

AWISA

THE MAGAZINE

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

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DEAR READER,

In the last edition, I wrote about the Furniture Cabinets
Joinery Alliance's (FCJA) leaders' forum that was about to
take place in Canberra. This edition carries a comprehensive
report on the forum, starting on page 13. I encourage you to
read this report. It is important for all those involved in the
woodworking and associated industries to realise that the
industry has a voice in Canberra. For many years we didn't.
While the results of the activities of the FCJA may be hard to
measure it is crucial that government hears about the issues
affecting the industry.

The work of the FCJA is funded by a number of trade
associations, the principal ones being the Australian Window
Association, the Australian Shop and Office Fitting Industry
Association, the Cabinet Makers and Designers Association,
the Furnishing Industry Association, and AWISA. If you are
a member of one of these associations, a portion of your
membership fees assist the activities of the FCJA. If you
are not a member, and can see the benefits of your industry
having a voice in Canberra, I encourage you to join one of the
associations assisting the FCJA.

In each edition of this magazine we try to have a profile on
someone who has contributed to the success of the industry.
I am pleased that in this edition we feature John Cover on
page 18. He is one of the key people who gave me great
support when I first became involved with AWISA.

Summer approaches and this edition touches on this in both a
serious way and a lighter way. Firstly the HIA draws attention
to problems that can occur with the specification of materials
for outdoor kitchens. And we feature the Adirondack chair, an
American creation that is increasingly seen in the Australian
backyard.

And finally, best wishes for the festive season and for the new
year, and we hope to see you at AWISA 2016 next year in
Melbourne.

Geoff Holland

General manager
Australian Woodworking Industry
Suppliers Association Limited

FRONT COVER: In-feed table on
an IMA Performance1 edgebander.
Photo courtesy The Wood Tech Group.

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Plus other industry and product news.

Adirondack – the chair that says ‘summer’

ITS NAME may not roll off the tongue easily, but its form is familiar. The contours of the Adirondack chair frame a classic design that in its simple and clean lines epitomises comfort, relaxation, and a care-free breezy summer outdoors. Peter Orman, who began making Adirondack chairs after he and his wife took a liking to them during a trip in the USA, explains to AWISA that the style hails from the Adirondack Mountains and other cooler locations such as Cape Cod in north east USA where people from further south such as New York take their holidays to seek relief from their sweltering summers.

The chairs were originally designed to be made simply, for low maintenance, and robust enough for use in the open, says Orman. They are comfortable to just laze in as well as having wide armrests on which you can put a drink, snacks, and books.

Mark Fielding, another Australian Adirondack maker, suggests to AWISA that there is something in the style that invites you to the outdoors with the large high back offering a feeling of relaxation.

Eden Kane, who also makes the chairs, reflects with AWISA that for him Adirondack chairs are a reminder of the simple life when things were not so complicated, of how a plain structure of planks of wood can be somehow very comfortable. They intimate easy summer contemplation, a time of letting go a little with your favourite drink perched on the armrest.

The design was conceived by Thomas Lee in 1903. The accepted history is that while holidaying in Westport, he set about experimenting with chair designs because he was dissatisfied with the garden furniture at hand. He produced

many prototypes that he let his large family test. They voted for one that had a straight slant-back, a low straight seat sloping towards the back and extra wide armrests. Lee's design used eleven pieces of wood all cut from one single plank of knot-free hemlock, a type of fir. With its low centre of gravity, it was very stable, and it sat easily on hilly and uneven terrain. Lee offered a struggling carpenter friend Harry Bunnell the opportunity to make and sell the chairs. Bunnell patented the design in 1905 without Lee's knowledge or permission, continuing to profitably make the 'Westport Plank Chairs' over the next quarter century. Lee never took any remedial action.

Generally speaking, after the modifications and interpretations of the original design over the years, today's Adirondack is distinguished from its original by the back made from slats and cut in a semi-circle at the top rather than a single board cut square at the top, as well as a shaped seat.

Adirondack chairs do not have a strong history in Australia until about 25 years or so, Orman points out. "We tended to have deck chairs, recliners, steamers and banana chairs so that the Adirondack was a novelty rather than a common occurrence. This is still the case with only a few Australian producers who are mainly small scale, and the big retailers who market flat pack copies from Asia. Strangely, though, most Australians are familiar with the design, if not the name, which is a bit tricky."

Orman began making chairs to sell at a local market after being captivated by an American Porch Glider his father had made for the front veranda, and started making Adirondacks after his trip to the USA. He was given a personal guided tour of the Lie-Nielsen Toolworks factory in Warren (Maine). "It was an experience that showed how a small player can have an international presence and market. I started with a design I got from an American magazine but quickly decided that it could be made better, combining style with comfort. The biggest change I made was to make the chair with a curved back. This complicated the process but it made the chair a lot more comfortable once I got the curve of the back right." He also changed the number of splats in the back, from six to seven and then to five or seven, with the odd number letting him create a feature by placing one splat at the centre.



Image courtesy Eden Kane.



"My interpretation of the chair allows me to draw on over 100 years of experience with a quality concept, as well as to make them to my individual design and standard of production. The flat packers generally do not use glue and this leads to movement after awhile in the joints and a generally inferior product. Some products also come with no finish and this is fine if you are that way inclined, but a bit of a pain if you buy the chair, put it together and then have to paint it," Orman says.

His life-long interest in working with wood intensified as he worked with his father-in-law in his joinery business. When his father-in-law passed away some years ago, Orman maintained some of the business contacts and set up Riverview Woodworks at Menangle Park (south of Sydney), working from a large shed on two acres. In 2013 Orman and his wife decided to buy a big old house at Cootamundra (NSW), continuing the business there. There was a lot of work to do on the heritage listed house and the "chairs took a back seat for a while", but working from a new workshop, in 2014 he got back into the swing of the chairs, which he finds very satisfying, and still enjoys making.

Accumulated over many years, the workshop's tools and equipment include an old Taiwanese 12" table saw, an Australian spindle moulder, a Triton router table, four HR Cousens radial arm saws, which he describes as "venerable", including a 16 inch model. The workshop also comprises a bandsaw, a 150 mm belt sander, a Scheer pin router, a very old Abbey table saw, a Delta overhead router and a Carbatec jointer, along with a fairly old Australian made dust

extractor. He enjoys using the machinery and these tools along with a wide variety of hand and power tools. There is a set of moulding planes that he highlights, inherited from his father, who was also an avid wood worker.

"As far as production techniques go, I usually make six chairs at a time, using a series of homemade jigs to facilitate consistency and to ensure the chairs are comparable to each other in terms of size, leg shape, armrest shape and rake. The chairs take about six hours each to make. The return is not great, but when you look at it in terms of work plus recreation plus time alone, it is pretty good. It allows me to have the gear I like and the independence I treasure," he says.

With regard to which timber is best for making Adirondacks, Orman continues, there is a variety of possible types. The most popular wood is treated pine because it is reasonably priced and its quality is predictable with a proven record in longevity, and it paints well. He also uses Oregon (Douglas fir), western red cedar and Tasmanian oak. "It really depends on where the chairs are going to live. H4 treated pine lasts very well in totally exposed areas. In covered or protected areas western red looks great with a clear finish as does any Australian hardwood. The treated pine makes treated pine screws a must to use, as ordinary screws will corrode quickly. Some customers like the idea of stainless steel despite the additional cost."

Mark Fielding, who today owns Furniture by Marx, began making a version of the Adirondack in 1986 and developed ►

► a business called Adirondack Designs Australia to complement a line of English-style bench seating and table and chair settings he was producing. In 1999, he changed the design to the signature style he still makes today. He called it the Paddle Pop Adirondack chair, "due to the wide back slats and the fact that everyone struggled with the word 'Adirondack'."

Fielding's Adirondack business had its genesis in a request from his brother for a couple of the chairs for around the house. Soon enough, he fine-tuned his design and sourced production made to his specifications in Thailand. At first venturing out to prospective customers with his chairs in the back of his ute, he sold them to garden centres and nurseries. The business took off after he placed some advertising, and a major newspaper ran a story about him. A key development eventuated when after experiencing some difficulties with the import venture, he purchased a Felder combination machine to produce everything himself from his base in Noosaville, Queensland. Later when a major furniture manufacturer went into receivership, he purchased a semi-trailer full of machinery, which he is still using in his present factory. The equipment included a Wadkin thicknesser, a bandsaw, a SCM spindle, a pedestal drill, a stroke sander, a multi borer and a Magic Table saw, as well as a Wadkin table saw, that he describes as 'an antique'.

"My workshop has everything needed to create and manufacture small runs to large orders. The largest run was 350 chairs for the defence department. However my signature chair is still The Paddle Pop Adirondack and I make it by hand using the machines I mentioned, and there is no computer cutting or drilling. I use lots of hand tools and most of all some saw horses. The tactile nature of making furniture by hand stays with the piece long after it has left



Image courtesy Peter Orman.

the factory and many clients return. A classic example of good design using good material is when people sell their property and the new owners want the furniture to stay as part of the sale. It is doubly rewarding for me when the original client comes back to re-order for their new home."

"The Adirondack has come into Australia like a fire with Aldi, Officeworks, Big W, and Harvey Norman all stocking it in some shape or form. Many copies, templates and kits of the Adirondack have been used. My version is roomy, and comfortable, a generous chair that wants you to feel like the person you should be, relaxed and at home," says Fielding.

In the latest development in his life, Fielding who was about to set out on a short holiday overseas when AWISA spoke with him, has decided to move on with his life and would love someone to buy his business and machinery.

The owner of Rustique, located in Chelsea (south of Melbourne), Eden Kane, explains he has tried a few designs but came back to the peacock style fan back because it is just that bit more interesting. He enjoys making this style because it is timeless and sells well. His stock is made "lovingly by hand" in a workshop stacked with lots of timber, and lined with machinery, buzzers, sanders, and saws. For Australian conditions, the best wood to use is treated pine because, he says, "It lasts well and is priced well."

These three manufacturers are typical of the small and independent furniture makers that produce Adirondack chairs in Australia. It is a small sector of the industry, and there is little information or statistics available about it.

Reflecting on his experience over the years in the industry, Orman says, "In terms of detail to sell anything, you need to have satisfied customers, as a good referral is often your next sale. Consequently, what the customer receives must meet or exceed their expectations. I like to have people say nice things about my work as well as about delivering on time. Nothing is more rewarding than having customers who are happy with their purchases. I use quality material, fasteners and glue and allow the chair to settle before delivery. Each chair is individually checked on a flat surface to ensure it does not wobble or rock." ■



Image courtesy Peter Orman.

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Window awards celebrate and recognise excellence



The Australian Window Association has once again held its awards that give recognition to outstanding achievements in the industry. This year's Fenestration Australia Design Awards have been run and won. The awards aim to increase the level of interest in windows, doors and fenestration products; to raise awareness and profile of all association members and differentiate them from others; and to execute a consistent professional showcase of fenestration products that celebrates and recognises excellence.

The Fenestration Australia Design Award of the Year 2015 was awarded to G James Glass & Aluminium for its work at Campbells Pocket, Mt Mee, Queensland.

12 awards in total were made. This edition of AWISA-The Magazine also features two commercial winners. The Best Use of Windows and Doors – Commercial New Construction up to \$5 million, was won by Evolution Window Systems for the Northern Beaches Christian School, Duffy Forest, NSW.

The Best Use of Windows and Doors - Commercial New Construction over \$5 million was won by Reynaers Aluminium for Bravo offices, Perth, WA.



Overall winner G.James
Glass & Aluminium,
Campbells Pocket, Mt Mee,
Queensland.



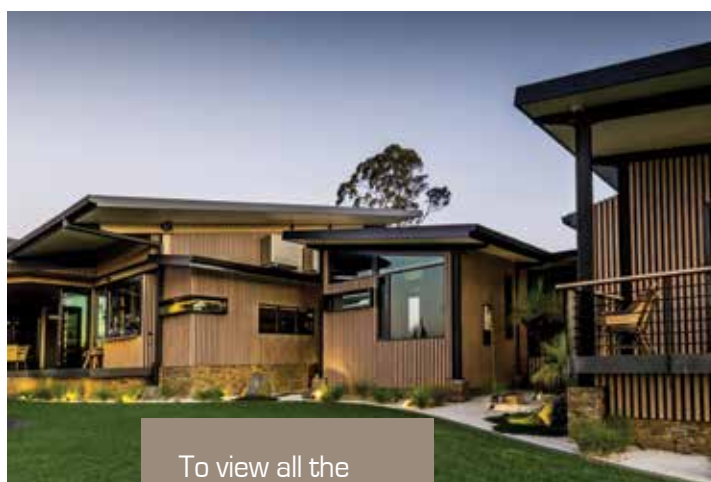
Best Use of Windows and Doors Commercial, new construction.

Up to \$5 million, Evolution Window Systems, Northern Beaches Christian School, Duffys Forest, NSW.



Best Use of Windows and Doors Commercial, new construction.

Over \$5 million, Reynaers Aluminium, Bravo offices, Perth, WA.



To view all the winners visit
www.awa.org.au/conference-information/design-awards



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by Peter Kreitals
Executive Officer
Furniture Cabinets Joinery Alliance Limited

Parliamentary secretary commits to Australia's FCJ industries



IN OPENING the latest Furniture, Cabinets, Joinery (FCJ) Industry Leaders Forum, held at Parliament House Canberra on Thursday 20 August, the Hon Karen Andrews MP, the then parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Industry & Science, confirmed the government's commitment to the FCJ sector and to small manufacturing businesses in general.

The forum was the fifth and final in a series of Industry Leaders Forums convened around Australia during 2014/2015 by the FCJ Alliance (FCJA), with the support of the Commonwealth government's Department of Industry and Science. The purpose of the forums was to identify the core issues confronting the FCJ industry throughout Australia and consequently derive a policy framework to drive the industry's ongoing development over coming years. The FCJA developed an Industry Position Paper based on the deliberations of the previous four forum meetings and this was circulated to all attendees, including Government representatives, prior to the Canberra forum to stimulate debate on the day.

In introducing the parliamentary secretary to open the forum, the FCJA's chairman Ron Scott, highlighted that it is the small to medium size business owners that epitomise Australia's FCJ industries that are the heart and soul of Australia's economy and it is the FCJ companies that are creating jobs, and as such that the industry needs and deserves a champion in Canberra.

Ms Andrews responded that she is already a strong advocate for the work the FCJA is doing on behalf of the industry and that she will continue to support the industry. Ms Andrews confirmed that she is happy to consult on all issues, is open to hear industry views and will continue to work with the FCJA and its members to resolve issues of concern.

The parliamentary secretary continued that she is well aware of the challenges confronting the industry and recognises that we still have a long way to go on many of them. But the government, and she personally, is already working closely with the industry to address

certain issues, notably regarding product that is not compliant with Australian standards/regulations (including product that may be compliant in itself, but is not installed properly or maintained properly). This issue is firmly on the agenda of the Building Ministers' Forum (BMF) and a Commonwealth/State/Territory senior officers working group has been established to investigate the issue and report back to the BMF Ministers.

heartened by innovation

Ms Andrews said that she was also heartened by the obvious innovation going on in the FCJ sector. She commented on the highly innovative activities she had the privilege to witness when visiting a number of FCJ businesses on the Gold Coast which the FCJA had facilitated. She reaffirmed the government's commitment to innovation, but noted that while there was clearly a high degree of innovation in the FCJ industry it

was not necessarily very visible. This is an area where Ms Andrews suggested that the government and the industry (through FCJA) could work closely together to promote the industry's capabilities and get the right message out in the marketplace.

Ms Andrews also encouraged everyone in the industry to make contact with AusIndustry as there are many programmes that AusIndustry delivers that can help the individual businesses. Indeed, AusIndustry has followed up with all the FCJ businesses that Ms Andrews visited, to ensure they have the opportunity to maximise returns from the assistance that the government does provide. The parliamentary secretary noted that there was merit in forging closer collaboration between AusIndustry and the FCJA to ensure that more FCJ companies could be introduced to the relevant programmes.

In conclusion, Ms Andrews congratulated the industry on the comprehensiveness and focus



► of the industry position paper developed by the FCJA, as it highlights that the industry understands what is needed to ensure a strong future and is prepared to take action to achieve that. The parliamentary secretary asked the FCJA to determine the core priorities for the industry that could be taken to the Minister and she committed to work with the industry to progress these.

Ron Scott warmly thanked Ms Andrews for her comments and obvious support for the industry. Ron stated that this is important for the industry to hear as it is one where the businesses are largely run by the people that own them, have a heavy investment in them and have a real passion for what they do. As such, he is concerned that much government rhetoric about Australian industry acknowledges that 97% of businesses in this country are SME's, but industry policy and programme delivery still seems heavily focussed on big business and multinationals. Ron was concerned that this particularly seems to be the case with the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre.

the FCJ contribution to the Australian economy

Ron stressed that it is vital that the government understands the contribution that the FCJ industry makes to the Australian economy. He reiterated that it employs more than 130,000 people around Australia and accounts for \$33 billion turnover annually in its manufacturing activity alone (leave aside the multiplier effect of businesses servicing/supplying this sector and the subsequent distribution, wholesale and retail activity focussed on FCJ product). Moreover, to survive as small businesses, companies need to be highly innovative but because of their size they often miss out on the support that government does provide.

Nonetheless, there is much the government can do to transform the FCJ industry and help the various businesses become more competitive and develop skills to ensure business sustainability. Assistance with

skills development (especially business/management skills), mentoring, design integration and innovation, and collaborative product and market development is vital, Ron highlighted. But such assistance will only be relevant if government truly understands how manufacturing works in Australia and in particular, how small business works.

commitment to manufacturing

In response, Ms Andrews reiterated that the government is committed to manufacturing in Australia and she expressed confidence in the growth centres to be able to help develop a structure to ensure a strong manufacturing base in this country. Moreover, she was firmly of the belief that Australia's FCJ industry is clearly and absolutely a part of advanced manufacturing and as such the FCJA and the industry it represents will need to work with the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre.

Tracey Gramlick, FCJA board member and CEO, Australian Window Association continued with the formal presentations at the forum. Tracey noted the parliamentary secretary's ongoing openness to hear industry views and concerns and in particular acknowledged the support Ms Andrews has given to the issue of non-compliant building products. Tracey updated the Industry leaders forum on what has been happening with compliance issues, noting that for the first time in 10 years, when industry first started raising concerns about this issue, some progress finally seems to be being made, in large part because all parties have come together to pursue the issue with a common voice.

This progress is reflected in the Building Ministers' Forum focus and the working group it has established (as previously identified by the parliamentary secretary), the current Senate inquiry into non-complaint building products, and the ACCC consultation paper on draft criteria for adopting international standards and risk assessment. Tracey reaffirmed that the industry is committed to

work collaboratively on this issue to ensure a sound outcome to overcome the current lack of verification of compliance, the insufficient visible regulatory authority, and the lack of enforcement and penalties for non-conformance.

Darren Doggett, FCJA board member and president Australian Shop and Office Fitting Industry Association, expanded on what needs to be done to ensure a vibrant FCJ industry for the future. Darren highlighted that it would be in everybody's interest to build a strong profile for a "Brand Australia" that reflected high standards, workmanship, service and design and innovation to which all FCJ businesses should aspire and then promote the fact that this is what you get when you buy Australian product. But to do this, we need a fundamental change in how we run businesses in Australia, with further focus and education on design, management and marketing skills, and encouraging businesses (which are largely small) to work together collaboratively to achieve better outcomes, thus generating an industrial base that is attractive for young people to work in. Ultimately, Darren believes we can - and need to - be recognised as the centre of excellence in FCJ manufacturing in the world.

Jane Calvert, national president Forestry, Furnishing, Building products and Manufacturing Division of the CFMEU, strongly welcomed the FCJA's work in developing the industry position paper stating that it highlights all the key areas of concern on which the union is advocating and that the CFMEU endorses all recommendations made, specifically in relation to the issues of non-compliant product, illegal logging, unfair trade, training and mentoring and Government procurement.

Other issues raised by participants at the forum included:

- Concern over the lack of industry data available which makes it difficult to assess the true nature of the industry and how it is actually performing.
- Skills that are needed today and in the future are vastly different to what they

were 20 years ago, yet many of the current training packages and training providers do not reflect state of the art developments.

- The skills needs of the industry are not merely vocational; the industry is a "pyramid employer" demanding a vast range of skill sets that are anchored in the design and craftsmanship capability of the manufacturer.
- The role of digital technologies and digital marketing are vital to the industries future development, let this is not well understood by the industry at large.
- Government procurement should pay due regard to the adherence to standards and conditions expected to be met by Australian industry, including with regard to environmental sustainability and social and workplace practices, regardless where product is sourced.
- There is a place for standards in Australian industry, but it is vital that all parties comply with such standards and there would seem to be merit in introducing an FCJ Industry certification scheme by which all suppliers/producers must abide.
- Reiteration of the significance of the FCJ industries as a whole – as Brett Ambrose, FCJA board member and MD of Blum Australia pointed out, "how many other committee rooms in Parliament House are filled with the representatives of the industry that is responsible for every feature in that committee room, from chairs, conference table, desks to the doors, windows and joinery that are all vital to the integrity and function of the committee room".

Darren Atkinson, manager Advanced Manufacturing Section, Department of Industry & Science, then responded to the issues raised, advising that the government had found the forum process very positive. The forum deliberations have provided a valuable basis for determining and understanding the industry views and in particular the Department has welcomed

the professional way in which the industry was represented by the FCJA and the way in which it engaged with the government.

strategic industry plan with strong, positive vision

Both the Department and the Minister's office have appreciated the proactive approach taken by the FCJA, first in developing the strategic industry plan and now the industry position paper as both provide a useful focal point for the Government. It is heartening to see that the FCJA identified the problems, challenges and potential solutions. He praised the strong positive vision for the industry as articulated by speakers on the day such as Darren Doggett.

Darren Atkinson noted that while the development of the position paper may be seen by industry as the end of the 18 month forum process, it is really just the beginning of stronger engagement with the government. Darren reaffirmed that the parliamentary secretary is a big supporter of the FCJ industry and accepted the need for an even stronger engagement between the FCJA, AusIndustry and the Department. However, many of the issues raised in the position paper fall within the portfolio responsibility of other Ministers and Departments, and indeed some are State rather than Federal issues. However, Darren undertook to work closely with the FCJA to help identify the appropriate contact points in these other portfolios and to facilitate connection with these. The government's further engagement with the FCJA would also include work to develop better data on advanced manufacturing including the FCJ sector.

Darren also sought to reassure the forum participants that it is not the intention of the growth centres to reflect big business interests. He stated that one of the core issues for the growth centres will be to identify ways in which to engage SME's so that they can better benefit from the activities of the larger multi-national companies. He believed

this could become a major role for FCJA to pursue with the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre, which he reiterated clearly encompasses the FCJ industries, and he encouraged the FCJA to engage with the Centre.

Further information on the outcomes of the FCJ Industry Leaders Forums and copies of the resultant FCJ Industry Position Paper can be obtained from the FCJA's Executive Officer: ■

Peter Kreitals at peterk@kreitals.com.au.



by Geoff Bills

trends

Commercial building

RECENT TRENDS

Non-residential building activity has shown little growth in recent years.

In the last two years, however, work done on those types of non-residential buildings that generally require significant amounts of cabinet work - such as offices, shops and hotels - has risen more strongly than total non-residential building.

As Chart 1 shows, total work done on these types of building fell sharply in 2009/10 and recovered very little over the following three years. However, the value of work done increased by 8 per cent in 2013/14 and by a further 10 per cent in 2014/15 to \$14.4 billion.

The biggest of these market segments - measured by the cost of the buildings - is usually offices, where the value of work done was around \$5.9 billion a year over the four years to 2013/14, but rose by 11 per cent to \$6.5 billion last year.

Work done on shops, including wholesale outlets, fell from nearly \$6 billion in 2008/09 to \$4.5 billion in 2009/10, recovered to over \$5 billion in each of the following three years, and then rose to over \$6.1 billion in each of the last two years.

Work on hotels and motels fell from \$1.4 billion in 2008/09 to \$1 billion in 2009/10

and averaged about \$1 billion a year over the following four years before surging to \$1.8 billion in 2014/15.

As Chart 2 shows, most of the work done on offices is in the three eastern states. Over the last seven years, 72 per cent of national office building has been in those three states: 27 per cent in New South Wales, 26 per cent in Victoria and 19 per cent in Queensland.

Those states are also the main markets for hotels and motels, again accounting for 72 per cent of national building activity over the last seven years. And they are even more dominant in shops, where they accounted for 81 per cent of national activity.

Offices

In its latest survey, the Property Council of Australia found that the national office vacancy rate had fallen slightly from 10.8 per cent in January 2015 to 10.4 per cent in July. Over the six months to July, vacancy rates fell to 6.3 per cent in Sydney and 8.1 per cent in Melbourne. But they remained high in Adelaide, at 13.5 per cent, and in Brisbane, Canberra and Perth, where they were all above 15 per cent.

The National Australia Bank's June quarter survey of commercial property found that market sentiment about offices had improved from the previous quarter and was positive

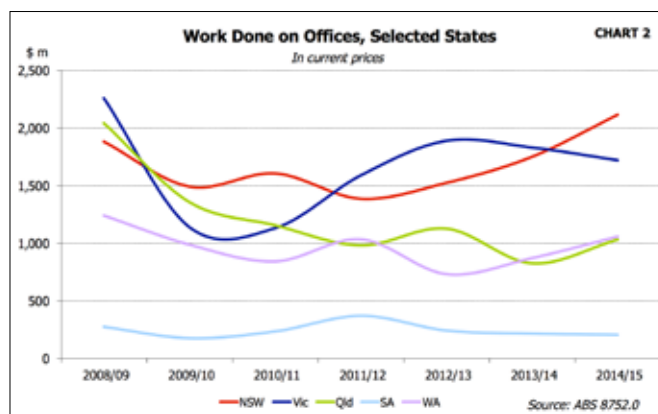
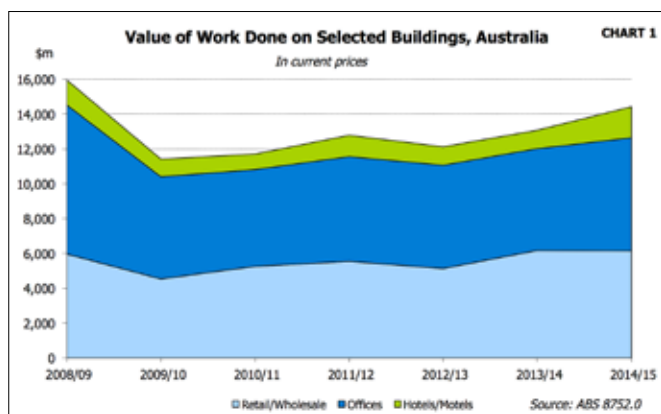
but very low. Vacancy rates were expected to fall moderately over the two years ahead but to remain above 8 per cent.

These high vacancy rates and the developers' rather pessimistic view of the outlook, are likely to constrain activity in the year ahead, especially in capital cities other than Sydney.

A growing workforce is an important driver of demand for more office space, and the recent rise of employment growth has been a positive influence. Over the year to August 2014, the trend level of employment in Australia grew by 2.2 per cent, compared with growth of less than one per cent in the previous year to August.

As Chart 3 shows, much of the growth was in such service industries as professional, scientific and technical services, administrative and support services, and public administration and defence, all of which need office space. That will eventually help the office market.

So, too, would a rise in business confidence. Business confidence did improve in the June quarter but fell back again in the September quarter. In the National Australia Bank's Quarterly Business Survey for September, its business confidence index fell from a net balance of four to zero. That means that as many respondents were pessimistic about the



Geoff Bills

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



future as were optimistic - a reading below its long-term average level of 2.6 and the worst result for more than two years.

The survey was undertaken just before the change in Liberal leadership, and confidence may improve as a result of that change. But as firms continue to point to subdued demand as the main constraint on their confidence, an improvement is by no means guaranteed.

Office projects planned and underway

Deloitte Access Economics publishes a quarterly Investment Monitor which lists around 900 Australian investment projects, each valued at \$20 million or more.

In its June quarter 2015 issue, Investment Monitor listed office projects valued at \$4.9 billion that were definite - either under construction or committed to be built - and a further \$6.6 billion that were planned - either under consideration or possible.

The value of definite projects was 16 per cent greater than a year ago and the value of planned projects 41 per cent greater than a year earlier. Although there is evidence here of improvement, in relation to the \$6.5 billion of work done last year, these are not big numbers.

With vacancy rates still high in most cities, confidence low, and national office approvals

totalling only \$4.4 billion over the year to August, national office-building activity is likely to fall in the year ahead. New South Wales, where activity will almost certainly continue to rise, will probably be the only exception.

Shops

Work done on shops has been steady at about \$6.1 billion over the past two years.

Household income and retail sales have grown relatively slowly in recent years, so there has been little incentive to invest in new capacity. However, low interest rates and rising house prices have boosted household incomes and wealth, and the outlook for retail sales has improved.

At June there was \$5.9 billion worth of definite projects on Investment Monitor's list and a further \$5.1 billion in planning. As with offices, neither of these numbers is high in relation to recent activity of around \$6.1 billion a year.

As Chart 4 shows, approvals rose strongly in the first half of 2015, reaching an annual rate of \$8.1 billion the June quarter. Although they fell again in the first two months of the September quarter, for the year to August they totalled \$6.2 billion: slightly more than recent levels of work done.

Although national activity seems likely to hold up in the six months ahead, work done in 2015/16 is expected to be a little less than in the previous year.

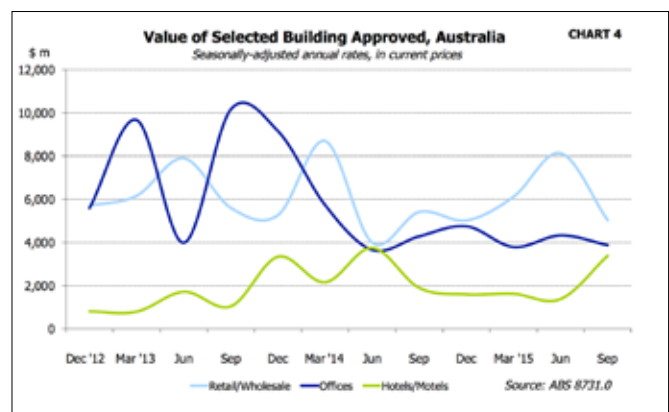
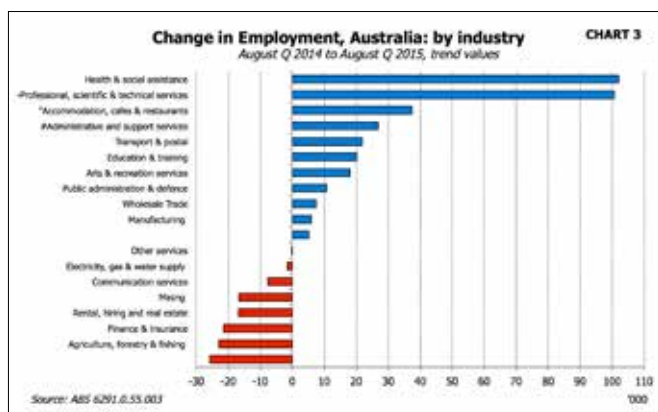
Hotels/motels

This sector had a difficult time during the mining boom, as the high Australian dollar discouraged foreign tourists and encouraged locals to travel abroad. In 2014/15, however, low interest rates and a lower Australian dollar contributed to a big rise in activity from \$1 billion to \$1.8 billion.

At June there was \$2.6 billion worth of definite projects on Investment Monitor's list and a massive \$19.9 billion in planning. Three projects in Queensland - the Aquis resort near Cairns, the Airlie Beach resort, and the redevelopment of the Great Keppel Island resort - made up the majority of the \$19.9 billion in planning.

Approvals remained subdued throughout 2014/15 but have since risen strongly and totalled \$1.8 billion in the year to August.

With property developers most confident about prospects for central-city hotels, and with several major tourist resorts in planning, national building activity in this segment is expected to grow quite strongly in the year ahead. ■



by John Halkett

Australia's modern godfather of CNC machinery

UNDOUBTEDLY the godfather of Australia's modern woodwork machinery sales industry, John Cover remains a force in industrial development, horse racing, on the golf course and fund raising for kids' cancer support and research.

Today, the woodworking machinery industry provides essential CNC machinery, information technology and technical expertise, having emerged from the stunning success of a business enterprise started by John in the late 1970s.

But before we get to that, let's go back a step. John started his working life as a bean counter, launching his career as an assistant accountant at Australian Trade Equipment. This company dealt in wood working machinery, including having the Australian agency for SCM.

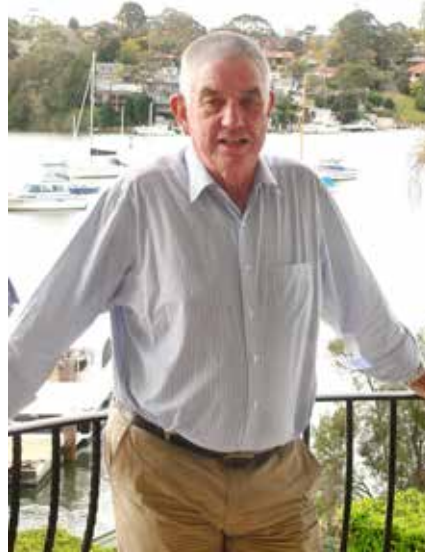
John's interest in the machinery and equipment saw him jump ship from finance into the sales side of the business. His flair for sales of woodworking machinery and related customer support saw him promoted to sales manager.

However, things can change quickly and Australian Trade Equipment sold out to Wickmans in 1979. Rather than be despondent, John saw an opportunity he couldn't refuse and set about establishing his own company, Allwood Machinery.

Being young, enthusiastic and ambitious but also pragmatic, Allwood Machinery started life by selling second hand equipment.

"I guess this was a similar trajectory to Barry Gabbett," John reflected warmly.

John's early successes were noticed by the German and Italian woodworking machinery manufacturers and he was able to acquire the exclusive agency rights to handle both Weinig and Biesse woodworking machinery, provide related technical support and all that



John Cover ... the godfather of Australia's modern wood working machinery industry.

went with it across both Australia and New Zealand.

"The business really took off. We established branches in every state and in New Zealand and built up to a staff of 60 with an annual turnover exceeding \$50 million," says John. "It got much bigger than we ever intended!"

In a remarkable story of persistence, management and marketing excellence, longevity and technical leadership Allwood Machinery's status at the top of the woodworking machinery industry remained for 25 years.

John attributes the company's success to a convergence of factors. He suggests that the late seventies and early eighties was the period when the woodworking machinery industry really started to go high tech.

"It was really the start of the CNC revolution and we were in on the ground floor," he says.

"We also did some things that were new in terms of technical support and training, plus we opened the first fully functioning showroom in Australia. We also started to take customers to international trade shows

like Ligna, and that really helped to broaden their understanding of machinery innovation and what was available to improve their business performance."

Certainly during this period the woodworking machinery industry was rapidly heading into a more computer-based, automated world.

"Yes we needed to grow quickly; we embraced IT, technical support and training. It was clear to our customers that this new generation of machinery offered real benefits, like much improved productivity, greater precision and quality, plus substantial labour cost savings potential," says John.

"So I think it is fair to say that our successes through the eighties and nineties were that we took on-board this innovation in machinery and operating systems and passed it on to customers who benefitted as a result."

Allwood Machinery was reconfigured into two divisions – Weinig and Biesse branches. "Weinig concentrated more on solid timber processing and Biesse more in the area of flat panel manufacturing," says John.

Perhaps it was John's success and growth that in the end caused Allwood Machinery to disappear into corporate history. With an expanding market in Australia Weinig brought out the Weinig side of his business in 2001 and established their own stand-alone company in Australia. Biesse followed suit in 2003 forming Biesse Australia. John continued with Biesse as its inaugural managing director until 2005.

It would be reasonable to suggest that John could have been justified in putting his feet up at that stage. As well deserved as that might have been he got stuck into a range of activities. A mix of business ventures, some on the leisure front and pursuing a passion for charity supporting kids' cancer funding were all on John's agenda.

the name John Cover - synonymous with the wood working machinery industry

With an associate John has continued an aspect of his days with Allwood Machinery related to industrial development. In a number of locations around Australia he is involved in industrial factory developments. However, he does find time to be active on the golf course and enjoys boating.

He is also occupied with owning a few racehorses but points to his wife, "Jenny enjoys going to the races!"

John is passionate about his hands-on support for the Sporting Chance Cancer Foundation charity where along with his wife he plays a significant role in fund raising by assisting with organising golf days and horse racing events.

The Sporting Chance Cancer Foundation was formed in 1998 by former Australian Cricket captain Mark Taylor, Rugby League legend Reg Gasnier, Olympian Raelene Boyle and Triple Brownlow medallist Bob Skilton. The Foundation provides mobile home care units that help make life easier for children with cancer. It also funds research scholarships for doctors and scientists exploring better ways to treat and overcome kids' cancer.

Michael Weinig Australia's managing director Neil Forbes says he first met John in the early 1990s and was lucky enough to be employed by him in 1994 as a Weinig Australia sales representative.

"I soon learnt that the name John Cover was synonymous with the wood working machinery industry. John and his company Allwood Machinery put Weinig on the map in Australia as a leading machinery brand for the processing of solid timber - a legacy that still exists today!"

"John's success with Weinig is still talked about in Weinig's home town of Tauberbischofsheim in Germany more than three decades after the brand first hit our shores," says Neil.



"Not only successful with the Weinig brand, John had the ability, the knowledge and the foresight to attract many, if not most of the leading European brands to become part of the Allwood Machinery success."

But John was not only successful with machinery - that was only part of the story - John had many, very long, very loyal and very successful employees and I feel privileged to have been one of them. This was and still is a tribute to him," concludes Neil. ■

Top: Biesse today... learnt the importance of embracing IT, technical support and training to improve customer productivity, precision and quality.

Weinig today... together with its Holzher brand remain at the leading-edge of woodworking machinery innovation and performance.

The jackaroo with the passion for solid timber

When the Global Financial Crisis hit Australia in 2008 and 2009, many businesses struggled. Some went broke, some are still struggling and others came out of it even stronger. TCDC WISE from the Central Coast in NSW is one of the latter. Through quality craftsmanship and vital business skills the company knuckled down and forged its way through the tough times and is now going from strength to strength.

TCDC WISE was established in 1988 by Tim Corlett and stands for Tim Corlett Design and Construction. Melbourne-born Tim completed his trade under a master craftsman, beginning his long love affair with timber and perfection for his craft. He has now established a shopfitting company that grew from a handful to 17 staff and has completed hundreds of projects Australia wide. TCDC WISE continues its growth by obtaining the latest technology and keeping abreast of the latest products and trends.



Its ongoing smart investments in new machinery from Homag Australia had surely helped it to increase capacity. Due to the efficiency of the machines and the successful interlink of the drawing software lead to a massive increase in turnover. In a period of 20 years, TCDC WISE purchased eight machines from the German machine supplier, including four CNCs, three edgebanders and one beam saw. The powerful Brandt Ambition 1650FC edgebanding machine forms the latest investment from Homag Australia.

The journey is the reward

Tim began his working life as a jackaroo on a sheep station in far north Queensland, hundreds of kilometres from the nearest town. Fixing fences and mustering sheep and cattle on horseback, Tim had visions of a life on the land. After a time though, the remoteness became too much and the pull of family and friends had him return to Melbourne. He

followed in his grandfather's footsteps and put his practical and creative passions to good use.

Tim started in the industry as a carpenter's apprentice in his grandfather's business Watts Construction based in Melbourne. Watts Construction, a large privately owned construction company, completed such works as the southern stand at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, G.J. Coles Bourke St and Miranda Fair. Under the tutelage of his late grandfather Mr Frederick Watts CBE, Tim gained the knowledge and the desire to forge his own way.

Eventually Tim moved to Sydney where he met local girl and future wife, Kelly. They settled on the Central Coast and as with many companies, started small in a shed next to their house with just a saw and an edgebander before they expanded the business. Tim established the company in the Central Coast suburb of Tuggerah with a factory size of 600 square metres before they moved to their recent premises in Fountaindale about four years ago. Now manufacturing in an area of 1800 square metres, TCDC WISE specialises in shopfitting, commercial furniture and interior fitouts.

Expanding and diversifying machinery equipment

To get where they are today, Tim needed to invest in the right equipment. Back in 1995, Homag sales representative Grant Jones walked into Tim's workshop and after some time Tim purchased a new Brandt KD56 edgebander; then the following year as his demand grew he upgraded the KD56 to a Brandt KD84C. Being very happy with the reliability of the machines and the quality that came off the machines, Tim continued buying Homag Group equipment over the years.

"Homag never let us down. I have built up a great professional and personal bond with Grant, who is always looking after us even when we weren't buying at the time," says Tim.

After having bought a BP80 CNC and a beam saw, the turning point was reached when TCDC took delivery of the Homag BAZ CNC router in 2004 and a Weeke Venture in 2005. "We experienced a real explosion in the business after we purchased all the machinery. The phone was ringing constantly and our workload increased tremendously," remembers Kelly, who also works in the business.

Tim says, "Without the BAZ we wouldn't have been able to do half of the jobs."

In 2008 TCDC expanded further and acquired Wise Products, a furniture manufacturer particularly focussed on the club industry. Wise manufactures functional and durable chairs, stools and tables. This procurement included a metal

fabrication, powder-coating and upholstery section making TCDC WISE a "One Stop Shop."

Perfect finish with a Brandt Ambition 1650FC edgebander

With the increase in workload and the demand for precise quality, Tim saw the need in upgrading their old edgebander. "Our previous Brandt machine still ran well but it wasn't as accurate as we needed it to be, so we sold it. Now with the new 1650FC we don't need to touch the boards at all when it comes off the machine. It's just perfect. Before we upgraded we needed to scrape the edges with a blade."

TCDC's Brandt Ambition 1650FC runs at least three quarters of the day. Therefore, Grant recommended a powerful machine to process a wide spectrum of parts. He says, "This is one of our most flexible machines in the Brandt range. You are able to run solid wood, laminated strips and it also has the capacity for large production runs at the same time. A great all-rounder with a very competitive price."

Edgebanding specialist from Germany

With over 50 years of engineering experience, Brandt - the edgebanding specialist from the Homag Group - stands for state-of-art quality from Germany and with an excellent price performance ratio. Brandt's annual production of 2,000 edgebanding machines makes it clearly a world leader in this market segment.

In the standard version, the Brandt Ambition 1650FC is equipped with a precision gluing unit, end trimming saw unit, top/bottom trimming unit and a multi-functional contour trimming unit. A perfect finish is guaranteed by the radius scraper, glue joint scraper and a buffing unit. The powerful motors on all of the units provide the unrestricted power that is needed to process a broad spectrum of different parts. To offer the perfect solution, Brandt includes a quickmelt gluing unit, plus the standard workpiece gap optimisation package for more effective production, also included are the separating agent and detergent spraying units. The versatility of this series is highlighted by the variable feed rate of 8-18 m/min.

The Brandt Ambition 1650FC is also equipped with the Homag Group's Multitouch display PowerTouch. The operating panel with full HD display in widescreen format creates clear and high-contrast images. Furthermore, it has ergonomic touch operation with gestures such as scrolling and swiping for simple navigation and intuitive operation of the machine. The machine data captures important operating figures such as number of pieces, production time or edge material quantity.



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TCDC WISE has completed hundreds of projects Australia wide, working with prestigious national clients including Kodak, Telstra, Pirtek and JB HiFi. Their hospitality chairs and tables can be found in hundreds of clubs throughout NSW.

The range of clients speaks for itself. Tim's attention to detail, his integrity and a life-time warranty on their steel products form a base for establishing a prosperous business. "I wouldn't be where I am now without my staff," says Tim who is proud of his long-lasting crew. Most of them have been with him for 10 to 25 years. "They've enjoyed the high times with me and stuck it out through the tough times."

With the main competition in the metal sector being cheaper imports, Tim can only hope for more awareness in quality. They can beat foreign imports in the joinery section by relying on their ability of providing customised work and superior quality. "We always go the extra mile," says Tim.

It took them five tough years to overcome the GFC. "No one was spending," says Tim. "Now, there appears to be more confidence in the market. We are also finding customers prefer our high quality Australian made products."

Also considering the high demand in aged care, Tim looks optimistic for the future. "TCDC WISE is well set up for this industry we have the expertise, metal shop and the machinery for doing large quantity orders in this particular field."

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FIAA's 'Future-proof your business' conference a great success



CLOSE TO 100 FIAA members and industry partners heard from the leaders in the industry, and their views on current and the future trends in marketing, design and innovation at the FIAA's conference held on 18 September.

FIAA members representing many states including South Australia, Queensland and NSW attended the conference, held at the Novotel, Sydney Olympic Park. Australian Industry Group were also in attendance providing FIAA members with information on current government grants available to the sector.

The first session speakers included Dr Sasha Alexander from University Western Sydney on the future of manufacturing, Shane Garrett, senior economist from HIA on current and future housing and the renovation market, and Stephen Cugley from Planit, major sponsor of the conference, on software innovation.

The main take a ways from the first session included: how to identify market dynamics and leverage innovation opportunities, how you are never too young or old to embrace technology, and how the market is influenced by population, economic conditions, rental market, housing prices, interest rates and confidence.

In the second session, the conference heard from Jim Snelson from Borg Manufacturing on 'Get big or specialise', Greg Miles from Marquis Bathroom Products on 'Making big business practice a SME reality', Michael Ryan from Finlease on business finance and Bill Watson, First Super CEO on succession planning.

During the third session, there was a focus on marketing and attendees heard from Judy Johnson from Trends Magazines, and Phillip Parisi from the NSW Business Chamber. 'Content is king' was the main message. Martin

Gane from Hettich Australia introduced some new product that will soon be hitting Australian shores and highlighted Hettich's commitment to environmental management. John Maclay put the attendees through an exercise in business planning and explained what the 'value proposition' is in the eyes of the customer.

The conference was wrapped up by Michael Hartman, CEO of Forestworks, who spoke about innovation and skills and how Forestworks has assisted many businesses through the Innovation Skills Program. A great presentation to finish the conference.

The keynote address came at the end of the day from the NSW Minister for Small Business, Regional Development and Skills, the Honourable John Barilaro. The Minister gave the audience a great overview of current government policy in training and being a small business owner in his past (before joining politics), gave many insights into how to successfully run a small business.

FIAA was very grateful having the Minister present the FIAA Apprentice of the Year Award to Ryan Gardner, from Reid Brothers Furniture, based in Bundanoon on the beautiful Southern Highlands in NSW.

A great day, a great conference and that could not have been put together without the support of the sponsors, Planit-Cutting Edge Solutions, Hettich, ForestWorks, First Super, AWISA and Finlease.

After a full day of hearing from some of the best minds in industry, the attendees were able to relax and speak to industry peers during a network function held at the end of the conference. ■

Stephen Cugley of Planit addresses the conference.

Speakers at the conference: Clockwise: Jim Snelson, Michael Ryan and Bill Watson during their presentations.

Minister John Barilaro presenting Ryan Gardner with the award for FIAA Apprentice of the Year.

Redefining the possibilities of wood with Wood-Skin

Successful manufacturers turn to CNC equipment to keep pace with the high-output, quality and delivery deadlines imposed by today's customers. Products include cabinetry; joinery; furniture and other common items sold in low or high volumes. Occasionally though, something comes along that excites the imagination and makes one sit up and take notice; something that is unique, visionary and speaks to the future while impacting the present. That "something" is Wood-Skin®; an innovative new product from a young, dynamic Milanese design team headed by Giulio Masotti. And to make Wood-Skin come alive, Giulio and his team turned to Biesse as their technical sponsor and production partner.

Wood-Skin is both a process and a product; able to challenge the conventional approach to wood and other flat materials to realise new, creative possibilities. As a process, the beauty of Wood-Skin is that it can be anything one can

imagine. The advanced digital fabrication process takes life thanks to the interaction between the various textile cores; wood and other surfaces, and software. As a product, Wood-Skin is two laminations (surfaces) of material and a central, flexible textile core. It can be furnishing; architecture; acoustics; lighting; building material or works of art. Wood-Skin products are created in the digital (computer) world and brought to life on modern CNC equipment. It fits in perfectly with Biesse's commitment to digitisation through CAD software and advanced machining processes.

Wood-Skin is a strong and resistant composite material that combines the rigidity of traditional materials (wood) with the flexibility of a textile core that allows original applications to both architectural and furnishing elements to develop unconventional structures, impossible to achieve with traditional building techniques. Recent Wood-Skin installations include the "Reign" restaurant in Dubai with



a 50-metre long counter in shiny black laminate and 7-metre high walls covered in a Walnut 3D skin. It's a blend between European and Arabic architecture creating a more pleasing and visually appealing use of space. The counter and floating ceiling at the Biesse stand at the Ligna show were also constructed from the new material to show the design potential of the new product and the capabilities of the machines it was made on.

There is no limit to the possibilities of the Wood-Skin product. A fascinating example is in the audio industry where the holy grail is to change the acoustics for rock concerts or classical music where the concert hall environment is fixed. It's what audio engineers study all their life to achieve but Wood-Skin was able to solve the problem with their unique product. A music venue in Milan was fitted with wood skin panels with the facets moved by miniature actuators to change the volume of air within the venue and the distances between the ceiling and the band to alter the resonances. The ceiling can be moved like a curtain with a few touches on an iPad.

To create something from Wood-Skin, Giulio and colleague Stefano Baruffaldi work with Biesse to turn the digital form into reality. Giulio says "Wood-Skin and Biesse are a perfect marriage because both are experimental driven; information is what drives us through to the next step. We found a very contemporary way to use, CNC machines that are not used to their full advantage." What he really wants to do is to "Find solutions to bridge the gap between what you can imagine, what you can design and what you can produce because it's the production where everything gets complicated."

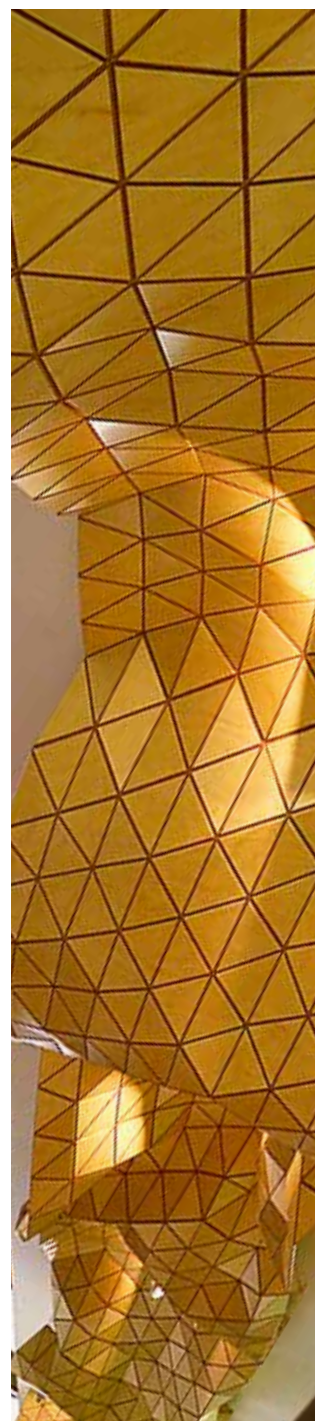
It comes as no surprise that Biesse were able to un-complicate the production of the Wood-Skin product. In collaboration with the MIT (Boston) Self-Assembly Lab and Wood-Skin, a revolutionary form of furniture was designed and unveiled at the 2015 Fuori Salone del Mobile in Milan in collaboration with Biesse. The "Programmable Table" is an entirely new type of furniture that actively transforms itself from shipping to full-functionality

by taking advantage of the pre-stressed textile core that eliminates the need for assembly of complex parts. It can simply be removed from the package where it jumps into shape at the touch of a finger. Once in place, the furniture may be reconfigured into other shapes or flattened again for storage and moving. By minimizing the volume during shipping, the flat-packed programmable product is extremely efficient and economical for distribution.

Milan is regarded as one of the leading design cities of the world and it was there in 2013 that this talented team of individuals, working together to use traditional techniques in innovative ways, developed the ground-breaking new product. Wood-Skin is a low budget, no-frills, high quality and highly functional creation that works so well that many leading international publications have said the furniture industry could be revolutionised. The revolution is no less apparent in the many other ways Wood-Skin can be applied. Giulio says "We don't actually have a product, but a way to get to a product or solution. It's not about the object you create but how you create it."

Every shape can be realized from flat sheets of material that once processed will be ready for sale, shipping and installation without any hardware or tool, just like origami. The central textile core is a form of digital hinge that allows multi-faceted creations to be produced on basic three-axis machines currently in use. Wood-Skin is currently a base on which future know-how can be built. Technologies such as audio systems, LED lighting (in the skin) are possibilities yet to be fully explored but when they are, Biesse will be in a position to put their high-precision machines on the line once again to transform ideas into life. Truly, Biesse translates the digital (virtual) World into reality with Wood-Skin.

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HK-XS joins Blum's Aventos HK series

Blum's Aventos HK series provides a contemporary stay lift solution for wall cabinets of small to medium height that combines high functionality with a simple yet elegant design.

The newest member of the HK series, Aventos HK-XS extends the planning and design options that are possible with the HK series programme. Aventos HK-XS is a compact stay lift fitting with a sleek and narrow design. It is ideally suited for wall cabinets with shallow internal depths from 125 mm such as above

the range hood in the kitchen or sink in the bathroom.

Aventos HK-XS features the familiar Aventos quality of motion and ergonomic benefits such as variable stop. The core element of the compact fitting is a robust spring package ensuring high stability and durability, without the use of gas. The symmetrical lift mechanism can be used on one or both sides to accommodate large and heavy fronts.

In addition to the HK series, Blum's range of Aventos lift systems includes lift systems to suit bi-fold lift, parallel lift and swing (up and over) lift applications.

Tip-On for doors and stay lifts – simplifying adjustments and merging harmoniously with cabinet interiors

Tip-On mechanical opening support system achieves functional opening comfort and freedom of motion for doors in base and wall



cabinets when combined with the proven unsprung Clip top hinge. Additionally Tip-On is compatible with Aventos HK series stay lifts allowing for freedom of design in wall cabinets.

The revised Tip-On programme ensures the right Tip-On unit is available for every door and Aventos stay lift application with the choice of two colours – Silk white and Terra black, along with a short and long version. The Tip-On unit can be drilled directly into the edge of the cabinet or can be combined with the rectangular adapter plate for fixing to the cabinet interior.





Adjustment ease for doors and stay lifts is enhanced with the door gap adjustment now integrated in every Tip-On unit (+4 to -1mm). To adjust, simply turn the ejector pin using the click-stop positions.

Servo-Drive Flex - achieve handle-less designs and ease of motion for integrated kitchen appliances

Servo-Drive Flex extends handle-less designs and the proven functionality of Servo-Drive adaptive electrical motion support system throughout the whole kitchen.

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close again automatically within a couple of seconds.

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Gets design moving



SlideLine M sliding door system from Hettich

The SlideLine M sliding door fitting from Hettich is a system for many applications. SlideLine M is opening up more and more options: shelf units are transformed into attractive multi-functional cabinets with doors that slide back and forth to produce a fascinating interplay between open and closed segments. Merging into the background, it does not interfere with the design of cabinets and gives sliding door elements a look of elegance.

Practical convenience comes from the Silent System that closes the doors quietly and gently. Where several doors run side by side in one profile, they can also slow down as they move towards each other. The activators can be mounted at any chosen position and the Silent System is discreetly integrated in the fitting's running component.

The single-track, bottom-running SlideLine M sliding door fitting is suitable for all common furniture designs and doors weighing up to 30kg. Cleverly designed mounting accessories means it only takes one person to install the system. As all installation steps are carried out from the front and not from the side, SlideLine M can be used for creating wall-to-wall units without a problem.

Projecting by just 8 mm, the profile keeps sliding doors close to the carcass, guaranteeing minimal gaps at either side. Two doors can cross each other in just one profile. Various sets in profile heights of 16, 18 and 25 mm provide positively connected solutions. And the silver or black decorative profile elegantly blends into the design of the cabinet.



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Gabbett's open house



As CEO of General Electric, Jack Welch raised the value of the company by 400%, so he knows how to run a company. One of his more memorable pieces of business advice is "An organisation's ability to learn and translate that learning into action and results rapidly, is the ultimate competitive advantage." SCM Group is one of the largest manufacturers of wood working machinery in the world and embraces learning and action as fundamental principles of success. As SCM Group's Australian distributor, Gabbett Machinery learns from its customers and acts to provide equipment that satisfies its customer's needs - even if it means re-designing the machinery to meet local demands.

Such is the case with Gabbett Machinery's latest edgebander release, the Olympic K360. Gabbett listened to what its customers needed and went to SCM Group to build a solution. The result is a machine that is suitable for over 90% of cabinet shops; is easy to use; is compact and cost-effective. A prototype was released at the Ligna fair, receiving plenty of interest and praise from customers in the United Kingdom and the USA where nesting is also very popular.

The SCM Melbourne Showcase promised visitors an up close and personal look at the latest machines and techniques for Australian manufacturers, with the highlight of the show being the release of the Olympic K360. Designed for Australian cabinetmakers, these machines are perfect for nested panels and high gloss edge-tapes.

They feature automatic tape thickness changes through the controller; rapid (less than two minutes) glue pot change-overs for EVA and PUR glues; dual-blade end cut with radius function; copy-rollers to prevent damaging high-gloss edge tapes and a full range of processing units and features depending on which one of the three models is chosen. As an entry-level industrial edge-bander, the Olympic K360 is unbeatable value.

In designing the K360 range the SCM Group design brief included the versatility to suit a variety of tape types and thicknesses; functional and quick to setup; quick serviceability; pre-milling and corner rounding; full finishing groups and great value for money. To save costs; the processing units were completely redesigned to fit closer together, shortening the machine length while reducing machining time and improving accuracy. The result is a compact machine that can handle thicknesses up to 64mm high, 3mm ABS, melamine and 6mm thick solid timber edges. Feed speed is comparable to larger machines from other suppliers and a full range of options is available. The machine is designed for NBM manufacturers so pre-drilled panels can be processed on the K360.

Gabbett sales representatives and technical staff went to Italy to work alongside the Olympic technical design team to make sure Australia got exactly what they were looking for. This is a completely new machine design that is certain to become a benchmark for entry-level industrial

an up close and personal look at the latest machines and techniques

edgebanders. Twenty five K360 machines are on the water with eight already sold; such is the confidence in this revolutionary machine design.

Gabbett Machinery is entirely customer focussed and sees success not just in machine sales but in solutions. SCM Group has an enormous sum of knowledge that Gabbett can call upon to solve any manufacturing issue. The showcase presented Gabbett Machinery's many partners in the fields of tooling; software; finance; edge-tape supplies; materials handling and safety. Gabbett provide machines to process panels, solid timbers and other materials including aluminium sections.

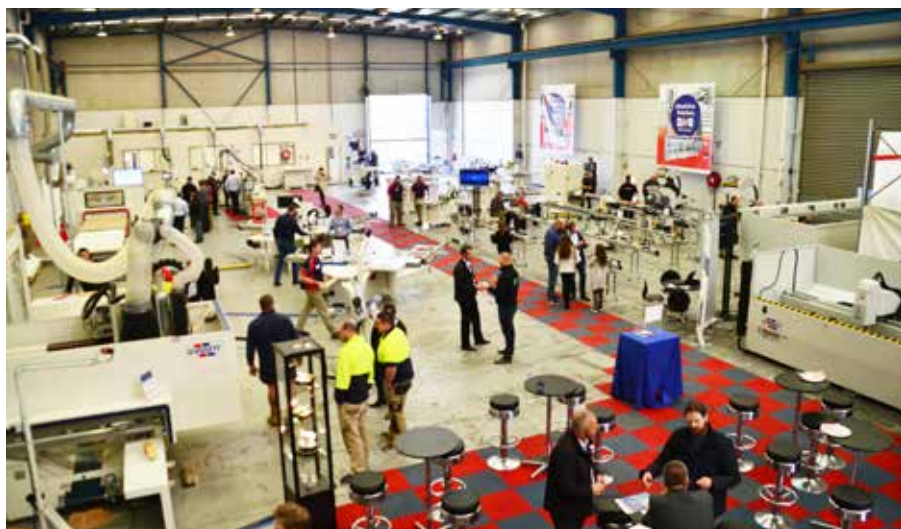
On display at the showcase was a wide range of machines to process aluminium components. As wood becomes scarce; Gabbett is in a position to provide alternate aluminium technologies based on the very best Australia and the world has to offer. Gabbett is strong in this field with the FOM Industrie brand and works alongside leading Australian aluminium suppliers to provide customers with the very best equipment and support in this emerging field of technology. Several high-end aluminium processing lines have already been installed by Gabbett who work closely with the Italian manufacturer. Currently, software is in development for popular aluminium profiles and will be available early 2016.

In addition to a full range of standard wood working machines, SCM Group is technically proficient in CNC wood and panel processing, with thousands of high-end installations worldwide including Australia. It's not all about high volume - the typical Australian nested-based manufacturer is well catered for at Gabbett. A classic example is the entry level Pratika nesting machine, the

largest bridge machine on the market with a unique vacuum pump for improved hold-down; an aluminium multi-function table and high-performance HSK spindles. Asia-Pacific regional manager Marco Rampichini on hand for the showcase said, "Why would you buy a flatbed router when you can have this?" The machine is available to six metres in length and 1.8 metres deep and is configurable as a nesting cell with automatic infeed and outfeed tables. The use of bumpers means there is no need for floor safety mats, cages or laser curtains and the machine can be loaded from 3 sides, including the rear. Controls can be fitted front or back and the vacuum pumps are enclosed within the machine frame to eliminate dust, noise and create more floor space, not to mention an uncluttered work space.

While Gabbett partner with all the leading cabinet software suppliers, manufacturers can opt for a cost effective software solution that more closely meets their production needs. Xcab is simple and easy to use and includes a comprehensive cabinet library that can be customised with a few simple strokes of a mouse. Cabinets can be exploded and each part viewed separately. Machining for all types of cabinet fittings can be entered graphically but for 99% of the kitchen design, are included in the cabinet library. All modern cabinet construction is possible with this cost effective software solution. Nested patterns are produced and any number of common parts can be added to fill up the unused parts of sheet material for absolute maximum yield.

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Commercial manufacturer transforms production using Microvellum software



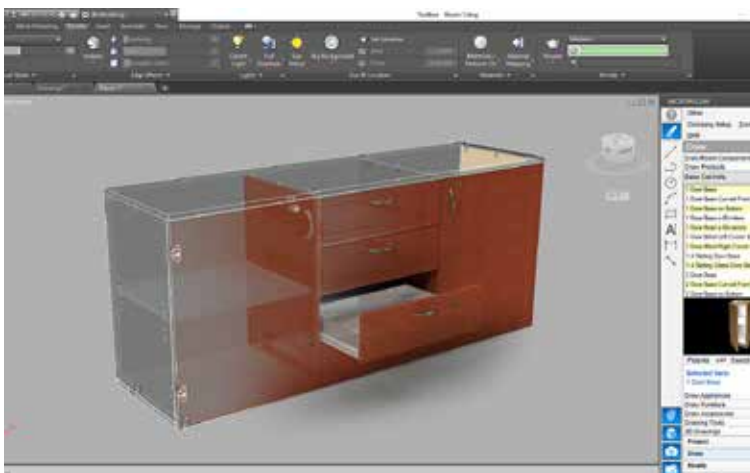
Commercial furniture manufacturer, Frankco & Simon, fell into the trap that many woodworkers do, spending money on software with high hopes of transforming the business. Like many companies, owner Frank Tong was consumed with day-to-day operations within his business and never took

the time to implement or learn the tool he had invested in. Frank's interest in transforming his business was once again renewed after a brief meeting with Tim Veale, one of Microvellum's new account managers.

Frank Tong purchased Microvellum back in 2008, a time when business was good and "the shop floor was buzzing" with projects. "Honestly, we were so busy back then. The thought of slowing our operations to learn the software we just purchased seemed a little overwhelming" said Tong. "So, until Tim came around, the software just sat on the shelf..." continued Frank.

"In a short amount of time, Tim was able to show me how to use the software, and to my surprise, it was pretty easy. It definitely helps having an expert like Tim around, but the truth of it is, his sincere interest in helping me reach my goals has definitely been motivation to keep the software off the shelf and into production," continued Frank.

"When I first met Tim, we were using a pod and rail system and experiencing most of the normal errors associated with duplicate data entry throughout the design to manufacturing process. Tim suggested that we change the way we manufacture and switch to a nested-base router to help improve our efficiency."



"Initially, I was a little resistant to the idea of implementing such a big change, but soon decided that I needed to keep moving forward and invest in the new technology. I ended up purchasing a Biesse Rover A machining centre and after experiencing the benefits and improved efficiency, decided to buy a second one three months later."

"I would have to say that Microvellum was the catalyst for our recent success. We've implemented the total design to manufacturing solution. Now, we process our projects in one system, a single entry resulting in a seamless operation that eliminates duplication and the chances of human error."

"We've kept current with our updates and have found them very beneficial. In fact, the most recent update really improved our processing speed. What used to take 5-10 minutes to render, now takes less than a minute. A real boom in productivity for our two designers using the software"

"It gives us the capacity to build the products the way we want with detailed accuracy and precision."

"At the end of the day, it's the ongoing service that has impressed me the most over the last few years. With Tim as our new account manager, we've really been taken care of and received outstanding support through a time of considerable change. Now that we've fully implemented Microvellum and our two nesting machines, we've seen our output increase by 30%, our overtime reduced by 10%... and we still have 25% machine capacity."

"Now that we've experienced the benefits of the latest release of Toolbox we are looking forward to implementing MicroManager Purchasing, Scheduling, Time Tracking and Shipping modules."

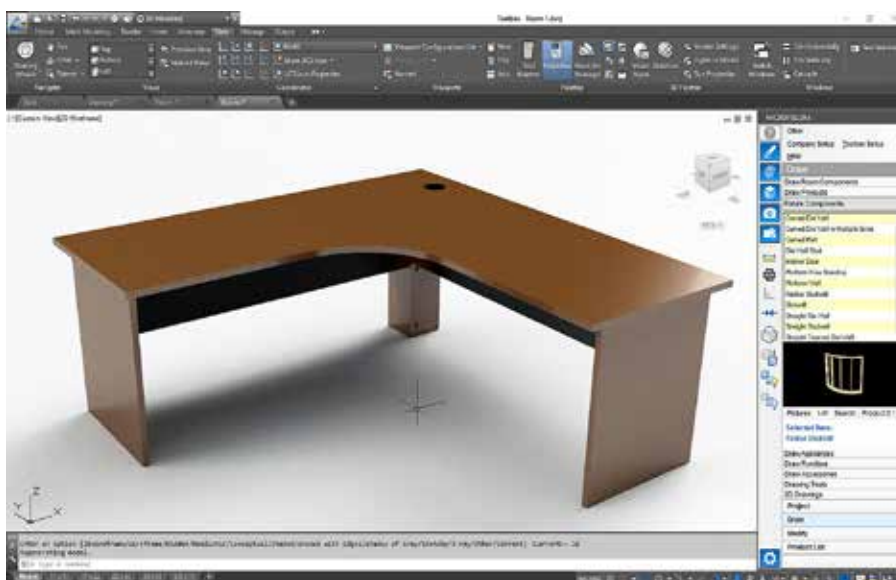
With a little guidance and reliance on Microvellum technology, the twenty-five person team at Frankco & Simon has been able to streamline and truly transform the design to manufacturing process using its once forgotten software.

About Frankco & Simon

Frankco & Simon Furniture was founded in 1993. The New Zealand-based company was started out with basic manual machinery and only two people. Nowadays, the team has grown to a large team of twenty with seven CNC machines from semi automation to fully automation. These machines are driven with advanced woodworking production software, Microvellum.

The design team use Microvellum software as well as CAD software. Microvellum is an AutoCAD based woodworking

...motivation to get the software
off the shelf and into
production



software that provides detail from the design to manufacturing process.

Frankco & Simon provide everything needed for office interiors; from workstations, desks, storage and reception for government agencies, offices, schools, and other commercial institutions. The company's primary focus is to develop strategic long-term relationships with its customers; recognising that every office interior, every room is unique and can require specialised furniture.

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Storage systems shape a new era of manufacturing

Short throughput times, stock reduction and flexibility with low production costs at the same time are decisive success factors for today's cabinet making shops. Local manufacturers are constantly facing the pressure of customised products at highest quality and punctual delivery.

In order to cope with the requirements a combination of integrated, intelligent production plants and flexible, highly efficient stand-alone machining centres are necessary to remain competitive.

Perth-based company Character Cabinets has recognised the benefits of the right machinery equipment and has invested in solutions from Homag Australia. With a horizontal storage system, a Homag Automation TLF 411, and two large Weeke Vantage 100 CNC processing centres the Western Australian company has stepped up massively in its production capacity. "The storage has increased our productivity as we could move our staff to other areas," says business owner Squeak van Duyn.

Steady growth requires investments at the right time

Character Cabinets is proudly owned and operated in Western Australia. It is a flexible, locally-owned business that delivers kitchen design, renovations and custom cabinets of superior quality to its clients.

When a company is growing in size and staff, economic growth will not happen by itself. Innovative products and solutions do not create themselves, but are the result of the work of people who understand what is needed.

At Character Cabinets, Dutch founder and owner Squeak van Duyn and manager Nat Rowe make

the final decisions. Nat, originally from Melbourne, had moved to Perth and started his apprenticeship at the age of 15 at Character Cabinets. Both know the company like the back of their hands and made it growing from a two-man team to 80 staff over a period of 18 years.

Nat says, "In the past we were cautious about investing in machines. When wages increased we had to change our approach." Squeak had spent a lot of time in Europe to see what was happening over there in regards to machine developments. With his forward-thinking approach he could further develop the business.

At the end, they decided to partner with Homag. "It's better to get a Homag than a lesser known brand," says Nat. Regarding the installation process, Nat continues, "It had been a smooth transition with only a little bit downtime. We had great Homag techs working around us so that we could continue production, while the new system was being set up."

Founded in 1993, Character Cabinets occupies approximately 2,100 square metres workshop space and had moved four times before they established the business in Armadale at the south-eastern edge of Perth's metropolitan area. The enterprise enhances a reputation as a company which can be relied on as consistently delivering quality products, on time and representing real value for money.

A new era – intelligent storage systems

The base of a successful furniture production with all its procedures from the delivery of the raw material up to the delivery of the finished furniture to the customer is based on intelligent logistics. A lot of leeway in combination with operating machines and in the panel variety makes the Homag Automation TLF 411 the ideal solution for highly efficient logistics for industrial production.

With span width up to 16 metres and travel way length up to 50 metres and more there are almost no limits in the variation possibilities. The operation speed of up to 130 metres per minute of the storage are enormous and enable the transport of each panel to any place in the storage or the deposition of the panel in a connected operating machine. CNC operating machines are connected like saws to the storage via standard interfaces in a simplest way and turn to even more effective operating centres. "Thanks to the cell the whole workshop is





At Character Cabinets, Dutch founder and owner Squeak van Duyn and manager Nat Rowe have grown from a two-man team to 80 staff over a period of 18 years and recognise the benefits of a forward thinking approach.

cleaner and we produce less waste," says Nat. The connection of a TLF 411 to a CNC processing combines intelligent logistics with the diversity of a CNC machine.

Nat names a few main benefits of the storage system, "It's a sensational program, and how the TLF puts the boards away. It shows you what you need to do next without relying on the operator. We can now handle more workload. It not only shows us what we've got in stock but also precisely where it is. In order to avoid board sitting there, the storage uses the board. This is where the real money is!"

The TLF helps to reduce utilised capital from storing up to sawing or nesting and the material used is coordinated with the ordering system and the order planning. The TLF sets the program a night before, picks orders over night and is ready for production the next morning. Also, offcuts are managed automatically.

Driven by the industry

In addition to the storage, Character Cabinets has invested in two Weeke Vantage 100 CNC nesting machines. "The industry has taken us to the decision of putting CNC machines in the workshop. We were busy and we didn't have enough trained tradesmen. So we were pretty much forced into it," says Nat.

The main reason for the investment in the new Weeke machines was to improve the

material handling. Character Cabinets' Weeke nesters run 13 hours a day, also in nightshifts. "We need less labour and the machines are much quicker," Nat says. All this goes back to the service they are able to provide to their clients. Over the years, they have built up a reputation that is built on the fact that they recognise a kitchen as the centre piece of a home so each project is managed individually.

Character Cabinets supply to the building industry and retail sector but want to keep the balance between building and renovation. Squeak still looks after his private clients. They have been dealing with him for many years and still want the personal touch. Squeak describes the strengths of his company, "We deliver on time, at a price competitive rate, good quality and service."

By having invested in the right machinery, Squeak and Nat are moving in the right direction thanks to savvy business skill and Homag Automation solutions and CNC machining centres.

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Forest to stadium – Maton Guitars

In an industry that's always pushing the envelope for clients who are always searching for a new, unique sound, Maton guitars have proven themselves on the world stage.

Patrick Evans attributes this success to the close relationship that Maton has with the artists who use its guitars. And this relationship is integral to Patrick's role as manager of research and design, projects and new product development. "While our products are available through a large dealer network – in many cases we've maintained a strong connection with artists by choice," said Patrick. "Maton's been around since 1946, and that close relationship has always been a part of our business."

The basic principles of guitar design have been around for centuries, however recent years have seen some major advances in sound quality and visual design. Patrick attributes this to two main factors: "Firstly, fashions change – people want to have unique instruments. Secondly, applications have changed."

It's this application change that has driven some unseen, but crucial advances in the Maton range. "More and more people are home recording," said Patrick. "That never happened before. And they have access to recording and editing software that in the past only big-name bands had. They literally have Abbey Road recording studio on their laptop. The flow-on from this is that their expectations of sound quality is that much higher."

"Bottom line," said Patrick, "is that we are always investing in being in front of these trends. We're looking for bigger sounds straight off the hook – which is to say, having a new guitar giving the same sound, feel and tone of a guitar that's been around for 10 years and has played in."

This bigger sound comes from the timbers within the guitar settling over a period of years, and, as Patrick puts it "learning how to vibrate". Another key component in the Maton guitar manufacturing is the materials. Maton invest heavily in sustainable timber – using some unique manufacturing techniques to give a market advantage. As part of the manufacturing process, Maton treat the timber and tonewoods with the respect a finely crafted instrument deserves. Each part of the guitar building process has its

own dedicated work area, qualified staff and independent testing areas.

In an acoustic guitar, the bigger sounds Patrick mentions are developed in the guitar body. A uniform thickness soundboard that has the ability to vibrate is a critical component. Repetitive and consistent manufacturing is performed on an SCM wide belt sander that has been custom designed for Maton.

The thin wall thickness that soundboards demand are normally well outside the parameters of an 'off the shelf' through feed sander. Working with SCM Group and Gabbett Machinery, Patrick initiated a tailored sanding solution to handle the small capacities that Maton needs.

"We now can create a consistent, uniform soundboard that behaves the way we want it. The SCM sander gives us ultimate control over our thickness that allows us to produce the tone we want. We've actually found that the SCM sanders can do more than the original brief, which is why we have them throughout the factory. Every flat piece of timber in this building goes through one of our SCM sanders," said Patrick. "Not only are the soundboards, but the backs, sides – even the electric guitar bodies put through."

The automated sanding system removed what was a time-consuming, laborious hand-sanding system – which created consistency problems. The level of hand-crafting that goes into each guitar, combined with the company ethos of respecting natural timbers is what makes Maton guitars so unique. The end result of why Maton put so much time and work into every stage of its manufacturing process could be described as the guitar in its natural state – creating music for enjoyment.

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Software- it's not as daunting as it seems

Tony Casella and Kent Dunham started Style Side out of their love of the trade. The two friends began installing cabinets together in 2008, after previously working as production managers for a big local cabinetmaker. As business partners, they were keen to bring their enthusiasm to the industry and together, they saw the opportunity to start their own business.

Tony and Kent had experience with using Planit software from their previous jobs. They knew that software was a key tool to help improve efficiencies both in the office, and out in the factory. Tony shares, "We did look at other software providers, but they all came in and compared themselves with Planit and Cabinet Vision, so having used the software previously, we decided to go with what everyone was saying is the benchmark for the industry".

Solid Essential Online was the ideal first step for Style Side to introduce software into the business. The partners used Solid Essential Online for 2 years as their main tool, as it gave them the ability to create all their drawings, plans and renders to present to the customer. They also valued the ability to take the panel part list and create a cutting list ready for the factory. Their investment in the software played a key role in the growth of the business. In particular, both Tony and Kent commented that "it saved us so much time in the office, which meant we could continue to be out working in the factory."

Getting a CNC for the business was always a goal for Tony and Kent, it was just going to be down to the right timing. In 2013, a great opportunity arose for the business, and following their plan to achieve their desired results, they purchased a CNC. Along with the investment in the CNC, they also upgraded their software, taking the next step with their Planit software and installed The Essential Business Solution. This package has given them value for money, especially with the ability to link directly with their new machine. They value being able to view each cabinet in 3D view, allowing them to see how the whole cabinet comes together, now including all the drilling and machine details, before they send it to the machine. Tony and Kent knew that there was propriety software that they could use with the machine, but really wanted the capability to send their drawings from their screen to the machine, all in the one program. Tony describes it as making their process "ten times easier".

Since the investment in software and machine, Style Side has continued to grow at a rapid rate. The new efficiencies that their investment has allowed, have meant they have been able to continue a sharp growth rate in the company. Processes and systems both in the office and the factory have improved, with less need to re-cut parts and less wastage. In addition, the two shared how they now have greater control over their work, meaning there is increased confidence in what they are producing.

Having enjoyed using Cabinet Vision for the past four years now, Tony describes using the software as "second nature. It's 10 times easier now with the screen to machine software, compared with the manual way we used to do it. It may look like a lot of work to learn the program, but it's easier than you think and actually saves you a lot of time". When asked what his advice would be for other cabinetmakers looking at software, both Tony and Kent replied, "Do it – it's not as daunting as it seems".



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All things kitchen and bathroom

HIA has been working hard behind the scenes to ensure kitchen and bathroom members remain informed and protected.

Outdoor kitchens

Over the past couple of years, there have been a number of issues arising from the failure of products used in the construction of outdoor kitchens. These issues are on the rise for the industry and are being reported and discussed by HIA members on HIA's kitchen and bathroom committees Australia-wide.

Consumers are selecting products for their outdoor kitchens that 'match' those used for the indoor kitchen. So while visually the outdoor kitchen looks great, the materials may not actually be suited to outdoor application, which can ultimately result in those providing cabinetry and installation being exposed.

Lee Hardcastle of Enigma Interiors Brisbane explains: "In my business, we have been researching, designing, constructing and installing outdoor kitchens for many years. There is virtually nothing in the way of information available for the industry working in this area. Outdoor kitchens are becoming more popular, particularly over the past five years; having a kitchen outdoors (big or small) has been embraced as part of the Australian lifestyle. This has also been made evident with the number of alfresco areas under rooflines being increasingly incorporated into builders' project homes."

A number of issues have been emerging around this trend and it is expected that it will continue over the coming years with the increase in installations of outdoor kitchens into

new builds and existing homes. Some products are being marketed by manufacturers and suppliers for 'alfresco' use; however, the industry and consumers alike need to understand the limitations of these products, Lee adds.

"Where warranties for exterior-rated products exist, the execution or application and methods of installation could lead to failure or voiding of warranties, and this is an important point to consider."

Some of the issues being reported by members are now becoming more apparent. These include warping and moisture ingress to board materials, incorrectly using fixtures and fittings and drawer systems designed for interiors, using appliances not 'fit-for-purpose', and the durability and UV properties of various products and their application.

Adam Douglas of Limetree Alfresco specialises in outdoor kitchens, and says that sourcing materials with the appropriate outdoor warranties is of the utmost importance to ensure a quality kitchen that is going to stand the test of time. "Obviously, the outdoor environment is a lot harsher on materials than indoors. So if the manufacturer is willing to give a good warranty it's generally an indication that the product and the material has been properly tested and is going to last in outdoor conditions. An outdoor kitchen is a fairly large investment, and if it's done right it's going to add quite a bit of value to a home, but if it's not done with the right materials then it can be a nightmare."

The awareness of these issues and the correct specification of materials and products is a two-fold problem that HIA is working to address - for both industry and the client/consumer.

"In the absence of any detailed information available in the market, HIA decided to take the lead in this area and come up with a set of industry guidelines for outdoor kitchens," says Diane Sebbens, executive director for HIA Kitchens & Bathrooms.

"This will help to alert members to the issues documented from industry experience, and also provide information for the design, installation and the specifying of a product's compliance in various applications. HIA Kitchen & Bathroom committee members will be working with HIA to research and produce outdoor kitchen guidelines which will include a set of general tolerances and a checklist to provide industry with the 'best known practice'."

HIA welcomes members' feedback, and invites those who would like to contribute to the research for the industry guidelines to send details of their experiences with outdoor kitchens - issues, information and/or products to kandb@hia.com.au





Consumer contracts

HIA has been working closely with kitchen manufacturer and cabinetmaker members regarding the security of payment and cash flow issues associated with businesses having to carry high costs from the point of signing the contract to delivery on-site of custom-made joinery.

Under the current consumer contract legislation (which varies by state), the issue of low deposits and the absence of a progress payment system continues to adversely affect cash flow for our kitchen manufacturing businesses. Custom joinery manufactured off-site is currently considered under legislation as 'building works'; however, around 80–90 per cent of costs can be incurred before delivery to site.

Randall Morrison, national chairman of the HIA Kitchens & Bathrooms committee, is concerned about the huge holding costs, particularly for small businesses. "However, we are pleased to report this issue is firmly on HIA's policy agenda to push for a fairer outcome for members," he says.

With varying state legislative frameworks and consumer protection agencies, HIA's lobbying efforts have been focused at the appropriate opportunities in each state, taking into account the timing and logistics of reviews of consumer protection laws and building legislation. There has been some progress to date, including the recent securing of a 20 per cent deposit (of the project price) on signing of the contract in Queensland. New South Wales has also had a small increase, from a five to a 10 per cent deposit, and efforts are continuing elsewhere.

The national HIA Kitchen & Bathroom committee recently voted on a preferred national position to secure a higher deposit on signing of the contract for all jurisdictions. The proposal was to allow at least one progress payment under the contract prior to delivery on-site, triggered, for example, when materials ordered for custom joinery are scheduled to be cut.

Achieving at least one of these steps will help relieve the cash-flow crisis and security of payment for members. Lobbying efforts will continue. Those wishing to make comment on this issue, should contact us kandb@hia.com.au.

Stay safe with HIA Contracts Online

HIA has a wide range of up-to-date, risk-free contracts, designed to protect members. HIA also have a suite of Contracts Online that lets members create safe, affordable, professional contracts quickly and easily. Benefits include that contracts are always up-to-date with the latest changes in state legislation; members can select from a great range of professional templates (or choose a standard HIA contract); members can personalise each contract with their business details, logo and special conditions, saving time later; members can preview contracts before they buy; the contracts can be printed or emailed directly to clients and customers; and members have access to expert contract information written by HIA specialists.

Article courtesy of
Housing magazine

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AN OPEN LETTER to the industry



IT HAS BEEN brought to my attention that the current surge of pre-Christmas orders in the retail sector has nothing to do with government initiatives at either a state or federal level. In fact, our esteemed bureaucracy has done everything in their power to dampen enthusiasm at every turn.

New laws in NSW, for instance, that hinder cash flow in relation to deposits have done nothing except anger the industry. The NSW government claims "the changes were shaped through extensive consultation with industry, home owners and key stakeholders". Key stakeholders? If you aren't the "industry", and you aren't the "home owner" then the only key stakeholder in these discussions was the NSW government seemingly trying to secure votes from consumers rather than secure friends within the industry.

Let's look at how the deposit system differs from state to state – for example: you can now take a larger deposit in NSW – up from 5% to 10%. In Tasmania, contracts over \$20,000 attract a 3% deposit with no more paid until work is performed. And in Queensland deposits rose from 5% to 20% with the stated goal being to increase retail cashflow.

In NSW, the reasoning behind the new system was "to reduce red tape and support confidence". Given NSW has seen a 70% increase in residential construction in the last six years (and nationally that figure sits at 23% according to July 2015 figures from HIA), why do we need to instill confidence in a market that's running along very nicely? Particularly when the flow on effect has such a significant impact on cash flow.

In effect, NSW retailers are now technically worse off than a manufacturer/retailer. Why? As a manufacturer, materials are paid for at an earlier stage of the process meaning the retail arm of the business can invoice the client at that time. A retailer who purchases from a manufacturer on a standard 30-day account is now in the position of having the kitchen delivered and installed before payment from the client can technically be claimed.

Trying to get an accurate fix on exactly what you can and can't do is not easy given the various differences on a state-by-state basis. For example, the new NSW rules state

you cannot claim payment from a client until the goods purchased are paid for by the retailer. And, if the client asks, receipts have to be provided with a claim for payment.

Nightmare? Absolutely!

Recently the HIA National Kitchen and Bathroom committee voted to adopt a national position to secure a higher deposit at the time of signing the contract. It's a good start and my congratulations to Randall Morrison, Di Sebbens and the whole team on this outcome. But, this urgently needs to be followed through by HIA to ensure reasonable cash flow returns to the sector.

The sparring relationship between designers and the architectural community shows little sign of abating any time soon.

Writing in an online publication in the UK recently, Michael Lewis, a designer for a well known high street retailer said "Architects spend seven years training before they can call themselves architects and I can totally understand the annoyance of the Architects Registration Board (ARB) when one architect refers to himself as a "spatial architect." What other kind of architect is there? If you misuse the word "architect" you diminish the respect associated with the title."

While there are many architects with extraordinary talent, an architectural background does not automatically make you good in all aspects of design. It takes years of training and experience to consistently deliver premium kitchen design to the consumer and the university-based architectural training does not provide the specialist knowledge required.

In both architecture and kitchen design one thing remains constant – both professionals have the power, if the consumer trusts them, to transform the lives of their clients. Architecturally-designed buildings affect the way we think and behave while the kitchens we design fulfill the inner needs of homeowners.

We all recognise architecture is public sculpture, with a great deal of social responsibility attached and the expertise of an architect and their vision creates the framework around

family structure. Likewise the art of kitchen design creates an environment that not only has aesthetic appeal but has real, long-term benefits for the consumer.

In a recent discussion in KBB Review, under the banner of "Kitchens an afterthought to most architects, say designers", some interesting points were raised:

- Leading independent retailers have accused architects of treating kitchen and bathroom design as a "retrofit irrelevance" and claimed most would rather manage the entire project themselves than work with a KBB specialist.
- A straw poll of some of the UK's top KBB designers found most had experienced major problems working with architects and said their approach to kitchens and bathrooms was often dismissive.
- "I've been designing kitchens, bedrooms and bathrooms for 30 years and have yet to come across an architect who can design any of the above," insisted Peter Humphries of Connells in Ipswich. "Architects should stick to designing homes and extensions and leave the interiors to the designers. The answer is to work together, not to run the designer down."
- UK designer, Johnny Grey who trained at the London Architectural Association, said part of the problem was that architects are taught only to look outwards. "What they don't learn so well is to look inwards," he suggested, "To understand the emotional needs of how people live, work and play in their homes. I'm doing a project at the moment where the architect isn't very well organised and uses us to take on the management of a project. Then you have architects who get very jealous about the design and create a lot of problems for you, because they want to control the aesthetics. One of the reasons I'm quite often limited by the projects I do is because if you get a

very status-driven architect, they don't like other designers on site. So they push aside anybody with a vision or a skill."

There's no question the finest architects work on the principle that you are only as good as your weakest link. An architect who professes to be all things to all (wo)men will fall foul of the customer and will be better regarded if they use those with specialist training and experience in a chosen field. From the architect's perspective, the only thing that stands in the way of this practice is their own ego. Drawing lines on a piece of paper with the instructions "build this" doesn't work in 2015.

Whether it's landscaping, pool design, lighting, bathrooms or kitchens, consumers are, in the main, well educated. And they expect the people they commission to design these spaces to have specialist training in these areas and deliver a professional, personalised solution that overcomes challenges and presents solutions.

On a closing note, this time of year is undoubtedly the most stressful for all of us and with that brings some challenges ordinarily not seen at any other time. Designers will struggle with a slowing down of consumer enquiries and spend most of their time wishing they had saved some of those hard earned commissions; retailers plan for next year while managing the demands of the consumer to have the project completed before the family arrives on Christmas Day; the supply chain struggles to deliver last minute orders and manage stock issues while handling their own internal struggles.

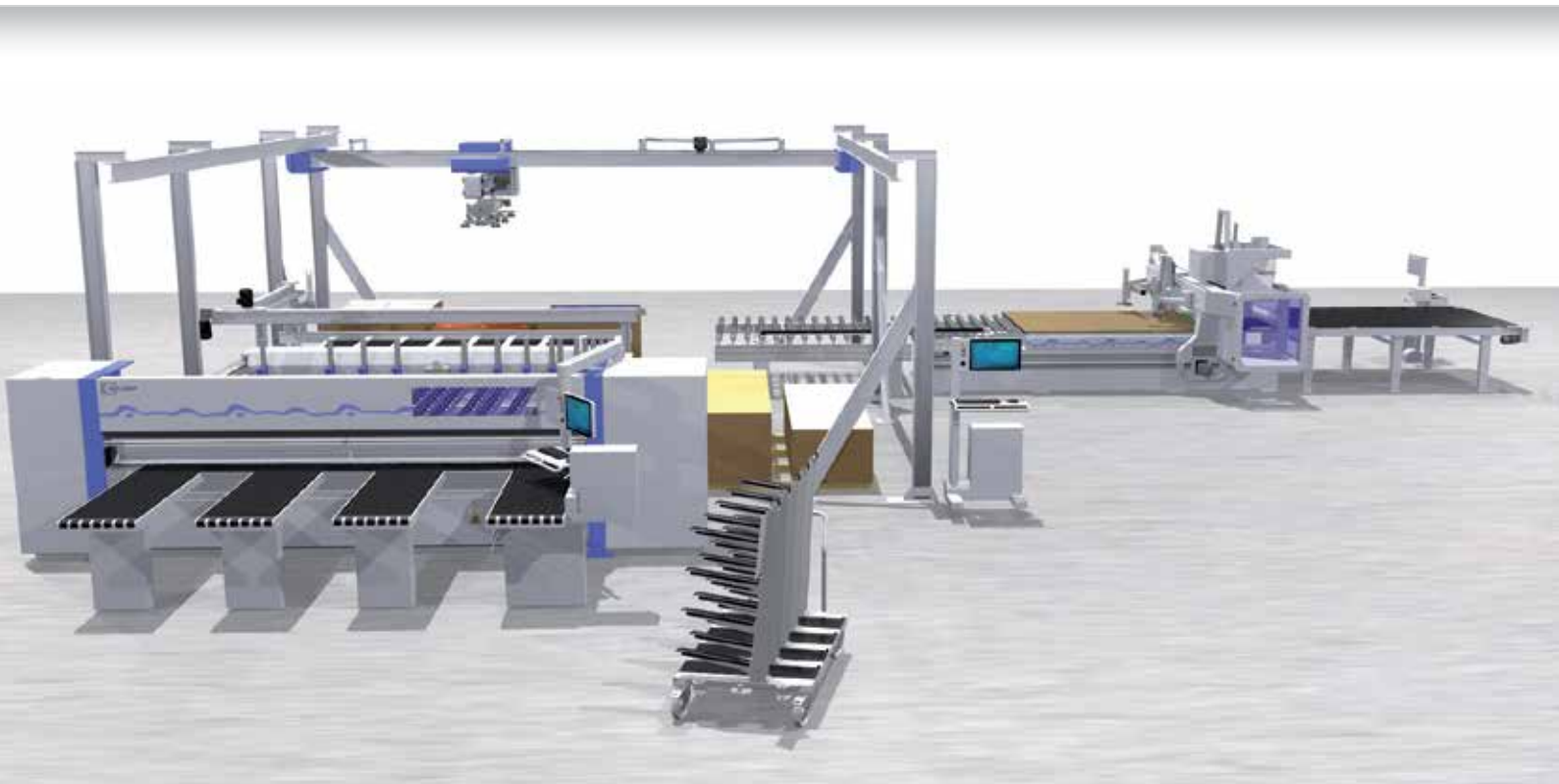
It's been a good year and it's a shame to finish on such a sour note but let's focus on agitating for positive change in 2016 and take a constructive approach to managing the many challenges we are sure to face. In our game we say "measure twice, cut once" converted this means "plan well but breathe better." ■



Simon Hodgson has over thirty-five years experience in the kitchen and bathroom industry including appliances, manufacture and installation of kitchens and bathrooms, design, coaching, mentoring and industry training. For the past eight years he has run his own consultancy business, Direct Representation, with clients including appliance and kitchen companies and trade associations.

He regularly contributes to industry blogs and magazines and is the co-founder and editor of The Kitchen and Bathroom Blog. Simon has served on committees of various sectors of the housing and design industry including the HIA and the KDBi.

Simon has ongoing relationships with many of the country's most respected kitchen and bathroom designers, specifiers and architects through his years within the sector and regularly meets with the industry supply chain on a variety of issues and initiatives.



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Titus Tekform launches appliance, sink and tap range

Titus Tekform now offers its customers a complete kitchen solution. The company has launched a comprehensive appliance, sink and tap range to the Australian market. The extensive kitchen product portfolio was created specifically for the Australian market place, with Australian consumers in mind.

Tekform Sinkware

The Tekform Sinkware by Titus range offers the market both hand-fabricated and seamless pressed sinks. Mercer, the manufacturer of Tekform Sinkware, delivers superior quality from its New Zealand plant and a 7-year warranty on all seven sink designs.

The 304 grade stainless steel bowls can be accessorised with foodboards, colanders, drainer trays and other fittings to suit a customer's kitchen requirements.

The range also offers 5 different mounting options to suit the kitchen design and type of benchtop. As an added benefit, each sink has a chamfered flange, creating an easy-wipe process from the bench top to the bowl. As an optional extra, the DriSeal for tapware protects the benchtop from leaks and water damage, ensuring customers are completely satisfied.

Tekform Tapware

To complement and complete the sinkware range, Titus Tekform has a range of modern tapware. Choose from single lever mixer taps and pull-out single lever mixer taps for basic requirements. The high rise tap options include a sleek square designs, gooseneck, pull-out gooseneck and a multi-function tapware for the serious kitchen users. To complete the range a square and standard basin mixer are also available.

All Tekform Taps by Titus come with a chrome finish, 35 or 40mm ceramic cartridge and a 4 or 5 star WELS rating.

InAlto appliances from Titus Tekform

The InAlto appliance range offers a higher level of cooking. Put succinctly, InAlto brings technology, quality and innovation together to provide a series of sleek and inspired products that will transform the way home cooks view their kitchens.

Functionality and polished European aesthetics are at the core of this appliance range. InAlto's manufacturing partners work with the many prominent global brands and have all been specifically selected for their exemplary reputations. Each of the InAlto appliances are backed with two-year in-house service warranty to ensure customers' peace of mind.



NEWS FROM TITUS TEKFORM

Titus has announced that it has merged operations with Stefano Orlati in Australia.

Stefano Orlati has been a valued distributor of Titus, making it a natural progression to amalgamate, which will allow Titus Tekform to deliver to its combined customer base in Australia an extended product range for the cabinetmaking, furniture manufacturing and distribution industries.

Stefano Orlati has established an unparalleled presence as a specialist in designer cabinet handles, lighting and general hardware, which will now be available through the full distribution network of Titus Tekform in Australia.

Titus Tekform has also appointed a new general manager. Jason McNulty joined the group on 1 October. He has nearly 30 years experience in the furniture, joinery and kitchen industries, beginning his career as a cabinetmaker in the UK. Jason's experience includes cabinetmaking, technical design, product development and general management.

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Quality, service and support key to success for Australian company's CNC woodworking machines

When Geoff Sellman sold his first four Woodtron CNC machines back in 2007, he had only his detailed technical drawings to show prospective clients. There was not yet a Woodtron machine in Australia, but his reputation within the industry was so strong that his first clients trusted him to deliver high quality machines that met their needs.

Fast forward eight years, and Geoff's Woodtron family business now sells about 135 machines annually in Australia and China, and is creating an export market to Europe, the USA and Asia.

The business has been built on Geoff's 30 years' experience in the CNC woodworking industry, and on the strong service ethos he shares with sons Luke and Kyle, his wife Jennie and Kyle's partner Serrin, all of whom work in the business.

"I established Woodtron because there was a clear need for an Australian-based company which could provide very hands-on service and support for a range of high quality CNC machines for the cabinet-making, shopfitting and plastics sectors," Geoff says.

As manufacturing costs make it impractical to produce high-end machines in Australia, Geoff has a joint venture agreement with a Chinese company, which they have grown together over the past eight years. The range of Woodtron CNC machines (see box) are manufactured at the Woodtron factory in China, with an all-steel frame for strength and rigidity, and the highest quality components selected by Geoff from Italy, Germany and Japan.

Extended machine life

No aluminium is used in any of the construction of the machine, so vibration is dampened, the finish of the cut is much cleaner, and the life of the machine is extended.

"The construction, the componentry, the finish and the speed at which the machines can cut mean they have been quickly accepted in the Australian market," Kyle Sellman says. "If you have a cheap, light frame you need to have smaller motors, a slower running speed and the finish is not as good. Our biggest selling point is that we have a superior machine at a good price with excellent service and an extensive spare parts inventory."

The six machines range from the entry model Woodtron One for smaller workshops that don't require full automation, to the new high speed Ultima which allows for simultaneous NC labelling, drilling and routing.

Each machine is equipped with a camera, enabling Woodtron staff to logon remotely and solve most operational issues on the spot.

"We have many customers in regional Victoria, Tasmania and NSW, and they don't want to have to pay or wait for a technician to visit, diagnose the problem and return with a part the next day," Kyle says. "But to date, less than 5 percent of issues actually require a technician to visit the site. The rest are operator issues which we can resolve remotely."

Machine downtime less than 24 hours

Woodtron moved into a new factory/showroom in Melbourne in June 2015, and has built a training centre with computers located close to CNC machines. Customers are invited to undergo free training before taking delivery of their machines and to take refresher courses as needed.

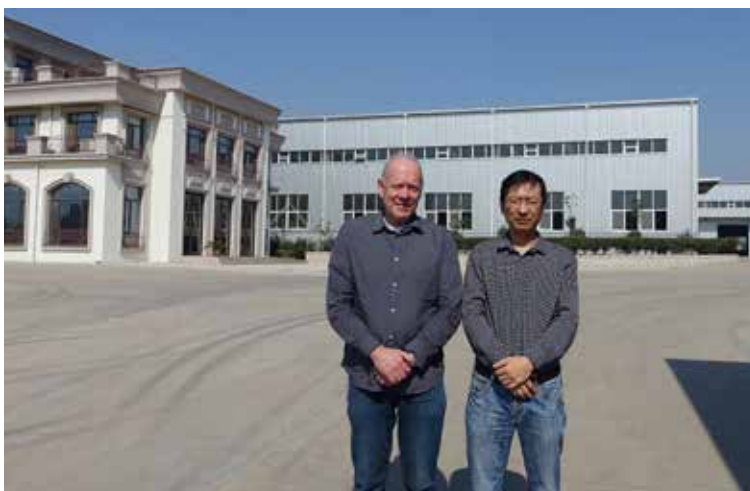
Machines have an open platform that can accept any software, and a backup of every machine is kept on the Woodtron server in case of major customer errors. The factory includes a huge inventory of spare parts, and the company is proud of a track record which has kept downtime from machine malfunctions to less than 24 hours.

"We could rebuild an entire machine on an existing frame if we needed to, because we have everything in stock," Luke Sellman says. "We understand that machine down time is very costly to any business, so it's crucial for Woodtron to carry all spare parts to get customers back up and running quickly".

"This is a long term business for Kyle and I, and we want to give the best service possible. So we are expanding our technical team which is headed by senior technician Rick Gusman."

"We have already had many repeat purchases and most new business comes from referrals within the industry. We

Geoff Sellman of Woodtron Pty Ltd with Woodtron's partner Keshen Guo, outside the company's factory in China.



The Woodtron team: Serrin McCallum, Kyle Sellman, Geoff Sellman, Jennie Sellman and Luke Sellman.



have had our Woodtron agency in NSW and ACT lead by Steve Hoareau and Pierre Sullivan, who have a large number of machines in that state. We are looking at expanding further due to demand shown for our machines in other states and overseas."

Custom installations

In addition to its six machine models, Woodtron has supplied custom installations, for example a flat table machine with a pod and rail for a staircase manufacturer who uses a combination of MDF board cut on the flat table and solid timber parts cut on the pod and rail.

The company has also built custom-sized machines with more than one cutting unit for special applications, charging only a small premium above its standard machines.

Woodtron machines offer great flexibility, and can cut plastics, acrylics and composite



THE WOODTRON RANGE

WOODTRON ONE

Heavy duty, high speed, stand-alone nesting machine. Designed for smaller workshops with limited floor space where a fully automatic machine is not required.

ADVANCE

Heavy duty, high speed, stand-alone nesting machine. Designed for smaller workshops that have room to grow and can be automated at a later date.

ADVANCE AUTO

Fully automatic nesting cell, with simultaneous loading and unloading of panels. Designed for high production and flexibility.

ADVANCE AUTO LB

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POD AND RAIL

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ULTIMA

The newest Woodtron model and the benchmark in flat panel nesting. Utilises a twin beam design coupled with an NC controlled labelling machine, allowing for simultaneous NC labelling, drilling and routing. High speed production output.

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► materials such as Teflon. For example, a caravan manufacturer in Victoria who replaced two smaller routers with one Woodtron machine has since tripled its production capacity.

The Sellmans are now focusing heavily on automation and on the ability of machines to communicate with each other. Automatic labelling, which prevents incorrect labelling and subsequent incorrect edge banding of parts, is now a feature of about 50% of machines sold, up from 10% a year ago.

They have also recently developed a computerised automated board storage system that works in conjunction with their fully automatic CNC Nesting Cell.

With a goal of continued automation based on CNC technology, family members travel frequently to international woodworking and automation exhibitions to look at how the latest technology can improve their machines and service offerings.

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Joining technologies gain international recognition

Award winning assembly solutions supplier Joinlox has amassed worldwide popularity with its simple and strong Striplox joining products and is opening a new USA warehouse to further service its international sales demand.

At the AWFS fair in Las Vegas, Striplox sales and marketing manager, Dean Urquhart said the immense success of the 'one of a kind' joining solutions of the Striplox range demonstrates its depth and breadth of use. "We realised how long the building and construction industry had been waiting for our leading-edge products," he said. "We had hundreds of industry members attend our crowded demonstrations of the Striplox range at the AWFS fair while also winning the New Product Award for Innovation."

"Striplox products are powered by our innovative, simple and strong joining solutions. All of our joins transfer load capacity evenly over a series of interlocking teeth across the entire length of the joint providing a superior and strong join, time after time. The quick and easy use of Striplox provides unparalleled savings on time and labour costs and a far superior connection in one action than any other conventional joining system."

"We have a deep understanding and engagement with the construction and design industry and our Striplox sales have gone from strength to strength leading to the opening of our new USA warehouse to further service our international demand," he said.

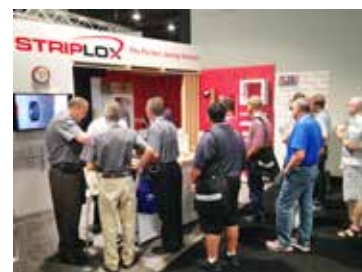
Joinlox is an innovative, award-winning, international company providing a range of joining solutions through its Striplox product range. The range is used Australia-wide and its use now spans the globe. All of the products are strong, fast and easy to use whilst also delivering significant cost-savings. The concealed systems boast multiple applications across numerous uses and industries. The entire Striplox product range is fast and easy to use, intuitive and eliminates the need for bags of loose fasteners and replaces



visible screws, brackets, fittings, connectors, latches, cam and dowels, mounting blocks and other mechanical components.

This makes Striplox perfect for hundreds of applications and installations off-site or on-site without tools or skilled personnel, making the range a 'one of a kind' in the market. Striplox is available through Hafele, Nover, and Wilson & Bradley.

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Striplox CEO, John Pettigrew, and sales and marketing manager, Dean Urquhart, with the New Product Award for Innovation won at the AWFS trade fair in Las Vegas in July this year.

air fusion



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Legrabox Pure – experience elegance

A linear and sleek design combined with high-quality materials characterises the appearance of Legrabox Pure. The drawer sides are straight both in the interior and exterior and are impressively slim at just 12.8 mm. All components are perfectly coordinated with one another and form harmonious transitions.

Legrabox Pure is versatile in any living space with four height options and three distinct colour concepts, Silk white, Terra black or the new Orion grey.

Lincoln Sentry territory managers or the company's national customer service centre should be contacted for Legrabox Pure inquiries and all other Blum needs.



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Kaeser Australia celebrates 25 year anniversary

Kaeser Compressors is currently celebrating its 25th anniversary in Australia. Over the past 25 years the company's presence has grown considerably throughout the region. While the business landscape has continued to change in that time, the company's focus on developing innovative air system solutions has remained, and its latest generation of products are ready to take full advantage of the future-orientated benefits that Industry 4.0 has to offer.

Kaeser Compressors Australia has grown significantly since it was established in 1990. From modest beginnings with just two employees, the company now boasts an extensive network of sales and service centres as well as dedicated partners that provide comprehensive coverage to compressed air users throughout Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia.

The company has seen a number of changes to the business landscape over the past 25 years. From the development of the internet to the instant communication capabilities of electronic mail and SMS, the revolutionary growth in information and communication technologies have had a profound effect on the control, monitoring, communication and inter-connective abilities of air compressor technologies.

The dawn of Industry 4.0 is now once again changing this landscape. A term which encapsulates a number of technologies and concepts, Industry 4.0 represents the

fourth industrial revolution, whereby the real and virtual worlds are brought together via cyber-physical systems in order to optimise a company's manufacturing processes and entire value chains.

Capable of seamless integration into an overall system and communicating with one another, all Kaeser products are ready to take advantage of the future-orientated benefits of Industry 4.0. All elements of a Kaeser compressed air system can be networked together from production planning to implementation and predictive maintenance, enabling intelligent control, which allows for the automatic delivery of the compressed air volume and quality required by each specific user. This strategy helps to maintain availability and efficiency, and keeps lifecycle costs to a minimum.

All Kaeser compressors remain proudly manufactured in Germany. Still owned and operated by the Kaeser family, the company employs more than 5,000 dedicated employees worldwide.

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Inside

 **BIESSE**

by Rick Lee

“This is what I want and I want it now”

Time to take back control of the sales process

My first and most important lesson in sales was the advice I received from my boss who informed me that I would never be successful selling machines unless I stopped trying to be a salesman. This was a time in the early eighties when high-pressure salesmen ruled supreme. Customers were often manipulated into buying products they did not need because they trusted sales reps with extremely persuasive powers. My boss went on to say that I had been hired for my knowledge of machinery and its applications in the woodworking industry. Our company had clients who had problems that needed solutions and if I made that my goal then the sales would follow automatically. It was advice worth its weight in gold and I thereafter developed my career as a solution specialist with a consultative sales approach that did indeed produce consistent sales over and above budgets.

providing customers with solutions

Since those early days I have managed, trained and mentored many sales professionals and have always focused on the importance of understanding customer's needs and providing them with solutions.

Throughout the nineties and the naughties, consultative sales slowly became the professional benchmark as clients turned to knowledgeable representatives rather than slick talking tricksters. They became more discernable when making buying decisions with the emphasis on informed representatives. It has always been my assertion that whether selling kitchens, the machinery to build kitchens or any other major investment, customer behaviour follows the same patterns. After all, business-to-business or business-to-retail, we are always dealing with people and trying to meet their needs.

The last ten years has seen a revolution in buying behaviour and with it our understanding of how to adapt to these changes in order to offer effective solutions. It is common knowledge that the transformation is almost entirely due to the internet and more recently social media.

The sales professional is no longer the only one with the knowledge, which in the past allowed him to control the sales process. Customers are now self-educated before they reach out in person. They have completed up to 60% of the purchasing cycle on line and this often puts them in control. Misinformation they receive has immense influence on their perceptions and this makes the whole process even more difficult for today's representatives.

In order to take back control of the sale, business must change the way it interacts with customers, as early in the process as possible. Needless to say, it begins with the way we present ourselves on the web and company websites must provide more than just an overview of services. Business owners must make sure search engine optimisation is strong and websites are informative. Perception of your company and brand will be formed far in advance of the first personal contact. If your site is weak or not readily found, you are already at a disadvantage.

Reviews are critical in the new age of marketing and a quick search will provide potential customers with information about your company from forums and other social sites as well as yours and your competitors websites. It is essential to provide a balanced view by making sure your success stories are well represented. Do this by using your website and social media such as Facebook, Youtube and other powerful forums to showcase loyal clients. Remember, reputation is king!

Providing the correct solution for clients is crucial for any business reputation and its ongoing success. Representatives need to focus more than ever on providing solutions rather than assuming clients know what they want because they have done some research. A problem with self-education on-line is that much of the information available is incorrect. We can go on-line to research a headache and come away with a brain tumour; such is the amount of confusing advice. It is up to sales professionals to express the company's position convincingly and at an early stage wherever possible. When they do finally get a chance to talk in person, they must not be afraid to tell clients if they have been misled by other sources and the reasons for the company's own solutions.



Rick Lee has over 38 years experience in the woodworking industry in both woodwork manufacturing and machinery and software distribution. He now works as a consultant to the industry and can be contacted at Right Track Business Consulting on 0412 237 456 or at rick.lee@righttrackbusiness.com.au.

Above all, and in my opinion by far the most important challenge sales professionals will face as a result of these changes in buyer behaviour is the need for speed. We live in an age of instant satisfaction and communication. I recently went out on site with a client to complete a design consultation for one of his customers, which entailed the design of a reasonably large and elaborate kitchen and laundry. We were gobsmacked to receive a call from this slightly irked customer only twelve hours later wanting to know where the quotation and plans were. Thankfully most customers are more reasonable than this example but the point is clear and repeated on a daily basis; you snooze, you lose.

The time spent speeding up processes and response times is time well spent. Not only is it necessary to be quick but also if you are to get those great reviews for your marketing campaigns, you must provide constant feedback to customers and keep them well informed at every step in order to keep them satisfied. The modern customer needs to know and needs to know now! The nearer you can come to meeting those expectations the better you will be regarded.

Taking back control of the sale means taking steps to understand the behavioural changes that have taken place and implementing a few simple strategies to deal with them. Without control we simply become order takers. ■



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Helping manufacture Sydney's nightlife



Joe Zarantonello with apprentice machine operator, nephew Marcus Zarantonello.

So what have Sydney's leading entertainment hot spots like The Star casino, Sydney Hilton, Rockpool Bar and Grill and Cyrens restaurant, to name a few, got in common? Besides being among Sydney leading excitement centres they have all had the Karisma Joinery treatment.

Then there are other talked about Sin City good time destinations, like the down-town Ivy complex. Since opening in 2009 the Ivy Bar has become the party-central playground for many Sydneysiders; housing bars, nightclubs, bistros and even a pool on the roof, drinking areas to suit all tastes, party joints that keep going long into the night, and some of the city's hottest dining spots.

Karisma Joinery's list of Sydney's leading commercial clients is long and impressive, from complexes like hotels and airports through offices, boardrooms, work stations, restaurants, cafes, cinemas, and libraries. The company is firmly established as one of Sydney's leading entertainment precinct design, fit-out and joinery specialists.

The dynamo behind the company - now recognised as Sydney's excitement venue design and fit-out leaders - is Joe Zarantonello. He stresses that quality and durability are overarching values for Karisma Joinery: "So we employ only the highest quality tradesman and use the best materials."

With Italian ancestry and equipped with a cabinet makers' ticket, Joe started his business making kitchens in his mother's shed in 1985.

So from the backyard at home to a modern cabinet making and joinery factory at Seven Hills in Western Sydney, employing 35 tradesmen and specialists, Joe is now firmly established as one of Sydney's leading entertainment precinct design, fit-out and joinery specialists.

"We now tend to concentrate on top events and entertainment venues where flare, quality and made-to-last are the essence of our joinery and cabinet making work. We can do everything from interior design, lighting, bars, restaurants, gaming tables and a myriad of other furniture," says Joe.

Karisma Joinery is able to offer clients a complete package from initial conceptualisation through design, architectural drawings, to manufacturing and installation.

Joinery work carried out in Sydney by Karisma Joinery

as part of major refurbishment projects includes the Regent Hotel, Alto BMW, and the University of New South Wales. Karisma Joinery also designed, manufactured and installed the joinery as part of a multi-million dollar renovation and refurbishment of the Sergeants Mess complex.

Overlooking Chowder Bay the Sergeants Mess is set in one of Sydney's most glamorous and breathtaking locations commanding spectacular views of Sydney Harbour across to Camp Cove, Watsons Bay and Rose Bay. Paying subtle homage to the simple glamour of the 60's the joinery for the renovation and revitalization of the Sergeants Mess was provided by Joe and his team. It is now a prestigious location for weddings, conferences, meetings, gala events or private celebrations.

Yet another more recent job has been the refitting of Sydney's The Star casino and hotel at Darling Harbour. The Star features two gaming floors, eight bars, seven restaurants, 351 hotel rooms, 130 serviced apartments and the 2,000 seat Lyric Theatre. Karisma Joinery has managed several aspects of a major refurbishment, including designing, and manufacturing casino tables and the high-rollers area fit-out, plus various bars.

Part of Karisma's brief at The Star included Sydney's hottest nightclub, Marquee, now fast becoming the city's favourite hot spot with national and world-famous DJs on the decks and celebs on the red carpet. Brash and glitzy Marquee is modelled on Vegas personality and the casino look. It is about brash sex appeal in a city trying to shock!

The engine room of the Karisma Joinery operation is the new modern compact and functional Seven Hill's factory designed for high throughput manufacturing. Joe emphasises the critical part in the manufacturing process played by CNC routers.

"This is the fundamental aspect of our manufacturing, so we need and use the best CNC routers available. And without doubt they are the Biesse Rover and Skill series machines," he says.

"They are critical to our performance so precision, reliability, quality and trouble-free running, plus excellent software programming, are the cornerstones for us."

"We found it impossible to go past the innovation, precision and reliability of Biesse CNC machinery and we're very satisfied with the performance and finished product they deliver."



Sergeants Mess complex - a multi-million dollar renovation and refurbishment.

Biesse's chief executive officer for Oceania Luke Tenaglia says he is delighted to have a special, rewarding relationship with Joe and his Karisma operation. "They are an exciting company at the centre of Sydney's night life and entertainment. We are pleased to be able to make a contribution to Sydney style and excitement throughout our Rover and Skill series routers."

Luke says Karisma has been able to reaffirm the reality that Biesse has a point of difference with other machinery manufacturers. "Biesse is the technology-driven industry leader in terms of machinery development, performance and support. We take pride in our technical innovations and leading industry knowledge."

"Our products are capable of adding value and profitability to our clients' production activities like that evident at Karisma Joinery. So yes - providing solutions that lift productivity, increase flexibility, contain labour costs and improve cost effectiveness is what we are about."

He confirms the view that Biesse's Rover and Skill series CNC routers are at the heart of Karisma's manufacturing process. "Extremely fast, powerful and precise, they represent the top-of-the-line in today's industry"

"With high axis speeds they are the fastest machining centres in their category, capable of high performance in even the most demanding operating environments. A wide range of configurations are available to meet any production requirement," says Luke.

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The brief at The Star included two floors of gaming tables, eight bars, seven restaurants, 351 hotel rooms and 130 serviced apartments.

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Nova Pro from Grass – the complete drawer range with precision and individuality

The double-wall drawer system Nova Pro is available in different colour options, materials, design lines and forms. It can be combined with Grass comfort systems to create an exclusive movement experience and supplemented by a wide choice of high-quality add-on and dividing systems. The result is maximum individuality, top comfort and lifestyle. The top-quality design add-on Nova Pro Duowing provides high, closed side walls, if required.

Nova Pro is the classic among drawer systems and for many years has defined the benchmark for quality, finish and running performance. The elegant and comprehensive drawer range Nova Pro is available in the Classic design line and the rounded Deluxe version, with a choice of three different heights, various colour options, and as a regular or pot drawer with variable add-on systems. This enables Grass to fulfil different customer requirements with one and the same system. Both Nova Pro design versions have straight inside surfaces and offer everything a modern system should provide: minimal opening forces, high side stability, top-quality material and workmanship, silent running with no mid-way knock thanks to synchronisation, perfect automatic closing and tilt angle adjustment on the inside. Anyone looking for limitless design scope will find it in Nova Pro.

On Top – the double-wall design add-on

For lovers of high, closed side walls in a modern, linear design, Grass developed the double-wall design add-on Nova Pro Duowing. This can be used to provide an elegant upward finishing touch to the timeless double-wall drawer side of Nova Pro Classic and Nova Pro Deluxe. The attractive double-wall metal add-on is simply fitted onto the round or rectangular railing with no tools required.

Handle-free opening and closing at the highest level

When combined with the Grass opening systems and the soft-close damping system, Nova Pro becomes a drawer system which meets every functional requirement. The handle-free opening and closing of furniture is transformed into a special experience with these comfort systems. The user benefits from intelligent movement design for maximum comfort in the kitchen, living room or bathroom. Regular drawers, pot drawers and inset drawers open with a gentle tap and move contents weighing up to 70 kilograms.

Colours, materials, functions: the special features of Nova Pro are to be found in the details. Furniture planners and manufacturers can allow themselves to be inspired by the variety of options and find the right solution for every installation configuration.



Top 10 innovations from the Homag and Holzma in-house exhibition, Treff 2015

From innovative development for individual machines through intelligent solutions and trends such as automation and robotics as well as all the important information about "Industry 4.0 and networked production": That is what visitors to the Homag and Holzma Treff experienced. The focus was on the latest demands of customers from trade and industry.

The great interest and enthusiasm for the Homag Group Treffs was demonstrated by the number of visitors and the amount of orders received. Around 2.800 visitors from all over the world were welcomed in Schopfloch, and around 1.800 visitors went to the Holzma Treff.

1. Holzma's HPS 320 FlexTec revolutionises the cutting process

With the HPS 320 FlexTec, Holzma has implemented a concept that takes parts transfer in customised production to a completely new level and allows fully automated processes. This saves time and material, thus reducing costs.

Benefits include fully automated processes on a small footprint with no manual handling - extremely fast and efficiently due to fully automated cycles. Unlimited recuts fully automatically, flexibly and without limitations due to a new parts transfer system from Holzma. Substantially less waste with optimum use of all offcuts and efficient energy usage thanks to intelligent, fully automatic processes. Suitable for craft and industry alike - can be combined with an automatic horizontal storage system or integrated in production lines of the Homag Group

2. Holzma HPP 300 MultiTec sawing, drilling, routing

Holzma also demonstrated the all-rounder for facade and partition wall manufacturers, the HPP 300 MultiTec. This new development cuts, drills and routs in a single pass. This not

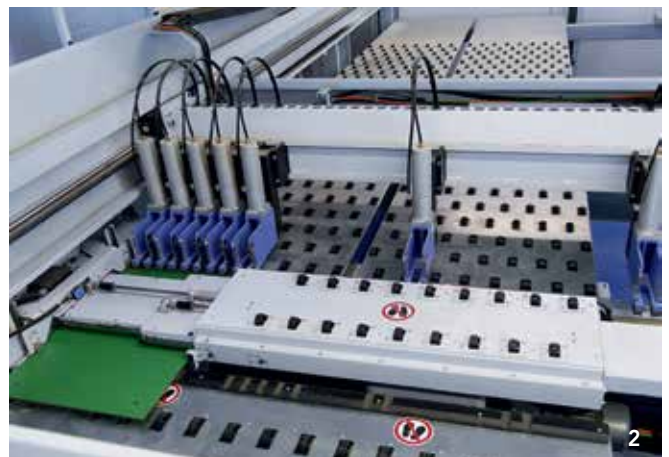
only makes it more efficient, ergonomic and cost-effective than a production system based on multiple machines, but also removes the need for operators to perform retrospective processing work and make installation bores on the construction site. The result is high-precision, ready-to-assemble elements at significantly lower manufacturing costs.

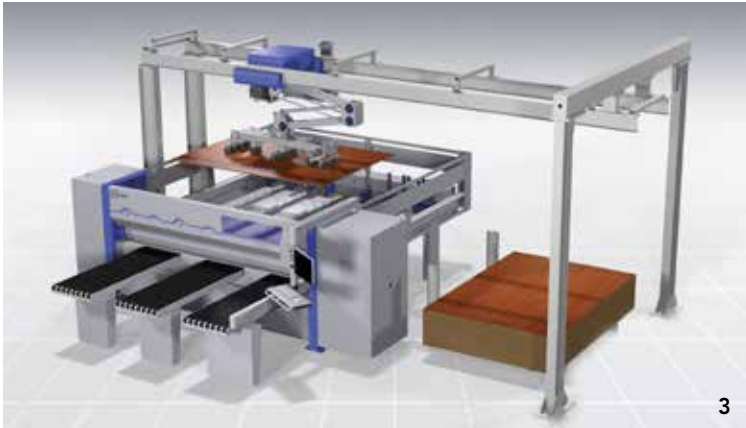
3. New feeding portal TBP 211: Automation for the saw even in a very small space

The combination of feeding portal TBP 211 and HPP 300 MultiTec was a highlight at this years' Holzma Treff. Totally integrated into the saw control, the two machines work as a perfectly harmonized system solution. Homag Automation stands for innumerable logistical solutions around operating machines in the furniture and construction elements industry. It optimises processes and thus creates the conditions for efficient and economical production.

The feeding portal TBP 211 is one of these new logistical solutions. Together with a Holzma saw of the series 3, the combination builds a system solution showing that efficient cutting with automatic material infeed is possible even in the smallest space. The feeding portal TBP 211 is totally integrated into the control of the Holzma saw so, the combination works as a single machine, the perfect system solution.

Different layouts can be arranged, depending on space and requirements. Material stacks can be stored directly beside or behind the saw and single boards can automatically be transported from there to the saw. This system solution is especially interesting for those who haven't enough space in their production area to install a standard storage system. Often it is about how panels may be transported scratch-free and with little effort onto the saw in order to perform the various cuts that a finished furniture part needs.





3

4. The new Holzma 6 series – with the power for large books of panels

With the new series 6, Holzma showed how easy it is to cut large packages of panels in industrial series production in multi-shift operation. The first model to emerge from this innovative generation of saws is an angular saw unit with a 190 mm saw blade projection. No other Holzma saw offers a higher saw blade projection in the standard version.

5. Optimisation software Cut Rite 10

Cut Rite is a comprehensive optimisation program that significantly improves efficiency in cut-to-size operations. It allows users to speed up internal processes, to be in full control of all data at all times and to cut material and production costs.



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6. CNC processing with the new Homag Venture range

Venture CNC processing centres stand for customised technology – from the CNC entry level model through to the high-tech 5-axis processing centre or machines with gluing technology. Today, users configure their own individual machine in just three steps, with freely combinable length, table type and gantry. All Homag CNC processing centres are fitted with the new generation of extraction hoods. Providing optimised collection and removal of chips, these extraction hoods combine a better suction result with lower air requirements. This solution has reduced the energy required in sample processing by up to 30% while also improving the degree of suction by 25%.



6

7. Homag FKF 200 for even greater surface and material diversity

The automated flat laminating machine with roller application demonstrates almost unmanned coating of sheet material using an infeed system that is also ideally suited for processing high-gloss surfaces. Also on display was a laminating solution with Reactec nozzle application using the CompleteLine method. As a result, this method popular in the industrial sector is now economically viable for medium-sized enterprises too.



7

► 8. A “good grip” on window production: The new Homag PowerProfiler

Homag unveiled its new PowerProfiler BMB 800/900: A multi-talent with more scope and more power for window production. This completely re-engineered series packs a punch in terms of high performance in a minimum of space and scope for efficient processing of all components in a single machine. New gripping and clamping technology as well as added scope for profile design make for efficient, future-proof window production.

The new gripping and clamping technology opens up new opportunities in profile design. The machine provides high performance in a small space - simultaneous processing of multiple components, faster tool change, loading and removal in one place. Everything is in one machine - integration of all components (straight parts, curved parts, doors, and supplementary elements).

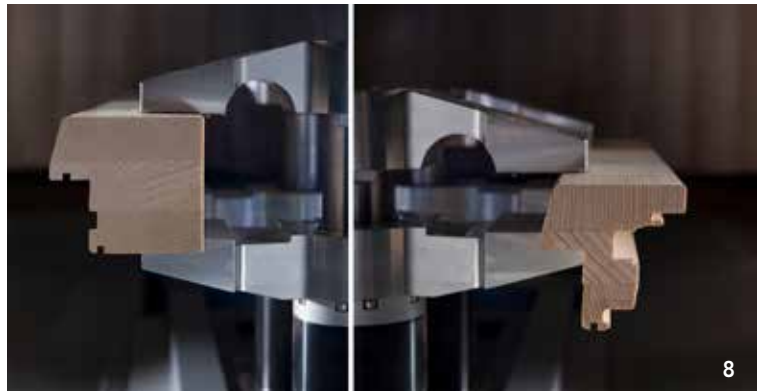
9. Brandt Ambition AirTec for the zero joint

Brandt was showing no less than five machines at Holzma Treff – from the entry-level category to the industrial machine. V-belt top pressure is celebrating its debut in the KDF 440 edition. Zero joint (AirTec) technology can be seen on two machines: the Ambition 1230 AirTec for first-time users of zero joint technology and the Ambition 1650 AirTec in combination with the Boomerang TFU 120 from Homag Automation for the high-end sector. Further highlights in edge processing include multi-level technology and PUR processing for waterproof and heat-resistant bonding.

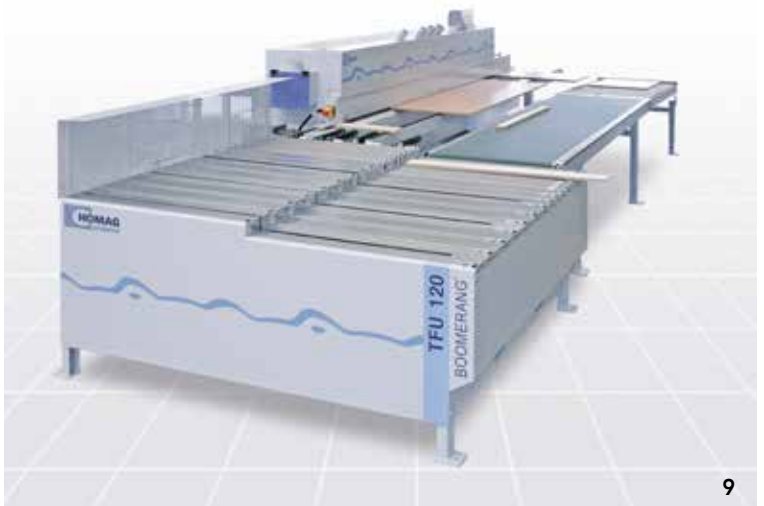
10. Homag Automation storage solutions: TLF 211

Homag Automation storage systems and software solutions help cabinet making business to increase flexibility and improve competitiveness.

Automated materials management is no longer the exclusive domain of large industrial businesses. To remain competitive, every manufacturing company has to consider automation as an essential part of its processes to reduce costs. Homag Automation demonstrated how to cost effectively produce and deliver just in time production, even in batch size 1. Independent of a manufacturing facility's size, short throughput times, stock reduction and flexibility with low production costs are vital elements for success.



8



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Homag Australia Tech Tour

Homag Australia again ran a tech-tour to the annual Homag and Holzma inhouse exhibition Treff. These tours have built an excellent reputation in recent years.

This year, a group of 12 joined Homag on the tour through Germany and Switzerland to visit highly automated plants. The following days were at the Homag and Holzma factories where the in-houses are held. Being inside the factories the customers get to dig deep inside the machines and their manufacture.

As well as visiting end users of the latest technology it is a wonderful opportunity to network with others in the industry experiencing similar challenges and opportunities. The networking benefit can be as great as the tech education itself. Of course there was no lack of entertainment that included the famous Oktoberfest of Stuttgart.



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Sige Infinity Plus wire ware range - now available in Orion grey

Sige, in partnership with Wilson & Bradley, aim to provide customers with a range of products that capture the latest style, functionality and a modern design. With that in mind Wilson & Bradley now offers the most popular pieces from the Sige Infinity Plus range in Orion grey for a stylish European feel.

Exclusive to Wilson & Bradley, the new collection of Orion grey pieces including pantries, corner units and pull outs, not only boasts a unique design but also aims to enhance and re-define the room which surrounds it.

The range achieves functionality on a number of levels; every product is easy to install and easy to operate, making the time spent in the kitchen a more efficient and pleasant experience.

Also a national distributor of Blum, Wilson & Bradley offers the full range of Legrabox Pure drawer systems in Orion grey, allowing for a seamless look throughout the kitchen, living space or bathroom.

Available on the Wilson & Bradley website is an extensive catalogue of instructional and information videos for all of its Sige Wire Ware and Blum Legrabox Pure drawer system making the buying and installation process of products a breeze.

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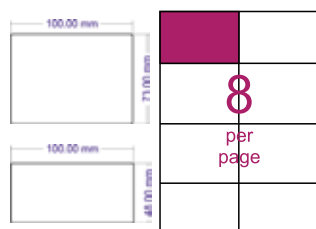
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The New Zealand made bins are easy to clean and maintain – providing a simple answer for storing waste and recycling in the kitchen, hygienically disposing of bathroom waste or sorting whites from colours within the laundry.

The framework of a Hideaway Bin is high quality steel which provides strength, powder-coated to remain easy-to-clean and durable. All units come complete with lightweight buckets made from a recyclable, food grade polypropylene and include a liner holder to hold the waste bag in place.

With three Hideaway Bin ranges available to choose from each with distinctive features and a variety of bucket sizes and configurations there is sure to be a hidden storage solution to suit the home owners needs.

Waste, recycling and storage are all sorted with a Hideaway Bin. Hideaway Bins are distributed throughout Australia through national distribution partners, Hettich, Nover and Galvin Hardware.

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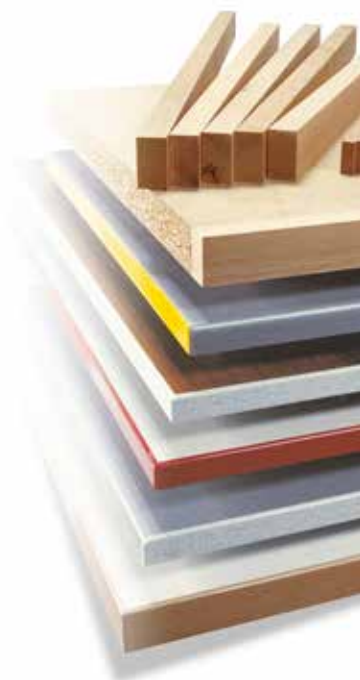


by Lee Gabbett

Gabbett Machinery Pty Ltd



A load of hot air?



'Zero glue line' technology is a phrase that is becoming commonplace in our industry. The last few years have seen some major advances in edgebanding technology, everything from gluing systems to edgetape have been revolutionised to help you achieve the perfect edge.

These advances in edging technology are all aimed at achieving one result - to reduce the visible signs of a join between the edgetape and the panel its being applied to. There are three main types of 'zero glue line' technology available in our market today. Laser, PUR and hot air systems. All indicators show that the hot air system is proving to be the most popular - mainly due to its simplicity of design and simplicity of operation.

Economies of scale also come into play here as well. Machines with hot air edging systems are becoming more economical, and are being designed to suit smaller models of edgebander. This brings zero glue line technology into reach of the majority of manufacturers.

How does it work?

The hot air system delivers compressed air through a series of heating elements and focusses it onto the reactive layer of the edgetape. Many machine suppliers are fitting hot air systems to existing models in their machine range. This means the machine has two gluing systems - a 'standard' EVA glue pot (that we are all familiar with) and a hot air system, that is selected for specific jobs.

This gives the owner the advantage of having access to the best of both worlds. Carcass work and standard edging operations are done using traditional methods - and the hot air system is used on the panels that require a zero glue line.

What are the drawbacks?

The edgetape used on hot air systems are specific to this gluing system. Put simply, the edgetape needs the layer either embedded in, or applied to the back of the edgetape itself. The hot air system on the edgebander then serves to melt this layer - allowing it to stick to the panel. Manufacturing the edgetape in this way allows for a minimum amount of reactive layer, therefore reducing the line to be barely visible.

Accessibility to the edgetape itself, while originally an issue, is now becoming more commonplace. Most suppliers now hold it in stock - though in some cases there are some minimum order quantities that need to be taken into consideration.

Finishing units.

After the gluing zone, the edgebanding process returns to the standard operation - end cut saws, trimming units and finishing units. However the importance of the following processes shouldn't be underestimated. The key to getting a 'zero glue line' is not only in the type of gluing system used, but in how well the machine trims, cleans, scrapes and buffs the panel - high quality finishing groups are a must.

Does hot air rise?

With its growing popularity, increasing accessibility to edgetape, and reducing pricing, the hot air edging system is well on its way to becoming commonplace in our market.

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KBDi Designers International Tour 2016

Those wanting to develop a hands-on-knowledge of what's happening in cabinetry manufacture abroad, and looking for some design inspiration should get their passports ready and join KBDi on the design experience of a lifetime.

The KBDi Designers International Tour 2016 will be led by multi-award winning designer, Lee Hardcastle, and will be like no other. The tour kicks off on Sunday 10 April 2016 in Frankfurt, Germany. From there participants will travel with KBDi diamond sponsor, Lincoln Sentry, introducing KBDi members to one of the most influential partners of the global kitchen industry, Vauth-Sagel.

The company is a second generation, family-run company with phenomenal production units and research facilities. It's opening its doors to KBDi tour participants, and hosting what will be an unforgettable few days in the Brakel-Erkeln region.

On Tuesday, 12 April, the group will travel from Germany through Switzerland to Italy's famous Como. Daily trips to Salone del Mobile (including EuroCucina) will be hosted by the well-travelled Lee Hardcastle, and evenings will be spent enjoying all that Milan Design Week has to offer.

KBDi Diamond Sponsors, Smeg, will welcome the group to its amazing head office at Guastalla on Sunday 17 April. Over the following two days tour participants will enjoy the wonderful hospitality that Smeg offers: including an incredible design seminar with Matteo and Raffaella of Deep Design, and the renowned Italian architect, Guido





Canali, along with a tour of both factories. The tour will wrap up back in Milan on Tuesday, 19 April.

The support of its sponsors, Lincoln Sentry and Smeg, has once again allowed KBDi to put together a fantastic package at a surprisingly good price. Despite the poor standing of the Australian dollar, the KBDi has beaten its previous offers, with packages for members priced at only \$4,200. KBDi also welcomes new members, and has put together a special package for designers who don't want to miss this design opportunity: \$4,490 will secure a place on this tour, and all the benefits of a full membership for 2016.

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Replacing lost or broken keys can be a major concern for some organisations. Imagine having several hundred lockers to manage, whether in a school, gym or workplace. For these environments, key management can take up a great deal of time.

KitLock is a digital access solution that uses a four-digit code to secure and open lockers, cabinets and enclosures. Fitted in place of standard cam locks, KitLock provides simple keypad access without the need to issue keys. This is particularly useful for users of a gym or spa, as they are free to enjoy the fitness session without having to carry a key around with them.

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KitLock is ideal for locking cabinets and drawers that hold confidential information in offices, for example, or for securing potentially hazardous materials like drugs or medicine on medical carts and trolleys in hospitals.

The KitLock NANO90 is a new mini lock designed specifically for these applications. With a footprint of just 30mm by 90mm, the NANO90 can be flush fitted to office furniture or medical trolleys for a really sleek look.

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BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

Kitchen manufacturer FOR SALE

Located at beautiful Nambucca Heads on the NSW mid-north coast, Nambucca Joinery has been owned and operated by the same business partners for over 40 years. This business has a well-established, thriving reputation throughout the Nambucca Valley.

The business premises are in a prominent industrial location on the main road into the township. All the plant and equipment including Isuzu diesel truck and box trailer are included in the sale. A new lease will be negotiated with the new business owner at a very reasonable rate.

The owners are looking to retire and are seeking young enthusiasts who wish to purchase a reputable bustling business in order to continue to provide high quality service to local builders, business owners and residents. Asking price \$85,000 but the owners will listen to serious offers.

Contact Nevil Cook or Ian Ward on 02 6568 6331

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 Melbourne from 6-9 July 2016 at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre. For more information visit awisa.com or phone Geoff Holland on 0412 361 580.

AWISA The Magazine



AWISA's magazine is published quarterly and is distributed free to a database of over 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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DISTRIBUTION

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

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