the new SuperStream format by no later than 30 June 2015.

Employers with less than 20 people, meantime, will need to make super contributions in the SuperStream format by no later than 30 June 2016.

Employers can voluntarily adopt SuperStream from 1 July 2014 if they are ready.

Options for meeting SuperStream

Employers have options for meeting SuperStream - either use software that conforms to SuperStream; or use a service provider, such as First Super, who can meet SuperStream on their behalf. Employers with less than 20 employees are advised to use the Australian Taxation Office's Small Business Superannuation Clearing House, a free service to enable them to make superannuation contributions and meet their SuperStream obligations. SuperStream may seem daunting at first, but stick with it: the system will enable employers to remove many of the complexities currently faced as a result of funds being able to set up different arrangements for accepting contributions (due to the lack of common standard).

Employers with questions about SuperStream or the free ATO clearing house should call First Super on 1300 360 988 for further information. Alternatively, the ATO small business clearing house can be contacted directly on 1300 660 048.

Caps on the rise

One of the other big advantages of joining First Super is early access to information. First Super sends regular updates to members on issues affecting the fund - and their hip pocket.

Employers should be aware, for example, that the concessional contributions general cap has risen for 2014-15. The concessional contributions cap will be temporarily increased to \$35,000 from July 1, 2014 for people over the age of 49 on June 30, 2014. For people under 49 on June 30, 2014, the concessional cap will be \$30,000, a \$5,000 increase from the current cap. The temporary higher cap is not indexed and will cease when the general concessional contributions cap is indexed to \$35,000. The annual non-concessional cap has been increased from \$150,000 to \$180,000. Non-concessional contributions are not subject to the 15%.

People under 65 years of age can make the non-concessional contributions of up to three times the non-concessional cap over a three-year period ie, a \$540,000 contribution in advance of the next three years. People over the age of 65 and satisfying the "work test" can make a non-concessional of \$180,000 per year. This can be a complex area for people about to turn 65, so financial advice is recommended.

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The Blum logo consists of a stylized white arrow pointing upwards and to the right, followed by the word "blum" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the top right of the word "blum".



CoJet flatbed printer delivers high resolution 3D images

AND A NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY FOR ARROW WOOD PRODUCTS

Growing industry demand for more sophisticated graphic images on diverse materials has led Arrow Wood Products to purchase the cutting edge Anderson CoJet, a large format flatbed printer which prints high-resolution 3D images directly on to materials including solid timber, glass, MDF and steel.

This investment will allow Arrow Wood to diversify its business, tapping into the design and architecture sector which seeks creative solutions that can be delivered quickly and at much lower cost than conventional processes.

Arrow Wood, which has been supplying quality component parts to the kitchen and cabinet industry since 1983, has set up a new company, InImage (Vic) Pty Ltd, to maximise the business potential.

While the CoJet can print on glass (for example, creating realistic images of tiles or exotic marble on kitchen splashbacks), Arrow Wood Products general manager Michael Stevens said it was the 3D digital printing capabilities that convinced the company to purchase the machine.

"This is the only machine that will do 3D printing," Mr Stevens said. "We can take glass splashbacks, decorative panelling, feature walls – basically anywhere a standard board is currently being used – and give architects and designers something that is unique and corporatised."

"We can create 3D effects including wood grain, brushstrokes and other textured finishes using any image and any graphic design. Your imagination really is the only restriction."

Mr Stevens said the CoJet would also overcome the high cost and long lead times associated with graphic products currently offered by laminate companies, as the new machine could deliver a less expensive end

product in a much shorter time. It will also enable colour matching of discontinued boards, as exact colours can be replicated.

The CoJet printer, which is manufactured in Taiwan, uses CNC flatbed technology and UV-curable inks to print large format graphics on coated or uncoated rigid materials including MDF, wood, plastic, foam board, aluminium, steel, glass, composites and tiles. Maximum print area is 2350 mm by 1250 mm, and maximum media thickness is 100mm.

The CoJet can print high-resolution graphics of up to 1440 dpi in 6/7 colours and translucent patterns. Vivid photographic images are easily printed, with a final clear coat providing a flat or high gloss protective coating.

Max Shatkhin of The Wood Tech Group, which supplied the machine, said about 200 CoJets had been installed worldwide since its introduction two or three years ago.

"It's becoming a very popular machine and the number of installations is increasing," he said.

While other flatbed printers can print on media including glass, Mr Shatkhin said the main points of difference are the cost and the 3D printing process which applies multiple layers of white paint before a coat of colour and a final coat of varnish for a durable indoor finish.

"You can print on a flat surface, and it will feel like an oil painting. The textured finish can imitate the feeling of timber veneer - you can print so it looks like real timber and feels like real timber.

"For kitchen splashbacks, rather than paying for exotic marble, you can print a marble finish on the back of the glass. Unless you went up, touched it and knew what you were looking for, it would look like marble."

"The CoJet price is the other main point of difference. The return on investment is incredibly important, and we are very competitive on price."

Mr Stevens said The Wood Tech Group had provided excellent training and backup support for the two new InImage staff: technical manager David Sodaitis and design consultant Annette Kaz.

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by Martin Videon

General manager
FIAA Ltd, South Australia

Key benefits for a stronger industry - the role of the FIAA



Just recently I was asked to write and submit an article about FIAA Ltd in South Australia.

My immediate thought was 'oh no' not another association chest beater session, however thinking about it I thought I would at least talk about what are my perceived values in FIAA and to a greater extent what benefits and outcomes can be achieved by industry.

Firstly, provided within our membership, we are an industrial advocate and provide award updates, industrial advice and guidance on thorny issues.

Most associations have an advice service covering multiple trades and sectors and can be renowned for varying interpretation. At FIAA our industrial advocacy works only in the furnishing awards and for that confidence is obtained as the advice is specialised.

Our second role is as a registered training organisation (RTO) for cabinetmaking (kitchen and bathroom), floor technology, soft furnishings and upholstery and several other minor sectors and we are in the process of broadening our scope.

This is where FIAA has a direct association with a company and their personnel and it is of the most importance that a trusting relationship is formed and over time built upon.

Our training is one-on-one, and within the factory, with the training customised to meet the needs of the company. All materials including kitchen cabinets and a variety of sinks plus all power tools are supplied. Some of the practical work includes hand making and machine making joints, through to kitchen cabinetry assembly and all stages of a kitchen installation.

FIAA has directly assisted with key benefits for the industry. Approximately 18 months ago in SA, carpenters and joiners were the only trades actually listed to install a kitchen even though a cabinetmaker was accredited to fulfil this task. FIAA lobbied the relevant government authority and the wording was changed and cabinetmakers are now included and authorised to do this work.

A second major initiative achieved was when FIAA and key industry personnel lobbied the CITB (Construction Industry Training Board) to include kitchen and bathroom apprentices in the apprentice subsidies available to the other building trades. The financial remuneration available now to a company over the course of the apprenticeship term is substantial on top of varying government incentives.

FIAA is the largest industry based association and RTO in Australia and continuing success is based upon supplying services and to providing the right opportunities for a stronger industry.

Martin can be contacted on 08 8554 9678, 0409 865 514 or mvideon@fiaa.com.au



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Milestones and expanded range for leading power tool brand

In a recent presentation in Sydney, Festool announced some significant milestones, and representatives Lauree Brewster and Bruce McKinley detailed new tools in the already impressive Festool power tool line-up.

Lauree Brewster said Festool continued to design tools that change the way people work; lifting efficiency, improving quality and enhancing safety. "We also focus on maximum functionality and producing tools you can work with for a long time without tiring. This is why we develop tools that are light, but still strong and that feel really good and solid in the hand," she said. Bruce McKinley explained that some of the best tried and tested products previously marketed under the Protool name were now Festool.

At the Sydney presentation new products were unveiled, including the new cordless plunge-cut saw TSC 55 with a revolutionary variable dual battery concept. Bruce advised that measured against performance, power and precision the new cordless plunge-cut saw was at the same high level as the tried-and-tested mains power operated plunge-cut saw TS 55 R.

Also unveiled was the new powerful, compact hammer drill, the Festool BHC 18 cordless that offers impressive features, includes a powerful impact with integral vibration damping and a compact design.

The Sydney event also celebrated the 50 year on-the-market milestone for the simple, effective and extremely popular Festool guide rails that have been making work faster



Festool representatives Lauree Brewster and Bruce McKinley announcing company milestones and new products.

and easier for tradesmen by saving time and money through eliminating laborious measurements, rework and wasted material.

Made from anodized aluminum, Festool guide rails are available in eight different lengths and suitable for every application. "The integrated splinter guard aligns perfectly to your cut line, saving set up time and serving as protection against tear out, on both sides of the cut," said Bruce.

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by Dean Brakell

General manager

Furnishing Industry Association of Australia

Dean Brakell



Sharpening the personal saw Part two – Better business owners

RULE NUMBER ONE in first aid is 'Danger, look after one's self, first'. In a previous AWISA issue, we spoke about the lack of supervisory skills and ineffective middle managers across our industry and the direct effect on productivity and safety.

We also touched on the current skills of the majority of business owners. Most of us start with trade qualifications and after that very few of us formally develop our skills further.

Another common issue with SME's (small medium enterprises) is that business owners are time poor and don't have sufficient time to do everything that needs to be done in their businesses.

Feel like you're juggling 100 balls in the air at the same time drifting from one issue or crisis to another? That's alright, we say to ourselves, I will start an hour earlier tomorrow to get that done. By next week we are starting another hour earlier.

Tired, stressed, when was the last time you took time out just to plan, or watch the kids play sport at school or maybe just have a coffee with the wife? Is the business controlling you?

All those IR/HR issues, another staff sick day, compliance and red tape, machinery break downs, running out of supplies to finish jobs?



Due to all these constant operational pressures, it is difficult for most business owners to get into good habits or routines that can develop their business further.

When was the last time you spent time on business development activities? When was the last time you met with your key staff to help improve their performance? When did you last review your business plan or marketing plan? Have you looked at the profit and loss statement lately?

These are common issues and challenges we see every day and every week.

But all is not lost and you are not alone.

A recent survey of FIAA members encompassing micro, small, medium and large businesses across Australia confirmed the need for business mentoring or coaching/advice to assist business owners to not only get back on track, but also, to ensure they are on the right train.

Business advisors can assist business owners with better planning, improved performance and greater productivity. They can offer support, guidance and advice on improving your business. The right business advisor can provide you with the confidence to make the right decisions.

Our industry has become increasingly competitive. We simply cannot compete on price alone; imports in the free-standing furniture sector have decimated a once strong industry. Retail chains are moving into the kitchen and built-in sectors. The only effective response is to ensure we have a skilled and educated workforce and skilled, educated and supported business owners.

Benefits of a business advisor

Advice

The biggest benefit of having a business advisor is having someone you can ask questions and get advice. A business advisor can assist you on more complicated business matters that your friends or family would not know how to solve.

Methods and strategies

In addition to simply giving advice and helping improve your personal business skills, business advisor can prepare you with the methods and strategies that will assist with your career as a business owner.

Confidence – making the right decisions

Other benefits of a business advisor include enhanced likelihood of staff retention and development, skill and leadership development and increased employee productivity.

The hardest thing for any business owner is to stop and say, hey, I need a bit of help here. Ron Clarke, a famous Australian runner once said, "The hardest step for a runner to take is the first one out the door". Don't stay indoors!

In the recent federal budget, programs such as Enterprise Connect will no longer be available to business owners. In its place, the 'Entrepreneur's Infrastructure Programme' will be established.

The government will provide \$484.2 million over five years from 2013-14 to establish the Entrepreneurs' Infrastructure Programme¹ to implement its new approach to industry policy. The programme will focus on supporting the commercialisation of good ideas, job creation and lifting the capability of small businesses.

FIAA is working through these changes and will ensure members are aware of the opportunities to get support.

If your business needs support, don't hesitate to contact us.

While FIAA members enjoy discounts and exclusive offers, our training and support services are available to everyone in the industry.

Dean Brakell FIAA Ltd, dbrakell@fiaa.com.au ■

¹Budget Paper No. 2: Budget Measures



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by Rob Ditessa

Pfitzner Furniture – a family manufacturing success

THE PFITZNER BUSINESS took its biggest step in 1999 when it dropped the word manufacturer from its name and decided to focus on retail operation and turn to bespoke production. Andrew Pfitzner explains they had always sold a few items through an outlet at their factory located in South Australia's Adelaide Hills but so few that it did not affect their wholesale sales to the big prestigious stores in the capital cities. After opening their own stand-alone retail outlet in Norwood in the eastern fringe of suburban Adelaide in 1999, they opened a store in Cremorne in 2010, on Sydney Harbour's north shore.

The Cremorne store has attracted a new, larger market, and they sell a few lines of other's furniture, including Ekornes Stressless lounges and recliners from Norway. "We make quite a few bespoke products for clients in Sydney for their homes, boats and holiday houses. People come to us with a drawing for lamp and coffee tables they want to put on their boats and in their holiday homes."



John Pfitzner, Andrew's father, established the company in 1972 working from a shed on their property supplying firstly bespoke and then from 1980, quality wholesale furniture, and Andrew details how some 15 years ago there were many manufacturers working in a market with a reasonable total volume. Their production included for instance about 5,000 chairs a year for Freedom Furniture in three designs in pine. Andrew says that was what Freedom wanted to pay for and the company was happy with the compromises because they were able to use quality pine. No chair has ever been returned, and there are chairs still out there in service, he says proudly.

Income from the high volume enabled the company to employ numerous staff and to purchase some machinery that they still use today. But seeing that circumstances were changing, they prepared for a transition to making bespoke pieces. "I guess we could see that the future for furniture manufacture in Australia was not great because the retailers were not interested in quality. They were only interested in price, and that just drove them off-shore. For instance, we had been dealing with one large top quality store for about 15 years. It really came down to the relationship between you and the buyer, and your ability to produce a product to a price rather than to a level of quality," Andrew tells AWISA Magazine. As well, they found that most customers did not appreciate quality work, unlike many Europeans and English people who value craftsmanship. Essentially the large retailers preferred the client to come into their stores already knowing what they want to buy rather than having to sell a product to them.

He stresses, "'Good design lasts forever' is our motto and it means more to us than just design aesthetics. If it is well designed and built, it will last forever. We have always designed our products to feature the best traditional construction methods, and, by employing modern technology, to enhance the design and the build. For example, all our drawers are dovetailed timber boxes with Blumotion soft close under mounted runners. Our tables and chairs are constructed with mortise and tenon joints, and machined precisely with our CNC Biesse router."

The dynamics of the team that conceives and creates the furniture is based on the expertise and close long-term relationships of everyone in the workshop. The tightly knit group consists mainly of locals from the Adelaide Hills, making for a stable workforce and the company a focal point in the community. "We have a workforce we respect like family. We work together but do not socialise a lot because we respect that there is a dividing line there between work and family life," says Andrew.



Paul, the cabinet maker, has been with the company since 1982. After completing his apprenticeship, for five years he travelled and worked afar to gain experience. Andrew explains that Paul also does a lot of the design drawings, and works out how a particular product can be manufactured. He makes prototypes and creates patterns for special bespoke items or new lines. While the production is mostly one offs, they will make multiples units in runs of between 24 and one hundred chairs, for instance.

Ben is the wood machinist. "He's been with us from day one. He runs our CNC router, and basically any machine in the place. He's a 2IC to David Pfitzner," says Andrew.

Andrew, not Pfitzner, is the furniture polisher. He is very fastidious and has been with the firm for over 15 years, again starting as an apprentice the company carefully selected and guided.

Andrew Pfitzner, who looks after the business side of things, and has a degree in business and marketing, his brother David, and John, their father, all work together in creating the designs. David is a wood machinist, and oversees the overall production process. John is a cabinetmaker with a wealth of knowledge spanning more than 57 years.

Reflecting on the success of the business, Andrew emphasises that he and his brother, also his business partner, work very well together contributing in different areas. He continues that it is David's mechanical knowledge

and attention to detail that guides the complex projects they undertake from design to delivery. Growing up immersed in furniture and design, their parents fostered their development of a keen eye for proportion and style.

In the very personal approach they have adopted, Andrew or David will talk with a client to draw up a list of specifications and a rough sketch. Sometimes clients want to adapt a Pfitzner design they like. After the client approves the cost and posts a small deposit, they will draw the product to scale. Once the client approves the scale drawings, they then put the work into production that takes between six and eight weeks to complete. Some jobs are complex, such as a recent one for a Brisbane client that evolved into a project to fill a whole house. David worked with the client on the design of the specific pieces some of whose production required special cutters. David drew the designs in AutoCAD for final approval. It was an enormous undertaking, and equally satisfying, says Andrew.

"We've got a 'can do' attitude. Just recently a young client asked us to make a very ornate bed, with carved feet, complex foot rail, shapes, and carvings. It was quite involved, and she'd been inspired by something she saw on a UK website. She was just blown away that somebody said 'yes'."

John, the founder, still works at carving. Recently a past client for whom they were making a cupboard, specified a flower carved six times on the unit as a motif. It was a flower

► from Europe, where she grew up. John researched the flora, carved and painted it.

The atmosphere in the workshop is cool, calm and collected, and the team is ready to take on any challenge in a systematic way to realise the client's desire. "We take every step to get it right the first time. You can't afford to have three attempts, even though because of the old culture, if we have to have a second or third attempt to get it right, we'll do it, and that's just our cost." It has to be right, stresses Andrew.

When it comes to favourite machinery and equipment, the Biesse router is David's favourite, and Andrew's is the chair press he used when he started working. The press was engineered for the company to press their own chair designs.

In 2009, the company installed the Empower production control system. It is a data-base that records and tracks work, helping to measure how long it takes to make a piece, and it identifies for you, explains Andrew, the costs along the production process. There is no simpler way of measuring costs, he says.

"What's really rewarding for us, is the look on the client's face, or the fact that they send us an email saying that the furniture is fantastic and they love it. We delivered a full dining suite and entertainment unit last Friday. The client told me that they had our chest of drawers for 25 years, and had given it to their daughter now that they have moved into a new house. They've come back to buy a new lot of furniture that we will make for their new house down by the beach. I just love that, that the piece of furniture we made for them 25 years ago, is something they don't want to throw away," reflects Andrew Pfitzner. ■

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Australian made routers succeed at AWISA 2014



"The 2014 AWISA trade show turned out to be one of our most successful trade shows of recent times," says Kevin Gordon of Multicam Systems. "Being the premier trade show for the woodworking industry, there are a lot of expectations placed on this event and we are pleased to say that these were easily met with sales exceeding our predictions."

Multicam Systems has been exhibiting at AWISA since 1996 and is a proud supporter of the woodworking industry and manufacturing in Australia.

This year, surrounded by a sea of imports, Multicam CNC routers stood as the only Australian manufactured CNC router to be on display at AWISA.

"We're very proud of the fact that Multicam CNC routers are able to compete against foreign imports," says Neil Winkcup, sales manager for Multicam Systems, NSW. "AWISA has proven to us that purchasers of CNC routers place a lot of emphasis on country of origin. The comments that we received from show attendees tell us that buyers want to support local manufacturers and are pleased to

do so when the product is of a world standard." adds Neil.

This year Multicam demonstrated a fully working nesting cell that featured automated material loading, processing and offloading of whiteboard sheets. The Multicam CNC routing machine that forms the backbone of the nesting cell was fitted with a travelling automatic tool changer, automatic drill head, barcode scanner, vacuum hold down and integrated dust collection system.

"The machinery that we displayed this year is typical of what companies involved in nested based manufacturing look to purchase to streamline their operations and increase productivity," says Phil Balzan, from Multicam's Melbourne office. "Because our machines are available in sizes to suit all standard material sizes, we can offer a solution that is tailor made to each individual company," added Phil.

"This year we celebrate 30 years in business. We have offices in NSW, Victoria and Queensland and we know full well that our dedication to our



product, our customers and our service is key to our success," says Kevin. "Customers know that when they buy from us they are supporting Australian made, and in doing so benefit from lower overall prices, prompt service with easy access to backup in training and spares should they ever need them," concludes Kevin.

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CNC the big winner from AWISA 2014



On the Gabbett Group AWISA 2014 stand the focus was on practical, relevant demonstrations.

"While there were a lot of high end, complex, expensive systems on display at the show – we decided to come at it from a different angle," said Lee Gabbett of Gabbett Machinery. "Our focus at AWISA 2014 was on displaying automation systems for every manufacturer – not just the top 1% who need to pump out 100 kitchens a week."

5 axis CNC machining

"With that in mind, the SCM Group's new Accord 5 axis technology is now among the most accessible on the market," commented Lee. "At AWISA 2014 we demonstrated some complex machining with our 3D race car demonstrations. It was popular with the crowd, but also demonstrates what can be achieved with this technology."

Nesting machines and design software

One of the most popular areas on the Gabbett Group stand was the XCAB nesting software demonstrations. Paul Edmunds, the nesting machine manager, explained how the new Xcab software works: 'We've designed a software that links seamlessly to the SCM product range – and kept the operation and user interface as simple as possible.'

"It's very easy to go from designing a kitchen on screen, down to the nesting machine, then on to assembly – XCAB nesting software really simplifies the nesting process."

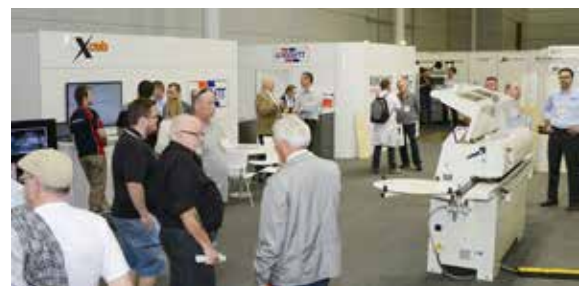
The XCAB software was teamed up with another new product release – the Pratika range of nesting machines. Small footprint, HSK toolholders, automatic tool changing, dedicated drilling head, oversized vacuum pump, aluminium table and a heap of safety features make this

an ideal machine for all cabinetmakers – so much so that AWISA 2014 saw the Australasian stock of machines run out, with forward orders now being taken.

The Ferrari for the workshop

SCM Group is famous for its standard machine range. The panel saws, thicknessers, planers and spindle moulders are second to none. This reputation is well deserved based on the latest release of the L'invincible range. Renowned for its Italian engineering and styling, these solid, robust machines are designed to work day in and day out. The range features a new design, upgraded control systems and increase safety systems.

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Versatile, individual and timelessly elegant - DWD XP Agantis

Movement clothed in timeless design has a name: DWD XP Agantis, the premium drawer system from Grass. Unpretentious and linear looks, flexible configuration and maximum movement comfort enable DWD XP Agantis to meet even the most discerning requirements in the kitchen furniture industry.

Uncompromising functionality at the highest level

For modern drawer systems, the fulfilment of top technical and functional requirements is an absolute must and therefore forms the basis for DWD XP Agantis. Well-conceived and perfectly matched product components guarantee high stability and a smooth glide for the synchronised full extension. The high load capacity of 40 kg or 60 kg, together with minimal deflection and good side stability, ensures that even heavily laden drawers can be moved with little effort. DWD XP Agantis provides a particularly user-friendly solution when used in combination with the Grass comfort systems Tipmatic Plus or Sensomatic

for simple, convenient opening and soft-close for gentle closure. The benefits of handle-free opening are then united with the elegance of damped closing action.

Differentiation through design

The product concept behind DWD XP Agantis successfully interprets a movement system as a key design statement. It focuses on the growing importance of design as a differentiating feature inside modern furniture. With a choice of a matt champagne or glossy white finish plus a wide selection of top-quality add-on and organising systems, the DWD XP Agantis drawer system provides the furniture manufacturer with optimum scope for styling a product while ensuring individuality, comfort and lifestyle through to the cabinet interior for the end user.

The linear, unpretentious drawer sides come in standard heights of 95 and 127 millimetres and can be extended by adding a rectangular-section railing and Agantis Top, an exclusive

8-millimetre glass panel. With this option, the flexible system is catering for the current trend favouring tall, slender drawer sides.

To maintain the design language of this designer piece, Grass developed special, flush-fitting cover caps which successfully continue the design concept down to the smallest individual component and give DWD XP its finishing touch as a functional eye-catcher for top-of-the-range furniture.

A globally successful company with over 1,750 employees at 19 locations, Grass ranks among the world's leading specialists in movement systems. Grass has been creating products such as slide and drawer systems, along with hinge, flap and corner cabinet systems, for more than 65 years.

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The premium drawer system DWD XP Agantis provides the furniture manufacturer with optimum scope for styling a product while ensuring individuality, comfort and lifestyle through to the cabinet interior for the end user.

Pole position in the world's second most important furniture market

The Homag Group acquired all voting rights in Stiles Machinery, USA, at the beginning of February, following talks between the companies that had been underway for the past year. Jürgen Köppel, the Homag Group board member who heads up the company's sales, service and marketing operations was part of the board team that worked on the takeover of the USA's largest machinery distributor.

Right: Board member Jürgen Köppel, who heads up the company's sales, service and marketing operations.

As Homag Automation, Bargstedt and Ligmatech develop intelligent solutions for effectively interlinking processing machines. They create solutions that ensure an efficient production flow, encompassing assembly and packaging. From series production to batch size 1: Homag Automation offers the optimal material flow for every performance class, making cost-efficient production a reality.

When asked about the background to this decision, Mr Köppel commented, "The Homag Group's strategy is to have its own sales and service organisation presence in all relevant markets. As a first step in this direction, we either participate in minority shareholdings or set up our own sites. The American furniture market has been the world's second largest furniture market for a considerable period of time, so it is a highly attractive market for our company. The Homag Group subsidiary Holzma had a 26.7 per cent minority shareholding in Stiles. After the acquisition, Stiles is now our largest sales and service organisation worldwide, and it is located in the world's second largest furniture production market."

"Two things are happening in America at the moment that make it an exciting market: Firstly, furniture design is changing and the modern look is becoming more prevalent, a trend that is strongly influenced by Europe. Secondly, in addition, many large companies are moving their production facilities back to America. The return to consumers wanting to 'buy American' is of course a fantastic advantage for us."



Mr Köppel went on to comment about the different way North American furniture is constructed. "There are still some things that are specific to America. But ever-increasing numbers of customers are switching to European construction methods – and one of the reasons behind this shift is the 'Ikea effect'. Many manufacturers can see the advantages of working without face frames and using high gloss or matt surfaces. This is another area in which the market is evolving, as it increasingly favours modern, European furniture.

Mr Köppel also commented on the recent decision of the Homag Group to bundle the activities of Ligmatech and Bargstedt in Homag Automation. "We took this step because we wanted to collaborate even more effectively within the Group for the benefit of our customers, and because we wanted to realize the potential synergies between the different areas. Both Ligmatech and Bargstedt possess excellent automation solutions. If we develop these solutions together, we will be able to do so more cost-effectively and hopefully also faster in the future. The idea behind the merger was to get products to market quicker and work together to increase the impact of the companies on the market. After all, if we can't provide the right solutions at the right time, others will."



"It may sound like a strange thing to say, but America is currently going through a phase of 'reindustrialisation'. Over the years the USA hasn't invested much in industry and has relied heavily on imports from China. But now American manufacturers want and need modern machinery. For us, this shift means that we need to build on the excellent structure that Stiles already has in place, using this as a basis to expand engineering capacity."

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This article is based on an interview conducted by Doris Bauer and Tino Eggert, published in the German magazine Möbelfertigung, issue 03/2014. By courtesy of Ferdinand Holzmann Verlag.



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Covering the financial risk of growing a business

Too often a business puts faith in a debtor when they say: "Don't worry; I know my account is late, but I will pay you". Too often the account is never paid and eventually the debtor falls into the grips of insolvency with no dividend to be paid. This article uncovers the truth about trade credit insurance, and explains what it can do for a business.

The only way to protect a business from debtor insolvency or non-payment is trade credit insurance. CMIB has entered into partnership with National Credit Insurance (Brokers) Pty Ltd (NCI) to find cost effective trade credit insurance policies for clients. NCI is the leading trade credit insurance broker in Australia; specialising in trade credit insurance and related credit management products such as credit risk management, collections, PPSA registrations, credit information and report writing.

CMIB has recognised through the extensive research from NCI that the rate of insolvencies for debtors is extremely high. NCI processed

over 107 insolvency claims in July 2014 and have an alarming amount of collection actions being conducted.

There are many advantages that trade credit insurance can bring to a business.

Preserve profit

Too often it is realised, after the fact, that a bad debt is actually a lost net profit. With a 5% profit margin, a \$50,000 failure can waste up to \$1,000,000 worth of sales. A bad debt reserve is not the answer as it won't put cash back in a business. Only a trade credit insurance policy will do this.

Protect liquidity and cashflow

A trade credit insurance claim payment can inject liquid funds back into the business. This is virtually an unlimited cash reserve for the balance sheet as a pre-planned tax deductible cost. If a best or largest debtor is hit with insolvency, it places enormous strain on cash flow and causing a domino effect resulting in unexpected bad debt.

Confidence to expand

A business will have the ability to grow with confidence, knowing that the cost of a potential failure has been covered. There will be no need to worry about the size of an exposure and a competitive advantage can be taken while competitors operate with uncertainty.

Strengthen credit management

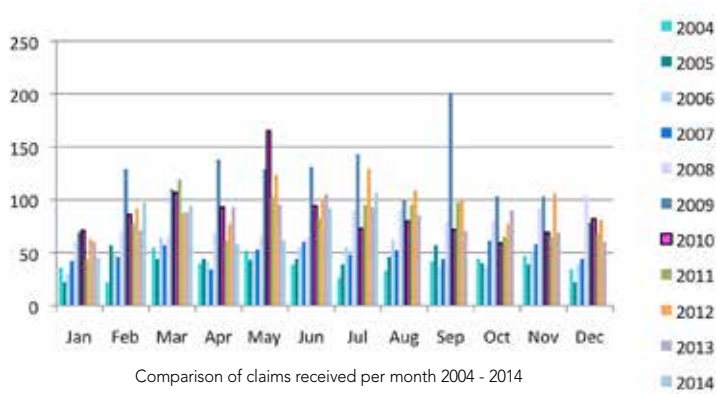
Through credit insurance, firm credit limit decisions are provided on larger debtors, based on sound analysis and information provided by NCI and the insurers.

Added security

Insuring a debtor's ledger will provide a new source of security to bankers and protects shareholders' assets.

Many suppliers into the cabinet, joinery, furniture, timber and joinery industries already have trade credit insurance. The risk is higher for those that are dealing directly with builders or developers, as they often take longer to pay their creditors. Before discounting this type of protection, a business should ask: "What would happen to the business if my largest debtor was to fall insolvent or simply not pay?"

For an introduction into premium levels to protect business from such risk, contact CMIB and in conjunction with NCI a cost effective solution will be found.



Comparison of claims received per month 2004 - 2014

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High-quality finishes throughout

A constantly greater volume of work and the ever increasing demand for better finishes has recently led two Sydney-based companies to invest in edgebanding machines.

Looking back on 15 years company history, Scarelli Joinery has grown to become a well-established business in Sydney. Starting just by himself in his backyard, business founder and director Michael Scarfo now employs 25 staff and has orders booked until June next year. With the increase in workload and to remain competitive, Mr Scarfo saw the need for a new edgebander. Knowing the market and based on previous experiences, the entrepreneur decided to purchase a Brandt Ambition 1440FC – a familiar name in the world when it comes to edgebanding.

Top: Michael Scarfo from Scarelli Joinery recently purchased a Brandt Ambition 1440FC edgebander and doesn't look back: "The Brandt is the best machine in regards to price and performance."

An example of Scarelli's commercial projects: the reception area of QBE in Parramatta, NSW.

German made state-of-art edgebanders

With an annual production of 2,000 edgebanding machines, German-made Brandt is not only the edgebanding specialist

in the Homag Group but also a world leader in its market segment. With over 50 years of engineering experience, Brandt ensures a state-of-art quality and a superb price-performance ratio. "Those machines are made to work," Mr Scarfo says, and points out some problems that he had in the past with equivalent competitor machines. "The Brandt is the best machine in regards to price and performance," Mr Scarfo admits. "I'd rather spend a few more dollars at the beginning and save in the long run."

Scarelli Joinery, based in the western Sydney suburb of Bankstown, creates work to the highest standard, providing professional and honest on-time service and reliable products. From "anything what the industry offers" to custom-built products, Scarelli prides itself to be very versatile. "If there is no demand for kitchens, then we make bathrooms instead," Mr Scarfo says. Predominantly, dealing with builders, the company's commercial and residential projects range from 10,000 dollars up to 3 million dollars. Regardless the size of the job, all work is treated equally and is finished to 100 per cent, Mr Scarfo emphasises.

Every business owner knows that the edgebanding capability forms a cornerstone for every cabinetmaking or joinery company to remain competitive. Consequently, getting the right equipment can make a remarkable difference to performance and profit. In order to compete and survive these days, Mr Scarfo sees a very simple return on investment: "The better the machines, the better your products."

Purpose-built to meet market requirements

The Brandt Ambition is equipped with a precision gluing unit, a tiltable end trim saw and multifunctional top/bottom trimming unit as well as a contour trimming unit and a corner rounding unit. The joint trimming unit is used to remove laminate chipping, chatter marks from machining and swelling material. Brandt also ensures a perfect finish by radius scrapper and a buffing unit. By having an automatic edge infeed device, the edge can be changed without opening the hood – an important feature which is highly appreciated by Michael Scarfo.

"All our Brandt edgebanders sold in Australia are purpose-built to specifications our market requires," states Homag Australia's technical sales executive Alex Muscat. Depending on individual needs, the Brandt Ambition is available in different sizes from entry-level to industrial trade and therefore, offers the right solution for every requirement. With a feed speed of 14 m/min and an edge thickness of 0.4 to 8 mm, the Brandt Ambition 1400 series, in particular, works a lot faster and requires no further cleaning of the edges – a result which is made possible by pre-milling.



Pre-milling saves time and further cleaning

Mr Scarfo was not looking into the pre-milling feature but when Alex from Homag introduced it to him, he started to like it – and has never looked back. “Many joineries deal with inconsistent materials and variable board thicknesses and shapes that require special attention on the edge strip,” says Alex Muscat. By using pre-milling, the issues can be reduced by re-trimming the edge immediately prior to the edge tape being applied. If the pre-milling unit is not needed, it can be easily turned off.

When comparing the size of the machine, the Brandt edgebander won over its competitors, Mr Scarfo admits in consideration to his workshop size of 1200 square metres. He was looking for a machine that fits perfectly in the back corner. “It is a nice compact machine that takes up little space,” the 44-year old business owner says. Even though he does not operate the machines on a regular basis, he still knows how they work. Michael Scarfo, cabinetmaker, joiner and carpenter by trade, wants to keep up to date with the new technology.

Regular maintenance to maximise machine availability

When he started to grow his business back in 2003, his first major purchased machine was a Holzma beam saw from the Homag Group – and it’s still running after 12 years. Mr Scarfo does look after his machines by cleaning them on a daily basis and getting an annual service check by Homag. He compares the importance of regular maintenance of a machine with a car: “If you don’t service it, it will likely break down one day.” In order to maximise machine reliability and an early detection of wear-related interruptions, regular service checks are highly recommended. Homag Australia offers a routine maintenance program which includes scheduled visits to maintain the machine, telephone support service and special rates on spare parts and operator trainings. And it all pays off at the end of the day.

Having had an older Brandt model for several years, Sydney-based Austracraft Shopfitters also know about regular machine maintenance to keep them in good working order. Never having problems in the past, Austracraft founder and owner George Tchaprastian was looking to complement their existing Brandt edgebander, and therefore, was already familiar with the benefits of the German machine supplier. “We always used Homag edgebanders, and we always will,” Mr Tchaprastian says. “They are reliable machines. Why would you change?” With the new Brandt Ambition 1650FC work can be completed much quicker, and it all goes in line with Mr Tchaprastian’s philosophy: “Achieving maximum results with minimum labour”.



Passion for highest customer satisfaction

Austracraft Shopfitters, located in the western Sydney suburb of Silverwater, is a small family-run business – consisting of company founder and director George Tchaprastian and son Raffy who is responsible for project management, and additionally two more tradesmen. With more than 23 years of experience, the company has established a reputation for quality craftsmanship and service, and specialises in shopfitting and office fit outs as well as project management, commercial and residential detailed joinery, exhibition and displays and construction.

When George started the business in 1983 in Marrickville, he realised a dream of owning a company. Now 31 years later, he still puts his heart and soul into to achieve total client satisfaction. “If we want to finish a job in 4 weeks, we

Top: Austracraft founder and director George Tchaprastian and son Raffy with their new Brandt Ambition 1650FC that, as Mr Tchaprastian says: “Achieves maximum results with minimum labour”.

The new Brandt Ambition 1650FC, equipped with the Homag Group’s multitouch display PowerTouch.

► finish it in 3.5 weeks,” George Tchaprazian says. “We always give 110 per cent.” This passion – without a doubt – has grown over the years and is shared by son Raffy. He joined the business in 2006 after completing his degree in building construction management. Raffy: “I love my work, and my family motivates me every day.” With lots of enthusiasm, both father and son have set themselves ambitious goals for the family-run business. Increasing turnover and growing three times bigger are serious objectives. In order to ensure that goals do not remain simply visions, Austracraft have invested in a new Brandt edgebander and are now moving on to the next phase of their further development. Keeping hardware and software regularly updated on the machinery, ensures quality finishes meeting customer satisfaction.

Invisible joint and touch screen technology

Quality expectations become more and more important in the furniture industry as well as the trend towards invisible joints. Optionally, the Brandt Ambition 1400, 1600 and

1800 series are also available with AirTec – for invisible zero joints and high-class finishes. In case of this technology, the functional layer is reactivated by compressed hot air providing a seamless adhesion of edge to substrate. Homag Australia’s Alex Muscat lists a few benefits of AirTec: “It reduces edgebander set-up, cleaning and maintenance times; and also increases resistance of the finished board to heat and moisture and provides a long-term, seam-free bond.

In addition, the AirTec technology enhances aesthetic appeal with no joints to collect dirt or yellow and meets virtually any design requirement with a range of material, colour and print options.” In summary, the zero joint technology has transformed furniture production and is now a quality benchmark for edge processing.

The new Brandt 1650FC is also equipped with the Homag Group’s multitouch display PowerTouch. Austracraft were the first company in Australia who received a Brandt



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edgebander with PowerTouch. The operating panel with full HD display in widescreen format creates clear and high-contrast images. Furthermore, it has ergonomic touch operation with gestures such as scrolling and swiping for simple navigation and intuitive operation of the machine.

The machine data captures important operating figures such as number of pieces, production time or edge material quantity. "It's much easier to operate the machine", Raffy Tchaprastian says, "and it only needs a basic understanding of computers."

However, common to both Austracraft Shopfitters and Scarelli Joinery, are their striving to keep up with the latest innovation in technology. This is, as they say, one of the most important key factors to achieve the highest standard of products – and thereby, to keep their good reputation and eventually grow their business.

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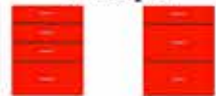


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Airtight dominates dust control work at AWISA 2014

Airtight Solutions is a leading supplier of air pollution control systems and filtration solutions across industries. The company's dominant market position in the wood industry was evident at the recent AWISA 2014. We spoke with Mr. Stig Brixen, general manager of Airtight Solutions, to learn the reasons behind the company's success.

"Airtight has become the preferred supplier to the largest wood working manufacturers and machinery suppliers in Australia and NZ. It is no coincidence when fierce competitors like Biesse, Homag, Weinig and The Wood Tech Group, all commission Airtight's expertise for superior dust extraction results for the all important AWISA 2014 event".

For years Airtight has quietly built a reputation for performance, reliability and service that is second to none. "Our strength is in our engineering background and proven ability to provide premium solutions of unrivalled reliability, quality, performance and efficiency".

"The AWISA platform allows us to demonstrate this in live operations and in direct comparison to opposition products".

"This was particular evident at the Biesse, Homag and The Wood Tech Group stands



where our modular NFS Reverse Airflow extractors demonstrated outstanding performance and quiet operation".

"Airtight is a one stop shop for the industry. We offer shredders, briquetting presses, burners/heat plants, duct/hoses, service/installations and energy saving products saving our clients thousands of dollars every year", Stig explains.

With thousands of dust control systems installed, Airtight Solutions combines with its own expertise the experience

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Hinging business

HINGES are an essential part of cabinet making and joinery but what does the industry know about the origins of this critical, sometimes taken-for-granted component of every cabinet, most joinery items and furniture?

Hinges have caused a revolution in the way we build houses, cabinets, furniture and secure our possessions. You benefit from hinges many times each day even before you get to work without even realizing it.

The history of the hinge stretches so far back into antiquity that archaeologists are not sure of its exact origin. While many metal hinges remain from periods dating back 5500 years, there is also evidence from later cultures that wood and stone hinges were made well before the Bronze Age.

The first door hinges uncovered by archaeologists are from the massive wooden doors of the gates to Hattusa, the ancient capitol of the Turkish Hittite Empire. They date from about 1600BC.

Hinges also have been found in ancient Egyptian and Roman ruins and in ancient societies in Africa, Asia and Europe. Many of these very early hinges were bronze door hinges. Metal was expensive and labour-intensive to fabricate, so ancient emperors who wished to show how powerful they thought they were used their wealth to purchase metal hinges. As knowledge of metallurgy spread and cultures worldwide discovered methods of creating alloys like brass and steel, the production of hinges increased.

Metalwork advanced during the medieval period and common people

began using hinged-doors in their houses. Local blacksmiths could create wrought iron hinges at affordable prices. However, the upper-class still constructed large castles and palaces with big doors requiring the load-bearing power of large scale hinges. These are still visible in old castles preserved in Europe - massive oak doors with wrought iron hinges which stretch across the entire door face.

When steam power and industrialisation began in earnest, the hinge found itself in the middle of a manufacturing explosion. With so many mechanical advances over such a short period, there were all sorts of machines requiring hinged parts. Complex hinges could be manufactured faster and at a fraction of the cost of their predecessors. The nineteenth century saw many hinge innovations, including hinges with ball bearings for smoother opening and hinges with decorative finishes. More-and-more products with hinges entered daily life.

So fast forward to 2014 and while hinges still remain at the centre of cabinet-making, the cabinet hardware inventory has never been better stocked. However, hinges are still the flagship hardware item for many companies.

Development, performance and cost remain litmus tests for the modern hinge in an extremely competitive, innovative-driven industry. Technology trends tell us to expect the hinge to further evolve. So keep your eye on the further development of the humble hinge - you will certainly be surprised.



Innovative opening function. Push to open Silent for ArciTech

Engineered by Hettich, ArciTech and the new push to open Silent function culminate in a drawer system that combines a mechanical push to open mechanism with the convenience and luxurious feel of Silent System. In particular, the system impresses with narrow gaps between drawer fronts and an opening distance that's second to none. The result: classy handleless design and high user convenience from using standard ArciTech drawer elements for cost-effective production.

Working on an all-mechanical basis, push to open Silent manages to do what has previously only been possible with electromechanical systems: It brings together handleless design with a high level of drawer opening and closing convenience. The push to open Silent mechanism is triggered simply by pressing the drawer front. In most cases, the large self-opening distance makes it unnecessary to pull the drawer out any further, saving time and particularly convenient if hands happen to be full. Closing the drawer automatically reloads the push to open mechanism before the drawer glides home in a gently softened movement.

Benefiting from cleverly devised setting capabilities, push to open Silent perfectly adjusts to different drawer sizes and weights. Adjustable release sensitivity and opening force provide a high level of convenience throughout. The integrated depth adjustment facility permits perfect front panel alignment with narrow gap between drawer fronts.

Push to open Silent makes it easy to create handleless kitchens and furniture because drawers, runners, carcasses and front panels can be used without having to alter them. The mechanism simply fits under the drawer base, scoring in particular where there's no room for an electromechanical system behind the drawer.

An ArciTech drawer is distinguished by its unequalled running action and exceptional stability. The Actro runner's prism principle gives it impressively smooth, even running performance. ArciTech caters to loading categories 40, 60 and 80kg with push to open Silent being available on 40 and 60kg drawers. The broad product line-up based on a single platform now features the new silver and anthracite drawer side profile colour in addition to white. ArciTech is available in two drawer side profile and six rear panel heights. For the high-end segment, the range comes with the option of a 126 mm side profile height with Design Side in glass or TopSide and rear panel height of 250 mm.

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ArciTech from Hettich is the drawer system for high-quality kitchens with the innovative push to open Silent opening function.



Amazing storage

August saw Brisbane play host to AWISA 2014 and Hodge Systems Pty Ltd took the opportunity to showcase the latest developments in its program of Tambortech doors and aluminium framed Alsert doors.

Alsert doors

For the first time, visitors were able to see and feel the vast selection of profiles and inserts Alsert Doors has to offer – the most extensive range available in the Australian market.

The full range of aluminium profiles were on display including new finishes - powder coated gloss white, anodised gloss steel and anodised gloss black 50/08 box profiles which complement the existing clear anodised and anodised brushed stainless.

Also on show, was the variety of Alsert Doors inserts: toughened glass, laminated glass, mirrors, painted toughened glass and acrylics. Also, Metaline, Alucobond, Zenolite, Stylelite, decorative MDF and laminates, with particular interest shown in the new starphire printed toughened glass and aluminium mesh.

The kitchen and entertainment unit displays highlighted the versatility of the Alsert Box profile door applications and included hinged (both soft close and touch to open), sliding, bi-fold, Aventos and drawer fronts. Many of the clear anodised frame doors were fitted with Alsert Doors new integrated handle.



Tambortech doors

This display certainly opened the eyes of many cabinetmakers who limit their use of tambour door to small appliance cupboards.

The Tambortech doors created a lot of interest and visitors were amazed at the scope of functional applications and design concepts on display – storage that is amazing.

The full height appliance/beverage cupboard and electric models were a surprise to many while the Tambortech splashback and benchtop pantry solutions were an absolute revelation. These pantries are within arm's reach and yet completely childproof.

The concept of placing a pantry in the heart of the kitchen preparation area also generated genuine interest and the Tambortech solution to concealing the clutter in both the laundry and TV unit provoked enthusiastic comment.

For most cabinetmakers and designers, AWISA presented their first opportunity to experience the combination of Tambortech doors and Alsert doors utilizing the matching aluminium anodised finishes in clear satin, gloss steel, brushed stainless and gloss black. A practical and modern storage solution.

Competition results

At the exhibition, Hodge Systems Pty Ltd ran a competition asking visitors to guess how many cans of tomatoes were in a 2400mm wide benchtop pantry.

Trent Willmott from Appearance Cabinets (pictured with Richard from Hodge Systems) and Roland Luhmann from Raumplus guessed correctly.

Congratulations to the lucky draw winner, Nigel Mifsud from Aria Kitchens. Access the QR code with a smartphone to discover how many cans were in the pantry.

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As featured in the picture, a 15 litre Hideaway Bin has been incorporated into the desk drawer during the remodelling project of the BHWL Chartered Accountant's offices based in Auckland, New Zealand.

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away when the unit closes complementing the minimalist design of this office environment.

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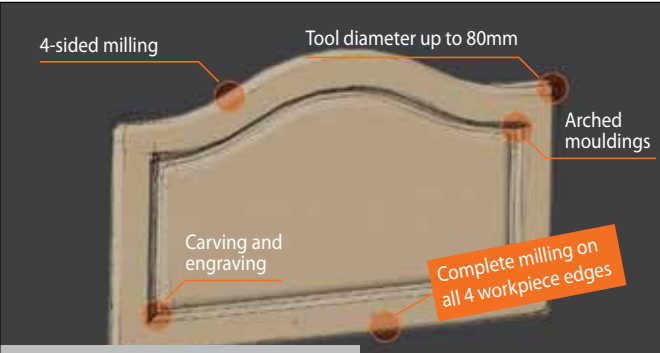
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The AWISA exhibition heads to Melbourne in 2016

WHEN AWISA 2016 opens its door in 2016 it will be 26 years since the exhibition last took place in Melbourne, at the Royal Exhibition Building. This building was not up to handling the complexities of a show like AWISA, so in 1992 the exhibition moved to Darling Harbour in Sydney, and stayed there until the NSW state government made the decision to re-develop the exhibition centre. So, in 2014 the show moved to Brisbane, and in 2016 it moves to Melbourne. There is a high probability that the show will in future follow a routine of being at each of these cities every six years.

AWISA 2016 will take place at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. The centre, which opened in 1996, has hosted many exhibitions with the complex needs of an event like AWISA – machine tool shows, packaging, printing, and plastics events.

AWISA 2016 will take place from 6-9 July 2016. Information for exhibitors will be available late this year, with the formal booking process commencing in February/March 2015. Enquiries are welcome. Contact AWISA at 02 9918 3661 or info@awisa.com. ■



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AWISA The Association



AWISA was formed in 1986 by the principal suppliers to the Australian woodworking industry. The main aims of the association are to present industry exhibitions, publish industry magazines, co-operate with other organisations, and to uphold the highest ethical standards and encourage members to do the same.

Membership applications are welcome from Australian based companies, and from overseas companies with Australian agents or distributors that are also members of AWISA. Membership of AWISA includes suppliers of woodworking machinery, cabinet and furniture hardware, panel products and surface materials, portable tools, computer software, materials handling equipment, dust extraction equipment, components, and general plant and safety equipment.

AWISA The Exhibition



The exhibition has been held regularly since 1988, and attracts furniture manufacturers, cabinet makers, kitchen manufacturers, joiners, shop and office fitters, and other wood, timber and panel processing industries. Architects and interior designers also attend.

The next AWISA exhibition will take place in Melbourne from 6-9 July 2016 at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre. For more information visit awisa.com or phone Geoff Holland on 0412 361 580.

AWISA The Magazine



AWISA's magazine is published quarterly and is distributed free to a database of over 14,000 end users in the industry. AWISA's editorial policy is to produce quality editorial about business and technical issues that affect the woodworking industry, and to provide members with a means of disseminating information about their products. The association welcomes input from both members and end users about subjects that should be written about in the magazine.

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DISTRIBUTION

AWISA – The Magazine is distributed free to a list made up of companies that attended the last three AWISA exhibitions, plus the client databases of some major AWISA members. To be added to the distribution list send an email to info@awisa.com or send a fax to 02 9918 7764. (AWISA Ltd may at some time in the future charge a subscription for personally addressed magazines)



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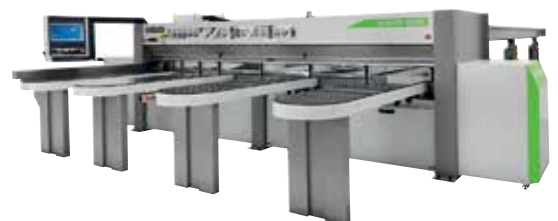
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