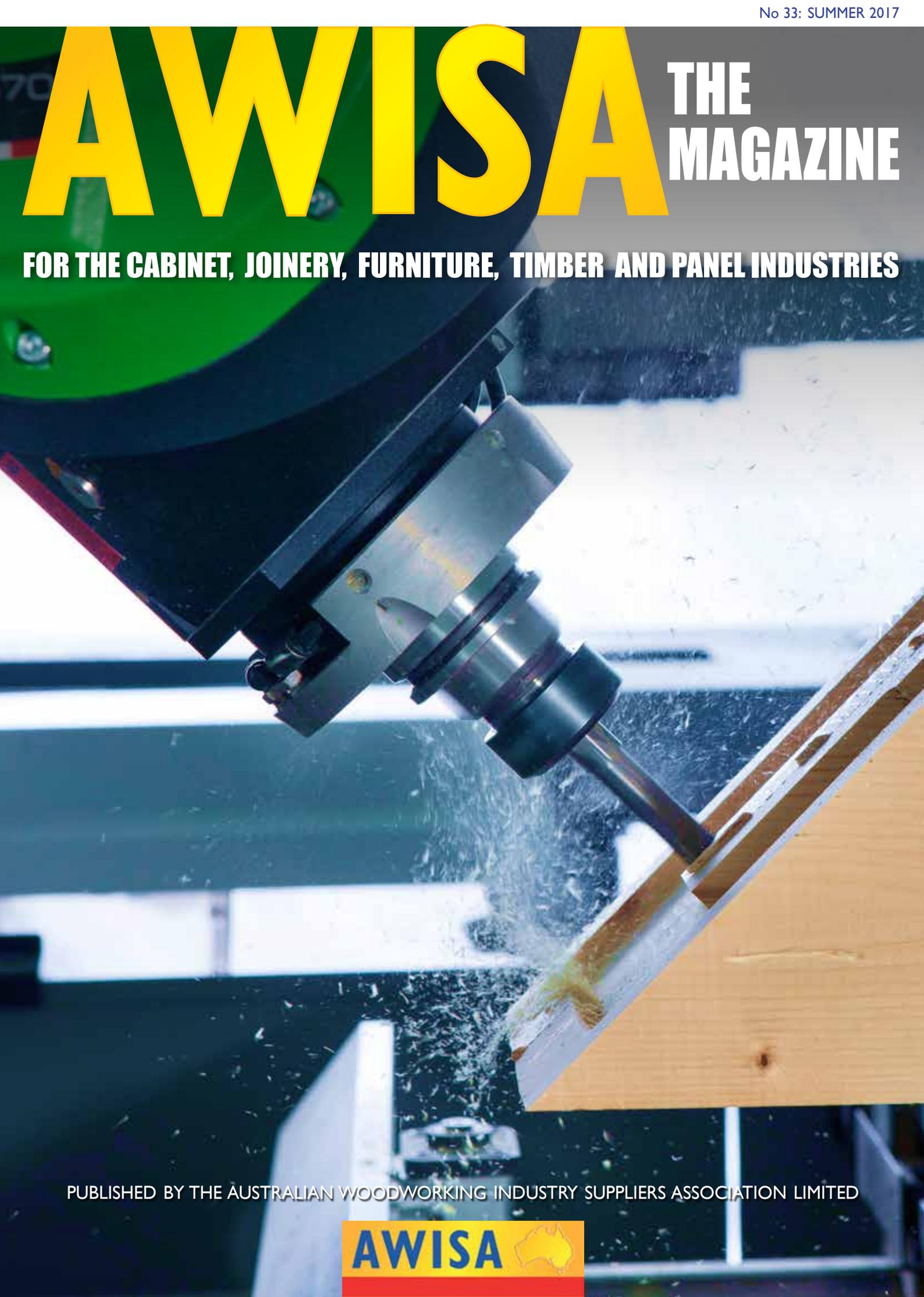


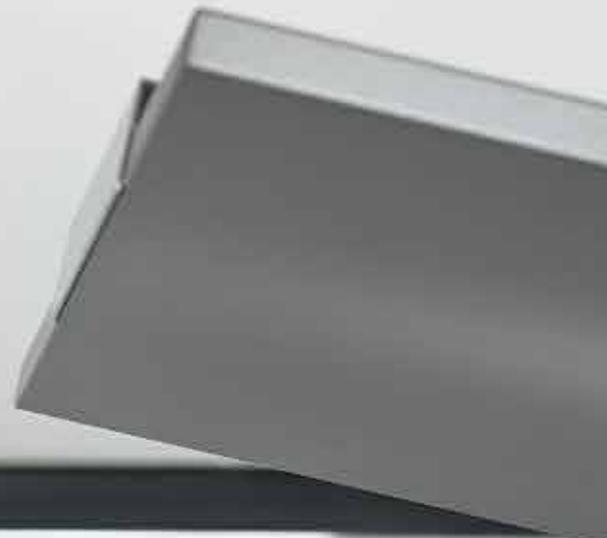
# AWISA THE MAGAZINE

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



PUBLISHED BY THE AUSTRALIAN WOODWORKING INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION LIMITED





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# AWISA THE MAGAZINE

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advertising enquiries are welcome.

## DEAR READER,

As I checked the final layout of this issue of our magazine, the word that came to mind as I read some of the stories was 'enthusiasm'. There is the enthusiasm of young designer and furniture maker Elliot Holdstock on the next page, and the enthusiasm of legally blind designer-maker Duncan Meering, who has successfully exhibited overseas - see page 42.

The other evidence of enthusiasm is the standard of the entries and of the winners in the various awards that are featured in this issue. Winners in the Furnishing Industry Association of Australia awards, the Kitchen and Bathroom Designers Institute awards, and the Fenestration Australia Design Awards are featured. We only have room to show some of each groups' winners, but a visit to their websites will reward readers with details of all their winners.

But as 2017 comes to an end, it's time to talk about the great example of enthusiasm that will be on show in 2018. Suppliers to the woodworking industry have reacted enthusiastically to AWISA's decision to bring the AWISA exhibition back to Sydney and to use the remarkable new facilities at Darling Harbour, the new ICC Sydney Exhibition Centre.

To give a sense of the size of AWISA 2018 to those that have visited previous AWISA exhibitions, the machinery part of the show will be the same size as the entire show in 2016. The AWISA-Design exhibition, featuring hardware, components, materials and decorative products will be in separate halls above the machinery halls. In total area the show will be 30% bigger than any previous AWISA exhibition.

In the new year, AWISA looks forward to bringing information to the industry about all that will be happening at AWISA 2018. We look forward to seeing you in Sydney from 4-7 July 2018.

## Geoff Holland

General manager  
Australian Woodworking Industry  
Suppliers Association Limited

FRONT COVER: 5 axis routing of solid  
timber. Image of Biesse Rover C machine  
courtesy of Biesse Group Australia.

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by Rob Ditessa

# A passion to be a furniture maker

**DESPITE THE ALLURE** of running a large venture with its potential for profit and position, Elliot Holdstock decided his furniture and joinery business should stay small. Sitting at his work table, he gazes over a lounge chair, and a stool, he has been working on, and quietly reflects, "The thing I will mention about my business is that I like it small because I'm on the tools. I have control of everything, whereas I know some people who have taken on people in their business on a much larger scale, and they are just on the paper work. They have people building for them. I think as furniture makers we start businesses because we love making things. If you're not making, you're just running a business, and that's essentially not what we start out to do."

He is not sure where the passion for timber and woodwork originated, to turn a chunk of wood into a piece of art, or something practical and functional. When he was a youngster, most times you would find him working on a wood project in the backyard. It was the place he always made a bee-line for, after returning home from school.

His family, who had professional backgrounds in the legal and managerial fields, were very encouraging. His high school woodworking teacher soon identified Holdstock's talent and creativity but also the drive that would propel the youngster along a career working in wood. The teacher suggested studying at the Sturt School for Wood in Mittagong (NSW) to gain qualifications and cultivate his skills.

After graduating from Sturt he felt unsure about the future, and he wanted to travel. Work included time in motorcycle mechanic shops. Travel included Japan where in Osaka he met the famed

Tokuhiko Kise of Truck Furniture, whose mission is to respect the properties of the materials used, to never pursue novelty for its own sake, and to create furniture that can be used for a long time. Energised by this meeting and inspired by the Japanese traditional methods of working with wood he discovered there, Holdstock decided on his return to Australia to challenge himself by setting up his own furniture making business, as an independent artisan.

"I wasn't hesitant. I thought I'd give it a go. I thought if it doesn't work, it doesn't work. And here I am, years later. At the start, I used to want and plan to have quite a large business with people working with me, and to establish a recognisable brand Australia wide. But now after seeing how things work and doing it, I like it to be quite small. However, I would like to at some point, and soon, to get my own workshop somewhere where I can live as well. Workshop and home together would be nice." He does continue though that he would like to attract clients from a greater area of Australia. What about a commission from overseas? He ponders to answer, "I guess that would be pretty cool actually, though I just think it would be a lot of hassle."

His work comes through word-of-mouth referrals from clients, who, as he says, find satisfaction in the exclusive nature of his design and work, and the depth of his engagement with them in the conceptualisation of a project. Holdstock's mission is to build a piece properly so that it will last a very long time. While he is equally committed to quality work in the commercial work he does, by its nature he is less involved in the design and development of the specs. He prefers the domestic work. "I get a



Photos: Holdstock



Photos: Holdstock

lot of satisfaction out of that. You drop off a table, say, to a family, and they love the piece, and it looks perfect in their home. I do enjoy that," he sums up.

The scope of Holdstock's work is broad ranging, and the size of any piece is limited by the area of his working space. While preferring to make big pieces, he will craft small items such as boxes. People just do not understand that there is as much work in a box, as in a bench or a table, he laments. "I like to think I do draw a lot of inspiration from Japanese furniture and Japanese design. I do a little bit of Scandinavian, but I try not to do too much of that. But in the end a lot of my work is

what the clients want of course. When I do my own pieces, for myself, they are definitely Japanese inspired. I do a lot of that. It is very honest and humble, I think."

Picking up the stool on the work bench, Holdstock explains how in Japan he was introduced to a different way of making furniture. The distinctive joinery, as well as the shape, form, colour and clean lines, were impressive. The stool is an example of Japanese influenced work. The joinery is very complex, he explains. It is exposed, and the timber holds itself. The way it is made is not hidden. It becomes part of the piece, he enthuses. ▶



Photo: Ditezza



Photo: Holdstock

► He continues his talk with AWISA to reveal, "I had all this ambition before I started, with big dreams of doing creative and crazy stuff, outside of the envelope, but the business has to provide a livelihood." He created pieces that were more conceptual. While he has moved away from that a bit, he is still interested in making pieces that are out of the 'box', making his 'art' pieces for people who want something different. Making custom furniture gives an opportunity of making something crazy that people like, he says. An example he points to, he describes as very conceptual, "a cabinet that did not look or function like a cabinet, and would not be used as a cabinet. It was more an art piece."

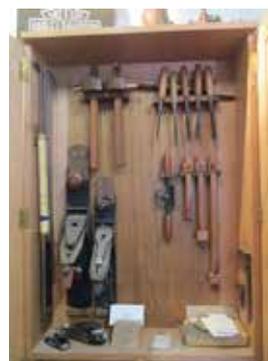
Behind Holdstock, a fine looking cabinet hangs on the wall. It is his tool cabinet, complete with drawers to house everything tidily. He made it at Sturt and he has also made most of the tools in it. There is a diagonal gauge he made using New Guinea rosewood. For the marking gauges, he used Tasmanian blackwood. The dovetail saw takes pride of place. "I shaped the handle to custom fit. I also made the blades. This is stainless with a brass back on it. I actually cut all these teeth by hand, with a file. It is very fine." There is a small Japanese chisel, and a favourite is a Japanese handsaw he purchased at the Osaka markets in Japan. Unlike a European saw that cuts on the push, a Japanese handsaw cuts on the pull. He likes this tool for its comfort, and precision control it gives him. "I love these tools. Here's one with inlaid brass. These tools are very sentimental to me."

The consideration that while a Japanese handsaw is an exceptionally fine and precise tool, it can be damaged if used carelessly with hardwood, leads Holdstock to talk about his use of wood. In thinking through the details of a project with a client, he runs through with them the selection of wood, Australian or foreign timber, colours, if they want a straight grain or a feature grain through it, and how loud they want the piece. Price can be a factor. People, he says, are surprised by the cost of local timber in comparison with imported timber, and that Australian timbers are amongst the hardest

timbers in the world, hard to work with and hard on the tools. He enjoys using blackwood because it is a bit softer and is a quite dark timber. Jarrah is a harder timber. His favourites of the American timbers include the hard rock maple, black walnut, and the oak which looks great with a stain or even in its natural blonde colour. It is softer and easier to cut and sand.

Holdstock works in a communal work space, where the big machinery is owned jointly, but each operator owns his own tools. There are many advantages to working in a shared space. "The advantages are that there are people around, it's a good atmosphere and there is always a helping hand if you need something lifted. The disadvantages are that sometimes it can be a bit messy, and sometimes you've got to wait for the machines, but that doesn't happen very often because there's not many of us," he explains. There is a Felder FB 610 band saw, a Felder AD 741 planer/thicknesser, and a Felder K 700 S panel saw. "The Felder K 700 S is used for cutting sheets but I also use it daily for cutting solid timber too. It's very accurate and easy to use. I would say it's the most important piece of machinery along with the dust extraction."

Surveying his domain, Holdstock says he never sets tight deadlines. He works out a timeline with a client so that the client understands the progress of work on a piece, and is prepared to wait for a personally hand-made quality product that will last a long time. ■



Photos: Driessa

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# FIAA Industry Awards Night 2017

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It's been 14 years since the Furnishing Industry Association of Australia (FIAA) held its last Industry Awards Night. The re-launch of this event saw over 100 entries submitted across 13 categories. Submissions were open to all within the industry, both FIAA members and non-members.

The judging panel included: Ron Redman (Blum), George Abagi (Polytec) and Geoff Holland (AWISA). The judging process was anonymous with any reference to company names removed from the nomination form to ensure anonymity with the judges.

The awards ceremony was held on Friday 22 September at the National Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour, hosted by Tim Woods from Industry Edge. It was a sell-out. A fantastic night recognising the amazing talent and craftsmanship within the industry.

An FIAA Lifetime Membership award was presented to Ron Scott in recognition of his time as FIAA president, FIAA board member and for his service to the industry. David Hoare was recognised for his service to industry training.

FIAA thanked everyone who entered and travelled to be part of the awards night, in particular the sponsors: Polytec, Finlease, EWPAA, Planit Cutting Edge Solutions, New Age Veneers, AWISA 2018, The Kitchen & Bathroom Blog, IJS Plus and First Super.

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FURNISHING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA  
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## AWARD CATEGORIES AND WINNERS

### **Apprentice of the Year Furniture NSW/ACT:**

Douglas Keith (from Myles Gostelow Furniture Design Craftsman)

### **Apprentice of the Year Cabinetmaker NSW/ACT:**

Tom Bingley (Select Custom Joinery)

### **Best Commercial Furniture:**

Winchester Interiors Pty Ltd

### **Best Free-Standing Furniture:**

Artifex Interiors Pty Ltd

### **Best In-Built Furniture:**

Debrich Custom Joinery Pty Ltd

### **Best Soft Furnishings:**

Stitches Soft Furnishings t/as No Chinz

### **Best Kitchen Under \$20,000:**

Kenross Kitchens

### **Best Kitchen \$20,000 - \$35,000:**

Kastell Kitchens

### **Best Kitchen \$35,000 - \$60,000:**

Art of Kitchens Pty Ltd

### **Best Kitchen \$60,000 - \$80,000:**

Apollo Kitchens (NSW) Pty Ltd – Sydney

### **Best Kitchen Over \$80,000:**

Debrich Custom Joinery Pty Ltd

### **Trade Champion of the Year:**

Logan Tomajek (Castlewood Kitchens)

### **Workplace Champion of the Year:**

Brett Beaty (Goolwa Kitchens & Wardrobes)



**Winner: Design of the Year: Winchester Interiors Pty Ltd**

The Angel Place Hotel is an iconic landmark located on Pitt Street Sydney. Built in the 1880's, the building is a rare example of Victoria Gothic style with its unique combination of pointed and semicircular arches. The building has served a number of purposes over the years but none more well known than as the House of Merivale/ Mr Johns Custom Clothing/Formalwear. J&M Bar is a tribute to the late John Hemmes and his wife Merivale.

A building with unique, heritage listed characteristics such as this one needed a specialist team to bring this project to life. Acme & Co was appointed as the architectural designer with Winchester Interiors Pty Ltd appointed to build all the joinery and related work.

The result was a classic antique detail incorporating some of the building's history. The aura of faded glory was enhanced by the addition of bespoke layers, from the avant-garde bar joinery, haberdashery cabinetry, leather banquette seating and lighting. It also showcases a well-stocked bar caught somewhere in the 1950s.

Materials needed to be hard wearing with an aged appearance. Blackbutt was featured prominently and was wire brushed, burnished and stained. A combination of new and traditional techniques was used to achieve the classic aged detail in regards to the brass, antique mirrors, archway moulding and built in joinery scribing.

Mathew Watson from Winchester Interiors Pty Ltd submitted this project into the FIAA Industry Awards 2017. This project won Best Commercial Furniture 2017 as well as Design of the Year 2017.

The judges' comments were "a beautiful display of craftsmanship in the curvature and detail of joinery"; "Ability to interpret architectural design and incorporate the history of building within the joinery"; "Ability to work in and around the historical restrictions of the heritage building".





► Winner: Outstanding Achievement of the Year: Douglas Keith

FIAA congratulated Douglas Keith on winning Outstanding Achievement of the Year. Douglas was also awarded 2017 FIAA Apprentice of the Year, Furniture NSW/ACT.

Douglas demonstrated exceptional skills, knowledge and craftsmanship of his trade. His commitment for woodworking is clearly evident throughout his 2017 coffee table portfolio. His statement of intent was to make a modern style coffee table which had multiple round legs and round table top.

Upon reviewing his submission, the judges provided the following comments "Beautiful display of craftsmanship"; "Extremely high standard of work"; "His portfolio clearly shows his passion for his trade".

Douglas is in his final apprenticeship year with Myles Gostelow, a highly renowned fine furniture maker and designer based in the ACT. Myles says "Doug's continued effort, enthusiasm and commitment to the craft have left me no doubt as to his suitability and value as a full-time employee. He is executing projects with a level of professionalism and attention to detail that is outstanding."



Fred White, president of FIAA (left) with Douglas Keith, and Dave Gover, EWPA.

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by John Halkett

# Hardwood timber demand and supply trends and complexities

**THE CURRENT** Australian hardwood demand and supply situation is both interesting and complex. Continuing supply reductions and associated sovereign risk related to ongoing hardwood log supplies from domestic native forest is causing disquiet in the timber supply chain. Also, with changing product preferences and structural product substitution being contributing factors, there is a clear downward trend on the demand side.

Whilst overall hardwood consumption in Australia has declined, medium term predictions of building and construction strength suggest that hardwood demand will stabilise. With domestic hardwood log supplies in decline the probability is that imports of medium density (700-900 kg/m<sup>3</sup>) darker colour hardwoods sourced from PNG and Southeast Asia are likely to increase.

### Housing trends

There is evidence that the housing market is starting to ease, and that this may continue in the immediate future. As a consequence domestic building activity has deteriorated by about 5-10 per cent (see Chart 1). This coupled with a trend towards apartments, rather than detached housing, has implications for the timber industry.

### Demand side trends

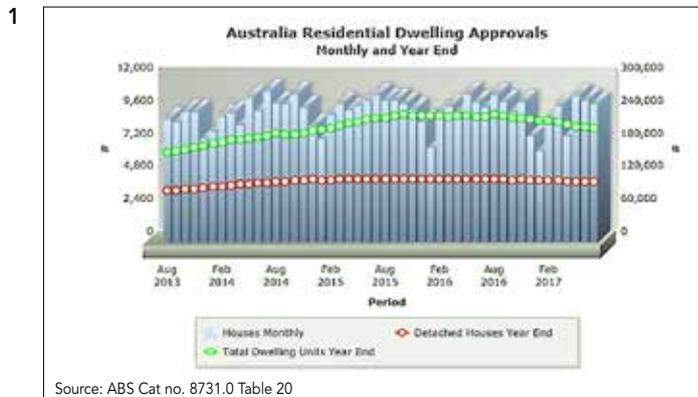
Notable factors on the demand side of the hardwood timber industry are:

1. A strong preference in long established hardwood applications, notably flooring, to use laminated and other engineered wood products (EWPs), rather than traditional solid timber products is evident.
2. The apparent continuing shift in timber product type demand driven in part by offsite manufacturing; the import of prefabricated building components, and increased emphasis on EWPs like LVL, plywood and CLT is certain to continue. This trend may exacerbate the weakness in more traditional hardwood structural and other solid timber product markets.

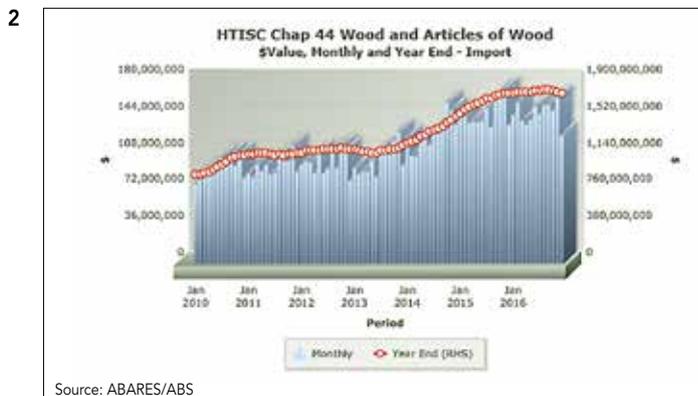
Product changes and substitution explain in part the decline in demand that is tracking down with supply. This appears to be contrary to the normal economic 'laws' of supply and demand that conventionally suggest that the decline in domestic production would be offset by an increase in imports. However, in the face of medium term residential house growth exceeding 200,000 starts a year, and the additions and alterations market at about \$10 billion a year, this demand side strength is likely to see hardwood product consumption increase over the medium term.

### Import changes

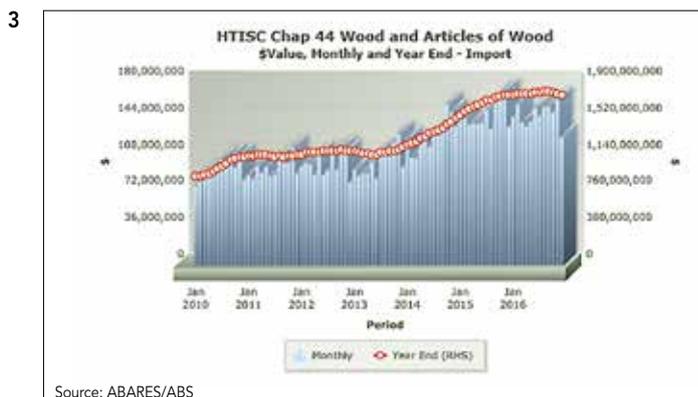
Changes to the nature of hardwood timber imports and product use preferences are topical aspects of the timber industry in Australia. At a time of overall increases in imported timber volumes (see Chart 2) traditional tropical hardwood timber imports are declining (see Chart 3), whereas engineered wood products are increasing (see Chart 4).



Australian residential housing approvals 2013-2017



Imports of timber (based on HS Chapter 44 products) from 2010 to 2016

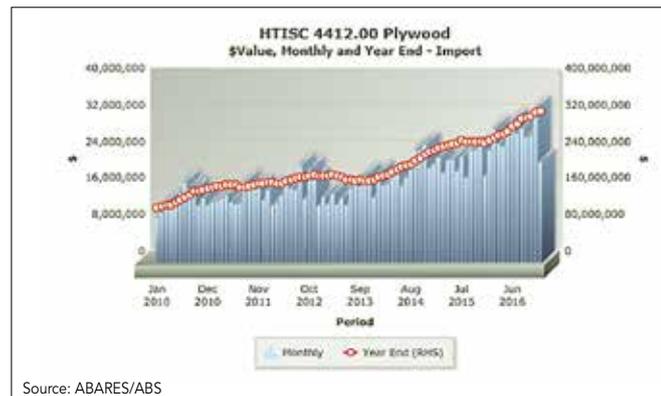


Imports of tropical timber products (covered by HS code: 4407.2) from 2010 to 2016



### Tropical hardwood imports

Overall it would seem that a combination of tougher market legality requirements, innovation in building systems and products are being reflected in both declining imports of tropical hardwood timber and increasing imports of EWPs. However, below the surface the supply situation is more complex. For example, despite the decline in hardwood timber imports, overall as shown in Chart 4, some segments are growing, such as mouldings non coniferous which includes decking are showing relatively steady growth (see Chart 5).



4

Source: ABARES/ABS

Imports of engineered wood and complex products (covered by HS code: 4412) from 2010 to 2016



5

Source: ABARES/ABS

Imports of timber products covered by HS code: 4409.29.00.17 from 2010



► **Future hardwood supplies**

Further notable reductions in domestic hardwood log supplies in Victoria, and likely further reductions in hardwood log supply in northern NSW will result in domestic hardwood supply continuing to decline in the short term. This reality is likely to be met by increased hardwood imports, potentially from PNG where the government has announced a policy to terminate hardwood log exports in 2020 and to process logs domestically. This policy is likely to result in some of the processed timber being exported to Australia. Also there does not appear to be any significant impediments on the supply side in relation to continuing, and increasing, hardwood timber imports from Indonesia and Malaysia. ■

## Summary

Looking forward, ongoing hardwood timber supply will be impacted by:

1. Likely softening of building and construction activity over the short term. However, population growth and housing shortages are likely to mean residential building and construction in the medium term will continue at or above 200,000 housing starts a year.
2. There will continue to be changes to the nature of residential housing, as the move from detached houses to apartments in major metropolitan centres gains further momentum.
3. Changes to hardwood timber product type demand will be influenced by strong trends toward laminate flooring and other EWPs together with greater prefabrication of building components, offsite manufacturing, and demand for EWPs.
4. Medium term concerns related to the maintenance of present levels of domestic log availability and sovereign risk considerations notably in Victoria and NSW will impact on the supply chain.
5. Increasing hardwood imports are probable, potentially from PNG. In addition there does not appear to be any significant impediments on the supply side in relation to continuing, and increasing, hardwood timber imports from Indonesia and Malaysia.

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by Rick Lee

# Hi-vis, but is it enough to pique their Pinterest?



**WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR** with the term hi-vis when it comes to the safety of workers. But when it comes to showcasing the modern business, Hi-vis is just as critical for the health of an organisation.

Every business needs at least a basic level of marketing in order to promote its products and services. In recent years, marketing noise has risen to unprecedented levels, making being heard an almost impossible task. We as consumers are constantly bombarded with advertising, so much so, that we have come to ignore the vast majority. We have become skilled users of selected vision. So how does a business get its marketing message across and how does it overcome this newly developed sense of discriminating sight?

Traditionally, products and services have been brought to the attention of customers through advertising in magazines, telephone directories, television and by word of mouth. The latter being one of the strongest influences on a buyer's decision making. Fleets of salespeople pounced on leads

once generated by these promotional forums and customers were routinely sold on products and services. In today's marketing, word of mouth is still king, it's just the way it is now delivered that we should be aware of. And, where once customers were sold to, they have become

buyers, preferring to do their own research and become knowledgeable before choosing to invest.

Like it or not, social media is transforming our lives. We only have to look at Donald Trump to see that even the president of the United States knows how important it is to get his message across, even if it may be a dumb one. How that message is received is just as important and just as Trump has so ably demonstrated, it can work for you or against you. But the fact remains, a half dozen words tweeted over the internet by the president will garner more attention than an hour long speech carefully crafted by his staff.

Visibility and speed are the key factors when it comes to successful social media; high visibility that punches through the advertising noise gets you noticed. The way in which we sift through information has become ever more visual. With so much marketing material to sift through, we tend to rely on images in order to decide if we should spend any more time on the subject. It is a decision we make in the blink of an eye. Visual content can tell a story in milliseconds and is far more potent in generating instant emotions than words could ever be.

It's a subject that divides us; you either love your Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites, or you wouldn't be seen dead using them. But as business owners, we cannot ignore the power of such forums for our products and services.

Pinterest is one such social media platform that continues to grow. With over 70 million users, it is currently the fastest growing media platform. 500,000 businesses have Pinterest



Rick Lee has over 38 years experience in the woodworking industry. He now works as a consultant and trainer and can be contacted at Right Track Business Consulting on 0412 237 456 or at [rick.lee@righttrackbusiness.com.au](mailto:rick.lee@righttrackbusiness.com.au).



accounts. Classed as a Visual Search Engine, it is the perfect format for the way we do our research. As previously mentioned, customers will no longer subject themselves to the hard sell, whether it's the pushy salesman or the in-your-face promotion. Anything that remotely looks that way is quickly rejected. Creating high quality, high impact visual content is vital. Powerful visual content can do the selling for you, it's a soft-sell approach that can pique customer's interest and bringing them willingly to your door.

Pinterest is free for business, and as such, it is well worth consideration. It offers a range of services and plenty of advice for those new to the format, including powerful analytics, allowing you to track your success and develop strategies that work for you. For optimum success, it is essential to understand those who use this media, and how they interact with the platform.

For example: in the world of social media, the first step to a new kitchen is to get inspired. The typical home owner will

go to sites like Pinterest and search for ideas. Once an eye-catching image draws the prospect interest, they will pin the images, sharing them with followers, and click on the links to find out more. Business users can add links to their web sites. They can interact with prospects who comment on pins and link to other social media accounts such as Facebook and Instagram. It is also possible to collaborate with other business accounts. Kitchen manufacturers could benefit from a collaboration with influencers such as local TV chefs, designers or food guides, gaining followers and generating mutual business. Home builders could collaborate with architects or garden designers.

There are many ways to take full advantage of this growing media platform. Like anything else, the amount of effort put into social media is directly related to the success you take out. There is plenty of help available for those wishing to give it a go. And as the saying goes; if you want to know more, just Google it! ■



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by Jim Bowden

# Students soak up knowledge on engineered wood systems



Georgios Anagnostou

**A RECENT** EWPAA presentation to Master's students at the University of Newcastle's school of architecture and built environment tapped a deep well of interest in engineered wood systems by future building designers.

More than 40 students filled the classroom for a lecture by Dave Gover, CEO, Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia; most intend to introduce the principles of the presentation to their Master's thesis. "The feedback from the students was exciting," said Rebecca Whan, a university lecturer who helped coordinate the student program.

"Dave presented a thorough overview of new wood technology, products and systems, a lot of which had not been experienced before by the students."

Ms Whan said this new awareness meant students would start to incorporate more engineered wood technology in their future building designs.

She hoped the EWPAA lecture would be an annual presentation at the university and added: "If you look around the NSW central coast and Hunter region, there are many examples of engineered wood structures, with new projects opening both for commercial and prefabricated mid-rise residential."

Rebecca Whan, an associate at Jackson Teece Architects, Newcastle, has more than 10 years' experience in architecture and has successfully delivered projects in the residential sector through to commercial and aged care projects. She lectures and tutors design and communications at the University of Newcastle and also sits on the local Institute of Architects committee.

Dave Gover was introduced to students by Professor Michael Chapman, Masters of Architecture program convener at the university's faculty of engineering.

Professor Chapman said interest in EWPs was ramping up; everyone seemed to be talking about timber in construction, particularly light weight prefab in mid-rise applications.

Georgios Anagnostou, a senior associate with Jackson Teece in Sydney who also helped coordinate the EWPAA lecture in Newcastle, is on an engineered wood study mission to Japan as part of a Gottstein Trust fellowship. Closer integration of architectural design and engineering wood systems will be a driving theme of the mission. "The increased use and application of timber engineering technologies and products demands that designers and architects understand the potential and limitation of such technologies," Mr Anagnostou said. "Japan has a long history of timber architecture and construction rooted in traditional carpentry and joinery," he said. "This profound understanding of designing with timber has influenced architects worldwide until this day."

Mr Anagnostou is actively involved in the timber design industry (architecture and engineering). He is currently involved with the design and construction of a significant timber/CLT building and intends to further promote the use of timber construction in future projects. The Gottstein fellowship will give him the opportunity to contribute to this sector and help create a closer connection between craft/trade engineering and structural and architectural design.

In Tokyo, Mr Anagnostou will meet with a Japanese associate who will open doors to some of the city's key architectural offices before visiting a graduate school of architecture and engineering and a meeting with representatives of the Japan Federation of Wood Industry Associations.

"Interestingly, I am catching up with a Canadian who has completed a course in traditional Japanese carpentry and has established his own company there," Mr Anagnostou said. ■

Dave Gover discusses engineered wood systems with architectural students at the University of Newcastle. Looking on are Rebecca Whan, university lecturer (left) and Professor Michael Chapman, Masters of Architecture program convener, faculty of engineering.



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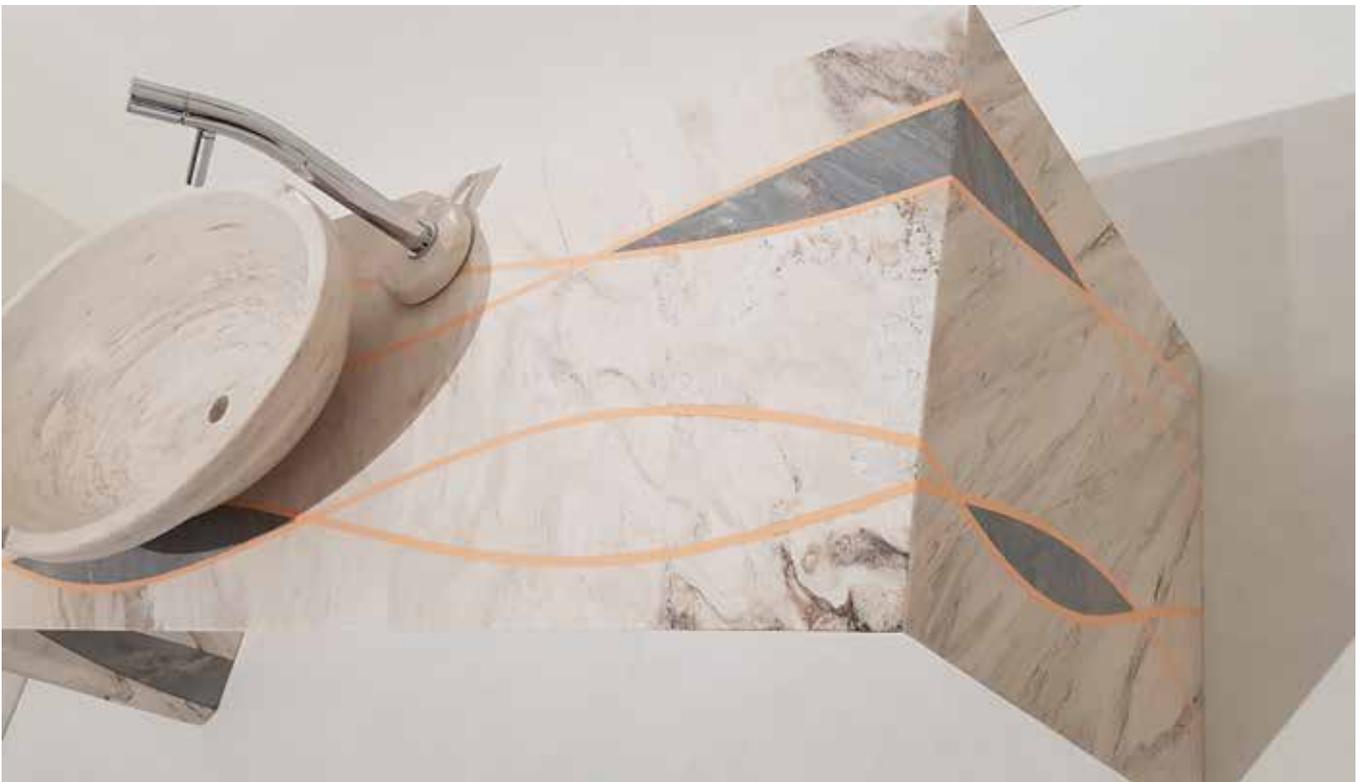
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The Sea Bath by Roberto Semprini.

# Marmomacc 2017 - from terrazzo to tofu

**IN THE SAME WAY** Prosecco or Champagne can only be named as such by being made from grapes from a very well-defined region, the European Court of Justice, in Ruling C-422/162 (Verband Sozialer Wettbewerbe V vs tofutown.com), determined that soya milk could not be called "milk", Veggie cheese could not be sold as "cheese" and Soyatoo tofu butter could not be marketed as "butter".

TofuTown, a German producer and distributor of vegetarian and vegan foods, was brought to a Regional Court in Trier by the German association combatting unfair competition (Verband Sozialer Wettbewerbe) at the request of the European Court of Justice. The association contended that using a dairy designation on a purely plant-based product marketed by TofuTown infringed the EU legislation and put forward that these designations should be reserved for milk and milk products only.

TofuTown argued that the way in which consumers understand these designations had changed considerably in recent years and terms such as "butter", or "cream" are not used on their own, but rather in association with words referring to the plants origin, such as "tofu butter" or "rice spray cream". The ECJ ruled that the terms "milk", "cream", "Chantilly", "butter", "cheese" and "yoghurt" would be reserved solely for milk products derived from animals.

The Court noted that the dairy terms could not be used to designate a purely plant-based product unless that product was mentioned on a list of exceptions. For example, the relevant legislation lists a traditional 'crème de riz' in French as an exception from this rule. The Court did not accept that clarifying descriptions, such as those used by TofuTown, did not ameliorate potential consumer confusion around the source of the products.

So what does this have to do with the world's largest stone exhibition?

Plenty.

As an invited guest of the Euroroc (European and International Federation of Natural Stone Industries) Annual General Assembly held at the Verona show, I listened to a partial reading of this ruling which could

potentially have a colossal impact for other industries where it could be determined that "a copy is not the real thing".

For example, can reconstituted stone be called stone?

The managing director of a reconstituted stone supplier (who would not allow me to name him) said that the ruling by the European Court had already started discussions in board rooms across Europe and the situation will surely be closely monitored by a wide range of companies for obvious reasons.

The implications, should a further court ruling not be favourable to the reconstituted stone industry, could see the landscape change from its current position.

The European natural stone industry is abundantly aware of the threat posed by reconstituted stone. According to one major supplier's annual report, its Australia turnover is well in excess of \$100 million, while its European turnover is roughly a quarter of this.

Australia's population is 3% of Europe's. So, if European consumers switched their allegiance to this one brand of reconstituted stone in the same proportion as Australian consumers have, its European turnover would be in the billions of dollars.

However, the milk ruling may have been an easier case than that of a potential case involving stone. As the managing director of one reconstituted stone importer to Australia says, while milk substitutes cannot be called milk because they contain no milk, reconstituted stone is mostly comprised of stone. While he has a point, I still feel there may be far reaching consequences of this landmark ruling and there will be many industries carefully watching any future challenges.

But, back to the theatre that is Verona.

Marmomacc is a fabulous event. 147 exhibiting countries were represented with a new record of 68,000 stone fanatics through the doors over four days. The Italian Stone Theatre is an entire hall dedicated to the works of architects, designers and stone masons who exhibit commissioned works made entirely of natural stone. There were many interesting pieces as usual in this hall (including a complete marble outdoor cooking centre ▶



Inlaid terrazzo by Mondo Marmo.

Black and white terrazzo furniture  
by Mondo Marmo.



Sea bath detail.

► complete with lounge and stools, a chandelier made from 350 water jet cut pieces, and a collection of baths all cut from a single slab, each one just that bit smaller than the previous – an Italian version of Babushka Dolls).

This year's highlight was undoubtedly The Sea Bath. Designed by Roberto Semprini and built by two well-known companies, Gruppo Tosco Marmi (Florence) and Ramella Graniti (Novara), the Sea Bath is a project built on material experimentation and aesthetic research, while focussing on the development and production of bathroom products. A fairly simple-looking console of Classic Palissandro marble is veined with light grey resin waves that surround inserts in Cloudy Blue Palissandro. At the centre of the console is a large spiral-shaped washbasin hewn from a single piece of Classic Palissandro that mimics the shape of a sea shell.

Roberto Semprini is somewhat of a legend in the world of design. Born in Rimini and studying in Florence, Semprini started his career as a design journalist before turning his hand to design. He exhibits at major shows around the world including Salone del Mobile, Seoul Living Design Fair and Abitare el Tempo. This piece of work is pure genius. It has such a smooth look and creates a feel of solace – something for which every bathroom designer strives.

Mondo Marmi Design is a small Italian company based in the valley town of Valpentena near Verona. A specialist in the stone sector, the company works with many professional partners on projects involving interior finishes for the creation of a decorative object. The company's objective in design is to ensure it provides a consultancy service that reinforces the desire to bring a project to completion.

The company offers qualified, and often imaginative, advice to architects and builders across Europe. I met its senior designer, Matteo Leorato, on the stand to discuss this latest little gem. He started with some company background:

"Mondo Marmo Design has more than 20 years' experience as marble supplier and, two years ago, decided to develop a new way to communicate itself through several collaborations with young designers".

During 2016 and 2017 Mondo Marmo Design presented two macro concepts. The first concept was three separate pieces, showcasing the transformations Mondo Marmo Design is now able to supply. The first setting was a kitchen made in Arabescato which appears minimalistic with pieces jointed with 45-degree mitres and some intricate kitchen utensils cut utilising water-jet technology.

The second setting was a reflection of post-modernism and the American trend which followed the rationalism of modernism. The setting featured inlaid terrazzo with a gate which was jointly influenced by renowned architects such as Charles Moore and Aldo Rossi. All these were produced by CNC and water-jet cutting, all jointed with 45-degree mitres.

The third setting was a contemporary design that took the idea from works by Zaha Hadid. Made with water jet cutting, 5-axis technology, the column sink was made with CNC re-created from a 3D model.

During the last two years Mondo Marmo Design produced three exclusive products developed from inside the company.

- A series of six lamps designed by two designers (Gerardo Mari and Matteo Leorato), and, as Matteo tells me, "a special thanks to Mr. Mari who put all his knowledge from 12 years' experience inside Artemide's technical office." All the lamps were developed with LED technology and have recently been CE certified.

- A wall and floor covering made with terrazzo and marble inserts. The project permits a full personalisation of the design: marble pattern, cement colour, grain colour and grain size. Orders require no minimum quantity. Architects and designers can design wall/floor coverings in



terrazzo for their own projects. Inside the stand they presented a series of patterns to inspire architects to understand the potential solutions for this beautiful product.

- Every year the company also presents an experimental category (last year was customisable terrazzo), this year was a set of low stools and a low table made with terrazzo in black and white and, given the warm response on the stand, there is every chance next year they will present a full furniture category.

The European economy is humming again – except for Britain, where fears about the effect of the country's exit from the European Union are taking an increasingly heavy toll on

business and consumer confidence. Factories in the Eurozone rounded off the first half of 2017 by ramping up at the fastest rate in more than six years.

And it showed in Verona; spirits were high and the cheque books were visibly open from the first day. There were many more exquisite products displayed this year than last; so much creativity coupled with opulence. The stands were buzzing and overflowing with the usual platters of antipasto and glasses of Prosecco, while the town at night was alive and thriving until the wee small hours.

And people wonder why I love Marmomacc. ■

Bagno Corteccia  
by Antolini.



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# Stunning use of veneers in Sydney restaurant

Design firm Enter Projects was commissioned to create a distinctive space for its client's debut as restaurateurs at Lot.1 restaurant/bar and café in York Street, Sydney.

With café latte as the catalyst for the design, the firm interpreted the everyday, familiar coffee swirl pattern into the interior design, transforming the venue with seamless curves of timber veneer.

Lot 1 is located in a late Victorian warehouse and the designers have juxtaposed original brick, sandstone and old steel work with Australian hardwood veneers that span over the entire 945 square metre venue.

The veneers are southern blue gum and wattle from Tasmania, installed in three dimensional curves which required rigorous planning. Light coloured veneers were chosen to create a clean look with the 'feel' of solid timber.

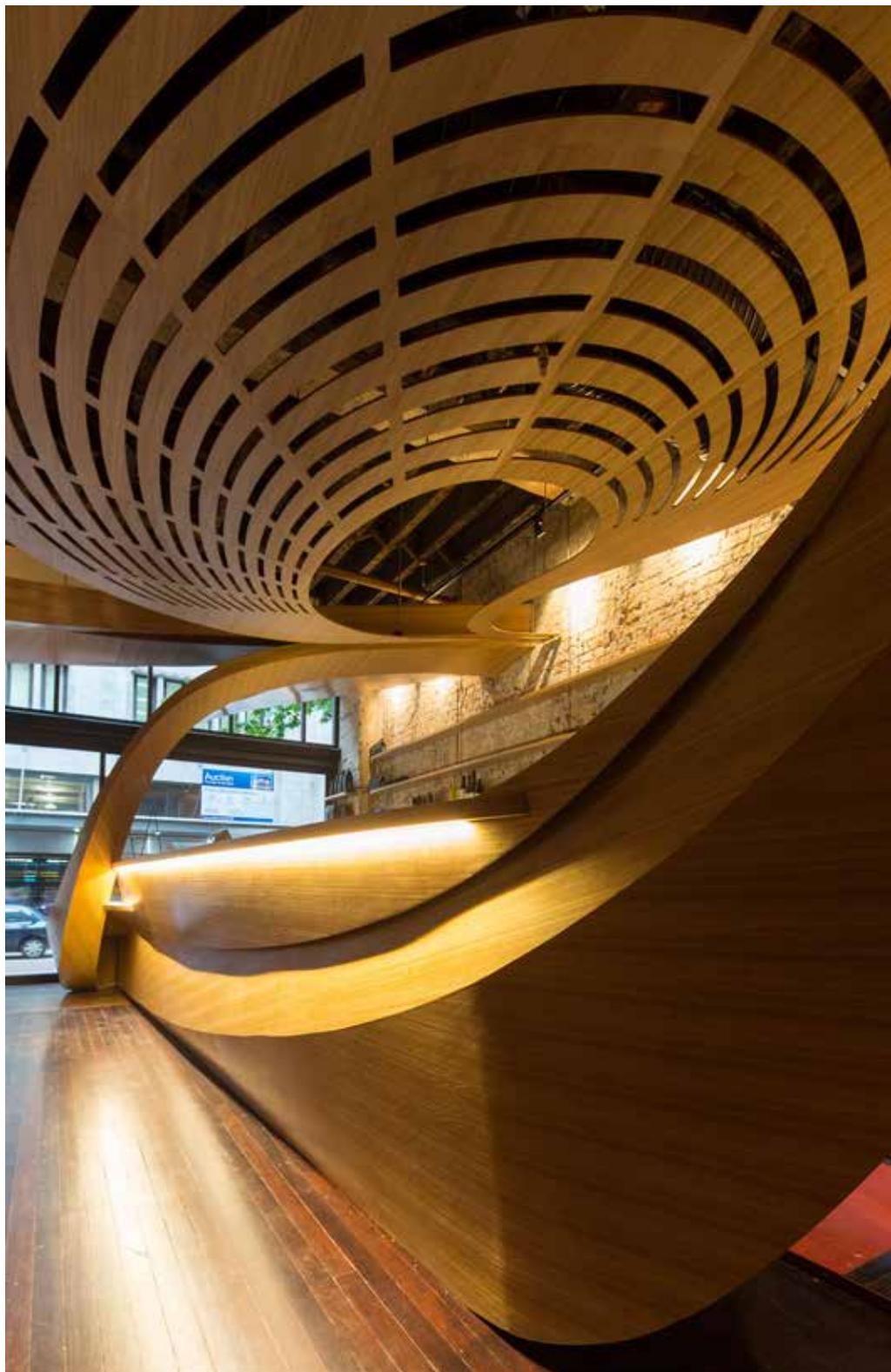
According to the designers, it was essential that the selected veneers were flexible enough to be manipulated into non-orthogonal geometry, while being durable enough to withstand the busy commercial environment.

The firm worked mostly with 3D modelling and laser cutting to create the 'sweep and motion' effect so evident in the design.

The excellence of the design was recognised when Lot.1 took out the top slot in the Timber Veneers category of the Australian Timber Design Awards. The Award is sponsored by the Timber Veneers Association of Australia (TVAA).

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# The KBDi awards the best kitchen and bathroom designers of 2017

The Kitchen and Bathroom Designers Institute (KBDi) was delighted to announce the winners of its 2017 Designer Awards program at a fabulous gala event in Adelaide on 16 September.

The top three award winners took home more than their trophies and titles; with thanks to KBDi's award sponsors, their efforts were also rewarded with a \$2,500 travel and accommodation voucher to their choice of international design fair.

## KBDi Australian Certified Designer of the Year 2017

KBDi Diamond Sponsor, Lincoln Sentry, was once again proud sponsor of the KBDi Certified Designer of the Year award. National sales and marketing manager, Kevin Bruce, was pleased to present Darren James CKD Au with the top accolade and title of KBDi Australian Certified Designer of the Year 2017. This award is the pinnacle of the program, with entrants required to submit two projects aligned with very comprehensive criteria.

The judges declared Darren's two kitchen projects to be of the highest standard,

both aesthetically and practically, and said his outstanding design aptitude, flawless documentation, technical accuracy and impeccable attention to detail made this accredited designer a clear winner.

## KBDi Australian Kitchen Designer of the Year 2017

Albedor Industries was thrilled to be sponsoring all kitchen category awards at the KBDi Designer Awards 2017 Gala, including the coveted title of KBDi Australian Kitchen Designer of the Year.

Albedor Industries' business development manager, Mal Stafford, was delighted to present Queensland's Katia Slogrove (Germancraft Cabinets) with the prized title and trophy for KBDi Australian Kitchen Designer of the Year 2017.

Katia's winning entry stood out from the rest as a 'bold and beautiful' design solution. The judges applauded her efforts, saying 'it takes confidence, courage and a great deal of skill to pull off a genuine art-deco kitchen, and this designer's delivered'.

## KBDi Australian Bathroom Designer of the Year 2017

The KBDi Australian Bathroom Designer of the Year 2017 was proudly sponsored by E & S Trading. Managing director, Rob Sinclair, was honoured to present Victoria's Vanessa Cook (Smarter Bathrooms & Kitchens) with the coveted title and trophy for KBDi Australian Bathroom Designer of the Year 2017.

Vanessa's entry impressed the judging panel, with the designer presenting a future-proof solution for her clients. A layout that would meet the needs of the family now and in years to come required the repositioning of the toilet (and its associated plumbing), the removal of a large bath and the relocation of an air conditioning duct. The effort proved worthwhile, with the designer presenting a practical and beautiful bathroom design solution that will suit the clients' changing needs.

To view all of this year's winning entries and find out more about KBDi, visit [www.kbdi.org.au](http://www.kbdi.org.au).



Kevin Bruce of Lincoln Sentry (left), with Darren James, Australian Certified Designer of the Year, and Greg Grant, executive officer, KBDi



Mal Stafford of Albedor Industries and Katia Slogrove, Australian Kitchen Designer of the Year.



Rob Sinclair of E & S Trading and Vanessa Cook, Australian Bathroom Designer of the Year.



Winner KBDi Australian Certified  
Designer of the Year 2017  
Darren James CKD Au



▶ Top: Winner KBDi Australian Kitchen Designer of the Year 2017  
Katia Slogrove,  
Germancraft Cabinets

Above: Winner KBDi Australian Bathroom Designer of the Year 2017  
Vanessa Cook,  
Smarter Bathrooms & Kitchens

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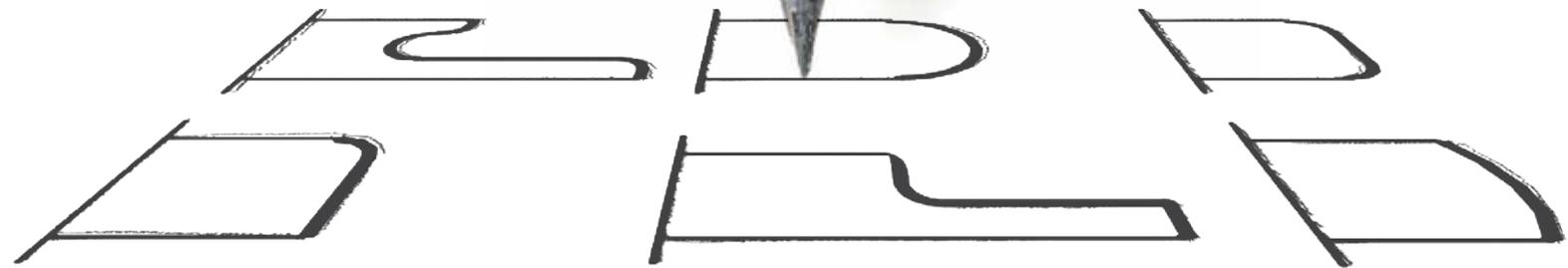


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Using Blum's Aventos lift system in wall cabinets provides enhanced user convenience and ergonomics making it a sought-after solution for many home owners. The comprehensive range offers a wide variety of options that are suitable for a multitude of applications throughout the home. Whether a bi-fold, up and over, lift up or stay lift – Blum has the right lift system for almost every application. The variable stop ensures that all Blum lift systems remain open in the position required so that fronts are always within easy reach for closing.

Aventos lift systems equipped with Blum's Servo-Drive electrical opening support system boasts enhanced convenience allowing fronts to open and close with ultimate ease. Blum's tried and tested Blumotion soft-close ensures that all Aventos lift systems close silently and effortlessly. Blum's range of stay lifts; Aventos HK, Aventos HK-S and Aventos HK-XS can be combined with Tip-on mechanical opening support system to deliver enhanced opening ease.

## Easy, safe and efficient assembly

Blum's Avento lift systems also offer enhanced assembly ease. Thanks to Blum's tried and tested Clip technology, Aventos can be assembled and disassembled quickly and easily – virtually tool free. To ensure that lift systems operate optimally in everyday kitchen use, the lift mechanism can be precisely set to the weight and size of the front with a cordless screwdriver. As a result, Aventos lift systems will always open, close and remain in the position required. 3-dimensional adjustment delivers precise gap alignment and projecting parts can be removed for transportation. To support the



Photos by Blum

assembly and installation of Blum's Aventos lift systems, a range of templates, drilling and insertion machines make the assembly quick and convenient. Blum's Easy Assembly App's augmented reality feature provides virtual support when it comes to determining fitting positions and making adjustments when installing Aventos.

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A comprehensive durability test that comprise of more than 80,000 opening and closing cycles is one of the many quality tests performed on the Aventos lift system, guaranteeing a high quality of functionality for the lifetime of the furniture.

Aventos lift systems equipped with Blum's Servo-Drive electrical opening support system boast enhanced convenience allowing fronts to open and close with ultimate ease.

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With Blum's tried and tested Clip technology Aventos can be assembled and disassembled quickly and easily - virtually tool free.

3-dimensional adjustment delivers precise gap alignment and projecting parts can be removed for transportation.

# Products with true added value

From zero to a hundred: It was eight years ago that Matthias Schäfer founded his shopfitting company Holzakzente. Within an incredibly short time, the company had made a name for itself, predominantly in the lingerie sector. This was achieved primarily by introducing products the sector had never experienced before. And since 2014 with a completely restructured, highly efficient production outfit.

To be successful in business calls for courage. And ideas. Particularly when focusing on a sector where many successful competitors are already active. Matthias Schäfer, master joiner and CEO of the shopfitting company Holzakzente, had both when he launched his business back in 2008. Working in his favor was extensive experience from the world of shopfitting

– which meant he knew exactly what he was getting himself into. “Following my apprenticeship I worked for years in the timber frame construction sector - and I got used to standing on my own two feet very early on.”

“I then started work for a shopfitting firm, where I played a role in implementing a complete new production technology concept. Regrettably this company offered little scope for promotion in the long term, so I decided to start again from the beginning and set up my own company. I used my existing contact at Homag, and purchased a BAZ 211 Venture processing centre with gluing section. I was able to rent suitable premises in a staircase construction company which worked with solid wood and I simply got going.”

“My contacts at Homag thought I was slightly crazy at the time - because what I'd purchased wasn't a classical entry-level machine. But actually it was the right foundation which allowed me to produce efficiently, and still does today. I was very

concerned even then to purchase a machine that has a wide range of functions.”

His extensive expertise had taught Schäfer one very important lesson: To be successful, he needed to visit customers on site and listen very carefully to what they were saying. “There's no point in developing a theoretical solution at the drawing board. This often misses the point of what's actually required. What matters is finding solutions to the problems encountered at the POS.” And despite a relatively short time in the marketplace, Schafer has already found the answers to some of these problems, enabling him to quickly establish a reputation as a supplier of shopfitting systems for outerwear and a specialist in lingerie display concepts. Companies such as Triumph International, Kunert

Fashion, Nina von C., Schäfer Group, Basler Fashion, Tam Fashion, Wolford and ISA Sallmann are among his regular clients. Above and beyond these industrial enterprises, Holzakzente can also list a whole series of satisfied retail clients whose shops it has fitted out.

One key word plays a vital role: Flexibility. The success of many of its solutions is based on the simple ability to offer a little bit more flexibility than other shopfitters. One example are special rails designed by Schäfer for its basic modules in the clothing sector which allow not only very individual displays but also rapid changes when required. By using a pivoting arm, for instance, it's possible to position sale articles within just minutes in a space which was previously empty, or at the same speed a drawer can be replaced by a tray. “The possibilities are really diverse, although we do pay attention to work as much as possible with one basic module type. Under the bottom line, we are best placed to earn money if we work with a kind of series concept for our fittings. ” This is why the arrangement of

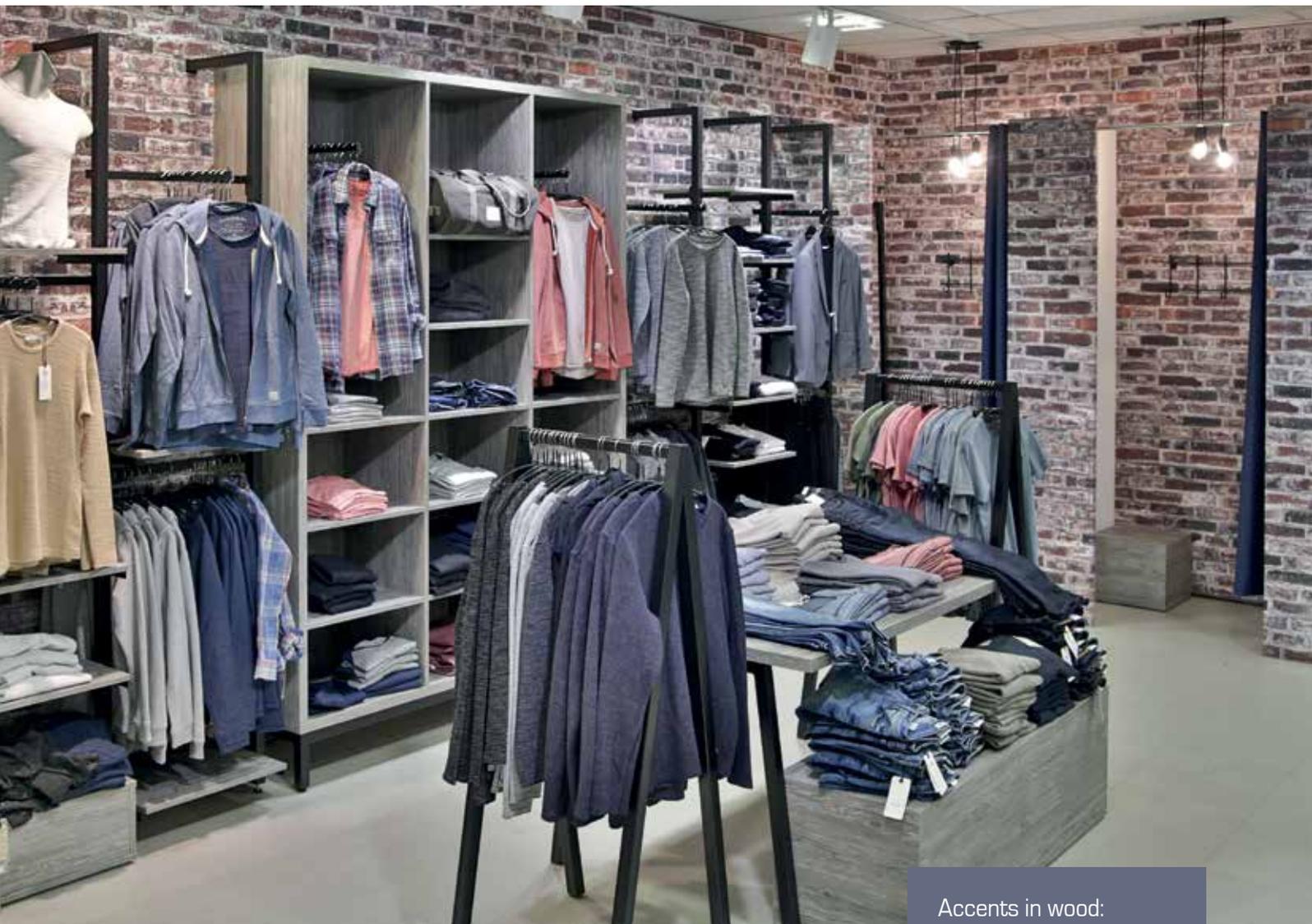
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*To be  
successful  
in business  
calls for  
courage*

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Photos: specialist magazine  
“möbelfertigung”  
/ Doris Bauer



Accents in wood:  
Evolved in eight years to  
become top dog in the  
lingerie sector



Top: Matthias Schäfer, owner and founder of Holzakzente, has gained a name among some of the biggest brands of the outerwear sector with his individual and primarily also innovative products.

It all started with this machine: Matthias Schäfer launched his production with the "BAZ 211 Venture" from Homag in his newly founded shopfitting company eight years ago.



Above: Thanks to the simple color diversity required in the lingerie sector, Holzakzente is able to keep a minimal panel store.

Right: The vertical processing centre "BHX 200" from Homag is a key element of production at Holzakzente.



rails is repeated throughout the entire standard Holzakzente range. In addition, Schäfer paid a great deal of attention to the best basic arrangement in terms of axial dimensions. After a lot of thought he decided to offer modules of 40 centimetres instead of the customary 62.5 centimetres. "It makes no difference whether we are talking about lingerie or hosiery, all the modules we offer come with the 40 dimension which allows the items to be ideally displayed."

It quickly became evident that Schäfer's venture would be successful: At the beginning of 2014, the company moved from Zahlbach to Schondra-Schildeck into a new building which was completed in around one year. The concept for the new production space of 2,000 square metres plus attached showroom and administrative suite of a further 450 square metres was devised in cooperation with a graduate of the Rosenheim University of Applied Sciences as part of his diploma thesis. The factory now employs a workforce of 35 as well as some part time staff.

As Schäfer has never really worked in a small enterprise before but only in large corporations, he attached particular importance in process-oriented production when setting up his own business. "On principle, everything here is data-based. After logging an order, we perform professional job preparation using ERP-managed systems, with a connected storage management system and similar facilities. As long as no sawing cut has yet been made on an order, it can be held back. Because of this we have a buffer zone in front of the sawing department, and another one suitable for an

operation of our size downstream from the logistics or rather the packaging department. Once an order has been cut, it runs completely through the system, as here all the externally sourced parts can be added just in time. In terms of the ratio of office to production time, we come in at about 1:1 – a very good outcome given the depth of our production. The key factor here is of course the availability of efficient machines."

Needless to say, the Holzakzente machine outfit now includes far more than just one processing centre. From Homag alone, the production hall boasts an HPL 300 panel dividing saw with cut optimization, a BHX 200 vertical CNC processing centre and a KAR 310 edge banding machine. Following the cutting process, the parts are given their own individual barcode. This not only allows employees to determine which order a part belongs to, but at the same time also provides a visual indication of which processing steps are planned.

For Schäfer, the actual challenge lies not only in the machine equipment itself: "Companies like Homag provide support when it comes to individual implementation of our production processes. But these things can be achieved. Cutting, edge application, drilling and doweling 1,000 parts in a day does work. What is more difficult is packaging, and the real hurdle is the logistical challenge of delivering those 1,000 parts to the POS on time and without damage."

Up to 95 percent of Holzakzente's production uses ready coated wood-based panels. "Only around five percent of the panels we use are lacquered in-house – shopfitting is a fast-



moving business", says Schäfer. In terms of colors and decor finishes, there are benefits in the clothing sector: "High gloss white finishes are the most common, as the clothing being hung provides the color later on. The next most common is black, followed by a selection of wood decor finishes."

Holzakzente generated a turnover of just under 5 million Euro in 2016. Following a number of product innovations and the resulting additional sales markets gained this year, he is anticipating sales for 2017 of up to 5.5 million Euro. Export business accounts for around 30 per cent of the company's sales.

The next major investment the entrepreneur can envisage is a carcass press line. Another possibility would be trimming one or more machines with a view to possible expansion into the fire protection market: "If you asked me today if there's anything I regret, I would say concentrating solely on wood. I envisage a lot of business potential in future in the fire protection market, and this could involve completely different raw materials, which we - as things stand at present - aren't able to process."

Clearly, Schäfer isn't in the business of reinventing the wheel with his company. But he does have ambitions to gain an established place in the market with these newly developed products. "We now work with a large network of suppliers: The special rails we mount, for instance, or other metal parts which are supplied just in time. We keep a certain stock of these items, as they are articles we need all the time."

Looking to the future, Schäfer's underlying approach will stay the same: "Our products have to be able to do more than what's already established and available. The stand we may use today as a display for lingerie must possess a real added value. And it needs to be usable tomorrow to display other kinds of clothes. Sometimes its not even about the item of furniture itself, but about a secondary product which acts as door opener. Like the "Easytexx" textile printing system which is just taking off and can be used in many areas of classic shopfitting, on stands or for back panel motifs, right through to complete wall covering. We are currently working on a development to electrify our patented carrier rail in the stands to allow expanded scope for lighting. And we are also about to launch a range of tile cabinets which will be combined with multimedia displays. For instance for use in DIY stores. When the end user pulls out a draw with a tile sample, a laying pattern appears on the screen located above showing precisely the tile in question - say in a living room - to allow better visualization of what it will look like in a large area. These are the kinds of ideas we need if we are to go on being successful tomorrow."

Left: Holzakzente produces the stands with integrated special rail in a similar way to a standard piece of furniture.

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An article from the German specialist magazine  
"möbelfertigung", edition 01/2017,  
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# Next generation CNC technology

CAD+T is a leading company of complete software solutions for joineries and interior fit out companies. CAD+T drafting software is based on AutoCAD and Autodesk Inventor and offers specialised add-ons which focus on the requirements of the interior fit out industry.

Besides drafting and ERP solutions, CAD+T offers a next generation CNC technology. So far CNC data has been either programmed manually direct on the machine or has been imported from AutoCAD or Inventor as DXF format. This still requires a lot of manual input to have the CNC program ready. But with the CNC technology of CAD+T users are now able to change this situation.



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## *import directly and read automatically*

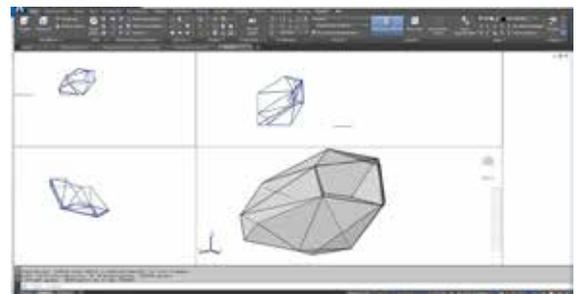
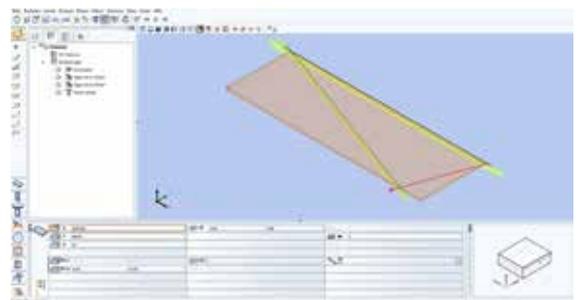
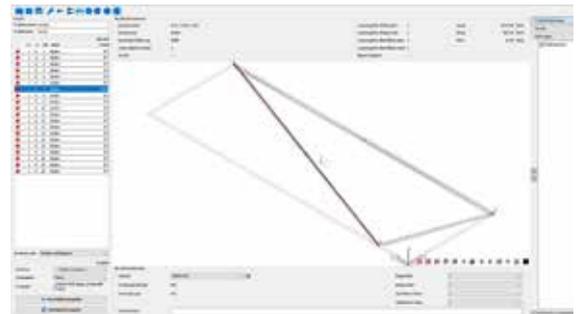
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The CAD+T CAM Interface enables users to import directly from the CAD+T drafting system all required information for the CNC. Based on the material configuration specified in the technical drawings, the system will automatically read the geometry of the parts as well as the machining details required. The necessary manufacturing method in order to assign the correct oversize parameters, tools, starting points and work steps will be automatically sent to the machine through the CAD+T Interface. Having all this information, the software will be generating the correct file and file extension for every machine as required.

One of the specialities is the NC drive of large tools, as sawing with 5-axis machines considering the production logic for example every cut from top or material-dependent work steps. CAD+T offers interfaces to all current 3 and 5-axis CNC machines as well as tools for edge bending and nesting. Nesting is even available in 3D, which is required for carcasses with mitres.

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by Geordan Murray, senior economist,  
Housing Industry Association

## Riding the investment wave - WA and NT

In this edition of AWISA magazine we continue taking a closer look at the economic conditions in each state. This quarter we take a look at the states that have ridden the wave of the resources sector investment boom over the last decade, specifically Western Australia and the Northern Territory (we'll look at Queensland in another edition). These two jurisdictions have seen extreme highs and lows of the economic cycle.

To summarise the mining boom story, it was a classic boom-bust roller coaster ride. The scale of the investment was unprecedented and challenged the capacity of the Western Australian and Northern Territory economies. Capital expenditure by the mining sector increased from around \$24 billion in 2006/07 to around \$95 billion by 2012/13 and held up at around \$90 billion in 2013/14 before easing back in the latter stages of the cycle.

The limits of capacity were clearly evident in the labour market. There were simply not enough local workers with the appropriate skills to fill the jobs that were being created. Consequently, both states experienced upward pressure on wages and a huge influx of migrants from interstate and overseas arriving in search of well paying jobs.

At the height of the boom Western Australia had a net migration (from overseas and interstate) of over 68,000 people in the year to September 2012 and the overall rate of population growth exceeded 3 per cent per annum at the

peak. The rate of population growth in the Northern Territory also exceeded 3 per cent per annum at the peak, although with a much smaller population base this equated to net migration of a little over 4,000 people in that year.

The unemployment rate in Western Australia dropped as low as 3.6 per cent and the rate in the Northern Territory was consistently below its longer term average. Over the five years leading up to 2012 the average weekly earnings of an adult working full time increased by 37 per cent in WA and by 32 per cent in the NT. This was exceptionally high when compared with growth of around 21.5 per cent in NSW and Victoria over the same period.

The big increase in the number of workers also meant that an increase in the number of households in the economy and thus demand for housing. Rental vacancies dipped and rental prices surged. Rental prices in Perth jumped by 7.4 per cent in the year to June 2013, and by 8.4 per cent in Darwin over a similar time frame. Low interest rates supported further home price growth and fuelled demand for new home building.

These were good times for industry activity in the NT and the territory recorded a high of 2,370 new homes commenced during the year to March 2013. The good times for home building also arrived in WA, albeit after being delayed by some ill-advised and poorly times planning changes. WA's home building cycle peaked with annual starts reaching an all-time high of around 32,800 in early 2015.

In the intervening years, new home starts in WA have fallen 40 per cent from the peak (only 19,666 starts in the 2016/17 year) while starts in the NT have fallen by 60 per cent from the peak (only 948 starts in the 2016/17 year). An overview of historical down-turns places these as the most extreme experienced by any state since Federation.

Rental prices in both Perth and Darwin have fallen by around 13.5 per cent from their respective peaks and the median home price for both these cities have also shown home price pressures easing.

It is not at all surprising to see these developments in the housing market during a period when the unemployment rate in WA returned to 6.8 per cent and 5.7 per cent in the NT. These unemployment numbers are distorted by the significant amount of interstate migration that has occurred.

By 2015/16 the mining sector's capital expenditure cycle was waning and the imbalance between the availability and demand for labour was a thing of the past. The high paying jobs in the sector became harder to find. In the five years since 2012 the average weekly earnings of an adult working full time has grown by only 9.6 per cent, well below the 13.6 per cent growth observed nationally.





In the absence of the high paying mining sector jobs, the resource rich states lost their lustre for many households and migration patterns flipped. Since mid-2014 WA has recorded a continual net loss of residents migrating to other states and the number of arrivals from overseas has slowed dramatically. Migration has still added to the population of WA but the annual rate of population growth had dropped to 0.6 per cent by mid-2016.

The changing flow of people moving in and out of the NT is having a more significant impact than in WA. Like WA, the NT has seen an increase in the net outflow of residents to other states and a drop in overseas migration. Unlike WA the scale of the shift in NT has seen the population actually decline in a number of quarters, including both the December 2016 and March 2017 quarters.

Comparing economic conditions from a period hosting record highs achieved during the boom years with the subsequent cyclical lows makes for rather sobering analysis but it does

a very good job of highlighting just how significant the challenges have been throughout the most difficult phase of the economic cycle. Promisingly, the worst phase of the cycle is now behind us.

We are currently on the cusp of a new economic cycle with public sector infrastructure investment playing a much bigger role. While the scale of upcoming cycle will not be comparable to the resources boom, it is likely to 'prime the pump' for an improvement in non-mining business investment and will generate the activity required to maintain economic growth.

The outlook for WA is more positive than it has been for a number of years. In fact, there are already signs of improvement with population growth lifting from the cyclical low, the state's unemployment rate dropping back to 5.7 per cent and we have seen the annual rate of jobs growth reach the highest level since early in 2013. We are optimistic that the outlook for NT will follow the path of WA towards improvement but we are yet to see the same degree of affirming evidence just yet.

## cabinet vision

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by Jen Sharman

# New perspectives on design

**EARLIER THIS YEAR**, young Tasmanian designer and maker Duncan Meerding took his latest collection of timber lights to Milan Design Week. There they featured in EuroLuce 2017, an exhibition heralded as the global benchmark in lighting design. Meerding's works sat alongside those of designers who rely primarily on sight to guide their creative process. They look at current fashion and industry trends, and produce work that reflects or imitates.

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## *Duncan Meerding's unique design process attracts international attention*

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Duncan Meerding is one step removed from such influences. His dominant design sense is touch, fuelled by imagination. His tactile approach has evolved as his eyesight failed. He is now legally blind.

"My experience of inheriting Lebers Hereditary Optic Neuropathy at the age of 18 has left me with 5 per cent peripheral vision. The alternate sensory world that I live in has definitely affected my design sensibility. I tend to concentrate

on overall form rather than detail and have become attracted to shadows and the way light disperses in and around objects, because that is the way I see."

This perspective has resulted in Duncan's work being applauded for its unique design outcomes. His "Cracked Log Lamp" in particular has been nationally and internationally awarded for its witty, fresh and sustainable approach.

Kees Dorst, professor of design at the University of Technology in Sydney, was an early champion of Meerding's work, describing it in a Radio National interview as having a "design sense that has a depth to it [that] could not have been made by a seeing designer".

At Milan, Meerding pushed the creative endeavours of his design practice by including large, flat-pack, sculptural light installations. Other creations on show included "Stump", the latest outdoor iteration in the cracked log light range, "Log Bankers Lamp", a humorous take on the office desk lamp, and "Propeller Light", the original form for which was developed by Meerding while mentoring in New Zealand with internationally renowned lighting designer David Trubridge. Trubridge's studio places environmental consciousness before profit and employs a team of local designers working on bespoke projects and products for an international client base. Meerding's studio, too, has a focus on sustainability with the majority of the timber sourced from waste material or faster growing timbers.

"My experience in New Zealand proved that it was possible to sell globally while manufacturing at a local level. It was

Below:  
Duncan Meerding.  
Right: Stump.



Photographer Jan Dallas



heartening to realise that customers are prepared to buy environmentally responsible designs that are not manufactured cheaply offshore," he said.

When Meerding returned from Milan, 102 of his handmade lights were installed at the Macquarie 1 site in Hobart. Meerding is well aware of the significance of such local interest in his designs.

"Making a living as a furniture designer and maker in Tasmania is a tough ride. Cheap imports and the cost of getting product off the island are definite barriers."

Over and above talent, persistence, intelligence and focus are required to make it in the industry. Meerding cites the furniture design department at UTAS in Hobart, Designed Objects Tasmania, Arts Tasmania and his designer/maker peers as key supporters in his progress. However, it is evident that he has worked hard at pushing against the restrictions imposed on those that operate outside of dominant paradigms. Through his determination, Duncan Meerding has proved that different ways of perceiving the world are fertile grounds for fresh, creative visions. ■



Cracked log lamps.  
Propellor.

This article first appeared in Tasmania 40° South magazine.



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# Elevating the luxe level of today's kitchens

"The details aren't the details, they make the design." Charles Eames said it best and the adage is as true now as it ever was.

When designing any object, whether it's a product, room or home, it is how the designer blends functional requirements, aesthetic desires and the minutiae of finish and inclusion that creates a masterful result.

In a kitchen the big stars are things like appliances, benchtops, cupboard fronts, handles and even lighting. But often the most surprising and exciting elements reveal themselves only when the doors and drawers are opened.

The luxe level of a kitchen can be elevated by paying as much attention to the internal surfaces and inclusions as are paid to the external. Timber laminate internals create great contrast; high quality drawers with glass or timber sides effortlessly look like the designer has gone to more effort. Even highly functional elements like cutlery inserts and drawer dividers can add luxury appeal.

Natural oak or black ash inserts from the Finesse range do their job with effortless elegance. Separating every piece of cutlery and all of the cooking utensils is a purpose they over deliver on. With flexible configurations and different sized compartments the sorting options are endless and with the contrast provided with the thin metal inserts the look of drawer internals is transformed into something akin to a high end showroom. Cupboards as well as drawers can utilise the Finesse inserts with product such as the plate sorters, though these work well within drawers too, to keep the rattling of the crockery to a minimum.

The Finesse product is beautiful, well finished, customisable and scalable and will add a touch of design detail and high-end functionality and appeal to kitchen drawers.

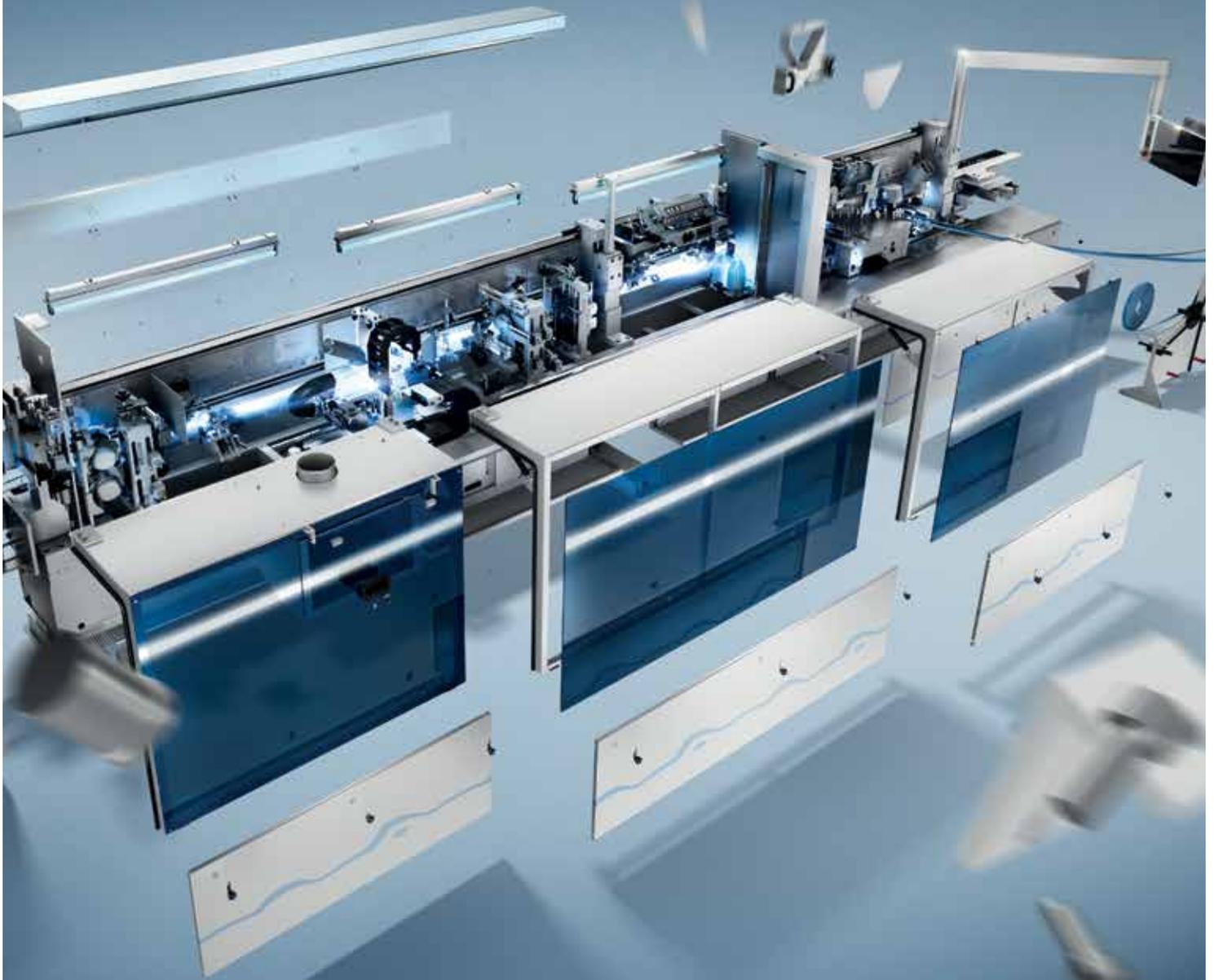


Darren Palmer, interior designer, TV presenter and author



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# Smart hidden storage for bathrooms

Creating a functional and stylish bathroom can be a challenge, especially when space is at a premium. Often the disposal of rubbish or storing of laundry is an afterthought, and a small rubbish bin or laundry hamper is placed on the floor once the bathroom is in use. This affects the original design, introduces new materials and takes up much needed space.

Hideaway Bins offer clean, simple and versatile storage solutions to keep waste bins and laundry hampers out of sight.

A Hideaway Compact 15 litre bin offers an ideal solution to keep a bathroom looking clutter free while keeping waste discreetly hidden. The unit can be installed within a bathroom vanity and easily accessed when required. Plumbing can be directed behind the bin, allowing for more room in other drawers.

The Hideaway laundry hampers can be used to hide laundry, store extra linen or as a removable washing basket. Features include a 60 litre hamper with air vents to reduce moisture, a robust steel frame designed to withstand the weight of wet washing, and soft close runners rated to 52kg. The base mount model allows easy removal of the hamper, with no high runners to clear.



Hideaway Bins are available exclusively through distribution partners, Nover, Hafele and Galvin's Hardware.

Hideaway Compact 1x15 litre bin KC15SCD, and Hideaway 1 x 60 litre laundry hamper SCLBM160D-W.

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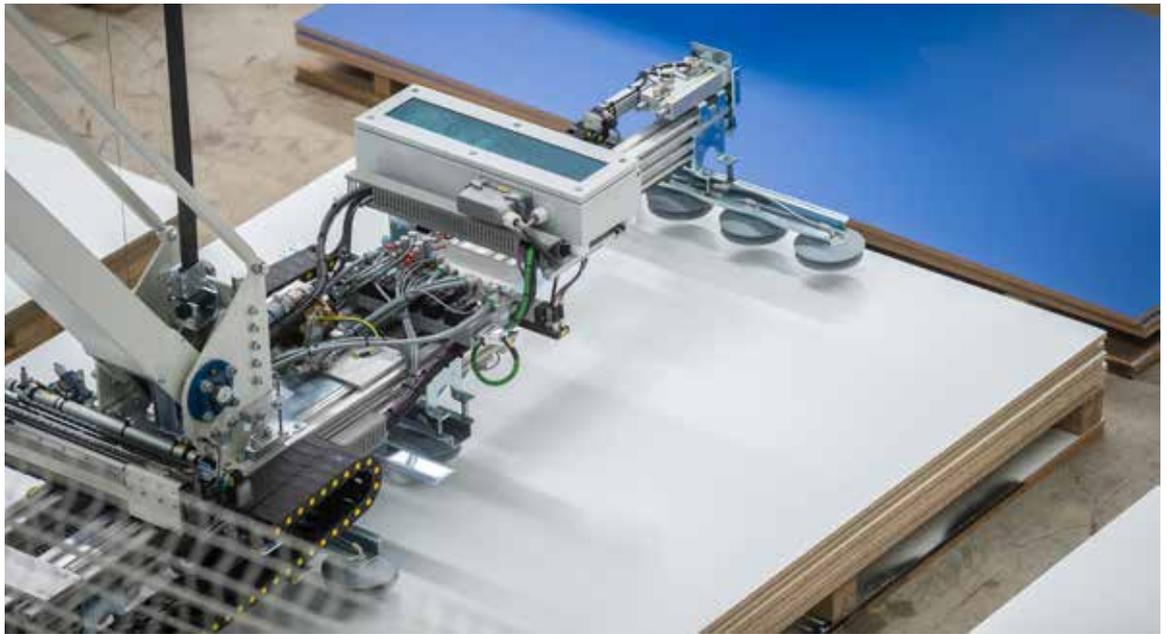



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# Flexstore inventory management and stock control



With the advent of complete nesting and machining solutions, inventory and stock control systems are quickly becoming a key part of the manufacturing process.

SCM Group's Flexstore system features advanced automation and integration of machines and systems which can work both in a standalone capacity or in combination with one another. High-level software manages the flow of information and logistics for the materials being processed.

Designed to be a compact solution, the new generation Flexstore provides excellent performance for cabinetmakers.

An automatic storage system, Flexstore can be used to optimise the handling of different panels. It can be integrated

in production lines for nesting and/or sizing cells, with a significant increase in productivity and considerable reduction of costs.

Adapting perfectly to the space available, Flexstore is built with two sturdy steel load-bearing girders which support a mobile horizontal girder on which the suction cup arm is fitted.

Brushless motors drive the girder which runs on flat guides thanks to wheels coated with anti-wear material – all of which adds up to trouble free, continuous operation.

The Flexstore suction cup arm automatically adjusts to the various lengths and thicknesses of the panel to be picked up and, moving both horizontally and vertically, can travel in the three main directions. It also has a pneumatic device for panel front detachment, and a device for detecting the weight – this ensures the system knows when a panel is in use by the cups.

The Flexstore design pays great attention panel movement - the horizontal layout of the store prevents any possible damage from sliding.

The store uses a labelling system to guarantee full traceability and recognisability of every element.

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L&S lighting adds atmosphere, functionality and style to any kitchen. L&S offers a constantly evolving range of energy-saving LED lighting solutions that can be integrated throughout cabinets, as well as hidden inside and under them to deliver the finishing touches to kitchen space.

To make the ordering of L&S lighting products easier, the Wilson & Bradley website also features a number of kit codes which include LED lights, transformers and accessories helping ensure that customers have everything they need to install their lighting. The Wilson and Bradley website also provides installation instructions and informative videos to make the installation process simple.




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# Tiomos Hidden - the hinge becomes invisible



With the development of the Tiomos hinge system, Grass has written a new chapter in the history of furniture design. With the concealed Tiomos Hidden hinge, which was launched at interzum 2017, Grass has added another component that makes it possible to move doors elegantly and almost invisibly.

“When we talk about minimalism, we assume that technology is becoming more and more intelligent and its functions more and more comfortable – but also less and less visible.” This is how Andreas Marosch, head of marketing at Grass, describes the company’s approach. “Customers want to express their personality with personalised furniture design; the technical components should be designed so that they take a back seat behind the furniture design or provide a specific aesthetic aspect in addition to the pure function.”

The latest product from the Tiomos series is a perfect example of this product philosophy: it really takes a back seat behind the furniture,

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*designed to take  
a back seat...*

---

even better, it becomes one with the furniture and thus becomes almost invisible. The concealed Tiomos Hidden hinge is recessed in the cabinet and thereby is flush with the surfaces of the door and of the inside wall of the piece of furniture. However, in terms of functionality, it certainly is not second-best compared to its

visible colleagues: it is unusually strong, and can be adjusted in three dimensions. Tiomos Hidden features a damping mechanism in the closing action and allows for an opening angle of 105°. The minimum door thickness required is 18 millimetres.

Tiomos Hidden combines functionality with design and, with its fully concealed installation, takes second place behind the furniture. Furthermore, with the new Night surface finish, Tiomos Hidden responds to the trend towards dark, high-quality surfaces. The hinge is also available in a nickel-plated version.

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# The SCM R-Evolution

In the tradition of bespoke SCM creations, a unique piece of furniture was on display for the first time at the recent SCM R-Evolution exhibition in Sydney. The centrepiece of the exhibition was an 8 metre slab table made from a recovered sequoia tree.

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## *recovered sequoia redwood slab table*

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Ian Dolan of Recycled Timbers created the slab table from a Californian redwood sequoia tree, which was recovered from the Mt Tomah Botanic Gardens after being struck by lightning.

Deemed a safety risk to Garden visitors, Recycled Timbers removed the tree remnants and had it broken into three pieces for easy removal to the Recycled Timbers factory. One piece was used to make the slab table for the SCM Group Australia Sydney showroom, and the other pieces will be used to create unique furniture pieces.

The Californian redwood is a slow growing softwood and is one of the largest trees in the world with some having a life span of between 1200 - 1800 years, a height of 115.5 metres and up to 7.9 metres in diameter.

Determined to respect the natural beauty of the tree, SCM Group Australia designed the slab table so that the raw state of the wood would be conserved. The resulting piece is a magnificent slab table more than 8 metres long which will be kept as a showpiece in the SCM Sydney showroom.

Surrounding the slab table, SCM R-Evolution was a buzz of activity with the latest in woodworking technology on display for all to see. A culmination of SCM Group's first year in Australia, the two day exhibition held at the beginning of September was the first opportunity for the public to see the Flexstore storage system up and running.

An impressive piece of machinery to watch in action, Flexstore handles panel management and storage with ease. SCM R-Evolution visitors were able to experience the smooth movements of Flexstore as it easily fed panels into a Morbidelli Universal nesting cell.

An exhibition that catered for a whole spectrum of wood trades from cabinet and kitchen makers, shopfitters, joiners right through to designers and architects, SCM Group Australia fitted out its Sydney showroom with the latest in edgebanders, 5 axis machining, DMC sanders and a wide range of panel saws and traditional machines.

The Accord 25 fx CNC machining centre drew a crowd over the two day event. Running demonstrations with SCM created Xilog Maestro software, visitors were able to see the flexibility of the machine as wooden mugs were created with ease.





Keen to offer an all-inclusive solution to warehouse fit out, SCM Group Australia invited a number of industry partners to participate in the exhibition. With many customers requiring a focus on screen to machine technology, Microvellum and Cabinets by Computer were on hand to demonstrate how SCM machining capabilities can be enhanced when combined with the right software for the job.

Also on site were Leitz, offering a suite of tooling options and Finance At Work, taking care of the practical aspects of purchasing machines.

“Our first year as SCM Group in Australia has been a great success,” said Lee Gabbett, CEO. “We’ve been well received by customers and the industry alike, and it’s been a privilege to introduce the latest in machinery to the Australian public direct from the designers in Italy. We’re really looking forward to what the next year will bring.”

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# Intuitive user convenience for purist modern design



Quadro drawer runners with push to open gently open handleless wooden drawers as well as the Hettich InnoTech Atira drawer system. All in response to a light press on the front panel.

To permit activation of large drawers from anywhere on the front panel, the Quadro full extension runners are factory configured for installing synchronisation.

Anyone looking to push beyond the limits of today's furniture design will find the answer in the synchronised push to open mechanism: making it easy to feature exceptionally wide front panels that interconnect several drawers. The synchronisation system connects all runners, synchronously activating them across centre panels or carcass sides.

The optional, easily clipped in synchronisation bar with fitted adapters can be cut to any carcass width without a problem while connectors reduce offcut to a minimum. This provides an effective way of combining on trend handleless, large format furniture design with practical convenience.

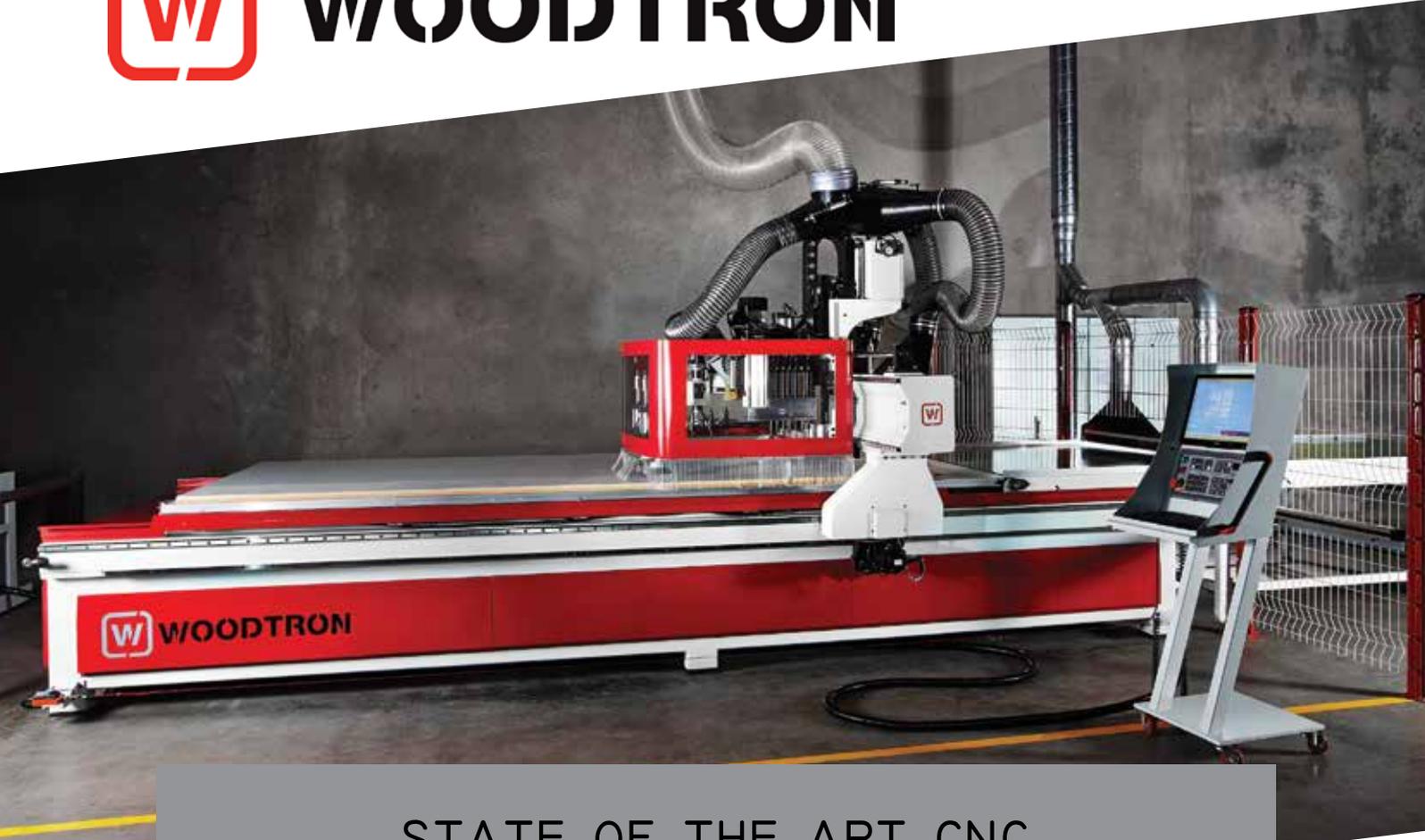


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# Quality and innovation at the Fenestration Australia Design Awards 2017

Now in its twelfth year, the Fenestration Australia Design Awards give recognition to the exceptional work in design and innovation achieved by the fenestration industry.

Open to members of the Australian Window Association (AWA), Australian Institute of Surface Finishing (AISF) and the Skylight Industry Association (SIA), the 2017 Design Awards were presented in September at the industry's annual conference.

The awards are held in high regard within the industry. It is only through the continued quality and innovation displayed that this standard of excellence is maintained.

The Design Awards aim to increase the level of interest in windows, doors, skylights, fenestration products and surface finishings. They also aim to raise the awareness, profile and interest in members of the AWA, AISF and SIA and to differentiate them from others; and also to execute a consistent professional showcase for window systems, skylights and surface finishings by celebrating and recognising excellence.

This article features only a few of the winning entries. The 'Winners Magazine' is published at [www.awa.org.au](http://www.awa.org.au).



## **Fenestration Australia Design Award of the Year.**

SGA Architectural Window Solutions;  
Dorrigo Health & Wellbeing Centre,  
Dorrigo, New South Wales.

## **AISF Best Use of Powder Coating.**

Australian Aluminium Finishing, Power  
Street Loop Project, Transurban City Link,  
Melbourne, Victoria.



**AWA Best Use of  
Windows & Doors  
Commercial Renovation.**

Distinct Aluminium  
Solutions, The Calyx,  
Royal Botanic Gardens,  
Sydney, New South Wales. ▶



**AWA Best Use of Windows & Doors Residential Renovation.**

Evolution Window Systems, Woollahra, New South Wales.



**AWA Best Use of Windows & Doors Residential New Construction Under \$1 million.**

DLG Aluminium & Glazing, Black Springs House, Beechworth, Victoria.



**AWA Best Use of Windows & Doors Residential New Construction Over \$1 million.**

European Window Co., Brighton, Victoria.

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# Quadro drawer runners with **Synchronised Push to open**

Quadro drawer runners with Push to open, gently open InnoTech Atira and wooden drawers, with a light press on the front drawer panel. The easily clipped in synchronisation bar with fitted adapters ensures that the opening mechanisms of both runners activate in synchrony.

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**Hettich**

# Doubling down on quality

Located in the light industrial estate of Mitchell, ACT, sits a veteran kitchen manufacturer with a proud reputation. Adopting a philosophy surrounding three core principals; quality product, competitive pricing and exceptional customer service, Mint Kitchens has become a fixture in the community and has grown considerably since its humble beginnings.

It was over 16 years ago and with a great emphasis for the quality of their work, business partners Vinnie Gudelj and Carlo Pasquariello met up with Altendorf Asia Pacific managing director Vit Kafka (then sales manager) to find the right machine that would lay the foundations for that quality. The company's very first machine was the Altendorf Elmo 4. While some may consider this high-profile machine to be a larger investment than necessary for a start-up, the two partners were committed to their quality-first principle and were in turn rewarded by their decision as the years unfolded. In keeping up with the joinery's core values of outstanding craftsmanship, the Altendorf panel saw delivered highly precise and consistent cuts with unparalleled reliability year after year. Not only was quality of the cuts guaranteed, the time saving features of the machine also contributed the company's principle of competitive pricing.

Starting with just the two working directors who tirelessly worked 7 days a week, the business garnered a solid reputation within its industry and saw year on year growth over the 16 years of operation. Today, both directors are vested more than ever in a hands-on approach in ensuring quality, customer satisfaction and process optimization on the factory floor.

With a solid reputation, comes great demand. In 2017, with a constantly growing volume of work and an increasing need to uphold the quality for which the company is known for, it was time to commission a second saw. For the Canberra-based business, the solution came in the form of an Altendorf Pro4U panel saw. Built on Altendorf's latest chassis, complete with motorised rip fence, crosscut fence, tilt and fall



adjustments, the machine is an amalgamation of Altendorf's newest engineering innovations and is designed at its heart to deliver quality cuts at an increased level of productivity.

Both Vinnie and Carlo had praise for the professional and personal relationship of trust they've developed with Vit over the years. "Vit's knowledge of product and expertise guided us towards a machine that was most suited to our needs," the pair explains.

"We cabinet makers today are confronted with increasing material diversity and increasing labour costs," Carlo elaborated, "so every investment needs to be well calculated and considered, each piece of the machinery we choose needs to fit into our environment and should be as efficient and capable as possible."

Vit Kafka agrees with that notion, "We make a wide range of excellent machines and the industry is aware of that," he comments, "but what's more important for our machine to contribute to the success of a business, is that it has to be the right solution."



Top: Owners Carlo (left) and Vinnie.

Above: Contemporary style kitchen by Mint Kitchens.

Vinnie and Carlo are clear about how they see the future of their business and it's simple; to be the go-to quality supplier in the Canberra region. While Vinnie and Carlo are aware they have a long road ahead, with the right machinery choice and their ongoing passion for the business, the two agree that the end result will be well worth the effort.

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## Open doors at Biesse's Pesaro campus

In October Biesse Group headquarters opened the doors of its Italian Pesaro campus to demonstrate the advantages its technologies can offer to those working with wood and plastic.

Raphaël Prati, Biesse Group's marketing and communications director said the Pesaro event welcomed visitors from around the world. "We were able to offer our visitors the chance to 'live' the Biesse experience, introducing them to our passion, our knowledge, and our technology."

"Open doors at the Biesse Group headquarters demonstrated technology and services that will allow our clients to succeed in today's complex market," he said.

The 190,000 square metre space at the Pesaro campus is available to clients for testing and observing first-hand machinery, automated systems, advanced software, and interconnected technologies capable of optimising manufacturing processes and digitalizing factories.

Within the innovative Pesaro Tech Centre visitors and clients had the opportunity to get to know Sophia, the Biesse platform that makes it possible for companies to offer their customers a wide range of services for achieving maximum efficiency, streamlining and rationalising operations. To explain to visitors the opportunities that Sophia has to offer, a seminar: 'Sophia, more value from machines' was held to illustrate the project. Seminars focussing on Biesse's partnership with CasaClima and Cleaf were also held.

Raphaël Prati said that also highlighted were important software developments with Bavant, the MES (Manufacturing Execution System) offered by BiesseSystems for the integrated

and efficient management of manufacturing flows in line with machining requirements.

"Also on display were three complete production lines and various solutions dedicated to the handling of panels used for cutting, nesting, square-edging, and boring processes. This display introduced visitors to the advantageous opportunities that automation of the manufacturing flow offers in terms of efficiency and quality," he said.

More than 50 functioning solution demonstrations were on display to clients and visitors. In addition Biesse's skilled technical and sales personnel were available to answer questions about the demands and needs of the manufacturing processes. Visitors were also able to go on various tours of Biesse facilities that in particular provided example of the concept of a lean factory.

Raphaël Prati said the 'Inside' concept was fundamentally important to Biesse. "It enables us to maintain a strong collaborative relationship with our clients, and for confirming year after year our company's characteristic dedication to technology."

"The assistance we constantly provide to our clients stems from our relentless search for 'the new', for that innovative element capable of determining the growth and efficiency of the companies in this sector," he said.

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Raphaël Prati, Biesse Group's marketing and communications director ... "Pesaro offered visitors from around the world the chance to 'live' the Biesse experience, introducing them to our passion, our knowledge, and our technology."



Open doors at the Biesse Group headquarters demonstrated technology and services.

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# Titus Tekform online store now open



Online ordering is now available at Titus Tekform, with the launch of the company's new online store. Titus Tekform trade customers can browse and purchase products with live contract pricing and account credit limits at their fingertips.

The new online store makes ordering products easier than ever before with 24-hour access to product information, past order details and invoices. Individual contract pricing automatically displays for relevant products so customers can access accurate pricing and stock information even well outside business hours.

Titus Tekform's carefully selected product range includes the world-renowned Titus hinges, dampers and furniture fittings; the extensive Tekform double wall and single wall drawer family; stylish Stefano Orlati lighting, handles and decorative surfaces; as well as a comprehensive array of innerware, sinks, taps, appliances, adhesives, abrasives, fasteners, and edgebanding. Latest product releases, including the T-type hinge, Capri handleless profiles, and the new range of overhead lifters, are all available to purchase online.

The online 'My Account' page gives Titus Tekform trade customers access to live account credit information as well as the ability to add or amend delivery addresses, update passwords, and view contact details for their technical sales representative. Invoices and statements are available to view or download, and payment options include credit card, PayPal and business credit.

The easy to navigate store features product filtering options and a comprehensive search function that recognises both order codes and keywords. The online store allows customers to enter product codes directly to their cart for added convenience. A touch of a button adds

products from previous online orders straight into the shopping cart to help re-order common products quickly and easily.

Titus Tekform has nine offices all around Australia to enable quick access to customers, no matter where they may be. The extensive network of warehouses ensures orders are collated and packed with maximum efficiency prior to dispatch anywhere within the region for fast delivery. In stock orders shipped to metro areas and placed before 1.00pm are eligible for next day delivery.

Customers with an active ABN and ACN can create a trade account to become a Titus Tekform trade customer and access trade pricing, specials and online account information. Those with an existing Titus Tekform account can simply contact their technical sales representative and will be provided with access to their online account within two business days. Companies that are not existing trade customers can apply for a trade account simply by clicking "request trade account" on the website and completing the easy online application form.

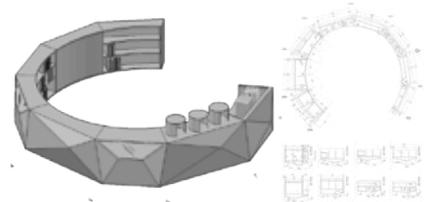
The new Titus Tekform online store is the latest step in an ongoing commitment to providing quality customer service to all areas of Australia. The soon to be available Titus Tekform App will also allow customers to access the online shop from mobile devices, as well as product brochures and assembly information. To keep abreast of the latest news and developments, customers can sign up to the Titus Tekform newsletter online, or follow Titus Tekform on Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn.

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# North Geelong Kitchens doubles productivity with CNC machinery and Cabinet Vision

Now a staple of the modern woodshop, CNC machinery was in its infancy when Toni Siketa opened the doors of North Geelong Kitchens (NGK) more than 20 years ago.

Today, he and his five-member crew are adept at using CNC machinery to produce a range of custom case goods and millwork projects that range from residential kitchens to one-of-a-kind vanities, wardrobes and doors. As a "job shop" for other cabinetmakers who outsource doors, the company is also a growing resource for industry professionals in search of a reliable, high-quality supplier.

"We've grown over the last two or three years and we're still growing," says Siketa, a master of traditional craftsmanship

who began his long and successful woodworking career with an apprenticeship in 1979. "It's just expanded so quickly over the last 12 months."

NGK is based in the namesake city of North Geelong, Victoria, where crew members - including painters, a design specialist, and Siketa's son - strike a winning balance between working hard and not taking themselves too seriously. "It's pretty laid back and, at the same time, it's intense when it needs to be. We all seem to take everything in our stride, but we do get the work out."

As an added bonus for customers, NGK fulfills all of its painting needs in house, which enables the company to flexibly respond to project changes and meet or exceed quality expectations.

"The benefit of painting in house is that we've got total control over time frames, and we offer an unlimited colour range," Siketa says. "If customers want additions, we can do them right away rather than waiting seven to ten working days to get it back from someone else."

In 2015, Siketa embarked on a journey to further increase efficiency by purchasing an Anderson CNC router and diving head first into the world of CNC programming.

"It all began with purchasing a CNC machine, which came with a program that was quite basic," says Siketa, who found that the program included with his purchase wasn't powerful enough to handle all of his shop's needs. "We wanted a program that was more able to service us and our needs for doors, and to produce cabinets a little bit quicker. We found that we could cut very quickly, but that we couldn't produce all of the drawer patterns and other projects with the basic program that came with the machine."

In 2016, NGK acquired the Cabinet Vision Screen-to-Machine™ system, by Planit Cutting Edge Solutions. Designed to help cabinet makers better visualize, plan and manage projects, as well as to easily and quickly produce accurate G-code, the solution was the right fit for NGK's evolving needs.

"We're producing at least twice as much as we were, and this has all happened over the past six to eight months - so it's happened very quickly."

To begin a job in Cabinet Vision, users enter the dimensions of the room in which the finished project will be installed,



followed by the dimensions and details of the project. Realistic graphics and renderings generated in Cabinet Vision assist both manufacturers and customers in visualizing finished projects, and in making production and design choices accordingly.

"The pictures are great because they're basically telling you what you're doing." Siketa says of Cabinet Vision's robust visualization tools. "Once you can see the picture and how you're changing things - playing around a bit and changing doors to drawers, and so on - it's very simple."

Siketa adds that the software also helps in providing a comprehensive picture of the machine tool and associated project. Detailed overviews help to ensure the efficiency of the program, as well as the integrity of the job and safety of the user's machine-tool investment.

"When you get to the machine itself, you can see what's happening because you've drawn it up, but you can also see what you left out, what needs to be added, and it's really very simple and basic," he says. "Cabinet Vision has saved us a lot of time and money and given us a lot of control."

For NGK, making the right choice in software has made the single biggest difference to the company's success in implementing CNC production.

"The program you choose is probably the most important thing. We had our highs and lows with the machine when we first got it, but we're only looking forward now with Cabinet

Vision," Siketa says, adding that Cabinet Vision support played a significant role in ensuring that the implementation of the program went as smoothly as possible.

"Cabinet Vision support has been helpful in many ways, with any problems that we had or anything that we didn't understand - which for me is a lot because I don't come from a computer background. Anything we didn't understand, we could ring up support and they dealt with it."

Perhaps most importantly, embracing CNC machinery and Cabinet Vision has helped NGK to increase production volume and efficiency, and gain more time for other pursuits.

"It's been a journey and it's all been very good for us. We're saving a lot of time, which gives me more time for me and my family," Siketa says. "Where we were struggling before to make things and get things out, we're actually producing quite comfortably."

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# Any material, any shape, any time

Three Sixty Limited is a New Zealand company specialising in retail fit outs and product displays, of any shape and in virtually any material. With big corporate clients that include Noel Lemmings, BNZ, Samsung, Fisher & Paykel and the Auckland City Council, quality is always exacting and timing often challenging. The recent purchase of an SCM Morbidelli m400 5 axis machine from Machines R Us has enabled the company to meet these requirements and bring its deadlines under its own control.

The company which employs more than 50 staff on Auckland's North Shore, has its own design office, production facility, engineering workshop, signage shop and LED lighting department, and provides a full installation and maintenance service. It was however having to contract out some of the joinery and 3D shaping aspect of this work with a resultant dependence on others regarding quality and meeting deadlines. This, with a big increase in workload and orders over the past 12 months meant company director Mike Ensor decided it was the right time to look at redressing these issues and improve the company's control.

The first part of this was to employ someone with specialist knowledge in CNC machining. "We do a lot of erratic shapes and one off specials and needed a good programmer and operator to take our designs through to production. I was lucky enough to find Carl Perry with experience in both design and the operation of CNC machinery and together we looked to refresh the company's machinery." says Mike.

"The large variety in our work means we needed a machine capable of cutting and sculpturing complex and often oversize

shapes in materials as varied as plastic, acrylics, Corian, MDF and solid timber - ideally a multi axis machine capable of heavy use, fast through put and quick change out between jobs."

"We settled on a Morbidelli for several reasons" says Mike. "Firstly, I liked the brand, we have been running an old Morbidelli point to point, purchased second hand more than a decade ago, and it has always been trouble free. Also the Morbidelli m400 can cut almost any material and has a 5m bed with the ability to work both ends. We can load both sides which gives great speed or we can be running a long run on one side and then interrupt that to do a smaller run on the other side before returning to the main job.

"Quality and timing is very important to us. In fact our motto is - safety first, then deadlines, then quality, with profit last - doesn't necessarily impress our bank manager but it keeps our staff and clients happy which is more important. This machine is very safe, very precise and allows us to gain great accuracy while maintaining the speed to achieve our deadlines and margins."

"We have definitely chosen the right machine. It has done everything and more expected of it, opening up new areas of work and doing the old work better. For example we don't need to construct jigs anymore and it allows us to easily run up a prototype when tendering for jobs, something that in the past was often very expensive."

"It has certainly freed up time in the company, previously we were continuously waiting for the CNC to become available now it is the other way around. It is a hungry beast and with its capability and capacity - we are unlikely to be needing to shop any work out for a while."



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This article first appeared in New Zealand's Joiners Magazine.

Carl Perry (left) with company director Mike Ensor. The new Morbidelli 5 axis has increased capacity and capability at Three Sixty Limited.



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# How to free up your top dollar guy

Gary Solomon Jr., Jonathan Foucheaux, and Stephen Fink, were involved in theatre and lighting, entertainment technology, and live arena production respectively. The trio came together to create a hybrid firm and fill a niche that was gravely missing across their collective industries. Thus, Solomon Group was born.

Solomon Group is an award-winning entertainment design and production company based in New Orleans, Louisiana. Solomon Group provides and performs in-house all of the essential production services needed to create spectacular live events, brand activations, themed attractions, broadcast environments and "architainment" projects.

It has a talented in-house team including producers, designers, project managers, fabricators, and technicians who dream up and deliver stunning entertainment productions and themed environments for a variety of national and international clients.

One peek inside the Solomon Group fabrication shop and one is instantaneously transported to another realm. The company's 65,000 square foot shop is one of the most technically-advanced facilities of its kind. Capable of carpentry, metal fabrication, CNC routing, professional paint

finishing and more, this is where custom environments take shape, transformed from rendered designs to beautifully finished forms ready for installation.

At the helm of the shop is fabrication manager, Jason Toups, who keeps all of the moving parts in synchronization. Jason keeps the team afloat in thanks to his prior experience in all things building. He has an extensive background in both metalworking and woodworking, fabrication, carpentry, construction, you name it. Nothing phases this whiz kid.

The average deadline Jason's team faces is unlike anything most shops have ever seen. "This industry is really fast. Our timelines are like none other and we are cutting all day every day. A four week timeline would be like absolute heaven to us. It's a possibility, at any given time, that a client will call us at 7.00pm on a Wednesday night and we need to make something happen by Friday so that the product is shipped and received by that Monday."

With looming deadlines at every turn and only so many hours in the day, Jason has been able to find areas of continuous improvement in the Solomon Group fabrication process to keep timelines on track. Any amount of time saved can make or break whether a client receives an order on time.

Jason pinpointed Solomon Group's cutoff stations as key areas for improvement and implemented a SawGear automated positioner. "The process before we installed our SawGear was typical of any carpentry shop. We had to set a manual stop block when we made any cuts either for repetitive lengths or using a cut list. Setting the stop block would take someone who had a bit of knowledge in carpentry, and after the stop block was set correctly we still had to check for part accuracy after every 2-3 cuts, just because of the nature of a c-clamp moving and shifting and cuts becoming too long"

Setting a stop block and using a tape measure to measure material isn't the end of the world if you are making a handful of cuts per day. But for a high performance fabrication shop like Solomon Group, it became an incredibly expensive operation. The amount of time and labour hours it took proved to be a massive impediment to production schedules.



"Throughout the day we could be doing anywhere from 700 cuts to well into the thousands. We can't set a c-clamp or stop block and measure and mark each piece of material thousands of times per day. It's just not efficient. SawGear makes the process so much faster."

"But time aside, the biggest issue we faced with the previous manual cutting process is that we had to use our most skilled guys to do this work. We had our top dollar guy working on cut lists instead of on the bench using his expertise and knowledge and working on building," explains Jason. SawGear's intuitive design allows anyone to type in a measurement, either in fraction or decimal form, and press start. That's all it takes to get a perfectly accurate and repeatable cut.

"The main reason I bought it was for productivity efficiency, so that I could free up our most skilled guys and any single one of our other employees could easily walk up to the machine and cut parts accurately," says Jason.

"We bought two SawGears at IWF Atlanta. Initially we had to train folks how to use the equipment and ever since then new guys have been using the SawGears. And honestly they are very self-explanatory. It takes a matter of minutes for our carpentry shop foreman to get new guys trained and going and on their way operating the SawGear on our mitre saws."

This makes the burden of hiring someone with extensive carpentry skills a thing of the past. "Over the course of a day 2 people could be using the SawGears or 35 people could be using them. They are so easy to use. SawGear has been a great asset to our shop."

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Tekno Softclose Bins offer a high quality solution for integrated kitchen waste. The range includes single and twin bins with clip ring bag holders, fully concealed liners, easily removable bins and integrated soft close damping.

Tekno Softclose Bins can be used with any European drawer to create a sleek system that maximises space and functionality. Options are available to suit 400mm, 450mm and 600mm cabinets with a variety of bin capacities.

- + Compatible with the Tekform drawer
- + Easily removable bins
- + Smooth, integrated softclose

# Labels made by rock n' roll royalty?

Cabinet label making and rock n' roll ? What have the Beatles got in common with humble white cabinet labels that the industry uses every day? Well most of the cabinet labels made at All About Labels are made by Ringo "with a little help from my friends". Let's start by telling the story about how these labels are made.

All About Labels manufacture labels. Basically, bulk label paper is shipped in by the pallets and then the company's staff take this label paper and use specialised label making/ die cutting machines to take these very large paper rolls and convert them to make labels into the sizes, quantities, materials and adhesives needed by customers. So how do the Beatles help?

One of the company's longest serving machine operators, Ivan, is a music enthusiast and a great Beatles fan. All About Labels has a tradition of naming machines with people names. When the company took delivery of two machines back in 2013 it had to name them and settled on "Ringo" and "Jeremy". Ringo is an obvious musical explanation but for those who are not familiar, Jeremy Hilary Boob PhD describes himself as the "eminent physicist, polyglot classicist, prize-winning botanist, hard-biting satirist, talented pianist, good dentist too". He becomes friends with Ringo in the Beatles movie - Yellow Submarine. He is also known as the Nowhere Man, hence the song. So, Jeremy and Ringo work together in the factory. But that's not the end of the story.

Last year, All About Labels needed another die cutting machine because Ringo was saying "help me if you can", just to keep up with demand. When the new machine arrived, this machine needed a name. The company had mostly male names Ringo, Jeremy, Roger, Henry and one female name Lola for the machines. The office girls wanted the balance evened up a bit so everyone had to think hard. The new machine was to ease the load on Ringo so eventually the name "Barb" was chosen. For explanation Barbara Bach is Ringo's wife and Barb is beside Ringo and helps him every day in the factory.

So, next time a reader purchases A4 label sheets or roll labels from All About Labels they would be made either by Ringo or Barb even though "they get by with a little help from my friends" - the humans at All About Labels.

All About Labels manufactures removable labels especially for cabinet makers. Hundreds of sizes, labels per roll, core size and so on are available.



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# NZ kitchen group to confer during AWISA 2018



AWISA 2018, 4-7 July 2018, will play host to New Zealand's largest ever group of kitchen manufacturers. Mastercraft Kitchens will send up to 50 delegates representing 30 manufacturing businesses from throughout NZ to the show.

Although a number of Mastercraft's owners visit AWISA regularly, this will be the first time the group has travelled to the exhibition together, says group general manager Kevin Belz.

"It's important that our business owners keep up to date with the latest in product developments from around the world. In today's business environment, continued investment in technology is crucial. The ability for our owners to view state of the art machinery being operated at AWISA is a huge advantage to them."

"Darling Harbour itself and the new International Convention Centre are such wonderful facilities, we've taken the opportunity to head over a bit earlier and hold our annual conference, in the days leading up to AWISA 2018."

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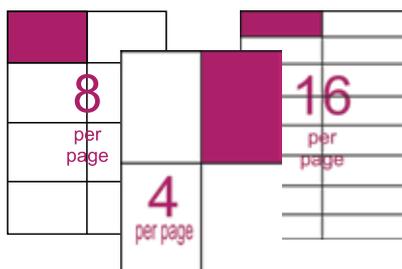
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## “Touch wood” and the language of trees

The expression “touch wood” seems to have been first associated with the famous Sydney’s Wishing Tree. This and other rich tree-related metaphors are now commonly in daily use. We “turn over a new leaf” and “branch out”, “ideas blossom and bear fruit”. “Though our momentum is sapped”, “our resolve remains deep-rooted”, and yet there are times when “we can’t see the forest for the trees”.

The expression “touch wood” seems to have originated in Sydney’s Botanic Gardens. The gardens are an important part of Australia’s tree heritage and Australia’s oldest scientific institution. Established during the reign of King George III, the Gardens were granted the royal epithet in 1959 by his great-great-great-great-grand-daughter, Queen Elizabeth II.

Sydney’s Botanic Gardens are part of the Domain established by Governor Phillip in 1792. The traditional foundation date of the gardens was 13 June 1816, the date of completion of Mrs Macquarie’s Road along the garden’s eastern perimeter.

The landscaping of the foreshore of Farm Cove, now enclosed within the botanic gardens began under the guidance of Governor Macquarie’s wife Elizabeth in 1811. Initially access was limited to the ‘gentry’, but the gardens were officially opened to the general public on 13 September 1831.

Arguably the most notable tree to have grown in the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens was the Wishing Tree, a Norfolk Island pine planted at the request of Mrs Macquarie in 1815. The tree is reputed to have come from Norfolk Island in a tub and was first planted in the Old Government House garden, at the corner of what are now Phillip and Bridge Streets in the Sydney CBD.

According to Edwin Wilson in his book, *The Wishing Tree*, in earlier times people believed that spirits lived in trees and would not pass certain ‘sacred’ trees without stroking their bark to appease the tree spirits and sometimes making a wish.



The Wishing tree, Sydney’s Botanic Gardens, about 1880:  
The origin of the metaphor “touch wood”.

Thus the idea of ‘wishing trees’ and the expression ‘touch wood’. The custom grew around the Sydney Wishing Tree that children and lovers should walk around it six times - three times forward, three backward and then make their secret wishes.

Generally the instructions for making a wish were to close your eyes, make a wish, then open your eyes and walk forwards around the tree three times, then backwards around the tree three times. On the last circuit the wish needed to be ‘wished’ again.

The Wishing Tree was removed in 1945 when old age and decay threatened to topple it. Souvenirs were made from its wood and sold to help disabled soldiers returning from Second World II.

So the Australian derived expression “touch wood” and other tree related metaphors continue to enrich the modern English language, even though most have their origins in eightieth and ninetieth centuries.

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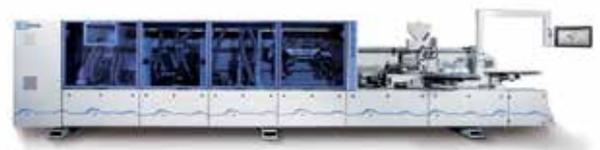


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# Believe it!

## The government is here to help you



The federal government has a series of different programmes that can - and indeed do - help businesses in the furniture and cabinet industries.

The main suite of packages fall under what the government calls the Entrepreneurs' Programme and this is designed to help businesses both big and small.

The programme offers support to businesses through four elements:

**1** Business management, which provides support to help improve a business's management, capabilities and networks. While this is intended to help businesses of all sizes, the nature of the services and grants available (as outlined below) tend to be of greater benefit to smaller businesses, for example:

- A business evaluation from an experienced adviser provides export guidance to help companies create an agreed plan of action to improve and grow;
- Growth services provides specialist support, advice and connections to help businesses identify and capitalise on growth opportunities and overcome any potential barriers to growth;
- Supply chain facilitation is intended to facilitate enhanced participation in domestic and global supply chains, but in particular helps companies to better connect with existing and potential new customers; and
- Business growth grants of up to \$20,000 to contract external specialist support, specifically to implement one or more of the priority actions identified in the reports generated by the above services.

**2** Innovation connections - experienced innovation facilitators are assigned to work with businesses to identify knowledge gaps that may be preventing business growth. It is intended to help firms:

- Identify their research needs and opportunities;
- Connect with relevant sources of expertise, technology and advice; and,

- Provide pathways to engage and collaborate with research sector. There are also matched funding grants (the Innovation Connections Grant) for up to \$50,000 to access research capability.

**3** Accelerating commercialisation - provides successful applicants access to expert guidance and grants to find the right commercialisation solutions for new products, processes and services. The grants are quite lucrative, but do need to be matched (dollar for dollar) and are difficult to obtain, so it is usually more established and well-resourced firms that benefit from this programme. Still, with grants up to \$1 million to assist commercialisation of innovative ideas it is well worth consideration.

To access the accelerating commercialisation support, firms need to first submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to AusIndustry and if this is accepted it is followed by a competitive (and comprehensive) formal application process.

**4** While the above programmes call for one off approaches/applications to AusIndustry with a focus on future activities, there are two schemes widely used by all industries in Australia that require annual applications / registrations, based on eligible expenditure undertaken in the previous financial year.

The first of these is the research and development (R&D) tax incentive, a targeted program jointly administered by AusIndustry and the Australian Taxation Office. The Incentive provides generous benefits designed

to encourage businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises across all sectors of the Australian economy, to engage in R&D to boost competitiveness and productivity.

There are two core components to the R&D tax incentive which provides the following percentage offsets based on the eligible R&D expenditure incurred:

- a 43.5 per cent refundable tax offset to eligible entities with an aggregated turnover of less than \$20 million per annum.
- a non-refundable 38.5 per cent tax offset to eligible entities with aggregated annual turnover of more than \$20 million.

The other recurrent program is the Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) scheme. This has been a long-running program administered by Austrade, offering financial assistance to small and medium sized Australian firms (i.e. with income of \$50 million or less) to actively develop export markets.

Eligible entities are entitled to apply for reimbursement of up to 50% of eligible export marketing and promotion expenses incurred the previous financial year. Eligible expenditure to warrant an EMDG grant includes spending on:

- Overseas representatives: limited to overseas marketing and promotion of the applicant's eligible products under a long term Agreement.
- Marketing consultants to undertake export market research or activities.
- Marketing visits: travel costs plus a \$350/day allowance for accommodation and living expenses.
- Communications allowance.
- Exhibitions: participation in international trade fairs, showings, etc
- Promotional literature: externally produced brochures, videos, DVDs, advertising, websites.

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## Think before buying a dust collector

When many companies purchase new equipment such as a CNC point to point or a beam saw they don't give much thought to the dust collection system they buy to service the unit. They may buy a dust collector with the machine as a package or base their decision solely on price.

Wayne Dockrill, managing director of Ezi-Duct Pty Ltd, said recently that there are many popular dust collectors sold in Australia today based on very old energy hungry designs that have no or very poor filter bag cleaning system, causing the bags to cake with dust.

"If the air can't get out, it can't get in," he said. "There is no such thing as a dust collector with 'self cleaning filter bags' and to prove this statement simply test the airflow on one of these units after it has been operating for a week and see how much the airflow/suction has reduced while using the same amount of energy. Also beware of dust collectors that use pleated cartridges instead of filter bags. Cartridge dust collectors are perfect for certain applications but are generally not a great option for timber dust with shavings that will get caught in the pleats, blocking the cartridges."

When selecting a dust collection system there are many important factors to consider that include continual high performance, filter medium and cleaning efficiency, energy consumption, easy disposal of the waste, labour saving operation, and smooth bore modular ducting with pressed 1.5 CLR bends.

For over 20 years Ezi-Duct has helped thousands of customers from small cabinet makers to huge manufacturing plants. Ezi-Duct together with its sister company Pollex Environmental Engineering has recently engineered, supplied and installed some of the largest, most energy efficient and technically advanced dust collection systems in Australia. Some of these dust collection systems have airflows of over 100,000 cubic metres/hour generated with 200kW high efficiency fans.

Ezi-Duct manufactures and supplies a huge range of high performance, energy efficient dust collectors, many of which were specifically designed for the Australian timber industry. Ezi-Duct dust collectors include the many models of the eCono range to the top of the line MDC series. All units are or can be supplied with an energy saving VSD that automatically turns down

the power consumption to the energy saving high efficiency fan when woodworking machines that are connected to the system are turned off.

All Ezi-Duct dust collectors are fitted with the recommended filter medium for the timber industry - cylindrical needle felt filter bags. Ezi-Duct uses heavy-duty 550 GPM top quality anti static needle felt medium that increases filtering performance and filter longevity. Filter bags are cleaned by either a high frequency shaker system when the unit is turned off or with reverse pulse compressed air cleaning. The reverse pulse system economically cleans filter bags while the unit is running increasing the energy efficiency. This ensures that the dust collector is providing maximum energy efficiency and suction at all times. Filter bag life is not affected with reverse pulse cleaning, with the MDC dust collector customers getting filter life of greater than 8 years.

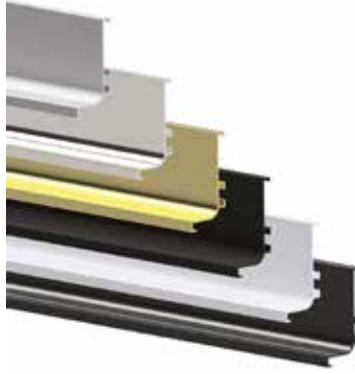
Reverse pulse compressed air cleaning is the most energy efficient and proven cleaning system on the market. The new Ezi-Duct intelligent dust collectors even know if the filters bags become caked with high dust loads when the maximum number of machines are used and will automatically increase the pulsing frequency ensuring the dust collector is running at maximum efficiency. The dust collector will automatically decrease the pulsing when machines are turned off and the dust load is lighter again.

Ezi-Duct has many innovative systems to minimise heavy lifting, making waste disposal from its dust collectors easy. The dust from the dust collection units goes directly into either plastic bags, "wheelie bins" or skip bins. Ezi-Duct can also custom design and build other waste handling solutions to suit customers specific requirements.

Ezi-Duct manufactures and supplies the genuine Ezi-Duct modular ducting system and is the Australian gold agent for Norres flexible ducting, the world's best flexible ducting. Ezi-Duct has branches and its own sheet metal factories in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane and is Australia's leading manufacturer and supplier of dust collection and fume extraction equipment.

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# Australian Woodworking Industry Suppliers Association Limited

## 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 Sydney from 4 - 7 July 2018 at ICC Sydney, Darling Harbour, Sydney. For more information visit [www.awisa.com](http://www.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 13,000 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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*Darren Palmer*

**Darren Palmer**

Interior Designer, TV Presenter & Author