

AWISA

THE MAGAZINE

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



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FRONT COVER:

LED lighting is increasingly a feature
of shop fittings and new kitchens
and available from most hardware
distributors. Shown here is Hera
lighting from Lincoln Sentry.

AWISA THE MAGAZINE

Read THE MAGAZINE at www.awisa.com

DEAR READER,

Just as even years are the years of AWISA exhibitions, the
odd years, like 2015, are the years of the major German trade
shows, Ligna and Interzum. Ligna is the world's largest trade
show for everything to do with wood processing and takes
place in Hanover from 11-15 May. All the major machinery
companies participate in this show, and their Australian
distributors or subsidiaries welcome Australian visitors to their
stands, with some even organising tours from Australia.
A Ligna visit is one of those experiences that everyone in
the woodworking industry should aspire to at least once
in their career.

Interzum takes place in Cologne from 5-8 May and features all
the materials, hardware and fittings used in the manufacture
of furniture, kitchens and all products used in interiors. Turn
the page and you can read a summary of a speech given by
the CEO of the show. Again, this show is an eye-opener for
anyone in furniture and kitchen manufacturing. The inside
back cover of this issue has information on a tour to Interzum.

While on the subject of shows, AWISA has just launched
space sales for AWISA 2016. The show will take place in
Melbourne from 6-9 July 2016. I welcome enquiry from any
company that wants more information about participating,
especially any Melbourne companies that might not have
been interested in exhibiting in an AWISA show in other
states.

Not only do I welcome enquiry about the exhibition, but I also
welcome ideas for articles for this magazine. If any readers
know of unusual work being done in the woodworking
industry that AWISA could feature, or if readers know of
interesting personalities in the industry that are deserving
of publicity, please make contact with me.

Geoff Holland

General manager
Australian Woodworking Industry
Suppliers Association Limited

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This is a summary of a speech
given by Katharina C. Hamma,
chief operating officer
of Koelnmesse

The show for materials and innovation of interior design



HERE AT KOELNMESSE we are of the view that Interzum is the world's most important trade fair for the supplying sections for the furniture and interior design industry. Or in short, for materials and innovation of interior design.

Interzum is and has been a main pillar of our company's competence already since 1959. Just taking the last 10 years as a comparison, you can see how well this trade show has developed. In the year 2003, we welcomed 1,335 exhibitors from 56 countries, in 2013 there were 1,512 exhibitors from 62 countries - that is a 13 percent increase within five fairs. A similar development has occurred regarding the growth in attendance: Compared to 2003, we recorded 8% more visitors in 2013 - increasing from 49,145 visitors from 131 countries up to 53,000 visitors from 148 countries.

Currently we have 8 percent more exhibitors than we recorded for the same period in the year 2013. In total, we are expecting around 1,550 exhibitors from over 60 countries, of whom again around 400 exhibitors are predicted to come from Germany.

In terms of visitors attendance, we are expecting 55,000 visitors - according to our experience around 40,000 of whom will come from outside Germany. As a result of our comprehensive visitor marketing measures, we are currently estimating a 6 percent increase in international visitors, which means the total share of international visitors will be around 70 percent.

Trade fairs are particularly successful if they represent and reflect markets and their developments as clearly as possible. Companies, who are market leaders, play a decisive role here. The leading role does not necessarily have anything to do with the size of a company, the company can also play a special niche, trend or emotional leading role. Or this role can be based on high brand recognition. However, they can also be smaller companies that excel as a result of their high degree of innovation. Or which simply have a good sense for trends and design. On the theme of furniture production and interior design at Interzum than at any other trade fair, more market leading and trend-setting companies present their innovations. This is what makes Interzum the meeting place for decision-makers. It is the leading international business and communication platform of the entire furniture supplier industry or in short: the leading fair for innovations in material and production.

There is no better trade fair than Interzum in Cologne to reach the decision-makers of the most important furniture manufacturers of this world on the one hand and to gain a compact overview of the global material trends on the other.



What is the current status of Interzum 2015 and what is new?

Interzum will be staged from Tuesday to Friday - from 5 to 8 May. Instead of from Monday to Thursday as in the previous year. The reason for this is that we have a lot of Christian holidays in the month of May and on the top of this we have coordinated our venue date with Ligna - the world's leading trade fair for forestry and the timber industry, which is being held in Hanover. In particular international trade visitors can conveniently combine attending two relevant supply industry trade fairs in one trip to Germany. Our cooperation with Ligna also includes joint visitor acquisition to attract guests from abroad.

To turn something good into something even better, the concept of Interzum 2013 has been again further developed. The trade fair is concentrating on just three exhibition segments instead of seven, as was

previously the case. This offers visitors and exhibitors a clearer structure and simplifies the classification. Based on the good experiences made at the last event, we will continue to work with just three segments. Overall, the trade fair's comprehensive range of exhibits is presented in 9 halls, covering 160,000 sqm exhibition space.

"Materials & Nature", bundles all of the companies that focus on wood, veneer, parquet flooring, interior construction, decorative surfaces, decor paper, laminated flooring, wooden paneling, laminated plastics, solid surface materials, skirting, surface treatments, adhesives, embossing cylinders and press plates.

"Function & Components" addresses the producers of semi-finished goods for modular furniture, office furniture, tables and chairs, light and lighting systems, fittings, locks and furniture components.

The exhibition segment "Textile & Machinery". This segment displays companies that produce upholstery materials, manufacture machines for the production of upholstery or mattresses. Or who work in the upholstery accessories, upholstery material or leather business.

None of our trade fairs in Cologne contain purely product displays. With formats such as the "Interzum award: intelligent material & design" or "innovation of interior" we look beyond the horizon and thus create new impulses. And we increasingly address the target group of architects and designers.

And finally, the most important facts: Cologne, the 2,000 year-old city on the Rhine, is famous for its Cathedral and Romanesque churches, its museums and galleries, its zest for life and the over 4,000 restaurants and Cologne pubs.

outlook

The post-rate-cut economy

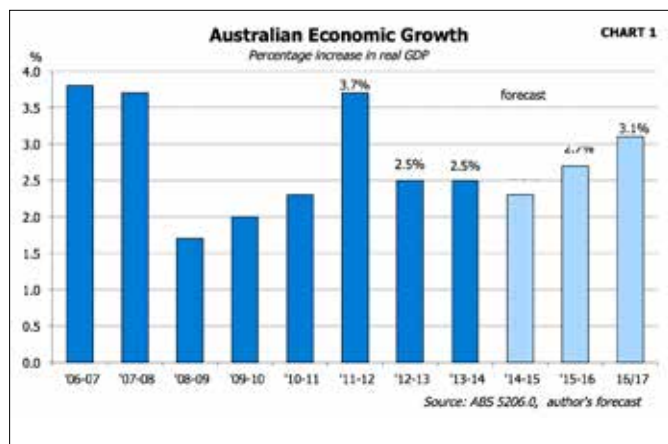
RBA cuts the cash rate

On 4 February the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) cut the cash rate by 25 basis points to 2.25 per cent. Was this good news for the Australian economy?

Not really. As the minutes of the board meeting record, the RBA's staff had revised downward its forecast of economic growth in Australia in 2014/15: from 2–3 per cent to 2¼ per cent. Recent data, they said, suggested that the expected pick-up in consumer spending and non-mining investment was likely to occur later than previously forecast, and that the rise in LNG exports over the next few quarters would be less rapid.

Nevertheless, lower oil prices and the exchange rate depreciation of the past few months would provide a positive impetus to growth over the next year or so. The RBA thus maintained its forecasts of 2½–3½ per cent in 2015/16 and 2¾–4¼ per cent in 2016/17.

As Chart 1 shows, we agree that growth will slow this year, but think that in the following two years it will be slower than the RBA forecasts.



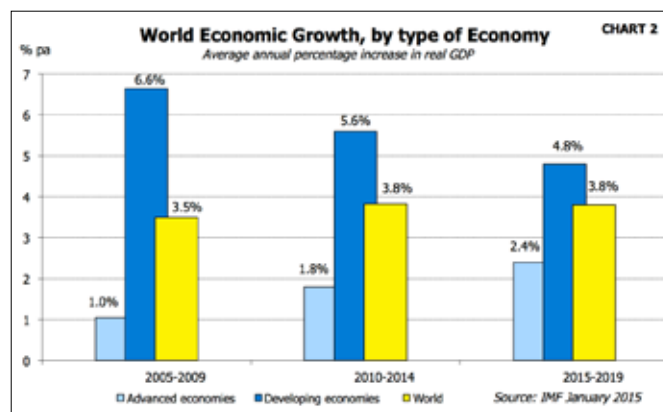
There are three main reasons for our more cautious view:

- The world economy is in worse shape than both the RBA and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) seem to think.
- Fiscal policy in Australia and elsewhere remains wrongly focused on so-called fiscal consolidation: the reduction in budget deficits and debt.
- As a result, reforms needed to promote growth and prosperity will not be undertaken, unemployment will remain unnecessarily high, and business and consumer confidence unhelpfully low.

The world economy

In its January update of World Economic Outlook, the IMF lowered its forecast of world growth in 2015 from 3.8 per cent to 3.5 per cent, and in 2016 from 4 per cent to 3.7 per cent.

As Chart 2 shows, its longer-term projections suggest that growth in the advanced economies will accelerate to 2.4 per cent a year, and in the developing economies slow to 4.8 per cent a year.



The general shape of these forecasts makes sense: the larger the developing economies get, the harder it is to sustain rapid growth; and it might well be expected that the miserably low growth of the advanced economies over the past five years will improve.

But the forecasts do not come to terms with some major world problems:

- The structure of the euro area, where there is a common exchange rate but individual country fiscal policies, is not sustainable. The current situation in Greece is a perfect illustration. Greece has a huge national debt which it is being pressured to reduce. But when it cuts government spending, GDP growth slows, unemployment rises, and the ratio of debt to GDP increases further. At present, unemployment in Greece is 25.8 per cent. One way out of this is for Greece to default on its debt, depreciate its currency and trade its way back to prosperity. But that could precipitate a major financial crisis, which is what all are trying to avoid. But will they?
- In the Middle East, Ukraine and parts of Africa, war is destroying billions of dollars worth of output and thousands of lives.
- Japan, the world's fourth largest economy after the United States, China and India, is still finding it difficult



Geoff Bills

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

to introduce the reforms need to lift productivity and boost economic growth.

- Even in the United States, where growth has been relatively strong, emphasis on budget balancing has restricted growth.

No wonder the IMF, in its latest Fiscal Monitor, said: 'But in all cases fiscal policy must, maybe more than in the past, incorporate measures aimed at increasing productivity, employment, and long term growth.'

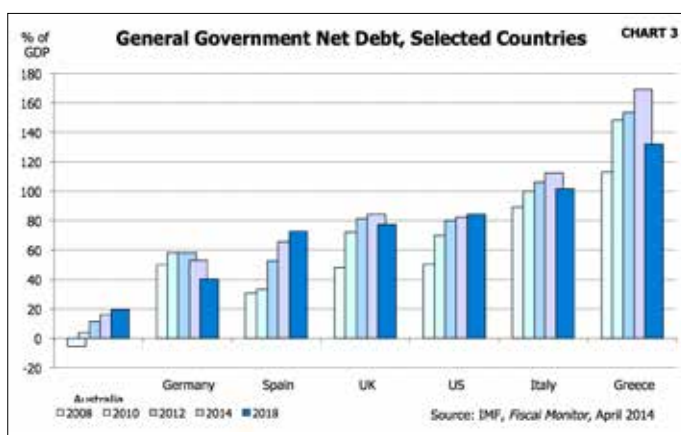
Australian fiscal policy

The Reserve Bank Act 1959 says the role of the bank is to contribute to the stability of the currency, full employment, and the economic prosperity and welfare of the Australian people.

That is also the role of the budget. It is not to seek balance. And it is not, as J M Keynes pointed out in 1936, in any way comparable to a household budget. Its job, in times of recession, when confidence and private spending are weak and unemployment is rising, is to run deficits. By so doing, it generates activity, employment and tax revenues. As prosperity returns, surpluses can be used to reduce debt.

There is no hurry about this. As Chart 3 shows, many countries carry debt of more than 60 per cent of GDP. Australia's net debt, projected to 2018, is expected to be less than 20 per cent. The idea that government debt is somehow bad, especially at a time of record low interest rates, is ridiculous.

The case for borrowing to invest in infrastructure that will lift productivity is strong: often stronger than raising taxes to make the same investment.

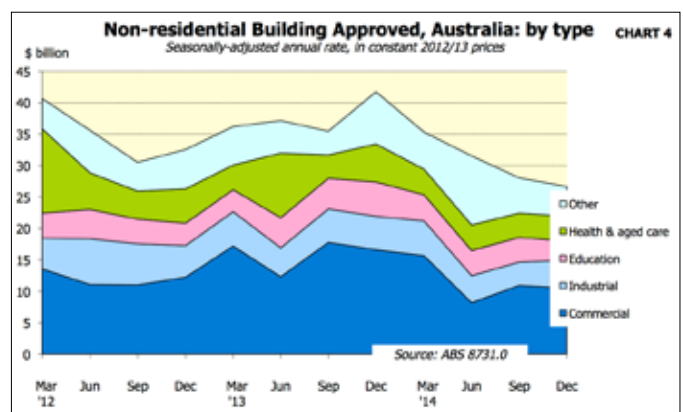


The changes needed to reform taxing and spending are well known to and widely supported by most economists. They include changes to negative gearing and superannuation taxation laws, increased income taxes to reverse some of the reductions made in past years of strong revenue growth, and increased spending on education and health care. Yet none of these measures is front or centre of current budgetary policy.

Confidence and non-residential building

In the recent RBA board meeting: 'Members commented that a strengthening of non-mining investment was a necessary element for growth to pick up to an above-average pace, and noted the importance of confidence in underpinning such an outcome. Indeed, an improvement in the appetite for business to take on risk had the potential, should it occur, to lead to much stronger growth in non-mining business investment than currently forecast.' (Minutes, p.4)

As Chart 4 shows, recent approvals of non-residential building show no sign of improvement in 'businesses' appetite for risk, and no sign of any government willingness to fill the gap.



In the December quarter, approvals fell, for the fourth consecutive quarter, to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$26.7 billion: down 5 per cent on the previous quarter and 36 per cent on a year earlier. Increases in industrial and health and aged care buildings were more than offset by a big fall in education buildings. Public sector approvals fell sharply, their market share falling from 26 per cent to 19 per cent. Total work approved in the year to December, at \$30.4 billion, was 19 per cent less than work approved in calendar 2013.

Both business and consumer confidence remain relatively low. Perhaps a more sensible budget in May will help to lift them both. ■

SuperStream is coming. Are you ready?

For employers, the introduction of more superannuation rules and regulations to comply with may be looming ominously. But SuperStream is being introduced to provide easier and more efficient superannuation processing which should, ultimately, mean a reduction in costs for employers managing their employee superannuation contributions.

Streamlined and efficient superannuation processes

The SuperStream data and payment standard is part of the government's Super Reform package. It aims to provide a safe, secure and more reliable way of processing everyday transactions such as employee data and payments to super funds via an electronic and standardised data system.

SuperStream intends to simplify how contributions are made, meaning potential time and cost savings for employers. After implementation, companies should need to spend less time dealing with employee data and fund queries. Automation should also greatly reduce the costs of processing employee contributions and payments.

For employees, SuperStream will mean better protection of their retirement savings as the tracking of superannuation will be improved, reducing the number of lost accounts and unclaimed monies. In addition, employees will benefit through a more timely flow of information and money from employers meeting their super obligations.

Regardless of size, all businesses have to comply with SuperStream

All employers will be required to use SuperStream to provide their employee data and payments electronically to super funds. For businesses with 20 or more employees, employers have 12 months from 1 July 2014 to comply with the SuperStream changes. For businesses with 19 or fewer employees, employers have 12 months from 1 July 2015 to comply with the SuperStream changes.

Businesses should have a plan in place and perhaps use a checklist to meet the Australian Tax Office's (ATO) compliance deadline. The ATO website provides employers with information and guidance to help employers prepare for SuperStream.

A way through the complexity

Employers seeking assistance in complying with the complexities of their SuperStream obligations should consider the benefits of using a "clearing house".

A clearing house assists an employer to fulfil most of the SuperStream obligations. It allows the employer to pay contributions across multiple super funds using one data file and one payment. It is designed to make the payment process easier, reducing red tape and compliance costs. The employer simply registers their employees' super fund details and the clearing house distributes the contributions to the correct super fund.

Some super funds will offer clearing house services to eligible employers. For example, First Super (the industry super fund for workers, their families and communities in the timber, pulp and paper and furniture and joinery industries) will provide a free clearing house service for employers that have 20 or more employees and where First Super is the default fund and at least 50% of their employees who are eligible to be in the default fund are First Super members.

In addition, the ATO offers the Small Business Superannuation Clearing House. This is a free, online super payments service that helps small businesses with 19 or fewer employees meet their superannuation obligations.

There is no single solution for making SuperStream contributions. The chief executive officer of First Super, Bill Watson, says, "Employers should consider various options for complying with SuperStream and choose one that best suits their business needs. A clearing house is a potential first step for businesses as it offers one central hub when dealing with super funds, irrespective of how many super funds your employees may contribute to".

More information

The ATO should have already communicated the SuperStream obligations to employers. The ATO's website also contains information regarding the new data and payment standard and the requirements for complying with SuperStream (see www.ato.gov.au/Super/SuperStream). Further information about SuperStream and First Super's Clearing House can be found on First Super's website.

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by Peter Kreitals

Furniture Cabinets Joinery Alliance Ltd
Policy advisor

Third FCJ industry leaders forum cements government industry relationships



THE THIRD of the Furniture, Cabinets, Joinery (FCJ) industry leaders forums conducted jointly by the FCJ Alliance (FCJA) and the federal government's Department of Industry, was held in Melbourne late last year. The purpose of the forums is to develop an agreed policy framework between government and the FCJ industry and the deliberations at the Melbourne forum clearly built on the solid foundation established at the previous two forums.

Ron Scott, the FCJA's chair and Andrew Trainer from the Industry Department, opened the forum which was hosted by the Victorian AusIndustry Office. Ron highlighted the importance of the forums to help develop strategies for the industry's future, stressing that the focus needs to be on identifying the solutions not just the problems, and that it is as much about industry resolving what it can do to help itself as it about what government can and should do to help industry. Andrew commended the FCJA for the positive stance it has taken, highlighting significant progress made through working together on a cohesive basis. Andrew noted that the collective work undertaken by the FCJA and the Department has helped the government gain a fuller understanding of the true economic significance of the Australian FCJ industry and the issues that need to be addressed.

Andrew reiterated that the intention of the forums and the joint FCJA/government activities is to develop an agreed, nationally focussed agenda of policy priorities for Australia's FCJ industries, which will be delivered at the final industry leaders forum in this series scheduled for mid-2015 at Parliament House, Canberra. The Minister for Industry has been invited to chair that forum, as have leading industry, union and retail representatives to join the Minister on a panel to debate the core issues and respond to general questions from the audience. This will be an open forum with all interested parties welcome to attend.

Damien Crough, project manager – SYNC Building Systems, Hickory Group, began the presentations at the forum, encouraging the industry to become more proactively involved

with the emerging but quickly growing, prefabricated construction segment of the Australian building industry. Damien highlighted how his own business has developed a modular, sub-assembly production line process drawing from the automotive manufacturing approach, which enables the resultant modules to then be quickly assembled on-site. Prefabrication requires the best quality inputs in as short a lead-time as possible, and therefore provides significant opportunities for all local suppliers to the building and construction sector.

John Paton, CEO Oak Tasmania and John Hollis, chair of the Australian Timber Flooring Association then outlined their experience in developing a unique laminated wood product, Hardlam, as a result of strong supply chain collaboration, especially with Forestry Tasmania, and support from government funding. The collaboration enabled the development of an innovative product which Oak could not have achieved alone, ensured there is a viable, value alternative for harvested timber in Tasmania and returned significant manufacturing opportunities to that state.

Jayne Facey, state manager Victoria of AusIndustry - Business Services then introduced Keith Calvert, A/g state director Victoria AusIndustry - Entrepreneur Development to outline the federal government's new Integrated Delivery Model for the newly introduced Industry Support Programs. Keith highlighted that there are 3 key streams to the new programs:

- Business Management – delivered through free business evaluations conducted by specially selected business advisers and business growth grants (of up to \$20,000 on a dollar for dollar basis) to help implement strategies identified in the business evaluation.
- Research Connections enabling businesses to get external design and research support.
- Commercialising Ideas

Dale Seymour, commissioner - Anti-Dumping Commission, made a welcome return to the FCJ forum, to elaborate on developments with Australia's anti-dumping regime since

his earlier presentation. Dale stated that the anti-dumping mechanisms were in place to "help level the playing field", but stressed that dumping in itself is not an illegal activity and is only actionable where the dumped goods can be proven to cause material injury to the domestic industry. This can only be determined through an independent, rigorous and evidence based inquiry process. Dale is conscious of the frustration this can cause local industry and all efforts are made to process the investigation as quickly as possible - but not at the risk of drawing inaccurate conclusions.

The final formal presentation was made by Albert Goller, chair of META. While META is funded by the federal government, Albert made it clear that META is an 'industry-led' organisation with two key goals:

1. To help raise the profile of manufacturing in Australia as an attractive venture which should be recognised as such.
2. To encourage collaboration between Australian industries, industry and research organisations to achieve meaningful commercial outcomes.

It was noted that META had established an FCJ Hub under its banner that is being facilitated by the FCJA. All companies were encouraged to become involved with the Hub that is focussed on the scope for developing new market opportunities and bringing companies together to collaborate on innovative means of capturing those opportunities.

As with the previous two forums, participants then engaged in intensive round-table discussion about the future prospects for the FCJ industry and the priorities that should be pursued. There was valuable contribution from all participants with insightful comment being provided by a diverse range of industry executives, including representatives from Blum, Laminex, Homag, Schiavello, Planit, TLD Kitchens, and Proform.

Copies of presentations, from this and earlier forums can be found at the FCJA website - www.fcja.org.au. The next edition of AWISA - The Magazine will report on the Perth industry leaders forum held on 18 March 2015. ■

by Lara Caughey

Timber trades for people with a disability

THE DEMAND for traditional sawhorses has remained solid despite the changing landscape of the building industry, and the manufacturing of them by Queensland's Horizon Business Enterprises (HBE) provides paid employment to people with a disability. Each worksite, garage or workshop needs a sawhorse, and thus it has remained one of the most useful pieces of carpentry equipment and in high demand.

HBE general manager Trevor Hulbert said the not-for-profit organisation had produced more than a quarter of a million saw horses since its inception more than 30 years ago and is still going strong.

"We often get comments like 'it's a real sawhorse'," he said. "Our traditional sawhorses have withstood the test of time. There are plenty of cheap imports but our product is unique and one of a kind lasting many years. We are the only company in Australia that still produces this simple product which is held in high esteem by people in trade-based professions."

Trevor said the traditional, humble and classic structure has not only ensured consistent sales to hardware chains from its strong structure, it has also resulted in meaningful paid employment for 33 people with a disability at HBE.

Since its inception, HBE has provided employment opportunities for many staff with some working in the company for 25 years. Redland Bay resident Paul Ballard has held down his job at HBE for a quarter of a century. "I love working here and earning a wage," he said. "I feel like I've found my feet here, working at Horizon Business Enterprises."

Trevor explained HBE sawhorses come in two models. The tradesman saw horse, specifically designed for the tradesman with its strong and robust design, and the Aussie saw horse suited

to the home handyman and providing a solid, safe work platform.

Some of HBE's other leading product lines include hardwood garden stakes, concreter pegs, tree stakes and painted marker pegs.

Woodford Folk Festival assistant event site manager Karen McBride said HBE garden stakes were in high demand for Woodford Folk Festival on the Sunshine Coast in 2014 used to support infrastructure. "They were used for marking out car parks and in the camp grounds and helping support essential signage," she said. "Without them a lot of people could have got lost and they were essential for our safety management."

Mr Hulbert said HBE hardwood garden stakes were made exclusively from untreated Australian hardwood. The stakes are used extensively in commercial nurseries and home gardens, by concreters, surveyors and in the mining industry," he said.

Mr Hulbert said HBE could engineer business solutions and customise products to business needs. "We have many product lines and would welcome new businesses to get on board that can really make a difference to people with a disability," he said.

HBE offers wooden stakes, pegs and saw horses for purchase. They also provide many B2B services such as mail house, direct mail, (re)packaging, rework processes, sample bag assembly, printing support and much more. Businesses interested in further information or that want to purchase HBE timber products are welcome to contact HBE. The products can be purchased from local hardware stores or online.

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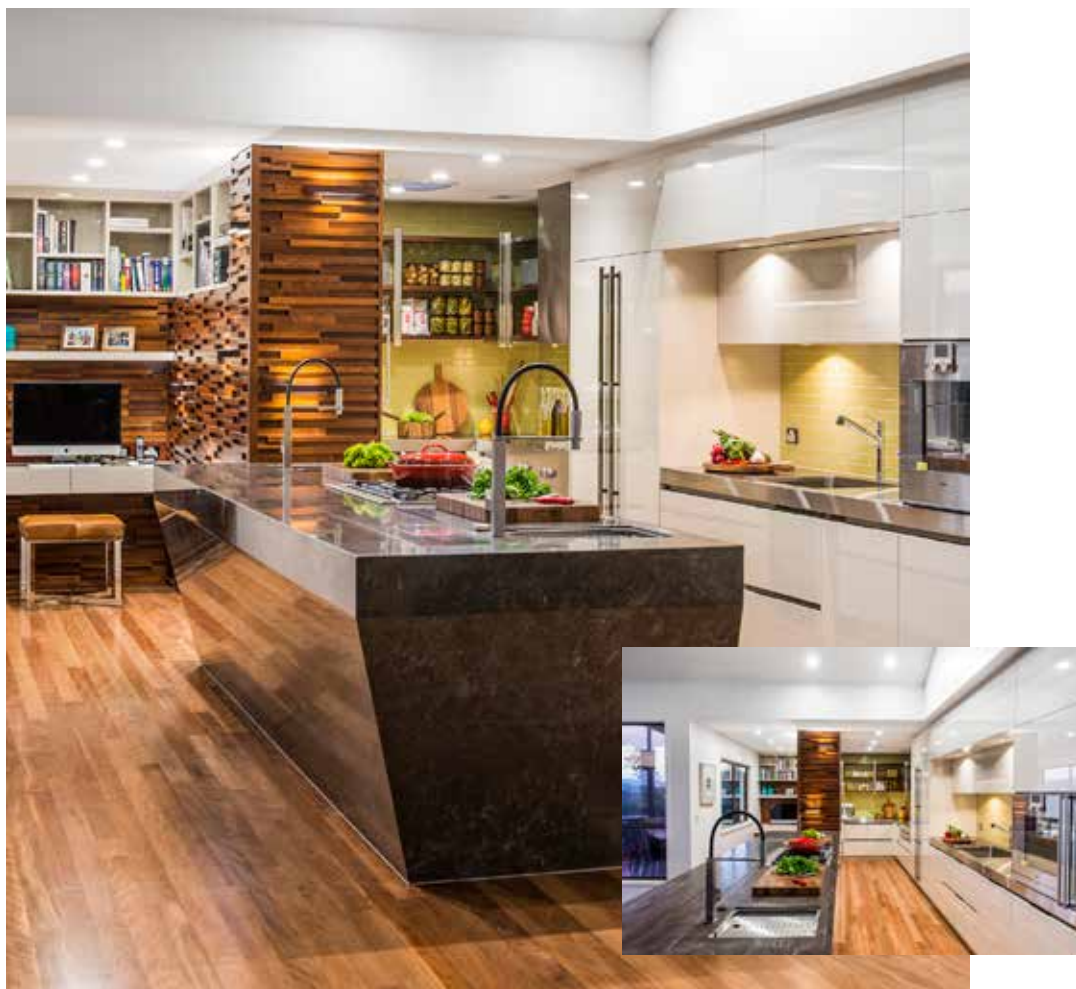
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KBDi Designer Awards

OVER 200 design-savvy guests attended the KBDi Designer Awards 2014 spectacular gala event in Brisbane last year, where members, sponsors and guests celebrated the 'inspiration, innovation and imagination' of Australia's finest kitchen and bathroom designers.

The winners of the three major awards of the evening had plenty to celebrate: their awards not only position them at the top of their field, but secured them each a place on the KBDi Designers International Tour early this year. (The designers have just returned from IMM/Living Kitchen in Cologne and Maison & Objet in Paris, and KBDi will be sharing their tour highlights at its next round of events.)

To see all 2014 winning entries, or to find out about entering this year's KBDi Designer Awards, visit kbidawards.org.au.

Queensland designer Darren James, of Interiors by Darren James accepted the pinnacle award of KBDi Australian Certified Designer of the Year 2014 at the end of a very successful evening, after collecting trophies for KBDi Designer – Large Kitchens QLD 2014 and KBDi Kitchen Designer of the Year 2014 – Queensland. The award for KBDi Australian Certified Designer of the Year 2014 was proudly sponsored by Lincoln Sentry.

About Darren's winning project: Two stunning kitchens were presented, as per the requirements for the category of Certified Designer of the Year: in the first project, the clients' brief was met and exceeded with an excellent design solution. They wanted the kitchen to be the visual centrepiece for the living area, and a space where they could cook, eat and entertain – Darren achieved this with a visually stunning and practically laid out design. In the second project, the clients dreamed of a gourmet kitchen that would accommodate their intense love for cooking and reflect the beautiful surroundings of their acreage property. The designer responded with a beautiful design solution that oozes warmth and invitation, without compromising on cooking practicalities.

The KBDi Certified Designer's documentation was flawless and a perfect representation of the standard required for this category. All plans and specifications were clear, concise and technically correct, and compliant with Australian Standards. The projects presented were designed and finished with extraordinary attention to detail and stunning aesthetic finesse, making the designer the obvious winner of the coveted title, Australian Certified Designer of the Year.



New South Wales designer Liam Murphy made his way to the stage early in the evening, collecting the award for KBDi Designer – Medium Kitchens NSW 2014. He returned shortly after to take out the title of KBDi Kitchen Designer of the Year 2014 – NSW, before accepting the prestigious title of KBDi Australian Kitchen Designer of the Year 2014. The KBDi 2014 kitchen awards were proudly sponsored by registered training organisation, Designer Training Pty Ltd.

About Liam's winning project: The judges were impressed with the high level of documentation supporting Liam's winning project. The striking kitchen design wowed the panel, and the designer's meticulous attention to detail was evident in every aspect. The clients' wish to have an island that 'looked more like a piece of furniture' was certainly granted: a mirrored kick gives the island a sense of weightlessness, while a clever installation of drawers ensures it remains a functional part of the kitchen, too. Finishes were beautifully balanced, with the contrasting tones of the Espresso Linea veneer and Vivid White cabinetry being skilfully drawn together with a Corian Clamshell benchtop.



espresso

showcase



► Designer Darren Genner of Minosa – KBDi Australian Bathroom Designer of the Year 2013 – continued his winning streak by collecting a number of awards. The first of the evening was the accolade for KBDi Designer – Small Bathrooms NSW 2014, followed soon after by the award for KBDi Designer – Large Bathrooms NSW 2014. Darren’s entry in the large bathroom category then went on to secure him the title of KBDi Bathroom Designer of the Year 2014 – NSW and the coveted title of KBDi Australian Bathroom Designer of the Year for the second year running. The KBDi bathroom awards were proudly sponsored by Pytha 3-D CAD Systems.

About Darren’s winning project: Design prowess and acute attention to detail are the key attributes of Australia’s finest designers, and this designer has ticked both the boxes with his winning bathroom design. The clients had very specific desires for a modern and contemporary styled bathroom with a ‘touch of bling’, to match their recently completed renovations. Their existing bathroom space had limitations – the area was narrow and dominated by a large colonial style window that could not be altered. The designer successfully manipulated the challenging area, meeting the practical needs of the homeowners and conquering the physical constraints of the space. The designer completed the room with a stunning combination of finishes and features that pleased both the clients and the judging panel. ■



Darren James (right) receiving his award for KBDi Australian Certified Designer of the Year 2014 from Kevin Bruce of Lincoln Sentry.



Liam Murphy receiving his award for KBDi Australian Kitchen Designer of the Year 2014 from Julie Shaw of Designer Training Pty Ltd.



Darren Genner (right) receiving his award for KBDi Bathroom Designer of the Year 2014 from Michael Rowe of Pytha 3-D CAD Systems.

Collaborate and celebrate in Cairns this August

The Kitchen and Bathroom Designers Institute is busy preparing this year's conference, certified designers forum and awards gala, to be held in Hilton Cairns on August 28 and 29.

As the only Australian conference dedicated solely to kitchen and bathroom designers, the KBDi conference is an excellent opportunity for members to join like-minded design professionals in relevant and inspiring sessions, and is the perfect place to mingle with the best and brightest kitchen and bathroom designers from across the nation. Conference delegates are encouraged to collaborate with their peers, share their wisdom and talent and learn from industry experts and suppliers, in the tropical surrounds of the incredible Hilton Cairns resort.

The collaboration continues with the KBDi Certified Designers Forum, where Australia's finest kitchen and bathroom designers actively discuss issues pertinent to the industry, including intellectual property and copyright, design inspiration, personal motivation and more. The KBDi team are preparing the 2015 agenda, and will be releasing details on their website soon.

There'll be much to celebrate too, with the KBDi Designer Awards 2015 Gala coinciding with the conference.

KITCHEN AND BATHROOM DESIGNERS INSTITUTE
www.kbdi.org.au



Spending quality time at EWPA lab

Members of the AFPA solid wood processing technology committee took advantage of a Brisbane meeting recently to inspect the new Eagle Farm office and laboratories of the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia. The technical committee is a sub-committee of the Australian Forest Products Association's processing chamber.

The committee discussed current technical issues in solid wood processing focusing on the Plantation Timber Certification Scheme, a voluntary certification program for MGP and F graded timber administered by the EWPA and accredited by JAS-ANZ.

"This provides the same level of scrutiny as other engineered wood products such as LVL, I-beams and plywood," said Andy McNaught, EWPA technical manager, who is directing the program. "Uptake of the scheme has been excellent with most major producers on board, including the most recent participation by Colac-based AKD Softwoods."

Membership of the scheme entitles mills to have their AFS chain of custody certification and Australian wood packaging certification completed at no extra cost. Audits for the three certification schemes are integrated to minimise disruption to mill staff and production.

"This means EWPA now provides technical and general input on behalf of the industry to standards development," Mr McNaught said. "The bottom line is that producers of solid structural timber can now be part of a rigorous JAS-ANZ accredited product certification scheme that gives consumers the confidence to consider MGP and F graded timber as a true engineered product." Mr McNaught said the plywood and LVL industries had always valued the services of EWPA and the value of the EWPA brand was something the solid timber industry wanted to embrace. ■

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Quality control .. EWPA laboratory technician Christian Hamlyn (second from left) explains bond evaluation of plywood to visiting wood processing technology committee members Geoff Stringer of Hyne, Kim Harris, Carter Holt Harvey Wood Products Australia, and Carl Angus, AKD Softwoods.



by John Halkett

Dollar down - good for cabinet makers and joiners?

WOW - hasn't the Aussie dollar dropped over recent months! This decline is likely to continue - possibly settling in the US\$0.75 to \$0.80 range. What does this depreciation mean for Australian manufacturing, and in particular for cabinet making and joinery industries?

In a general sense the sliding dollar is likely to benefit domestic manufacturing, and although opinions are mixed there is also a risk of higher inflation. Businesses heavily dependent on imported materials as inputs to their manufacturing processes should expect price increases, particularly over the medium term.

Some commentators suggest that manufacturers are gaining a new lease of life from the sliding dollar and rising building activity. After years of being in the doldrums, new figures indicate the manufacturing sector has been expanding for the last five consecutive quarters.

The composite index of the Westpac-Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry industrial trends survey rose to 54.2 points in the December 2014 quarter from 52.1 points in the previous three months (a figure above 50 points indicates the sector is expanding).

Westpac senior economist Andrew Hanlan said this strengthening was been driven by new orders, output and overtime, although this has yet to spill over into any notable increase in employment. He said manufacturing is also benefiting from rising residential building activity and some evidence of a lift in services investment.

According to Chamber of Commerce chief executive Kate Carnell the fall in the currency is helping to boost both exports and import competing industries. She suggested the survey gave some cause for optimism. "However, there was no room for complacency with the improvement in output and new orders yet to show up in robust hiring intentions. But there are some early signs that manufacturers are absorbing spare capacity and that the labour market might be starting to improve," said Ms Carnell.

Commenting more particularly on the likely impact of the dollar's decline on cabinet



making and joinery industries, the chairman of the Australian Woodworking Industry Suppliers Association and managing director of Blum Australia, Brett Ambrose suggests that higher prices for imported, notably Asian cabinetry and furniture is and should continue to boost sales for Australian-made products and may also help exports. "Perhaps it is still too early to get a completely confident feel from the market, but in my opinion the industry is optimistic at the moment with many businesses having recently experienced healthy sales."

The fall in the value of the Aussie dollar should be seen in the context of the surge in the currency's value between 2009 and 2012. Australia's economy rode the global financial crisis relatively well compared with most developed economies and during that time Australia came to be regarded as a 'safe haven' resulting in risk-averse investors ploughed their money into the Australian currency. Further, relatively high interest rates in Australia relative to other developed economies have ensured an attractive return.

Sharp reductions in the price of Australian commodities, like iron ore and gold over

the past twelve months or so have dented demand for the currency. This effect has been compounded by the slow-down of growth in China, a key market for Australia's exports. These have been the main factor behind a series of interest rate cuts by the Reserve Bank of Australia since 2011 that have also served to take the 'heat' out of demand for the currency.

The easing of the Aussie dollar has also occurred against the backdrop of reduced tensions in international financial markets over the past twelve months. The now increased risk tolerance of international investors has seen 'safe haven' economies like Australia's becoming less important. This also explains the dollar's fall from favour.

A decline in the value of the Aussie dollar could represent a boon for the domestic economy. Conventional wisdom suggests that exports will generally increase due to the fact that Australian products are cheaper for overseas buyers. Similarly, imports will tend to fall because they become relatively expensive compared with domestically produced products. Increased exports and lower imports meant that the overall economy will benefit from a significant demand stimulus. The wider recovery in demand across the economy is also likely to benefit sectors like new home construction and renovations activity.

The implications for cabinet making and joinery industries, and for the housing construction industry more broadly of the dollar's depreciation will generally be positive over the longer term. However, there is a risk that the short term effects could be negative. The fact that a weaker dollar will sooner or later result in higher prices for imported goods means that household income will suffer in terms of its purchasing power. The risk of higher priced imports means that inflationary pressures will increase with higher interest rates a probability. Both of these effects may weaken the demand for both home building and renovations activity in the short term. However, over the longer term stronger activity in the housing market will see continuing brisk home price movements that is likely to be support stronger activity in home building and renovation activity. ■



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Hideaway Bins wins 'Most trusted waste management brand'

Hideaway Bins, designed and manufactured in New Zealand by Kitchen King Ltd, a family owned and operated company, gained Australian recognition in the 'InfoLink Top Trusted Brand Survey'. Hideaway Bins won the 'Top Trusted Brand in Waste Management for 2014.'

Infolink.com.au customers voted for their favourite brands by allocating a maximum of 10 votes to 10 different nominated brands between 1 September and 10 October 2014. With a total of 581 nominated brands across all 44 categories, The Top Trusted Brands survey is Australia's leading national showcase of the best brands in the architectural, building, construction and design industry sectors.

Winning the 'Most Trusted Brand in the Waste Management' category means Hideaway Bins has been recognised for innovation and quality in supplying waste management systems to the furniture and joinery industry of Australia.

Hideaway Bins are renowned for manufacturing high quality innovative storage solutions for the kitchen, bathroom and laundry. The bins are a practical solution that slide away under the bench and are completely hidden from sight until needed. Being both ergonomic and functional the bins are designed to be mounted at bench height and pull out

towards the user, allowing easy disposal of waste without having to bend low inside cupboards.

The hidden bin solutions have been distributed throughout Australia for the past eight years through a strong distribution network as well as being showcased at many consumer and trade based exhibitions assisting in building a strong and well known brand. It is seen as a huge achievement for a New Zealand owned and operated business to be up ranked at this level given the size of the Australian market in comparison to New Zealand. To win this award in such a competitive environment is seen as a great achievement and an honour and is something the father daughter team of Allen and Jamie Bertelsen are incredibly proud of.

Hideaway Bins have been distributed through Australia for many years and can be purchased through distribution partners Hettich, Nover and Galvin Hardware. The full results of the survey they can be found on Infolink.com.au.

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The big gamble

Today's cabinet makers are confronted with increasing material diversity and rising labour costs. Therefore, every investment has to be well-considered. An edgebanding machine used in today's highly competitive environment should be both efficient and capable of material-independent application.

A constantly growing volume of work and the ever-increasing demand in quality products has led the Canberra-based company Mint Kitchens to invest in more machinery from Homag Australia. The recent purchase includes a Homag KAL 310 edgebander with a Homag Automation Boomerang ZHR 340 work piece return system.

Mint Kitchens has been a Homag customer since the founding of the company in April 2001. After having two smaller Brandt edgebanders, it was time for a heavier and more robust machine to manage their increasing volume of work. The Homag KAL 310 can be an innovative answer to the highly competitive nature of the manufacturing industry in the Australian Capital Territory.



Vinko and Carlo not only want to deliver an on-time, quality product for a good price but also work a bit smarter in regards to further business improvement.

Constantly growing through to hard work

Mint Kitchens has grown considerably over the past thirteen years of operation. Business partners Vinko Gudelj and Carlo Pasquariello first began with a small edgebander, panel saw and drilling machine working tirelessly seven days a week. The company has built its reputation on three major factors, producing a quality product, competitive pricing and offering exceptional customer service. The business operates in the north side Canberra suburb Mitchell.

While Carlo oversees the factory side of the business, Vinko is the first point of contact to the builders within the region and spends the majority of his time ensuring that the end product supplied, delivered and installed is to the highest standards.

Highly flexible all-rounder of quality finishes

Homag Australia's salesman Grant Jones says "The KAL 310 is a high performance edgebanding machine that processes all kinds of material with an optimum edge quality." A separating agent spraying unit, for example, prevents adhesion of glue residues on the top and bottom surface of work pieces.

The KAL 310 also features a hot melt gluing unit, a snipping unit for snipping the edge overhang and a profile trimming unit for processing overhanging edges. Furthermore, the machine is equipped with a finish processing unit that comprises a glue joint scraping unit for disposal of glue residues at the top and bottom of PVC edges and a belt sanding unit for sanding straight veneered and solid edges.

The Homag KAL 310 clearly meets the company's requirements, as Carlo says, "The finish of the edge is beautiful and we can run all types of material through the KAL 310", which is a huge improvement. There is no need for hand scraping or cleaning of doors.

The gamble with machinery

Greater economy is achieved in part by minimised extraction output, low energy requirement, ergonomic operating functions and a high degree of flexibility in the choice of equipment configuration. Mint Kitchens purchased various machines from different suppliers over the years but it went back to Homag – and never regretted it. "When it comes to engineering, Germany is the world-leader, and Homag stands for quality and reliability," states Carlo. Additionally, he credits Homag's service, "If there's a problem, they send us a technician next day."

In order to find that machine, both Carlo and Vinko praise the professional and personal relationship with salesman Grant Jones. "Grant was supporting us with a lot of

expertise so that he could offer us the edgebander most suited to our needs”.

With the Homag KAL 310 in the workshop, Mint Kitchens is able to deliver high-quality products to their clients. This differentiates them from their competitors in Canberra. “It’s all about the quality and the service,” Carlo says.

Cutting down labour costs through automation of processes

Mint Kitchens has already taken the first step in the direction of automated production processes. The Homag Automation Boomerang return system is the perfect addition to a single-sided edgebanding machine, “reducing the number of manual workers needed to one operator, and increasing the output, the return on this investment is enough justification for any company of this size,” says Grant Jones.

In order to take the business to the next level, an investment in automation would be the logical step for the Canberra based company. An intelligent storage system helps companies to save space, minimise waste and maximise material usage. In addition, it requires fewer man hours which allows Mint Kitchens to move the labour to more appropriate areas.

Carlo and Vinko are clear about where they want to see the business in the future. “We want to remain a good quality joinery supplier in the Canberra region and surround’s”.

Although their work hours have decreased over the years due to the increase in staff and machinery, Carlo and Vinko are aware that they have a long road ahead of them and it will still require a great deal of hard work. They are both very passionate about their business and agree that the end result will not doubt be well worth the effort.

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The international Häfele Group for hardware technology and electronic access control systems continued to grow in 2014. The company group achieved revenue of 1.144 billion Euros (2013: 1.071 billion). This represents a growth of 7% compared to the previous year. International markets in particular have made a significant contribution to this growth, because Häfele now generates 77% of its revenue there.

Company management of the Häfele Group considers the combined results from the last five years to be a remarkable success story. "Since the year of the crisis in 2009 we have been able to increase our revenue by more than 50% thanks to the tremendous efforts and commitment shown by our employees both in Germany and on an international scale. Thousands of employees across the globe carry the Häfele family spirit with them in their hearts and are incredibly devoted to meeting our customers' every wish. So much so that they always want to be just that bit better," explains Sibylle Thierer, managing director, who took over management of the family-owned company in 2004 and now represents the 3rd generation.

Häfele supplies its products and services to leading furniture manufacturers around the world, architects and planners, joiners/cabinet makers and dealers. The number of employees working for Häfele around the world in 2014 has risen by 300 to a total of 6,900, of which 1,600 are employed in Germany.

Häfele is represented in over 150 countries throughout the world and has independent sales subsidiaries in 37 countries. With 23 sales subsidiaries operating for 15 years or more, the philosophy of staying in close contact with customers, which Häfele has lived by for many decades, enables the company to produce a range of products and services which are all tailored to their customers' needs while also offering a different range of products in the USA than in Australia, Japan or Western Europe for example.

There is also a firm focus on networking and the sustainability of the company. Häfele has invested 33 million Euros in markets, logistics and production last year.

"I think it's particularly important to mention that our customers have not been greatly impacted while making these changes due to the tremendous commitment shown by our employees," explains Sibylle Thierer who is full of praise for her employees. With this new roll-out, the company is preparing itself for more growth in the coming years.

Due to the investments over the past years and exemplary logistics expertise, the Nagold-based distribution centre

in the Wolfsberg industrial park, the international hub for furniture and hardware fittings, is now kitted out and ready for a growing number of assignments in the future. An average of 4,700 deliveries a day incorporating 25,000 items are sent on their way to customers all over the world from the centre. The volume of packages being shipped has seen an increase of 70% over the past ten years and there seems to be no stopping this rate of growth.

Häfele is very optimistic about the year ahead and sees excellent opportunities to continue its growth on an international scale in 2015 due to its major investments in global standardized IT, in markets, logistics, production and services.

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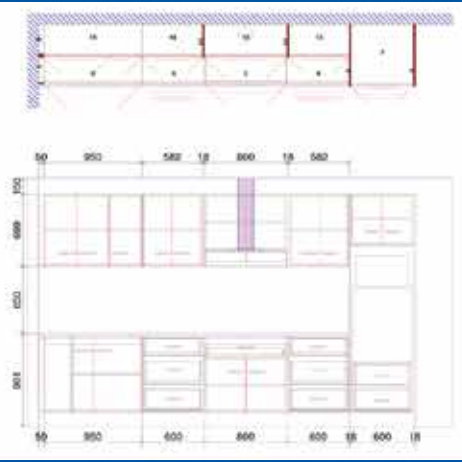
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Shayna Blaze of the Block to host CMDA 2015 annual dinner and awards night

MARK NICKSON, chairman of the Cabinet Makers and Designers Association, recently announced that award-winning interior designer Shayna Blaze will be hosting the CMDA 2015 annual dinner and awards night. Shayna is also well known for her appearances in "Selling Houses Australia" and "The Block". CMDA is also pleased to announce that Shayna will be involved in the final selection of award winners.

2015 Cabinet Maker and Designer Awards – entries now open

The Cabinet Makers and Designers Association announced recently that entries are now being received for the Australian Cabinet Maker and Designer of the Year Awards to be presented at the CMDA 2015 annual dinner in May.

The awards program

CMDA and its predecessor CMA has been holding an awards program for many years with entries being received in a range of categories including:

- Best kitchen
- Best bathroom/laundry
- Best built in furniture (residential)
- Best commercial project
- Best example of free standing furniture
- Best showroom display.

Finalists and winners of the awards gain significant prestige and marketing opportunities from the recognition provided. Many finalists have commented that promoting their success in the awards has enabled them to make additional sales and create a point of difference in their marketing campaigns.

Introduction of additional award categories in 2015

Following feedback from the 2014 judges and industry the 2015 awards will see the introduction of traditional/contemporary sub-categories in each of the "Best kitchen" categories and also the introduction of "Best outdoor/alfresco project" recognising the growth in this area.

FIAA members pay "member rates"

CMDA in recognition of the need for greater cooperation in the industry is committed to the objectives of the Furniture Cabinet and Joinery Alliance. In line with this commitment the CMDA board has agreed to extend "member rates" to any financial member of FIAA who enters the awards or attends the CMDA 2015 annual dinner.

As in 2014 non-members of CMDA or FIAA will be able to enter the awards using the non-member entry form and also receive additional benefits from CMDA.

Application/judging process

The awards entry process has been modified over the years to provide the judges with the information they require while limiting the time required to complete an entry. The entry form is available at www.cmda.org.au and must be submitted with a minimum of five photographs of the project.

Judging is conducted by a panel of independent judges who may request additional information from the entrant or client and they reserve the option of visiting the finalist's entries to select the winner. Apart from the selection of the CMDA President's Award no member of the CMDA board is involved in the judging process and all identifying information is removed from the entries prior to presentation to the judges.



CMDA Annual Dinner and Awards Night

Following a most successful event in the Olympic room at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in 2014 CMDA is pleased to announce that the 2015 event will be held in the prestigious Members dining room at the MCG on Friday 29 May 2015 commencing at 7.00 p.m.

The event will include a 3 course dinner and beverages, entertainment and awards presentation – guests may also participate in an optional tour of the MCG and museum prior to the event. Attendees who went on the tour in 2014 have already indicated that they would like to participate again.

Entertainment will be provided by one of Australia's best major corporate live acts Reverend Funk & The Horns of Salvation and plenty of time will be allowed for dancing and networking with industry colleagues.

Any business interested in sponsoring the event can obtain a sponsorship prospectus from the CMDA.

CMDA
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Hagley Kitchens, Biesse and Christchurch moving forward

Hagley Kitchens in Christchurch is bursting at the seams with work from the post-earthquake rebuild of the city says general manager Nathan Moore. The company, currently has 30 employees but is taking on more staff as well as investing in new machinery, which will increase its capacity and help it meet the high demands.

"Five years ago we were 80 percent renovations and 20 percent trade, now it's the other way round - 80 percent trade (new houses) and 20 percent office, repairs and renovations," Nathan says. "As a result staff levels are on the rise, we have employed another project manager and a few factory workers on the floor."

The company is making some big, high value modern kitchens for new homes in Christchurch.

"We are up with 'the now' in terms of styles, hardware and we use the top quality Blum hardware. Acrylic and vinyl wrap doors and acrylic tops are latest trend seen in kitchens in 2015."

The company's diverse portfolio helped them through the tough times following the earthquakes. It makes stairs and wardrobes for most of its kitchen clients and office furniture for a customer that supplies government organisations.

"We are putting out about the same [30 kitchens per week] but the size and complexity of these kitchens has increased significantly. We have also increased our output for wardrobe systems and office furniture by about 30%."

Hagley Kitchens' top quality design, workmanship, service and the use of quality products has won the company

several awards over its 32 years in business. "The 2012 Master Joiners 'Best Kitchen Design' and 'Best Canterbury Region Award' are the most significant", Nathan says.

Undoubtedly the top end machinery produced by Biesse plays an important part in the company's achievements. Biesse machinery has been running flat out on the factory floor for around 15 years and Hagley Kitchens has recently installed the Biesse Rover BG 1836 NBC and Roxyl 4.5 AFS Edgebander and are now in the process of looking to invest in another Biesse machine.

"The main benefits from the CNC are that we can run bigger sheets (1800mm instead of 1200mm wide) meaning with office furniture we don't need to put joins in the top, and it pre labels all the parts before cutting so you don't need to do that manually, and they are put in the correct place,"



big, high value modern
kitchens for new
homes

Biesse Group Australia looks after Biesse's interests throughout Oceania. In this edition of AWISA - The Magazine, two Biesse Oceania customers are featured. In this article a New Zealand customer, Hagley Kitchens, and later in the magazine, a Fijian customer, Topik Furniture and Joinery.

Nathan says. "It also loads itself, and if you program it right at the beginning it's absolutely accurate and saves on time."

He says the edgebander with its server technology changes products effortlessly and the speed at which it runs has created a lot more capacity. The new edgebander also gives the option of running Airforce, the zero glue technology, and the ability to use newer products such as acrylic edges.

Nathan says Hagley Kitchens chose Biesse, not only for its excellent technology but also for its reliability and the fact that Hagley Kitchens knows them well. Their staff has also become skilled at operating Biesse machines over the years.

"The support seems better than a lot of other suppliers and we have a good relationship with them. Biesse also has a good market share. Quite a few people in town have the same machines. It's reassuring to go with something everyone else has got. If you need a hand with something you can give them a call and see how they are doing it."

"Hagley Kitchens is always looking to make improvements and update its technology and software while Biesse is always looking forward and improving its designs", Nathan says.

"We are going to the blinside event, the opening of the new cutting edge technological Biesse showroom, 18-20 March in Sydney so we'll see what's new there. I'm also looking forward to a couple of factory tours to look at other manufacturing operations."

Last year's trip across the ditch resulted in some major changes on the factory floor back home. The company replaced the rollers on the bottom of racks that hold cut product with heavy-duty casters.

"[With the casters] you're not limited to where you put your trolley in the factory and it's created a sense of space. It was an expensive exercise but it's definitely paying off."

Hagley Kitchens is now well set up for the future.

"Our aim is to have our software and technology work for us as much as possible, and this creates consistency, capacity and removes an element of human error."



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Award winning TAFE SWSi students help to design the future



Hettich Australia took part in the Designing Your Future, the annual TAFE NSW, South Western Sydney's (SWSi's) Lidcombe College design exhibition held at the Armoury Gallery Newington in Sydney on 2 December 2014.

This has been the second year Hettich Australia has been involved in the 'Hettich helps me' design competition in conjunction with (SWSi's) TAFE Lidcombe design.

Hettich had the opportunity to judge 10 designs created by the students with the top 3 selected to be awarded with a cash prize for their achievements to support in the costs for their course.

First prize went to Regina Shakya for a well-designed storage solution, with great use of Hettich core hardware that meets the criteria for the competition.

The evening was well attended by industry and families of the nominees of awards.

Event organiser and TAFE SWSi senior head teacher in design, Kathy Marshall, said the exhibition would be a wonderful source of inspiration to anybody looking at a career in design as well as those who were interested in sourcing a new designer for their own projects".

TAFE SWSi director Peter Roberts is urging local lovers of design to support the exhibition and see for themselves the outstanding array of design talent on display.

Hettich Australia looks forward to being involved at the next exhibition, with training for the design students during the year at the Hettich Academy Smithfield Office.

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Australian-made pays off

“Genuine surprise and pleasure that our machines are made in Australia.”



Since receiving endorsement by the Australian Made Campaign, Multicam CNC Routing machines have enjoyed a growing recognition by local companies on the importance of being Australian made.

“The majority of our clients are grass roots companies, often employing less than 10 persons,” says Phil Balzan, sales manager for Multicam Melbourne. “These companies operate on the principle of maximum return and reliability for minimum outlay. This principle often involves factoring in such things as local service and support that will ensure long term return on their investment.”

Buying Australian made is a logical decision for many reasons. Especially when dealing with equipment that has a service life that can extend in to the decades. Some of these reasons are:

Availability of spare parts: Multicam Systems has a long list of machines in production today that are over 20 years old. This is possible because of this availability and the ability to manufacture replacement parts if required.

Rapid response: whether a customer requires spare parts, product support through training, or technical advice, local manufacturers can provide solutions much faster than those companies that import machinery and parts. Multicam has offices in NSW, Victoria, and Queensland, all of which have a team of factory-trained technicians and carry a complete range of spare parts. This ensures a same-day response to all customer requests.

Greater product knowledge: because Multicam machines are manufactured in Australia, there is a far greater level of product knowledge and expertise throughout the entire organisation, so customer queries can be dealt with quickly and efficiently.

Continuity of support: one of the biggest disadvantages of purchasing imported equipment is that the dealers for these products can swap and change, or worse still, the overseas manufacturers move their production plants to third world countries in an order to keep prices low. This results in a lower quality product and also that an end user can struggle to secure any level of support and can be left in the lurch entirely. Multicam CNC routing machines are made in Australia and sold directly by Multicam.

Upgrade paths: as technology evolves the ability to make these advancements available to older machinery is extremely desirable because it can drastically increase the service life of the machines. Multicam understands its equipment like no other, so it can offer upgrade paths to its machines allowing end users to enjoy the latest advancements without having to investment in new machinery. The majority of Multicam owners recognise the advantages of adopting the latest upgrades as they become available as a way of extending service life with comparatively little outlay.

Pricing stability: because Multicam machines are manufactured in Australia they are able to withstand fluctuations in currency

conversation rates. This means that the price of the machine themselves, and their spare parts remains fixed for a far longer period of time and are not subject to daily revision.

Support of local industry: the flow on effect of manufacturing in Australia is that other local manufacturers through the supply chain also benefit. Multicam Systems employs the service of up to a dozen local manufacturers and suppliers in the production of its machines and machine accessories. This means a stronger local manufacturing sector and more employment opportunities.

“Multicam exhibits its range of CNC routing machinery at numerous trade shows throughout Australia,” says Neil Winkcup, of Multicam NSW. “Visitors to our stands are genuinely surprised and pleased to learn that our machines are made in Australia. Their construction, look, finish and features easily makes them world class and we at Multicam are proud to be supplying an Australian made machine that is a leader in its class.”

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How Cabinet Vision created more family time

John De Vos started his apprenticeship in 1996, working at one of the first customers in Western Australia to own Cabinet Vision. Part of his apprenticeship was operating the company's new CNC machine. John learnt hands on from a technician, and built up his skills as a CNC operator.

In 2006, John decided to venture out on his own. 'All About Wood' was established, starting out as a small business as John took the time to ensure everything was in place. Getting a CNC was always in the plan, and three years later John received an offer to purchase the same machine he had learnt on. It was a simple decision. John knew how to operate the machine and felt comfortable with the condition and reliability he would experience. The CNC was only step one of John's plan.

As the business grew, John always knew the best way forward would be to invest in software. He identified the benefits it would bring, after seeing it in action at his previous job. It was just about waiting for the money. As John describes, "I knew what it could do, it was just a matter of time".



Implementing Cabinet Vision's Solid Standard level into the business has brought major improvements in efficiency for the business and has streamlined operations. John describes, "I can send a job straight to the machine from Cabinet Vision, and it is all there. It's been an amazing learning journey."

This improved efficiency has allowed John to spend more time with the family. As John comments, "My wife is excited by the fact I have been able to save so much time, meaning I can spend more time with the family. I used to bring work home or even come back to the office after dinner, but now I can just go home and spend time with the kids. It's great".

John's been able to save time in being able to easily make changes to the design when working with clients, as well as not needing to go back to site as often. "Installing is done more efficiently because Cabinet Vision helps us have everything ready before we leave."

As the business grows, John has the option of upgrading to a higher level of Cabinet Vision, giving him greater functionality and further automation. Cabinet Vision will be able to continue being a key part of the business in the years ahead.

Looking back on the whole journey, John says "I waited too long before getting software, I should have done it sooner. The best way to grow your business is to start with a router and Cabinet Vision. You won't regret it."



In 2013, he was working with his accountant, and software was once again discussed. The pair did the numbers, and they saw just how much software could benefit the business. Alan Gibson, territory manager for Planit in Western Australia, worked with John to discover the right solution for the business.

Alan was able to demonstrate how Cabinet Vision would integrate into the business, including the process involved in sending designs to the machine. Alan was also able to point out that many businesses near John also use Cabinet Vision. This gave him peace of mind, knowing that Cabinet Vision was a well-trusted investment.

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Hettich

Still the dynamo behind collaborative group

ENTHUSIASTIC, dynamic and well-respected woodworking machinery industry elder statesman Sam Shatkhin remains committed to the business practices that were the founding principles when The Wood Tech Group was established.

Even now Sam remains a cohesive force in the group as one of its founders, current leaders and motivators. He is still passionate about the strengths of the group gained from collaboration among independent state-based businesses.

A forestry graduate in wood technology, Sam made his way to Australia in 1980 from his homeland of Ukraine when it was still a part of the Soviet Union.

He said he was lucky that with limited English language skills and still coming to terms with the Australia culture and way-of-life to get a job with a Swedish forestry equipment supplier as a forest engineer. "This then lead me into sawmill management with a particular focus on wood processing and related equipment."



Sam Shatkhin ... enthusiastic, dynamic and now well-respected woodworking machinery industry elder statesman.

In 1986 Sam was appointed as a sales consultant for Wickham, selling panel products. With his wood technology expertise and having established himself in the Australian industry Sam landed a job with woodworking machinery supplier Acme.

However, when the company folded in 1989, along with other senior staff Sam decided to pool their skills, geographic spread, wood working machinery knowledge and establish their own business. "We thought we had the collective experience and business skills to go it by ourselves."

Sam said this business, The Wood Tech Group, was then, and is still today, based on some strong principles developed in the early days of business development and collaboration.

Regional business autonomy; local decision-making; a common product range; collective relationship and buying power with machinery manufacturers; collaborative technical support and shared marketing were all part of the mix. "So today the long-standing partnership with our specialised suppliers ensures a variety of brands that are tailored specifically to suit our market needs," said Sam.

"This is a business formula that has seen The Wood Tech Group grow and spread across the country."

"Also an important part of the group's business recipe is the benefit of being a wholly-owned and operated Australian company," said Sam.

"At the state-level managers run their own businesses. They know local cabinet making companies and are able to make rapid decisions without having to go to some overseas head office."

"All this at the same time as being able to share technical knowledge and to support others in the group. Also our staff are technically, rather than sales orientated, so we are very serious about, and have the capacity to service our customers' needs competently and promptly," he said.

Sam said today The Wood Tech Group proudly represents quality production machinery from respected leading machine manufacturing companies. These brands include IMA, Schelling, Hebrock, Orma, Breton, Griggio and Anderson.

"We have been careful to select our machinery suppliers as successful, progressive companies. I can say without a doubt that our machinery offering is technologically leading-edge and covers the full range of applications and industry size from small one-man kitchen manufacturers to larger automated operations," said Sam.



"We can deliver what our customers need in a way that only an Australian company can, from the right choice of machine through to the correct servicing requirements to ensure the best performance possible."

The Wood Tech Group sales support to customers includes machine installation, commissioning, on-site training and subsequent technical support, spare parts and servicing back-up by the group's own technicians.

Sam said he remains very enthusiastic about the group's business. "Today I see my role as supporting and encouraging our staff. I am always on about the need to continue develop and improve our industry and product knowledge."

"We cannot afford to stop this effort. It needs to be to stay on top and maintain the reputation we have gained over what is more than 25 years," Sam concluded. ■

Caption: Sam Shatkhin (centre) with The Wood Tech Group staff ... delivering what customers need in a way that only an Australian company can.




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Competence at all CNC levels



Equipped for all requirements: The BMG 512 from Homag with robot.

CNC processing centres are no longer "only" machines, they are now top of the range when it comes to providing a solution for individual production tasks. Productive, flexible and a high level of availability - these are just a few of the customer requirements that ensure optimum results and cost-effective operation.

The Homag Group offers a comprehensive range - from entry-level machines to drilling and trimming, right through to nesting processing and fully integrated, automated processing cells and large-format processing centres for glue-laminated beams.

The tools used on Homag Group processing centres range from the smallest of engraving cutters for producing ornaments through to saw blades with a diameter of 920 mm for solid wood elements. The typical areas of application have now extended beyond the production of furniture and construction elements. Today, CNC processing centres can be used for anything that can be processed either dry or with minimal lubrication. In addition to wood, this also includes plastics, aluminum, composite materials, and sound-proofing and insulating materials. Homag Group CNC processing centres can now offer features such as edge banding, cutting, sanding and attaching fixtures all enable comprehensive processing of workpieces in just a single step.

In 2004, the Homag Group launched the Venture series, featuring fixed-configuration, high-performance CNC technology. The machines range from entry-level machines to high-tech solutions. With 5-axis and edge banding technology, Homag has successfully installed around 4000

Venture machines by August 2014. But what are the specific factors that guarantee the success of the processing centres? The answer: quality and resources. By standardising components, the Venture range offers outstanding quality as standard. The high-quality components include screened cable guides, covered linear guides and the Homag Group Eco Plus for saving energy and resources. The Venture series offers an optimum balance of standardisation and customisation.

Decades of experience in mechanical engineering comes together in the Weeke, Homag and Weinmann processing centres: this is also reflected in the processing units and machine control units. The Drive5C+ 5-axis processing head is a perfect example of high-tech trimming. The head is equipped with tensioned crossed roller bearings that are free of play; these ensure a high level of rigidity even under heavy loads. The spindle has a threefold pneumatic interface, which also enables the use of controlled units. The spindle is controlled by returning the actual value via an encoder.

As this core competency is incorporated into all Weeke machines, this continuous experience is taking effect and is particularly visible in the lasting quality of all drilling gears. The company prides itself on this level of expertise, which is why there are configurations with up to 90 individually available drilling spindles in Weeke's stationary BHX series. In the throughfeed area, there can be as many as 674 individually available spindles in a single machine. The patented spindle clamp guarantees a high level of lateral stability during drilling. Homag and



The Drive5C+ processing head is equipped with tensioned crossed roller bearings that are free of play; these ensure a high level of rigidity even under heavy loads



To produce the perfect zero joint, the LaserTec process on CNC processing centres is the perfect choice.

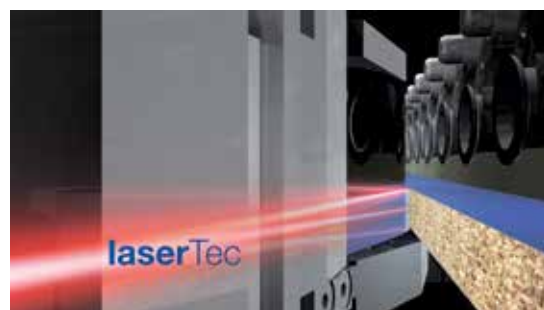


Image source: Homag Group AG

Weeke successfully use synergy effects when developing software and machine operation elements. All CNC processing centres benefit from comprehensive, integrated modules and tools for control, programming and user support. WoodWop is a prime example of this. With regard to Homag's specifications, no other CNC programming system can look back on such a long and successful history of development.

With regard to the integrated operating concept, the Homag Group achieved a milestone at Ligna 2013. With PowerTouch, visitors discovered a brand-new control philosophy: straightforward, uniform, ergonomic and evolutionary. The innovative touchscreen operating concept combines design and function in a new generation of control systems.

The complete product range also includes an integrated software suite. WoodCAD/CAM already offers a tool for 3D planning, which automatically generates production data. IT Engineering supports comprehensive production control for linked machines. The production path is determined, the orders divided into batches and a stack assigned. All machines are then supplied

with the required order data. This allows parts to be automatically identified by their barcode or RFID, alternative production paths to be considered and faulty parts to be ejected. The MMR software module records all data, which is then analysed in the office.

The EasyEdge edge banding unit uses a simple and efficient comprehensive solution for edge processing on processing centres. The EasyEdge turns a CNC router into an edge banding machine in the blink of an eye. This unit is the ideal solution in particular for the production of smaller volumes using standard edge materials (veneer, ABC, PP, melamine, PVC). In conjunction with a manual snipping unit, even 360-degree abutting edge banding is possible. To produce the perfect zero joint, the LaserTec process on CNC processing centres is the perfect choice.



Small and compact: The BHX 055 from Weeke works with an installation area of less than 5 m².

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Set the mood with Hettich's Magic lighting

Lighting can be more than just a necessary addition to a room, with the right lighting playing on moods and emotions to create a tone for any space.

Innovative lighting can create dramatic highlights, subtle warmth, or functional illumination. With lighting, whatever mood is desired can be created in the home.

Hettich Australia's Magic lighting solutions feature the latest in European design excellence and are the perfect addition to make living spaces work beautifully. The new Hettich catalogue "Magic by Halemeier" features an innovative lighting range for furniture, interior fittings and shops. Halemeier is one of the pioneering manufacturers of furniture lights and a competent partner when it comes to lighting. All the lights in the "Magic" range are made exclusively by the light expert from Germany.

The new range of products at Halemeier is focused on quality, energy efficiency, reliability, harmonic design and a very good colour rendering index. The new Hettich catalogue presents a number of lighting solutions for working and living environments and shows how rooms and furniture can be designed with lights in different lighting situations. The new products complement the overall range very well.

"Selecting the right lighting is important. A good light is not necessarily the same as a bright light; the lighting needs to be used to enhance the space and provide illumination where needed," says Corene Roberts, marketing manager, Hettich Australia.

Hettich's Magic lighting range provides the solution for any room, be it on the walls, floors, inside cupboards and wardrobe, with low voltage LED lights that give off almost no heat and use limited energy.

Also available are switches for doors, drawers, touch switches and remote controls to create the perfect space.

Hettich even offers lighting that will automatically turn on when cupboard doors are opened, or options that activate at the wave of a hand near the switch for the ultimate in convenience.



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Homag Automation: all automation areas from one source



The merger of the subsidiaries, Bargstedt Handlingsysteme GmbH, Hemmoor, and Ligmatech Automationssysteme GmbH, Lichtenberg, into Homag Automation GmbH has successfully been finished. The legal step in the merger of both companies was realised by recording the new company in the Commercial Register on November 18, 2014. Since then both companies act in common under the new company's name Homag Automation GmbH. Jochen Fischer, (research and development and production) and Holger Blötscher (sales and commercial area) take over the management.

"The merger of the both automation subsidiaries is a milestone for the service support to our customers from one source. We are very satisfied with the course of the integration process", concludes Jochen Fischer positively.

The reason for the merger of both subsidiaries is the worldwide increasing demand in automation and robotics that sees Homag Group from its customers in industry and handicraft. Further capacity is generated for the planned growth and the globalisation of the five sectors due to the merger. The five sectors are: storage systems, automation and robotics, buffer and collating systems, assembly technology and packaging technology.

Manager Holger Blötscher emphasises: "The largest company in its sector has been created with Homag Automation, by merging both subsidiaries. This overall competence is expressed in our motto "One brand – double power". We have created excellent prerequisites to even better penetrate international markets.

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Topik and Biesse: money in the bank for renovation of Fiji heritage building

The Westpac Suva branch, built over a hundred years ago, is one of the most well-known and admired buildings in Fiji.

So when manager Nirosh Weerasinghe asked for careful and diligent renovation of the heritage building using high quality machine-engineered Fijian-grown timber, Biesse customer Topik Furniture and Joinery Ltd was quickly approved for the task.

"This is Westpac's flagship branch in Suva and one of the biggest banks in Fiji and the new fit-out was one of our biggest projects since we set up the family business at Lautoka 30 years ago," director and son of the founder Ajesh Kumar said.

In that time, Topik has completed hundreds of jobs throughout the Fijian archipelago, but Ajesh says no previous machine has matched the output of his newly-installed Biesse Akron 435 edgebander

"It's just the perfect machine; the Akron 435 has saved on time and labour adding greatly to our bottom line," he said. "In fact, the Biesse unit has replaced six other machines at Topik and reduced our production turnaround from two weeks to only three or four days."

The Westpac fit-out includes counters, feature wall panels, work stations and flooring, all factory-finished on the Akron 435 edgebander and then installed on site by Topik's carpenters and joiners who are part of a 150-strong dedicated work team.

Ajesh Kumar said the strong Fijian economy had brought a boom in the building and renovation industry – and the need for high-quality materials, including locally-grown timbers, and for projects to come in on time.

"The Biesse edgebander has put us in the box seat bringing European technology and many features usually found only on larger machines," Ajesh said.

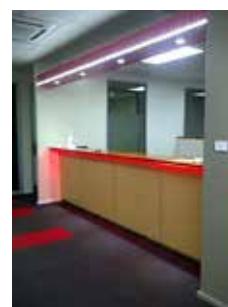
"The Biesse technician gave us the back-up and service too, installing the machine and guiding us through their CNC program in just a few days. Biesse is the ideal partner with a professional hotline where senior technicians deliver high standard remote control: issues are ironed out quickly and smoothly, questions answered promptly and for us this is piece of mind so we can concentrate on our business."

The Akron 435 edgebander features an industrial gluing system with a precision glue roller and an end trim unit on precision guides with a pneumatic tilt feature.

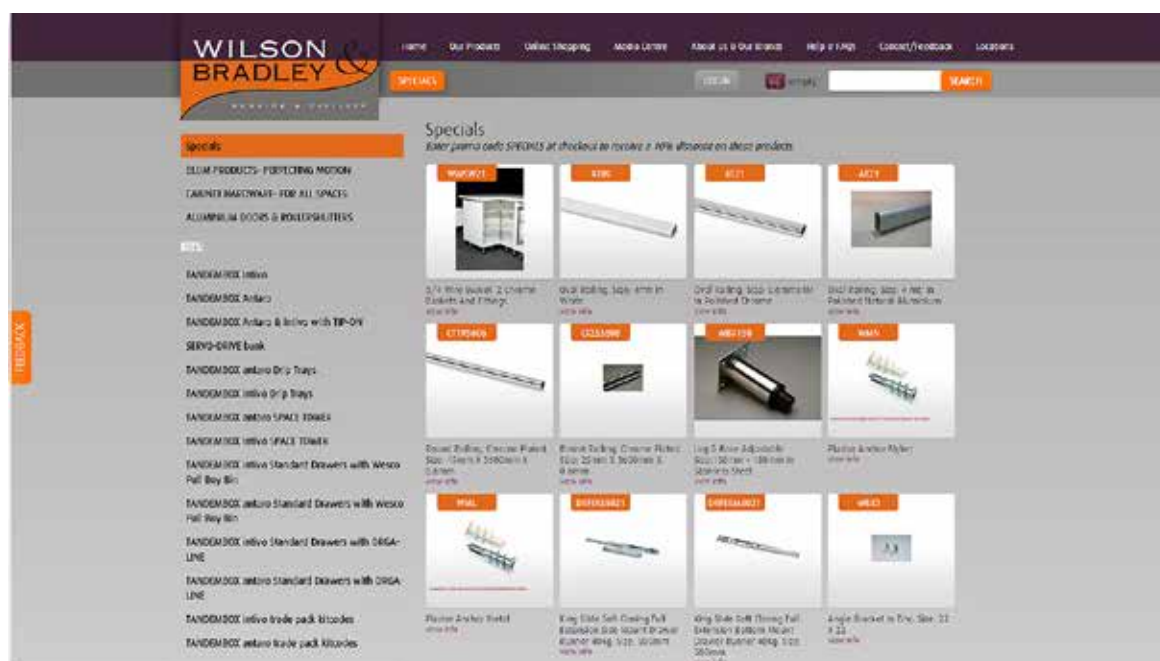
Topik is particular about the timber it uses, choosing supply from Fiji's certified forest estate, home of the world's finest plantations of genuine mahogany (Swietenia macrophlla), which have been sustainably harvested for many decades. Other tropical hardwood timbers used include vesi (Intsia bijuga) and rain tree (Samanea saman).

Returning to the Westpac renovation, manager Nirosh Weerasinghe said the bank's new layout would provide more interview offices, express service points for banking transactions and inquiries, bureau de change and a self-service area for customers.

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- A SMS service will provide customers with notification of backorder delivery or when backorders are ready for collection.
- Metro customers ordering online have the option of a 3-hour courier for \$40 ex GST per order.

A list of the postcodes which fall into the reduced delivery fee areas is available on the Wilson & Bradley website on the FAQ's page. And while there customers can check out the new specials page that contains products that are discounted by 10% when the promotional code 'Specials' is entered at checkout.

Wilson & Bradley trusts that these improvements to pick up and delivery services will enhance the overall customer experience that has long been a proud hallmark of the family owned business.

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Personal branding for the designer

SO THIS doesn't start out the back of Bullabakanka with a very hot fire, one scared bull and a farmer ready to make his own mark. It's about how best to create your own identity and retain the ownership, keeping you ahead of the pack – it's called 'Personal Branding'.

Today it's more important than ever to learn how to brand yourself be that online or in a client's home or in any marketing you do. Over 1 billion names are "Googled" every day - so unless you live next to that scared bull in Bullabakanka, you yourself have probably been "Googled". And what people find there is affecting their decision to do business with you or not to. In the protected environment of your own showroom or a client's house you're a part of the way there. They have found you (or you have found them) and the relationship has been started, but in other media, you need to control your own destiny.



Various businesses across the country have many different ways of branding themselves - there are some notable examples ranging from a signature design that is repeated over and over again, to those who make a diverse range of comments on social media, to those who quietly sit back and in a structured manner, drip feed selected projects and comments through a mixture of media.

Understanding how to brand yourself begins with uncovering and knowing your personal brand. Your personal brand is not a tagline or an ad campaign. It's a combination of your interests, beliefs, ethos, values, talents and skills, among a number of other characteristics. It's how you're known - "He's so good with colour, but more importantly he's so good with colours for his clients" or one I heard recently, "She just clicks with her clients".

Uncovering your personal brand is the best place to start. Personal branding is not an act or a show you put on for others (well for some it is!) but your personal brand should be you to the very core. The qualities and characteristics that comprise your personal brand are unmistakable. If five of your colleagues were asked to describe you (honestly) the answers should be roughly the same, the same words should be used by most of them.

To find your personal brand you need to ask yourself a few questions – and be honest with yourself.

- What are my biggest strengths?
- What are my true passions in the field of design?
- What makes me unique?

Once you have dug deep inside and found the substance that makes you uniquely you, and the products you feel best represent you - you're halfway there.

The exercise of branding extends way beyond yourself. It encompasses the product you promote and sell, be that a design or the physical product itself. Many say that branding isn't important, it's critical. Malo Tasle, the director of InHouse (distributors of Aster Cucine in the UK) said recently in an interview that not only did they need to raise the professionalism of the industry (and haven't we heard that elsewhere recently), and need to stop thinking just about products but about brands. "The brand is the most crucial element in the business environment. It denotes loyalty and brand image is critical to the success of a company. Looking at the world today, it's easy to see why brands are more important today than in the past 100 years"

The next step in branding yourself is identifying your target market. By pinpointing your target market, you will be able to position your talents and skill-set in the best way possible to land a dream job, close that sale or accomplish a goal.

- Determine your target: who needs to know about your product, design skills and services? Which types of people would be interested in using you? Of these people, how many would be willing to pay for you prior to your design? Focus first on those individuals and/or businesses that possess the pain points that you specifically can resolve. Once you have identified these people, build your personal branding strategy around this specific niche.
- Understand your competition: as Sun Tzu so eloquently put it "Keep your friends close and your enemies closer." Having a basic knowledge of your competition is critical to your personal branding. Understanding their core competencies allows you to position yourself better and provides you with the ability to better fit your target client's needs.
- A "You" or "brand" statement: create a one or two small sentence statement that epitomises your attributes and your product - but make it memorable. Your statement answers what you are the best at (value), who you serve (audience) and how you do it uniquely (USP). It sums up your unique promise of value. Your personal brand statement is distinctive to you and you alone. You could liken it to a tagline or even a catchphrase that product brands have. The personal brand statement is not a job title. A job title is what others will try to classify you with, what employers and others want you to be to fit you into a corporate setting. It's also not your personal mission statement, career objectives or even life purpose. A personal brand statement is memorable, punchy and solution oriented. As opposed to simply saying "John is a boiler man", why not "John keeps families warm through bespoke heating installations"? or "John is a great designer" could be much better served by "John turns dreams into reality by designing for you with only you in mind".

Normally branding yourself is something that initially happens without you paying any attention to it. When you started in the design arena, your individualism most likely just happened, be it taught or self created. But as you gained experience and momentum, you recognised what worked and what didn't – and this is where your own personal branding truly started.



However, for you to remain where you are and get even better, with better results, means you need to work hard to maintain your own brand. If you are doing things well, there will always be those that try to emulate that which you have created. Understanding not to push your own personal branding on every occasion is equally important.

I was talking to the owner of a well known kitchen business recently who is very much in the limelight of the industry from a consumer perspective. His approach has and I suspect always will be, to stick to your values, stick to what you know best, but most importantly, approach all clients as if they were your first. His personal branding may not be everyone's cup of tea, but his online record is excellent. There are no complaints on line, just admiration for what he does best. His branding is personal but it promotes his company- in the same way that Gerry Harvey is Harvey Norman. His personal branding is what some (not all) consumers like - but it works very successfully. And like Mr Harvey, the constant personal branding that promotes his business has proved that this attention to core values and a constant focus on personal branding delivers success.

We have many examples in this country of outstanding designers and design organisations. Those who have succeeded have a measured and structured approach to branding. ■

Darren Genner
of Minosa Design
is an excellent
example of
personal branding.

Yes – readers can visit Germany's Ligna 2015 fair and more

Readers have the opportunity to visit the world's top wood working exhibition, Ligna 2015 in Hannover, Germany and to also inspect renowned German engineering excellence in wood working machinery and wood processing in action.

Again this year Weinig Australia's tradition of showcasing the latest European machinery, processing technology and systems integration continues with an exciting opportunity to visit both the internationally recognised Ligna 2015 fair and inspect an exciting and diverse range of machinery manufacturers, and leading wood processing businesses in Germany and Austria.

Managing director Neil Forbes says Weinig Australia is able to offer a limited number of placements on its premium industry tour from 9 to 22 May.

Neil says Ligna 2015 will be about more international business; more innovation and more integration. "That's what Australian visitors can expect when the international wood industry demonstrates its immense capabilities and innovative spirit at the Ligna 2015 exhibition."

"In addition to Ligna our tour is being tailored to be a combination of visits to some of Germany's and Austria's most sophisticated and diverse manufacturing plants with an emphasis on technology and diversity, but will also include time to stroll through some of the cultural and historic spots of the region," says Neil.

All the market leaders will be exhibiting Ligna 2015 to impress visitors with a tremendous array of products and services. "Together they will present key technologies for every single link in the wood processing value chain – tools, machinery, systems and services for industrial cabinet makers, furniture manufacturers, joiners and carpenters."

"As diverse as the technologies on display will be, they will be united in promoting greater efficiency for every stage of wood panel and other manufacturing operation," says Neil.

Ligna 2015 will be championing the cause of greater efficiency and integration in production by means of advanced technology and automation. Like no other trade fair in the world it will feature entire production lines in action.

Enjoy a weekend of relaxation and discovery in the beautiful medieval town German town of Rothenburg.





Neil says Ligna is an absolute must for those who want to find out about the latest developments and advances in technology and automation.

Ligna 2015 will feature more than 1,500 exhibitors from over 40 countries. Displays and live demonstrations will fill some 120,000 square metres of exhibition space. Another exciting new development will be that some exhibitors of wood working and processing equipment will be showcasing the non-wood capabilities of their machines. Machines that can handle not just wood, but plastics, composite panels, composites, insulation and construction materials.

These additional non-wood applications have benefits in a range of fields, particularly caravan and boat building, vehicle customisation, ship and aircraft interior finishing, and plastics processing and fabrication. The ability to process plastics and composites is also becoming increasingly important in cabinet making and other wood working trades.

Neil says Weinig's upcoming technology tour will take in the fair and include a number of other carefully selected technology and manufacturing visits. "The tour has been designed to meet challenges that are being encountered by producers in the Australasian wood processing industry. Our specialised tour is designed to bring participants up-to-date and project them forward with emerging trends within our industry."

The Weinig tour group will leave Australia on Saturday, 9 May and arrive into Hanover Germany on Sunday, 10 May.

The first five days will be devoted to visiting the Ligna 2015 fair. That will be followed by a weekend of relaxation and discovery in the beautiful medieval town of Rothenburg.

But back to work on Monday says Neil with the commencement of a five day technology tour starting at Weinig's multi-million dollar exhibition centre in Tauberbischofsheim, Germany. The next four days will involve visiting and learning about technologically advanced operations throughout Germany and Austria, including a visit to the state of the art Holzher showroom and a sightseeing day in Salzburg, Austria.

Neil says Holzher operations to be visited on the tour are the best Holzher has to offer, not only for their machine operation, but also for management skills, product selection, processing and pre-finishing procedures.

Enquiries about the tour and possible participation can be directed to Katarina Partic at Weinig Australia.

WEINIG AUSTRALIA
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Inspect an exciting and diverse range of machinery manufacturers, and leading wood processing businesses in Germany and Austria at Ligna 2015.

Ligna 2015 will be championing the cause of greater efficiency and integration in production by means of advanced technology and automation.

Doing the heavy lifting

Moves to systems integration and automation are vital for progressive wood processing businesses. However, CNC and clever software alone won't cut the mustard in a competitive industry without materials handling being at the centre of manufacturing thinking. The Achilles heel of modern wood product manufacturing where labour and cost efficiency are paramount is that adequate materials capacity handling is sometimes overlooked.

Millsom Materials Handling general manager Kevin Smith is adamant that materials handling should be at the heart of planning machine centre layout and processing flows so that machining efficiency is optimised. "Not to have an adequate materials handling configuration runs the risk of reduced benefits, rather than implementing substantial

improvements in operations and cost savings for panels and other wood working."

He adds that while remarks about systems integration and automation ring true, he points out that the nature of Australian cabinet making businesses still remains focussed around traditional family-owned companies where manual materials handling is still the dominant practice.

"Sure we have big clients like Borg and Laminex where automation is a key part of their manufacturing, but manually-operated, light weight vacuum handling systems and cranes are still the dominant lifting systems across the industry and the cornerstone of our business."

Servicing all states of Australia and New Zealand, Millsom Materials Handling is Australasia's leading supplier of cranes, hoists, vacuum lifting systems and materials handling solutions for the wood working industry. Millsom's vacuum lifting equipment also includes carton and sack handling vacuum lifters, sheet lifters for wood and steel and many other products.

Millsom also provides a full installation, maintenance and repair service to suit all materials handling requirements.

With a range of over 50 products Millsom can provide a material handling solution for every area of manufacturing, logistics and materials handling. "We have been providing solutions to all kinds of industry and manufacturers for almost 40 years," says Kevin.

"We can ensure that your business is provided with quality material handling products, innovative solutions and guaranteed service, resulting in improved productivity, work safety and

flexibility, for increased profitability."

Millsom's work with a number of innovative industry partners including Schmalz GmbH, SWF Krantechnik GmbH, Hitachi, and many more.

Kevin points out that Millsom's are not only a major vacuum lifting supplier in Australia but they also manufacture their own cranes for the wood working industry. "Yes, we make cranes to any configuration from scratch with lift capacities of up to five tonnes."

"Plus we service the whole of Australia and New Zealand. Pretty much there is nothing we don't do."

He says that with many thousands of crane installations completed, Millsom is the natural choice for selection, installation, service and breakdown needs for hoists, cranes or vacuum lifting equipment.

"We certainly pride ourselves on offering an all inclusive service whether companies need panel lifting equipment or vacuum tube lifters all complete with matching cranes."

From design, manufacture and installation of new equipment to after sales service, maintenance and repair on almost any brand of equipment, Millsom is a single contact point for all material handling and lifting requirements.

Millsom can also provide periodical service and inspection as required under occupational, health and safety regulations. Servicing is provided in accordance with the relevant Australian standards by fully qualified and trained technicians.

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Boilermaker Greg Toll, making component parts for Millsom's own range of cranes.

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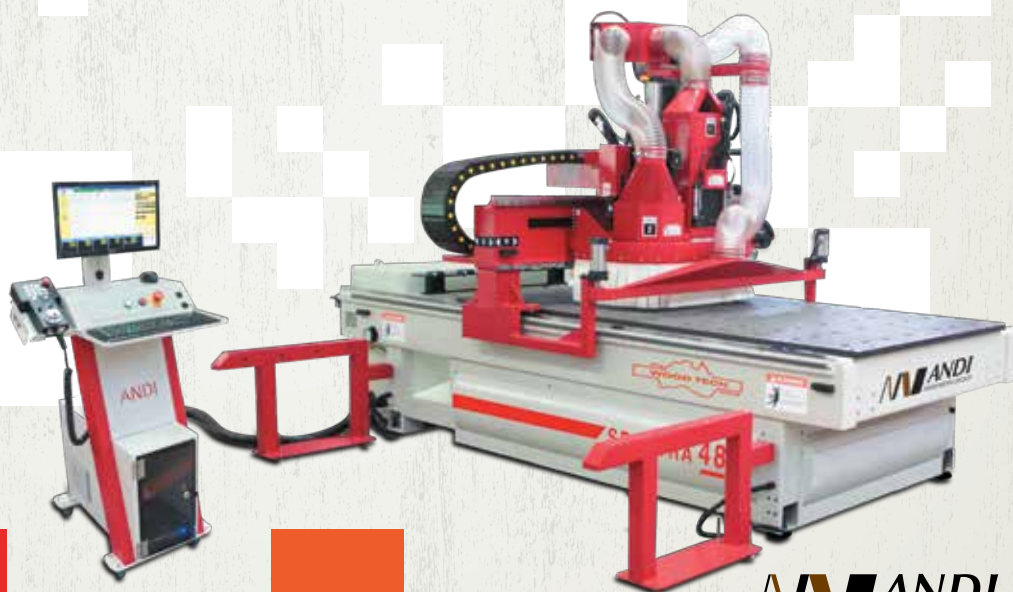
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Splinter workshop - more than a communal workspace

The Splinter Workshop formed in 1996 as a cooperative workshop for like-minded designers and makers. The workshop contains a number of separate furniture manufacturers, each working on individual projects. However as a group they enjoy the exchange of design ideas, construction methods and shared experience. On a more practical level, it also equates to more hands and assistance being available when needed.

Initially 3 people shared the space, however the culture of design, and its unique environment, has seen the number grow over the years to where 11 members are now involved.

Graduates of the Sturt School For Wood would be familiar with the Splinter workshop. While it's not a pre-requisite, the majority of its members are Sydney-based graduates of the Sturt School. This creates the advantage of a similar design ethos for unique, bespoke furniture made and finished to a very high standard. The pieces are individual, highly functional and have a contemporary, modern feel.

These talented individuals operate out of a former industrial building in the inner city suburb of St Peters. Clientele is varied, from private purchasers through to architects and interior designers.

It's a romantic image – a group of kindred spirits spending their days designing, refining and making unique pieces. However it does create some challenges.

Most notable is the wide variety of work that goes through the communal areas of the workshop – particularly the shared machine shop.

The decision to upgrade their existing jointer and thicknesser involved a lot of research of machine types, manufacturers and specifications. This was required to cover the diverse demands of the members, not least being that members are all equal, without an overarching responsible person.

Initial conversations centred around spiral cutterblock machines – known for being quiet as well as providing a great finish.

However, after investigation, it was found that a Tersa head would be more suitable to reliably give the level of finish required at Splinter workshop. The Tersa system also satisfied the simple and easy knife changing required from having multiple members.

The Tersa system is a quick changeover, automatic setting 4 knife system designed and manufactured in Europe and this was a key determinant in Splinter's choice of the MiniMax jointer and thicknesser.

The Tersa knife system provided two key advantages for a workshop with independently working members.

Firstly, it meant the machine was always perfectly setup. Knife setting devices and jigs became a thing of the past – every member could walk up to the machine knowing they were going to get a clean, neat and accurate finish off the back of the machine, and if the knives required changing then that would only take several minutes.

Secondly, it meant each member could have their own set of 'finishing' knives to use in the machine. With the quality of finish, and the cost of raw materials, of some of the projects at Splinter, this was an important aspect.



talented individuals operate out of a former industrial building in the inner city suburb of St Peters

When compared to the existing jointer and thicknesser, the Tera provided a substantial reduction in noise in the workshop – a key consideration with the numbers of people on site.

Splinter members also determined that the European made MiniMax was very well manufactured, more robust, heavier with a larger motor than its direct competitors. The electronic brake, an important safety mechanism, was also a key factor.

Splinter's members were also impressed with the professionalism, responsiveness, knowledge and service of MiniMax's distributor in Australia, Gabbett Machinery. After sales service with seven technicians and associated workshop and spare parts was also a big plus.

The final purchase saw two MiniMax machines installed in the machine shop. A 410mm wide jointer, with a large

worktable and referencing fence as well as a 410mm wide thicknesser.

Gabbett had both machines in stock and within one week of Splinter's decision to replace its existing machines, the Gabbett team had put a very commercial package together and had delivered and installed them. The members were using them immediately.

Readers can learn more about the Splinter workshop, read the members' bio's and get info on their woodworking classes at their website www.splinterworkshop.com.au

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Ideas for organising the drawer: interior accessories for ArciTech

A well-planned kitchen ensures short distances and smooth work flows. To continue meeting practical needs as the years go by, kitchen unit interiors need to be right as well. As such, drawers and pot-and-pan drawers define the front of today's kitchens. This makes poorly accessible cabinets with shelves and hinged doors a thing of the past. The cleverly designed interior organisation elements for the ArciTech drawer system also free up space and help to keep everything neat and tidy.

ArciTech interior organisation elements give kitchen manufacturers what it takes to meet the vast range of consumer preferences. From the easy to clean, versatile cutlery tray in plastic to the high quality material combination of wood and steel or stainless steel that makes a visual statement behind the drawer front - they have the right answer for every segment. This makes interior organisation an attractive point of difference in the kitchen retail trade and provides a simple way of generating added value.

The OrgaTray cutlery trays in steel and stainless steel are supplied preassembled which means they can be picked for consignments just as easily as the plastic cutlery trays. Added to this, they can be combined with customised, cut to size wooden elements in oak that means they can also be used in drawers of non-standard width.

The OrgaStore solutions organise and perfectly utilise storage space in pot-and-pan drawers. The dividing elements can be positioned with extreme ease wherever the user chooses to give stacked plates and food items a secure hold. Whether purist modern in drawer colour, or classic in high quality oiled oak, interior organisation takes account of the individual's personal furnishing style.

The ArciTech drawer system also makes it particularly easy for kitchen manufacturers to produce pot-and-pan drawers with TopSides in steel or DesignSides in glass instead of a railing. As a result of the cleverly thought through platform concept all drawer components remain unchanged, and the railing's existing drill holes are used. This means that consumers' personal preferences can be accommodated cost effectively, and it provides an easy way of differentiating between ranges.

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New version of high-end panel saws

Altendorf is set to unveil an Edition 500 version of its high-end machines for early 2015. There are only a limited quantity of these machines released globally, allowing a handful of owners to become part of Altendorf's history. The duo of machines to be available on Australian shores are the immensely popular F45S and Elmo 4.

The Elmo 4 version represents the finest of over a hundred years of panel saw innovations. Time and again it is referred to the most cost effective sliding panel saw due to its productivity enhancements and rapid return on investment. In addition to the powered rip fence as seen on the Elmo 3, the Elmo 4 also features an automatic crosscut fence, that's 4 CNC controlled high precision axes working in unison to bring cutting time times down to a minimum.

An optimum mix of productivity and ergonomics, the F45S is also designed to save the operator time. The machines utilities CNC technology like those present on the top end Elmo 4 machine to make things simple. Since the rip fence of the saw is controlled from the central operating position, there's no need for the operator to travel around the machine when changing fence dimensions. Productivity is increased substantially and repeatable accuracy is achieved no matter what the skill level of the operator of the F45 S sliding table saw.

The Edition 500 machines are available from the beginning of March.

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Wooden boat reminiscences

WHEN HE WAS about to retire from a long and successful career in the electrical and power industry, Bruce Main explained to his wife that he would not mind building his own wooden boat in order to share with his family and grandchildren the enjoyment of wooden boats and boating that he had experienced as a youngster. His desire reflects a resurgence of interest in the craft, seen in the number of boat schools, festivals, and specialist publications.

Main reminisces in generous detail with AWISA about the timber clinker putt-putt boat his father always hired during their Christmas holidays. If he was not on the boat, either fishing with his father or on the lake on his own, he was watching the boat shed owner repair boats. Already imbued with an appreciation of timber from seeing and helping his father at work as a carpenter, "quite a craftsman", Main found himself drawn to timber boats. In time, he learned carpentry skills from his father and more about wooden boats from occasionally working as a deck hand on fishing trawlers, although boat builders did not receive his casual interest too well. Main embarked on

his career, but at home he continued with other timber projects, and enjoyed cruising in the clinker wooden boat that his wife's family owned.

Now, unlike all those years ago, he found his interest welcomed. He visited the Wooden Boat Centre in Tasmania, attended wooden boat regattas, and the local Lake Macquarie Classic Boat Festival (NSW). He espied that the local coast area was dotted with many a boat builder. Eventually, he discovered the Pittwater Wooden Boats School, at Pittwater in Sydney's north. His course finished in early December but as the boat was not finished, he returned in January to complete it. "I loved every minute of it, building a boat, developing skills, and working with wood," he exclaims.

He has taken up membership of a wooden boat enthusiasts group in the Lake Macquarie area and has begun preparatory work to build his own 5.2 metre wooden clinker hull boat. "I am now studying and sourcing suitable timbers and suppliers for the particular timbers I need, which is an experience in itself," he adds.

One project that Main considered undertaking early in his retirement was working to restore a boat. Restoration, renovation or remodelling is a popular project amongst wooden boat enthusiasts, and one type of boat that has seen numerous and interesting work in this regards is the wooden AWBs.

According to his research, maritime historian, Mori Flapan tells AWISA, these boats were built by Ford, General Motors Holden, and others, in mass production in WWII for the Army "to support the Allied operations in the islands to the north of Australia".

He explains that in the period at the end of the war, the Navy took over a number of them and also had some built. The Army had used a numbering AM (Army Motor), but the Navy employed a new numbering system, using the initials AWB. Many people assumed it meant "army work boats", but research has found original correspondence showing it meant "Australian work boats".

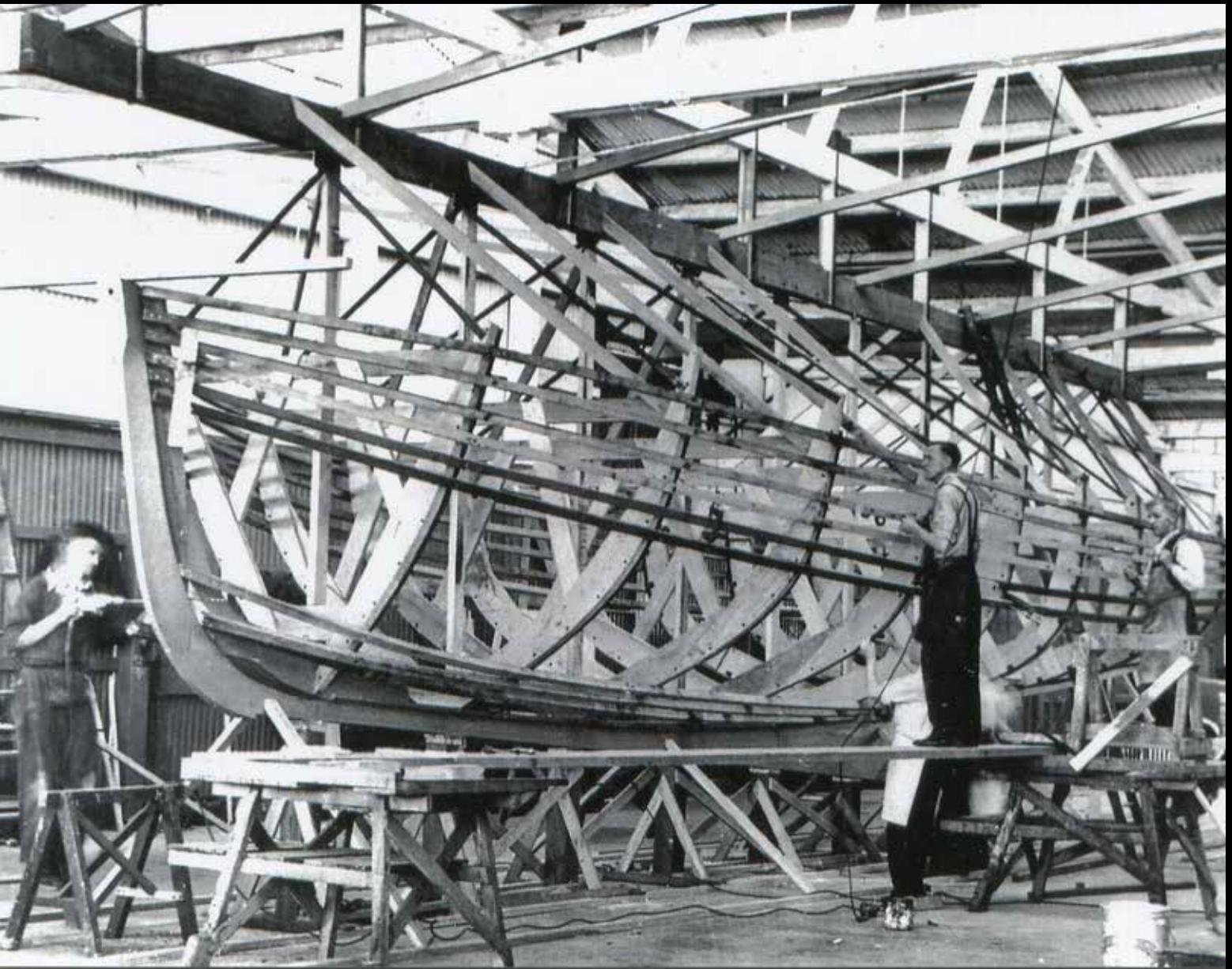
Photo: Daryl Peebles,
Tasmanian Boat
Festival



Photo: Don Roberts
In this first photo, the keel has been laid. The stem, transom and transverse moulds have been erected. Ribbands (the thin longitudinal timbers) are being put in place.

Herbert (Bert) Chennells is shown standing on the staging plank in dark bib- and-brace overalls. A woodworker in the automobile assembly plant, Bert was put "in charge" of a work group building the boats at the GM-H Woodville plant. Years later his wife recalled that he did not relish the role

*“Australian work boats”
- out of the estimated 417 built,
at least 84 are still in existence*



From top:

Photo: Don Roberts

At peak, GM-H were able to produce a boat every 36 hours. This shows completed workboats ready for delivery at GM-H Fisherman's Bend.

Photo: Chris Sattler

Photo of 401 (formally AWB444) shows one of the few remaining workboats working for the RAN. She is operated by DMS at Sydney.

Photo: Don Roberts

The 8' dinghies on the wheelhouse roof were made at the General Motors - Holden's Ltd Woodville and Mosman Park plants. There was also a seat across the transom having buoyancy tanks beneath to also serve as a float-off buoyant appliance. The completed launches went through a series of trials before being handed over to the armed forces.

Photo: Mori Flapan

The Bangalley also attended the Workboat get-together (at the Australian National Maritime Museum in January). She illustrates a more extensive conversion. Bangalley was previously the AWB417. She was converted by Ian Perdriau to designs by Bill Bollard.

Photo: Mori Flapan

Mori Flapan says, "We held a workboat get-together at the Australian National Maritime Museum in January. The 40' workboats (in fact former RAN AWB's) were well represented. Shown in the photo is a group that included AWB441, AWB442 and AWB420. The MB172 is a pre-war Naval launch preserved by the Australian National Maritime Museum."

► Out of the 417 he estimates were built, there are at least 84 still in existence. The majority are in use but some are ashore "in varying states of repair, or disrepair". A few were in danger of being broken up when he last heard. One was disposed of in 2013. Flapan says there have been some good news stories as well. A husband and wife have just purchased the AWB422 to restore it back to operational condition.

In making the AWBs, imported Oregon was used for the planking, and Australian hardwood for the frames. "I've recently taken some photos of one of these boats that is in a real stripped down condition, with all the paint taken off the plank. It shows the timber but also shows the identifying numbers that have been cut into the planking. It's very nice timber, the Oregon," Flapan says.

Ian Major owns an AWB. It's got history, he tells AWISA. "It was built in 1944. It was actually transferred from the Army to the Navy and it was used in Nowra just as a general purpose boat down there, and supposedly as a rescue boat. Then it was transferred back to the Army, and saw the rest of its days working out of Sydney's Garden Island dock-yard."

He bought the boat some ten years ago from specialist wood boat builder Ian Perdriau. He had carried out major reconstruction, including re-doing all the cabins, and changing the layout of the boat to a 'raised deck' where you actually step onto the deck, with the motor below the cabin floor. Describing it as a well travelled boat, Major explains it has been as far as Cape York. Powered by a Gardner diesel engine, it has a range of some five thousand kilometres, sleeps six, and stretches 40 feet overall with a 12 foot beam. The hull is made from Oregon, with spotted gum frames, and ribs. The cabin now is built from coachwood. He says with enthusiasm and pride, "It goes every year into the Timber Boats Festival at the Royal Motor Yacht Club, in Sydney on the northern beaches, and when they have the Wooden Boat Festival in Darling Harbour, we take it into that as well." ■



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Vionaro – the new designer drawer for kitchen and living room

The ultimate slender drawer side for concealed movement systems

With Vionaro, movement system specialist Grass has created a sensational design solution for all applications in the kitchen and living room environment. The slender 13-millimetre drawer side in this complete system is based on the concealed drawer slide Dynapro. As well as being successfully proven millions of times over in practical use, Dynapro also won the Red Dot award for visionary design in 2010.



The extreme lightness of being is all the rage. But this trend is not limited to physical awareness. It extends to the world of work as well as to living spaces – wherever people we want to feel at ease. Light, sustainably produced materials are conquering all areas.

"The new style is minimalism. A profound and fantastic development is taking place", says an inspired Harald Klüh, global brand manager at Grass. "We dispense with everything that is not absolutely necessary and concentrate on the simple but very elegant and efficient basics."

Cubist design in aluminium or steel

One of those basics is Vionaro, the most radical development to come from Grass. The cubist drawer system provides the perfect complement to the successfully proven concealed slide Dynapro, forming a complete solution that meets even the most discerning design aspirations. "Vionaro has everything that Dynapro has: perfect running characteristics thanks to synchronised movement for the first time, combined with the lowest opening pull forces and outstanding load capacity of up to 60 kilos. And in addition, the three-dimensional adjustment facility that has become inseparable from the name of Grass", explains Günter Grabher, who is responsible for the development of movement systems at Grass. For this technological revolution in the area of concealed drawer slides, Dynapro was recognised with the Red Dot award in 2010.

Vionaro features two drawer sides that are just 13 mm thick and have an immaculate, entirely uninterrupted surface. These are set on the Dynapro system in a perfect cubist design. The drawer sides come in a choice of elegant aluminium or a steel version with a flush, uniform connection to the back panel that can be supplied in either wood or steel. With its elegant simplicity, Vionaro provides wide creative scope for inclusion in every conceivable furniture design and covers all segments of the market.

The perfect 13mm for modern living spaces

Perfection in the design of the front connection ensures the utmost stability and completely homogeneous surfaces. "We're proud to have created a milestone in movement with Vionaro that's just made for modern living spaces", says Grass chairman Ronald Weber. With Vionaro, Grass has succeeded in going a long way towards fulfilling the wishes of the furniture industry for a slide that "doesn't take away space and cannot be seen."

Grass movement expertise in Dada kitchens

For the management of Italian kitchen maker Dada, which is part of the globally active Molteni Group, Vionaro marks the

successful start to a potentially long-term collaboration with Grass. The brand-name kitchens from the traditional firm of craftsmen based in Mesero near Milan are to be found in such locations as the 144 exclusive Armani Residences in the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai.

For their latest model line of Armani kitchens, the designers were looking for a drawer solution that would harmonise perfectly with the aesthetics and functionality of their top-class creation. "We immediately noticed that Vionaro comes very close to our idea of what a movement system should look like", says a delighted Andrea Molteni, Dada's head of design and development. Further system milestones from Grass will be instrumental in moving forward future kitchen developments at Dada.

For Grass, the relationship with the Italian luxury brand is a prime example of successful brand collaboration: "When two brands get together on the basis of constructive mutual support, success is just a question of time", says global brand manager Harald Klüh. "We see great potential in this development – for our brand partners and, of course, for the Grass brand."

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Brandt upgrade at Melbourne cabinet maker

Thanks to the versatility of the Brandt Ambition 1220C, Inline Joinery can do any kind of work. "I can easily switch between 1mm and 2mm. It just takes four minutes to change", says business owner Cliff Caruana.

When the business is growing and quality finishes become more and more important, it is time to consider a change. Understanding the importance of this, the Melbourne-based company Inline Joinery has recently upgraded installing a new Brandt edgebander from Homag Australia. The German manufactured Brandt is not only a world leader in edgebanding machines but also an edgebanding specialist in the world-wide Homag Group.

Cliff Caruana from Inline Joinery in Melbourne knows the benefits of his new Brandt edgebander. He recently invested in a Brandt Ambition 1220C and doesn't look back. "You have to think smarter in regards to the right equipment. I got prices for other machines and asked myself: Is it worth spending the extra money for a Brandt? And I have not regretted anything".

Inline Joinery is still a relatively young company, established just two years ago. Located in the northern Melbourne suburb of Campbellfield, Cliff Caruana now employs four people and produces on an area of 300 square metres. After working for 14 years in the commercial market and mainly doing office fit outs, Cliff wanted to try something new. "I needed a bit of a push," he says. Relying on a loyal customer base, Inline Joinery now provides joinery both for the commercial and domestic market as well as doing jobs for office fit-outs and aluminium fabrication.

Highly flexible edgebanding machine

Thanks to the versatility of the machine, Inline Joinery can do any kind of work. "I can easily switch between 1mm and 2mm. It just takes four minutes to change. The machine suits the variety of work we do". With approximately two or three

jobs per week, Inline Joinery is booked well ahead. It may lead to overtime hours as Cliff knows from the past experience but as long as cashflow is running smoothly, it'll be all worth the effort. "Keeping your customers happy means you are happy".

With the new machine, all of the work can get done much quicker. Cliff says the older second-hand Brandt model was taking too long, and appreciates the new features on his Ambition 1220C, which is equipped with a corner rounding unit and a glue joint scraper. The scraper cleans everything and guarantees a perfect finish.

"I was really looking into the corner rounding", Cliff points out, "Before we had to file it by hand which took a couple of hours".

After becoming more familiar with the benefits of the pre-milling, Cliff regrets a little that he didn't go for the pre-milling. "It would have been good to have". Homag Australia's salesman Simon Vowles explains: "We do offer an upgrade to pre-milling but we recommend getting it in the first place, to save yourself the cost and downtime required to install the upgrade".

Service when and where it's needed

The team from Inline Joinery is also very happy with the support Homag Australia provides. "They are sensational with their service. Once when we had a little issue, I rang the service coordinator in Melbourne and he sent us a service tech on the same day. We got it completely fixed that day."

Homag Australia operates nation-wide and has offices in



You have to think smarter in regards to the right equipment

Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth, with approximately 20 service technicians stationed all over the country. Additionally, the service department manages a large spare parts inventory with online shopping available, coupled with routine maintenance programs, telephone hotline diagnostics and support, software training as well as edgebander gluepot reconditioning. "We realise that the machinery we supply is the heartbeat and lifeblood of our customers' businesses and we do not only provide the best advice when purchasing a machine but also highlight our strong focus on service", explains Homag's Simon Vowles.

In summary, the purchase of the Brandt Ambition 1220C has been the right decision for Inline Joinery as Cliff says. "Compared to the Brandt machine we had before, the new one is easier to use and very straight forward". It is very likely that Cliff will stick to the German machine supplier: "I don't shop around. Once you've experienced Homag, you stay with it".



"I was really looking into the corner rounding", Cliff points out, "Before we had to file it by hand which took a couple of hours". Additionally, the Brandt Ambition 1220C comes with a nesting package for bridging hinge holes or processing acute angled work pieces.

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Who dares often wins - but only fools jump wearing blindfolds

WITH RISKS COME REWARDS, the saying goes. Most business owners have already taken an initial risk by starting their own enterprise. However, that's often when the risk taking ends and if this happens, business tends to stagnate as a result. Many owners spend years just making ends meet; they fail to build their business, making them vulnerable to downturns and unforeseen circumstances. For a business to grow and prosper, there must be an ongoing program of calculated risk taking, calculated being the operative word. No one would advocate taking risks without due diligence and neither would they recommend risk for risk's sake. But an enterprise without risk is an enterprise standing still.

Strategies for dealing with a stagnant business sadly tend to include downscaling. This is often the choice of cautious management, especially during volatile economic conditions. In my experience this is a last ditch strategy and the start of a slippery slope to annihilation. A common thread amongst failed businesses is the cutting back of expenditure a little too readily, impeding the ability to operate efficiently and at the fatal expense of the business.

Attack is claimed to be the best form of defence and the time when others are cutting back can be the perfect time to do this by expanding your business. Taking a proactive approach with an eye on the future can give you the jump on competitors and show your customers you really do mean business. There are many ways to expand including investing in efficient machinery and equipment, introducing software and system controls and improving service. Indeed, service is a prime example of an opening opportunity when less confident businesses are cutting back on their provision of service to save costs. It's a time when customers jump ship to find someone who can provide excellent customer care.

Other approaches include increasing your product lines and range of services, enter new markets or acquire complementary

ready-made businesses. Acquisitions are not the exclusive domain of multi-million dollar corporations; you can find attractive opportunities that expand your offerings without embarking on a start-up program that will take your eye off your core business.

Whatever form expansion takes, it is vital to thoroughly evaluate the risks and opportunities before taking a leap of faith. Always view expansion as a major project that needs careful research and diligent analysis. Take time to assess the resources necessary for the project to succeed such as available skills, time needed to implement the project and the necessary finances. A complete financial analysis is paramount and should include cost of capital investment, cash-flow forecasts, tax implications, your expected return on investment and should include any efficiency gains.

A holistic approach to the proposed expansion is the best way to ensure success and some important questions to consider are:


- Are there economies of scale and can I use my existing structure to support the new project?
- Do I need new skills and personnel?
- Do I have the time to oversee the project?
- Is enough space available and do we need to reorganise the physical layout?
- Is there a knock-on effect where we have to upgrade other resources and assets to keep pace?
- Do I have enough funds for the entire project including the learning curve?

These are all important considerations but by no means a comprehensive list. The bottom line is, you can do nothing and continue to plod along, content in the hope that if you keep your head down, avoid risks and the hard decisions, nothing will change for the worse. On the other hand you can find some inspiration and with some careful analysis and planning, you can take a chance on greatness. ■



Rick Lee has over 38 years experience in the woodworking industry both in woodwork manufacturing and in 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.

evaluate the risks and opportunities before taking a leap of faith



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Nesting machine streamlines business for DVS Kitchens

DVS Kitchens experienced an unexpected advantage after improving the manufacturing systems in its factory. The increased capacity led to increased demand – the company's clients are now approaching them with larger, more detailed jobs – because they know the end product will be on time and built to a high quality.

Since its inception 8 years ago, the company had been growing at a steady pace. Danny Soklevski has been with the business as it's grown from small premises in the Melbourne suburb of Campbellfield to a purpose built factory in Craigieburn. Each year has seen double-digit growth and expansion.

But with growing comes growing pains. Like many small cabinet making businesses, Danny knew to take his business to the next level meant working smarter, not harder.

Danny's initial investigations proved that an easy to use nesting machine, with simple software to drive it, was the solution for DVS Kitchens. After looking at all the options available to him, Danny decided the best machine for him was the SCM Pratika 310, supplied and serviced by Gabbett Machinery.

"We've had an SCM edgebander for years and it has served us well, so we were well aware of the SCM brand and Gabbett Machinery", said Danny. "After looking at what was available we decided the SCM was the best machine available to us. On top of this, another plus is that all our machinery and software can be serviced by the one company".

Gabbett Machinery was able to show Danny the savings that could be achieved in both time and money, when an easy-to-use software and nesting machine worked together.

One of the main areas of improvement provided by the SCM was the time taken for each job. Interestingly, the time savings experienced were not only in the factory, where the machine was, but also in the office. Preparation of cutting lists, designing time, and inventory control were all reduced significantly.

The second flow on effect was the increased levels of accuracy. Each machined piece was the right size every time – giving a saving in assembly times. Danny estimates that the same number of employees has easily doubled production output.

The SCM Pratika 310 offers a lot in a compact footprint. A unique protection system positioned directly on the machining head allows the operator to work closely to the machine in safety. This system eliminates the space required for other safety methods such as fences and laser



curtains. The nesting bed can comfortably machine a 2400 x 1200 sheet and has drills in both Y and X directions for added efficiency.

The Xcab software holds a cabinet library that can easily be manipulated. Entire cabinets or individual components can be simply adjusted to suit individual jobs and the changes can be saved if required to use at a later stage. Then, the cabinets can be selected, a cutting list is automatically created, the job is optimised on sheets and then sent to the machine to be routed. Xcab is even capable of grain direction and grain match machining for jobs that have grain patterned laminate. The Xcab cabinet library software also assists with job costing and material ordering. "It has been money well spent", says Danny. "The time I save using Xcab allows me more time to work on the business, rather than in the business".

Danny says: "The SCM Pratika has given DVS Kitchens the ability to meet the demands of our customers. The investment has meant that DVS Kitchens can commit to larger projects and deliver on time and be competitive on price".

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Central vacuum supply in staircase construction



Treppenbau Voss produces customised stairs in all conceivable shapes and materials in Reinfeld.

Treppenbau Voss specialises in the design and production of top-quality, unique staircases made from solid timber or other materials with main production buildings in Reinfeld, and six other stair studios in northern Germany.

State-of-the-art CNC production is designed to create individual parts in single batches - unique every time. The CNC machining centres are supplied with vacuum for clamping via a centralised vacuum system, featuring Mink claw vacuum pumps. This technology allows Treppenbau Voss to make massive energy savings.

The machining of solid timber parts such as stringers, steps and banisters is carried out at one of the three CNC machining centres. One centre is equipped with a fully automatic material supply and delivery system. Two of the processing machines are fitted with vacuum block suction cups, and one clamps the pieces using a nesting process. Originally, two rotary vane vacuum pumps with carbon blades, providing a pumping speed of 500 cubic metres each, were installed at the machining centre with the nesting clamping table, and each pump was driven by 15 kW motors.

Managing director Reiner Voss searched for a solution to reduce the energy requirement. The Mink claw vacuum

technology from Busch was the perfect answer. These vacuum pumps provide the same vacuum performance with just one 9 kW motor each. This is a difference that should not be underestimated, because the machining centre is practically in constant operation during working hours. There are no set-up times when the machine is at a standstill, because the data for machining is sent directly from the process planning department to the machines. Thanks to this data, the CNC machining centre sets itself up independently and can begin machining immediately after the material has been provided.

In order to exploit even more energy-saving potential, Busch recommended the centralisation of the vacuum supply. This means that the other two CNC machining centres, which had previously each been equipped with two liquid ring vacuum pumps, should also be supplied by the same vacuum system.

Busch designed a vacuum system fitted with six Mink claw vacuum pumps which is connected to all three CNC machining centres via a ring main. Reiner Voss decided to invest in this innovative vacuum supply concept. The central vacuum system was installed in 2011 and has been in operation since.

The vacuum supply is controlled by the pressure level which guarantees a defined vacuum, maintained constantly. At the same time, only the vacuum pumps required for that vacuum are put into operation. The performance of the vacuum system is designed so that it corresponds to the total performance of all the vacuum pumps in the previously installed rotary vane and liquid ring vacuum pumps. As the maximum performance is only called on in exceptional circumstances, one or two of the six Mink claw vacuum pumps are generally in standby mode.

In the previous, decentralised mounting of the vacuum pumps, all the pumps were generally in operation all the time. This enabled energy savings, firstly due to the smaller motor sizes and, secondly, because the maximum performance is not required constantly. Reiner Voss speaks of a 30% energy saving with the vacuum supply since the centralisation of the system.

The virtually maintenance-free operation of the Mink claw vacuum pumps provides another saving. Previously, carbon blades had to be replaced every year as they were exposed to extreme wear; this involved downtimes and high costs for the spare parts. Mink claw vacuum pumps generate the vacuum without any internal parts coming into contact with each other. This means there is no wear and so no parts that have to be replaced regularly.

An additional advantage of Mink claw technology is the low noise level: While rotary vane vacuum pumps with their large carbon blades lead to extremely high noise pollution, Mink claw vacuum pumps run relatively quietly.

Thanks to the wear-free vacuum generation of the Mink claw technology, their pumping speed remains constantly high and does not fall away over the duration of the operating time. For technical reasons, this is not possible with rotary vane vacuum pumps as the pumping speed slows down as the number of operating hours increases due to the wear on the carbon blades. This was another reason why Reiner Voss had the carbon blades in the rotary vane vacuum pumps replaced every year in the past because, in his words, "the performance of the pumps just collapsed" if the blades were not replaced in good time. This means that, in the case of a central vacuum supply with a mathematically identical performance to the previous decentralised solution, it is possible in reality to achieve a pumping speed that is up to 20% higher.

This surplus is currently helping to save energy costs, but will also make it possible to connect a further CNC machining centre; and at the successful and innovative stair producer Treppenbau Voss, that is a possibility that can never be ruled out.



CNC machining centre with fully automatic material supply and delivery system



Nesting table in a CNC machining centre

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Vacuum module with three Mink claw vacuum pumps from Busch. Two such modules supply the company Treppenbau Voss with vacuum for clamping.



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Waste peeler cores provide low-cost engineered wood product alternative

NSW-based building systems company Loggo Ltd has opened up new viable commercial possibilities of turning the plywood industry's virtual waste peeler cores into low-cost engineered wood product alternatives. Loggo has been investigating utilising these peeler cores and laminating beams as small as 56 mm diameter into 'tri-logs' and quad logs.

"The initial results from testing show the benefits of laminating these small diameter sections are considerable, with shared strength and a reduction in the number of failures at less than optimal loads," Loggo principal Pat Thornton said. "This design engineering has shown very promising span results – a Loggo 'quadrilog' joist/beam of 194 mm, consisting of 4 x 56 mm diameter peeler cores for application as floor joists at 600 mm centres that allows spans up to 3.6 m in length."

"Subject to testing, the floor joist appears to be well suited to the Australian market." Mr Thornton said companies would be able to select suitable market end products from Loggo's span tables, based on their predominance of waste peeler core sizes.

"These virtual waste peeler cores are an ideal starting point in the Loggo process because they have already been true rounded – one of the major expenses," he said. "Ply companies or their subsidiary fabricators have a golden opportunity to value-add and increase the sales of plywood and OSB. Ply or OSB products would become companion products with the potential to multiply sales in the form of flooring using the Loggo floor frame systems, structural cladding of pre-fab wall modules and plywood as a roof sheath underlayment for fire-prone areas."

Mr Thornton believes that in traditionally built timber homes the quantity of plywood sales could increase significantly over and above the amount of traditional structural ply bracing sales. He said the system would stimulate the re-uptake of masses of waste plywood by incorporating:

- Structural ply onto the floor joists as pre-fab floor modules or even manual systems in countries with low labour costs.
- Structural WP ply or OSB onto all external walls as wall panel modules (incorporating inside stud walls) or alternatively low-cost manually installed systems in countries with low labour costs.




Pat Thornton, managing director, Loggo IP Pty Ltd, Wollongong, NSW, (right) and Peter Blair, executive director, Structural Management Australia, Loggo's structural engineer (centre), discuss the Loggo systems with American visitor Charles Barnes, director, international marketing, Engineered Wood Association, Tacoma, Washington state.

- Cost effective portal truss and purlin modules with the opportunity of ply underlayments for roofing. These are end-buttled onsite needing only roof cover over the ply and inside lining material.

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The Infolink Top Trusted Brands Survey is Australia's leading national showcase of the best brands in the architectural, building, construction and specification industries. Blum Australia was voted as the Number 1 Most Trusted Brand in Infolink's Top Trusted Brands Survey 2014. In addition, Blum has also been voted as the most trusted brand in the Kitchen and Kitchen Equipment category.

Infolink.com.au provides a comprehensive central online source containing the latest product, company and industry news updates for the architect and specification market with over 14,000 companies listed. In October 2014, Infolink launched its Top Trusted Brands Survey for the second time.



The Infolink Top Trusted Brands Survey recognises the businesses that have influenced the Australian architect, building, construction and design industries as voted by industry professionals.

Highlighting the degree of diversity in innovation, application and quality within the industry, companies were nominated in one of forty-five categories. In addition, brands also competed for a place in the overall Top 100 Brands for 2014.

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"One of the most invigorating and interactive product knowledge courses we have run – the feedback was excellent," concluded Simon Dorries, general manager of the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia, at the end of four days of presentations and site visits in Brisbane. The course late last year included practical site visits to Austral Plywoods, a leading manufacturer of premium grade plywood sourced from 100% plantation-grown hoop pine provided by HQ Plantations and the DAFF Salisbury research facility.

Speakers and delegates were drawn from four states, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. The course defined structural and interior plywoods focusing on standards for bond type, durability, veneer quality and face

grades. The expanding role of plywood and LVL in diverse range of formwork applications generated high interest.

Simon Dorries said the course focused on manufacturing technology, quality control, product application and uses, innovation and the structural and aesthetic applications of plywood and LVL. He said ever-improving manufacturing technologies together with a total quality control program gave the user confidence that EWPAA-branded plywood and LVL were products of consistent reliable strength, stiffness and dimensional stability.

"This was a valuable up-skilling program for manufacturing staff helping them to make products more cost effectively and in a quality environment," he said. Strong interest

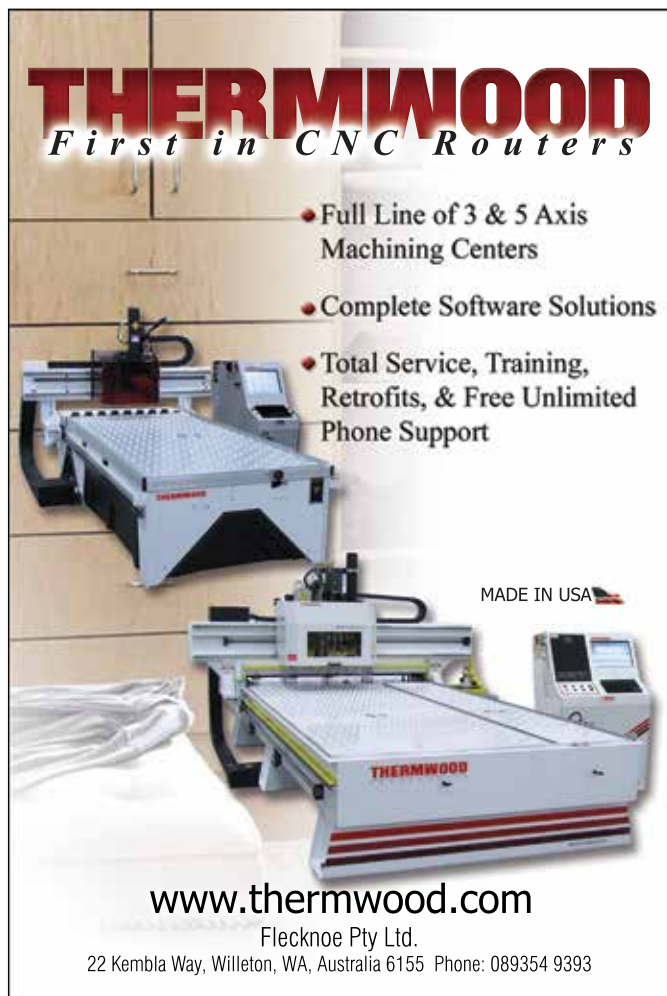
centred on sessions about close scrutiny of important EWPAA standard products in various market segments and 'selling' product advantages and how to deal with substitutes in the sales situation.

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EWPAA staff members Andrew McLaughlin, Christian Hamlyn and Karrin Ryan welcome Ta Ann Tasmania delegates Paul Woolley, operations manager, and Tung Hiek Hii (pictured right).

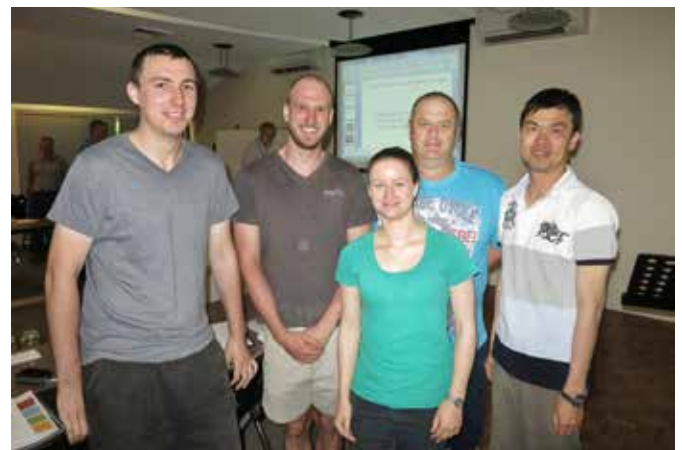


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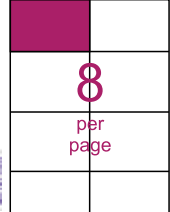
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Dynamic Space workshops explain all the value and benefits of a practical kitchen



Blum has tailored a four-hour complimentary workshop to share key insights and ideas for a practical kitchen with the industry. The workshops support designers, kitchen retailers, and cabinet makers to respond to increasing competitive pressures and customer expectations around functionality and innovative solutions.

Blum has investigated the needs and requirements of kitchen users for many years. Thanks to this research, Blum is continuously coming up with new ideas to make modern kitchens even more practical. The company likes to share these findings with the industry. The next available workshops are locked in throughout June and July (spaces strictly limited) at all Blum showrooms.

Blum's Dynamic Space provides the confidence and support to explain why an investment in Blum fittings in a customers' kitchen is essential; backed by research, quality products and ongoing innovations. It arms the industry with knowledge to share with customers to strengthen their relationships and best satisfy their needs.

Through Dynamic Space workshops, Blum share insights to assist in achieving differentiation and customer satisfaction. Experience how to incorporate functional, ergonomic and quality product solutions in designs to meet customers' unique needs.

Readers who are considering a showroom update or looking to gain some insights into selling and designing practical kitchens through Blum's Dynamic Space should contact their local Blum representative.

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Blum provides added support for installers

Servo-Drive for Aventos now includes an additional aid to support the installation process. A flyer is attached to the outside of the cover caps. The flyer provides assistance for the installation of the Servo-Drive for Aventos unit.

This is also complemented by a QR code sticker located inside the cover cap. The QR code allows installers to download the installation instructions and video.

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AWISA 2016 - the space sales process has started

LATE LAST YEAR AWISA announced that AWISA 2016 will be taking place at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre from 6-9 July 2016.

AWISA always starts the space sales process much earlier than most trade shows, mainly because the major participants are always keen to commence their planning early.

Information about AWISA 2016 has been distributed to 300 industry suppliers, and applications for the initial space allocation close on Friday 20 March. After this date, AWISA makes further contact with those companies that have not responded and late applications are accepted up until the mid-April AWISA board meeting. New exhibitors must become members of AWISA.

"I would like to make it very clear that AWISA welcomes new members that meet our membership criteria. With the show being in Melbourne we especially welcome Melbourne companies for whom the location may make the show even more relevant than usual to their marketing efforts," said Geoff Holland, general manager of AWISA.

"We have committed to sufficient space at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre for the show to be of the size of the AWISA show that took place at the Darling Harbour centre in Sydney. Early indications are that the industry in very enthusiastic about AWISA's decision to hold the show in Melbourne."

Any reader who wants to find out more about AWISA 2016 should contact Geoff Holland on 0412 361 580 or at info@awisa.com.

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Australian Woodworking Industry Suppliers Association Limited

AWISA The Association



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

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

AWISA The Exhibition



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

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

AWISA The Magazine



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

AWISA The Board

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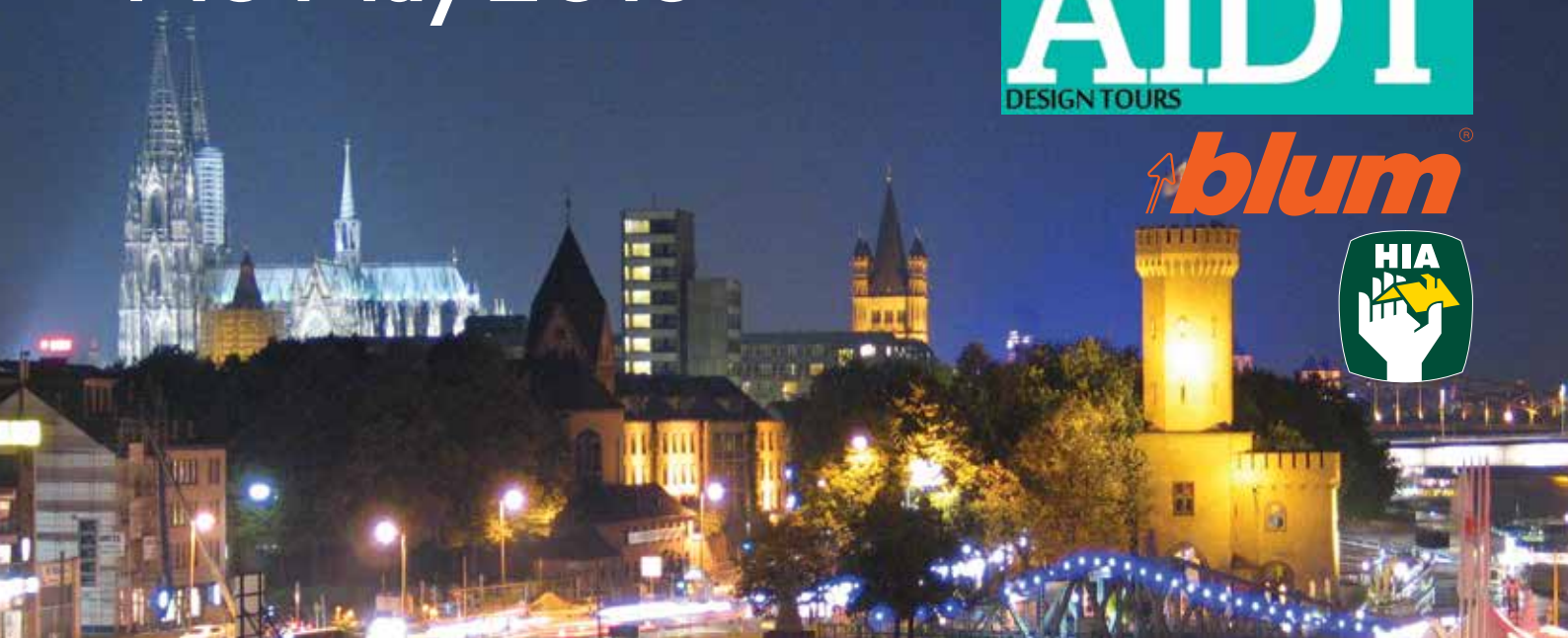
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DISTRIBUTION

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

4-13 May 2015



Australian International Design Tours (AIDT) is pleased to announce an International 10-Day Design Tour to Interzum (one of the world's foremost kitchen trade fairs), plus a visit to the world's leading hardware manufacturer, Blum in Austria. AIDT invites you to participate in this unique experience, sponsored by Blum and supported by HIA, to see the very latest releases in products and materials from many of Europe's leading material suppliers.



The Show

Interzum provides the industry a voice for the latest innovations and creations. Held biennially in the historic German city of Cologne, this four day show allows designers, cabinet makers and those in the industry wanting new ideas and innovation, the opportunity to touch and feel the latest offerings from the world's top furniture and cabinet making suppliers. Interzum is the show where visitors from around the world go to determine what products will be available to their clients in the years to come. Interzum is unquestionably a must visit. The global design community recognises the show provides all who attend an exciting vision of the future and a sound base to move their businesses forward.



Stand: Duopal 2013
Photo: Koelnmesse

Itinerary

Mon 4 May 2015: Arrive Hilton Hotel, Bonn/Welcome dinner
Tues 5 May 2015: Interzum Show
Wed 6 May 2015: Interzum Show/
Dinner in Cologne
Thurs 7 May 2015: Interzum Show
Fri 8 May 2015: Interzum Show/
Optional free day sightseeing
Sat 9 May 2015: Train to Bregenz, Austria/Welcome dinner
Sun 10 May 2015: Free day/Dinner
Mon 11 May 2015: Blum Factory and Showroom Tours/Dinner
Tues 12 May 2015: Blum Factory Tours/Farewell dinner
Wed 13 May 2015: Transfer to Zurich Airport



Blum's headquarters in Höchst.

Inclusions

- All airport and train station transfers from the start of the Tour until completion
- All accommodation (Hilton Hotel Bonn 5 star and Hotel Martinspark Dornbirn 4 star)
- All breakfasts
- Free Wi-Fi in both hotels
- All entry passes to the Interzum Show
- All lunches and dinners in Austria
- Welcome dinner and one additional dinner in Cologne

Cost

\$3,699 per person (ex flights).
\$450 single room supplement

Places are limited and selling fast. For more information call Simon Hodgson — 0419 483 700



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Biesse broadens the range of its products with the new Rover BG series. This machine is highly customisable and is available in 3, 4 or 5 axis. The new revolutionary Gantry structure is fitted with dual drivers ensuring maximum precision, speed and accuracy.

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