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INDUSTRIAL WOODWORKING

& PANEL PROCESSING

OCTOBER 2021

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SMOOTH RESULTS

TWO models from the Martin range which feature in the workshops of Kaizen Furniture in Ongar in Essex are the Martin T45 planer/thicknesser (depicted here) and the Martin T54 surface planer.

The T45 planer/thicknesser helps to ensure that smooth results are achieved every time. It provides the company with perfect planning results and it is impressively silent in operation.

Ideally suited for modern production methods, it supplies cleanly planed wooden surfaces. It is quick and easy to operate and for those companies which are on a limited budget, it offers excellent value for money.

Irrespective of whether short or long workpieces are being planed, the sturdy thicknessing table extension can dispense with the need for a second person located behind the machine. Short workpieces do not fall on to



the floor and longer ones are supported at the out-feed side.

The table extension always moves synchronously with the thicknessing table and this accessory can be retro-fitted without any problems.

For the full story please turn to Pages 4 & 5 of this issue.

THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

FITTED furniture components manufacturer and distributor, Hill's Panel Products (HPP) is marking its 30th anniversary.

'HPP is now one of the leading vinyl-wrapped doors and kitchen and bedroom component manufacturers in the UK,' says managing director, Keith Wardrope.

Among the recent new appointments is 53-year-old Gary Kinder (pictured right) who joins HPP as purchasing manager.

For the full story please turn to Pages 9-12 of this issue.



CNC ROUTER PROCESSING

HPC Laser is a leading supplier of CNC routers and laser engraving and cutting machines. The West Yorkshire company has supplied over 6000 machines principally to sign-making, education, woodworking and panel processing but, also to a wide range of other industrial and private customers for an almost infinite array of applications since the business was established in 2006.

All machines (such as the Laserscript CNC1325 shown here) are supplied complete with on-site delivery, installation and training and are covered by a minimum 12-month on-site warranty.

With a team of nationwide installation and service engineers and HPC's very highly rated life-time telephone and email technical support, help is never far away.

HPC's router range starts with an industrial level LS6090 machine with a 600mm x 900mm bed size. Even with a machine of this modest size, the compact arrangement accommodates a 3.5kW air-cooled spindle motor driven by a frequency inverter.

This provides ramped acceleration and deceleration, elimination of high in-rush currents and a seamless choice of operating speeds up to 18,000rpm,' explains HPC Laser director, Steve Cockerham.



'CNC router technology has advanced significantly over the past few years with the most significant developments being in travel speeds and positional accuracy, automated tool change options and enhanced features for automated operation and software integration,' adds Steve.

'Other significant CNC router developments in recent years have included the migration to heavier duty fabricated steel and cast-iron beds, improving dimensional accuracy, reducing vibration and ultimately contributing to improved repeatability and in most cases a vastly superior cutting finish,' concludes Steve.

For further information tel HPC Laser on 01422 310800. Visit www.hpclaser.co.uk

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- precision top & bottom guides
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315mm Panel saw package

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GERBER TECHNOLOGY REDEFINES MASS PRODUCTION WITH LAUNCH OF NEXT GENERATION CUTTING ROOM



AT ITS recent annual technology conference, Gerber Technology claimed that it is revolutionising the flexible materials processing industry with the launch of its end-to-end solution for mass production.

The connected platform features the new Atria digital cutting solution and the October 2020 release of AccuMark 2D and 3D, AccuNest and AccuPlan.

The Atria digital cutting room leverages Industry 4.0 and IoT to seamlessly integrate with Gerber's pattern-design, cut-planning and nesting solutions, which connects the entire mass production process from CAD to the cutting room.

Gerber's latest product releases are what the company says manufacturers need to succeed in the post-Covid world, by integrating data management, improving efficiencies, reducing material waste, optimising nesting and cutting production costs.

'We designed the Atria to be the most intelligent, integrated and high-performance cutter the mass-production market has ever seen,' says CCO at Gerber Technology, Lenny Marano.

'The "new normal" Covid era is a challenge for many manufacturers and requires them to be agile and innovative. The Atria is backed by Gerber's end-to-end solution that will allow companies to easily adapt and respond to consumer demands and market challenges,' says Mr Marano.

The Atria digital cutting room builds on the innovative spirit of Joseph Gerber, the company's founder and the pioneer behind the first automated cutting solution.

As one of the industry's smartest machines to date, the Atria

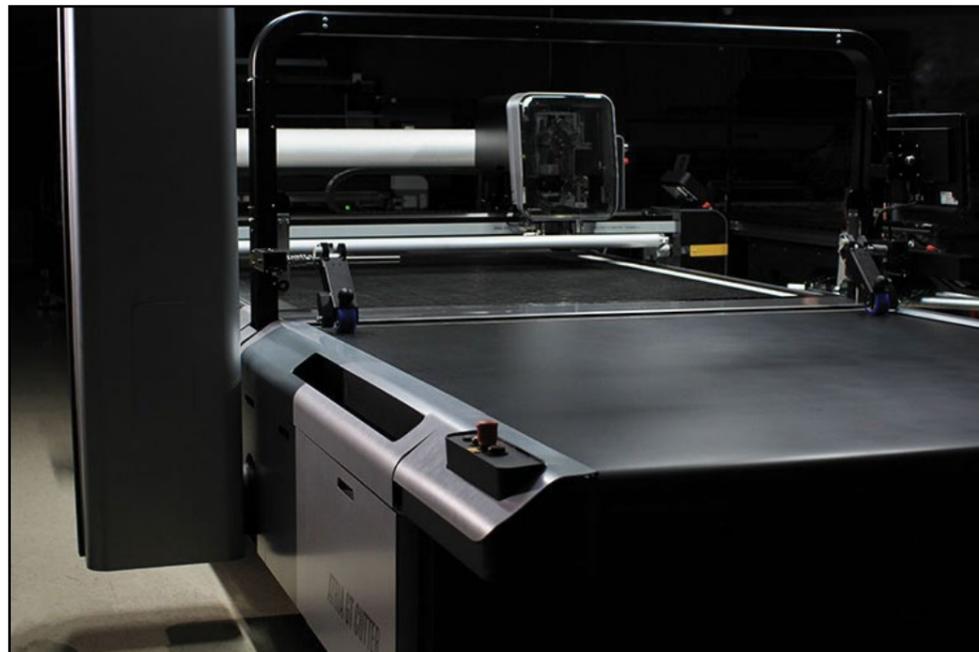
promises to transform mass production, by improving overall throughput by + 50 per cent, reducing consumable usage by over - 30 per cent and improving material yield by + 5 per cent, with zero-buffer cutting in many applications at full speed.

Gerber maintains that this intuitive solution will be a game changer for the furniture manufacturing market, as it utilises powerful algorithms to eliminate errors, reduce costs and ensure data integrity at every point in the process.

The Atria has already received high praise from early adopters, which have been testing and leveraging the advanced cutting room solutions for several months.

'The Atria's state-of-the-art control technology and intelligent sensors enable versatility and make it the perfect solution for a variety of markets, including furniture manufacturing,' concludes Mr Marano.

For further information
visit www.gerbertechnology.com



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MARTIN'S MACHINERY PROVIDES FOR KAIZEN'S EXTENSIVE RANGE

KAIZEN furniture specialises in the design and manufacture of the finest luxury interiors for prime London residences with the emphasis on bespoke furniture, cabinetry and joinery solutions.

Kaizen designs, engineers and produces bespoke furniture exclusively made for individual clients. No matter how big or small the project in question, Kaizen can create everything from single pieces of furniture to entire kitchens (as well as

bedrooms, bathrooms and dressing rooms) or furniture for commercial spaces.

Kaizen works in a wide variety of different materials, including timber, acrylic and glass, metal and stone.

The company's well-trained team of experts will take care of the entire process for the client – from developing a design through to production and ultimate installation.

By managing a project from start to finish and down to every final detail, Kaizen can ensure that everything comes together seamlessly on time and on budget.

At Kaizen the aim is to create the highest quality furniture to meet the precise demands of its clients. This is why Kaizen designers and craftsmen work closely with clients from the very beginning of each project.

Kaizen is a Japanese philosophy devoted to continuous improvement and attention to detail in manufacture.

The company was named thus because it is committed to setting and achieving the highest possible standards with a

strong belief in making high quality furniture that is tailored exactly to each individual client's demands.

That is why every piece of Kaizen furniture is hand made in the UK and combines craftsmanship with forward thinking design.

Kaizen is based in London and Essex, where the company's well-managed workshops are located. One feature of the well-equipped workshops is the operation of German woodworking machinery supplied by the well-renowned manufacturer Martin.

Two models from the Martin range which feature in the workshops in Ongar in Essex are the Martin T45 planer/thicknesser and the Martin T54 surface planer.*

The T45 planer/thicknesser which features in Kaizen's workshop helps to ensure that smooth results are achieved every time.

It provides the company with perfect planning results and it is impressively silent in operation.

Ideally suited for modern production methods, it supplies cleanly planed wooden surfaces.

It is quick and easy to operate and for those companies which are on a limited budget, it offers excellent value for money.

Irrespective of whether short or long workpieces are being planed, the sturdy thicknessing table extension can dispense with the need for a second person located behind the machine.

Short workpieces do not fall on to the floor and longer ones are supported at the out-feed side.

The table extension always moves synchronously with the thicknessing table and this accessory can be retro-fitted without any problems.

It is possible to choose between the long 1,200mm version, or the short, foldable 450mm version. The latter can also be mounted on the infeed side.

The workpiece transportation of problematical materials and short workpieces can be improved by means of a second rubber outfeed roller – especially if no lubricant can be used. The second outfeed roller is also available as a steel roller.



Martin's T45 planer/thicknesser is impressively silent in operation.

A TRULY BESPOKE SERVICE FROM ALAN LAMONT

DREW FORSYTH & Co produces its kitchens in the heart of West Yorkshire, with talented designers, highly skilled joiners and cabinet makers coming together to install cabinetry throughout the UK.

The 16,000 ft² workshops use traditional and modern methods to create high quality kitchen cabinetry.

The company is proud of its expert craftsmanship, offering a truly bespoke service – “if you've seen it, or can picture it, we can design and make it for you” – and with every detail crafted to the highest standards, customers can enjoy their bespoke designs for years to come.

The company has recently purchased its fourth matrix clamping table from Alan Lamont, all of which are still in use.

Managing director, George Forsyth took over management of the company from his father about five years ago.

‘My father would have bought that clamp off him over 15 years ago,’ says George.

Of the other three – one was purchased three years ago, one last year and one just very recently.

‘We could not grow capacity without increasing our clamping capabilities,’ says George.

Drew Forsyth & Co is an expanding heritage company. The

matrix clamping tables are used to manufacture the company's kitchen doors.

‘The clamps are a key part of our processes. We make a high quality product and we know that the clamps are a high quality build: we can rest assured that the product will come out of the clamps square,’ says George.

‘Lamont is the only option, not because it is the only company in the market place – it isn't, but because my father had a good working relationship with Alan Lamont, which I have picked up.

‘Alan is really easy to work with and the machines he produces are bespoke, not simply just off the shelf.

‘In terms of dealing with him it is very informal. Indeed, it feels like dealing with a friend. It is a real personal service ... and the payment terms are also great! Now, I would not look anywhere else.

‘I like to do business with people: you get that with Alan. You can have a conversation and be guided along the journey.

‘We have always had the clamps made to bespoke sizes to fit our factory: the most recent one is slightly different again to suit our needs.

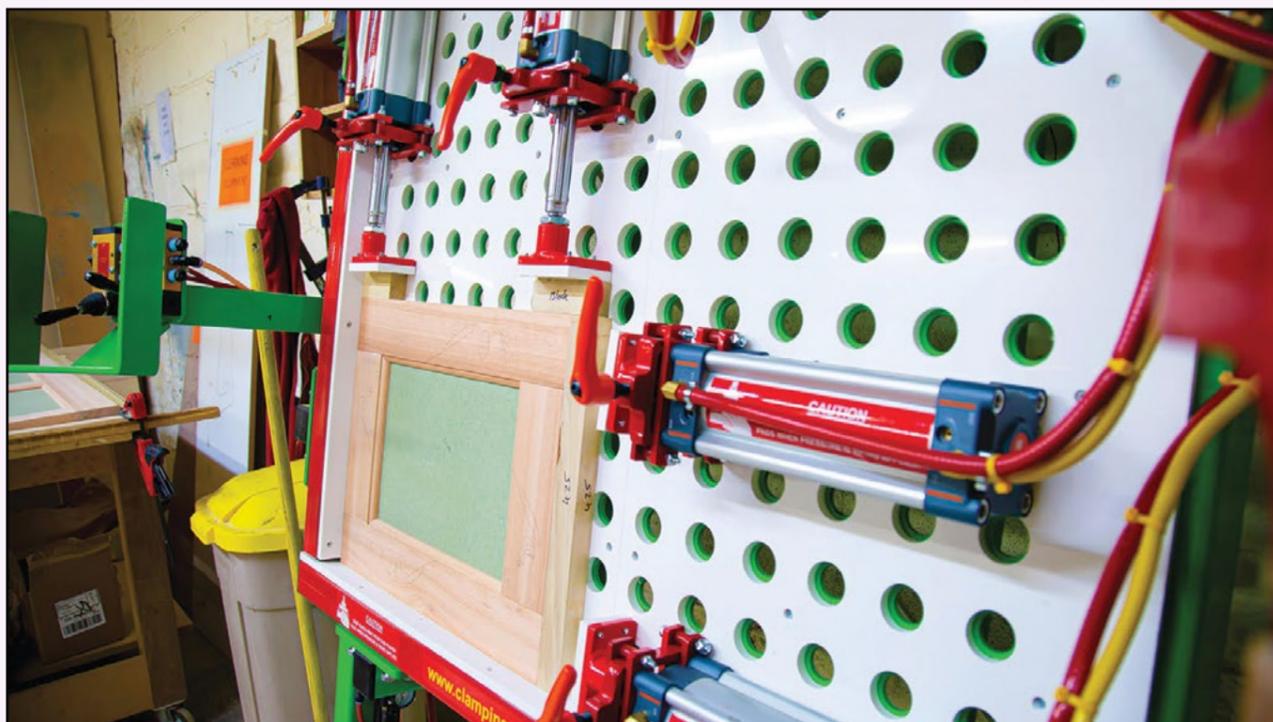
‘As our knowledge expands, we consider how to develop the next one. Alan helps us, and also has supported us in adapting an older clamp. He is really flexible in that way: we toss around ideas with him on what may and may not be possible,’ says George.

When asked if he would recommend Alan and his company, George replied:

‘Yes, definitely. I would highly recommend him. He turns projects around really quick and he adds a personal touch to business, which can be lost in 2021.

And you see Alan's clamps everywhere.

For further information tel Lamont on 01461 40017. Visit www.clampingmachines.co.uk



THE RIGHT WINNING FORMULA ON OFFER FOR THE KITCHEN

The operator can switch between the standard feed speeds of 6m/min and 12m/min during the planing operation.

Another distinct advantage is that the feed speed can be adjusted by means of the optional, infinitely variable feed control. This option allows variable feed speeds between 2m/min and 25m/min – depending on the individual design.

The Martin T54 surface planer

was initially developed primarily to accomplish two separate tasks – firstly to dress workpieces perfectly and, secondly, to provide these workpieces with superlative angular edges quickly and safely.

As the production staff at Kaizen know only too well, you only arrive at the prefect end result with perfect preparation

Martin's T54 surface planer features an easy-running guided surfacing fence with an integrated auxiliary fence, which enables quick and precise operation.

The ball-bearing guided jointing fence runs smoothly and without tilting on tempered raceways. In years to come, it will work as precisely as it does on the very first day following its acquisition.

Chamfers can be planed in no time at all, owing to the fact that any angle between 90 deg and 45 deg can be set quickly by means of the user-friendly single-handed operation.

Kaizen has come to depend on its Martin machinery in much the same way as it depends on the skills of the dedicated team of production staff in its workshop. It's a winning combination.

*Supplied by Martin's UK agent, Scott & Sargeant

For further information tel Martin on 00 49 8332 9110
Visit www.martin.info or www.kaizenfurniture.com



STAY SAFE AND WORK FROM HOME WITH EXPERT SUPPORT

HEXAGON supports woodworking professionals working from home with access to Cabinet Vision and Alphacam with free online licensing and remote access options to help woodworkers remain productive while working from home.

Hexagon's Manufacturing Intelligence division is offering a range of free offline licensing and remote access options designed to enable efficient home working for woodworking professionals facing new productivity challenges during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Home working options will be provided for Hexagon's production software and metrology software offerings, as well as the MSC Software range of CAE solutions, at least until 30 June 2020. Users will also have access to additional online learning resources.

This includes licence move, remote access or additional

temporary home office licences for Hexagon's Alphacam and Cabinet Vision.

'The purpose of our smart manufacturing solutions is to improve quality and productivity and this challenge is especially acute during this time of extensive home working' said Paolo Guglielmini, President of Hexagon's Manufacturing Intelligence division.

'So, to support the industries we serve, we're offering special access to our software and learning tools for both current customers and non-customers who can benefit from our technology.'

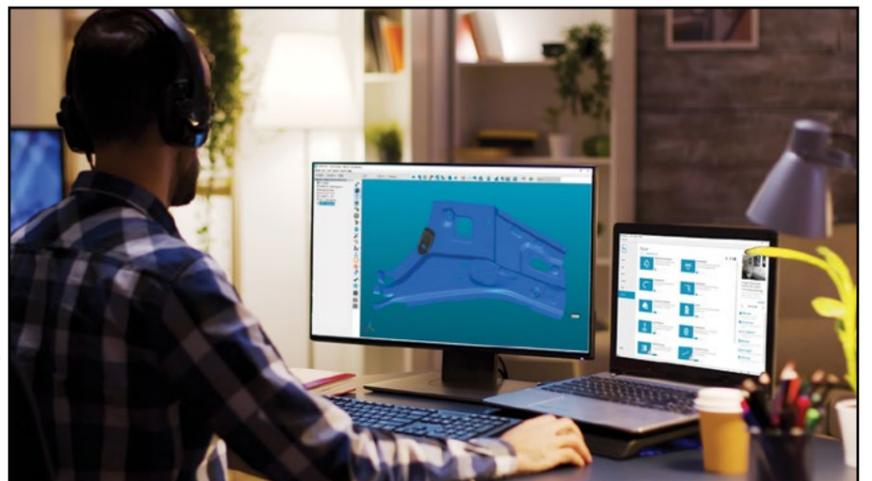
'Like many businesses in the manufacturing sector, we have many employees working from home at the moment and we appreciate that giving them the right tools to work remotely is essential to their wellbeing and success.'

'By offering learning and remote working solutions I hope we can contribute to maintaining productivity and quality while keeping employees in manufacturing safe.'

Details on how to access the home working packages can be found at www.hexagonmi.com/wahs

The offering will include:

- Extension of licences for work-from-home support or alternative access options for MSC Software CAE solutions.



- Licence move, remote access or additional temporary home office licences for Hexagon's CAD CAM software such as Alphacam and Cabinet Vision.

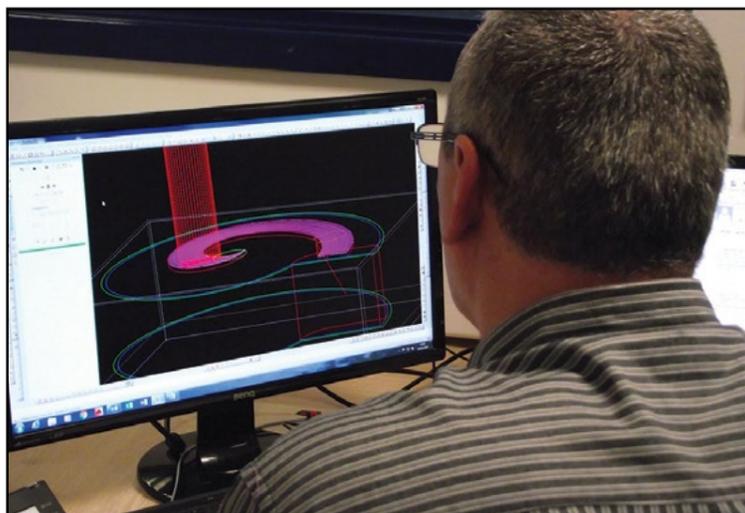
- Free offline licences of the latest versions of PC-DMIS and other leading metrology software.

- Free remote machine monitoring via the HxGN SFx | Asset Management asset performance management solution.

- Free access to online learning for Hexagon's metrology and MSC Software solutions.

Although Hexagon employees are also working remotely, service and support remains in operation. Full details are available from local offices.

For further information
Visit www.alphacam.com or www.cabinetvision.com



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STAIRBOX – THE STAFFS STAIRCASE MANUFACTURER ATTRACTS FTSE BUYER

STAIRBOX – a leading manufacturer and distributor of bespoke wooden staircases – has been acquired by Grafton Group plc, the listed building materials distributor and DIY retailer.

Founded in 1994, StairBox, has experienced significant growth in recent years. Its success has been driven by the heritage of quality workmanship and future-focused investment, including the development of pioneering software to enable customers to easily and accurately design, visualise and price staircases online. StairBox reported revenue of £19.5m and adjusted operating profit of £6.1m for the year ended March 31 2020.

The strength of StairBox's operational expertise, team and a culture dedicated to continuous improvement was key to the deal. As such, StairBox chief executive office, Alex Hancock, will continue to lead the business and all employees will remain in their roles, ensuring business continuity and stability.

'These are exciting times for the whole team at StairBox. We have witnessed impressive growth over the past few years by investing in our business and providing the highest quality service and products to customers. There are so many benefits of linking up with Grafton, both in our operations, as well as in our aspirations for the team and the future,' says Mr Hancock.

'Grafton has a strong track record of investment in the Group and supporting management autonomy to achieve the best results. Our team, customers and supply chain

will benefit from being part of the Group, which shares our strong values,' he adds.

The deal could unlock international expansion for Stairbox, as Grafton Group plc's foot-print extends to Ireland and the Netherlands.

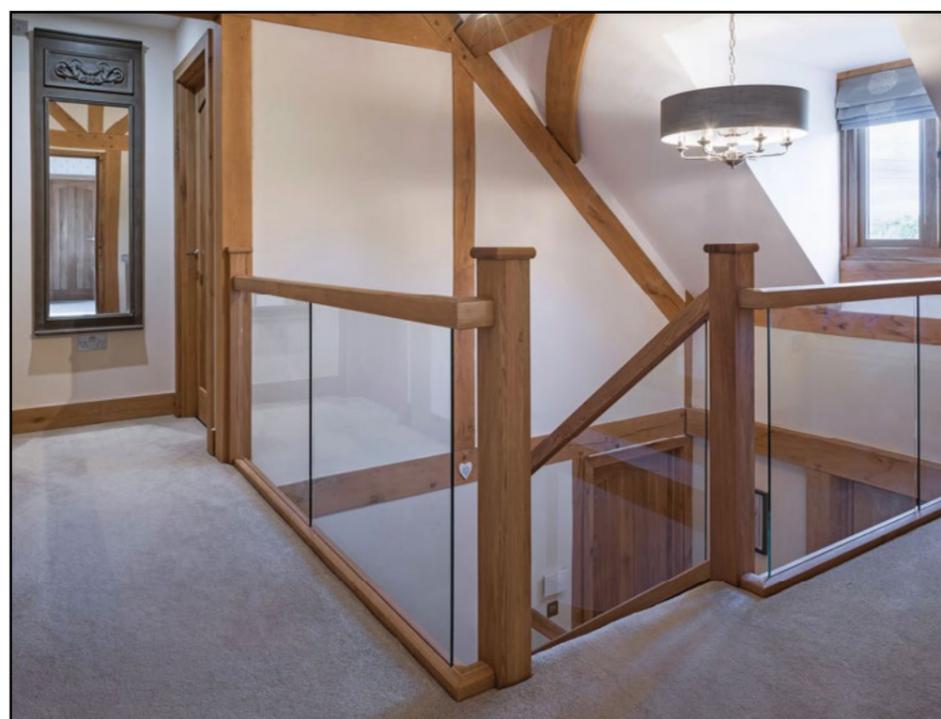
'StairBox is a dynamic manufacturing business with a best-in-class online solution at its core. It has an efficient production process, nationwide distribution and strong growth potential,' says chief executive officer of Grafton, Gavin Slark, commenting on the acquisition.

'The acquisition is in line with our strategy of acquiring specialist high quality businesses. We are delighted with this acquisition and the skills and experience that the management team will bring to the Group, under the leadership of Alex Hancock,' adds Mr Slark.

'As part of the Grafton Group, the size and scale of the opportunities for StairBox are significant. This deal is a real success story for Staffordshire, with a Midlands-based growth story attracting such a strategic investor. We look forward to seeing the team go on to even greater success in this next chapter,' says BDO M&A partner, Roger Buckley.

BDO is the most active M&A financial adviser – in the Midlands and in the UK – based on Experian's year-to-date rankings.

For further information visit www.stairbox.com or www.graftonplc.com



THE JOINERY NETWORK'S NEWLY LAUNCHED WEBSITE GOES LIVE

AS THE growth of The Joinery Network continues, a new website has been launched to support UK joinery manufacturers looking to manufacture PAS 24:2016 Document Q-ready timber windows and doors.

The new website has information on The Joinery Network's range of fully tested, accredited timber windows and doors.

'We launched the new website to make it easy for joinery manufacturers to see the range of fully tested timber windows and doors that are available, exclusively, for them,' says one of the founder directors of The Joinery Network, Owen Dare of O T Dare Joinery Consultants.

'There is also a great deal of information on which tests our product range has passed. With this information, joinery manufacturers can choose the products they need, obtain licences for each product against each test result and cascade the data to use as their own,' says Mr Dare.

'This transparency means that both big and small joiners, offering a full, or selective range, can fully comply with regulations without worrying about

falling foul of the Law in any way,' adds Mr Dare.

The new website comes after the launch of the exclusive Lignum range from The Joinery Network. Lignum is the first complete UK timber window and door system with full PAS 24:2016, Document Q, BS 6375: 1. Document L1B and

Document M certification, available to joinery manufacturers.

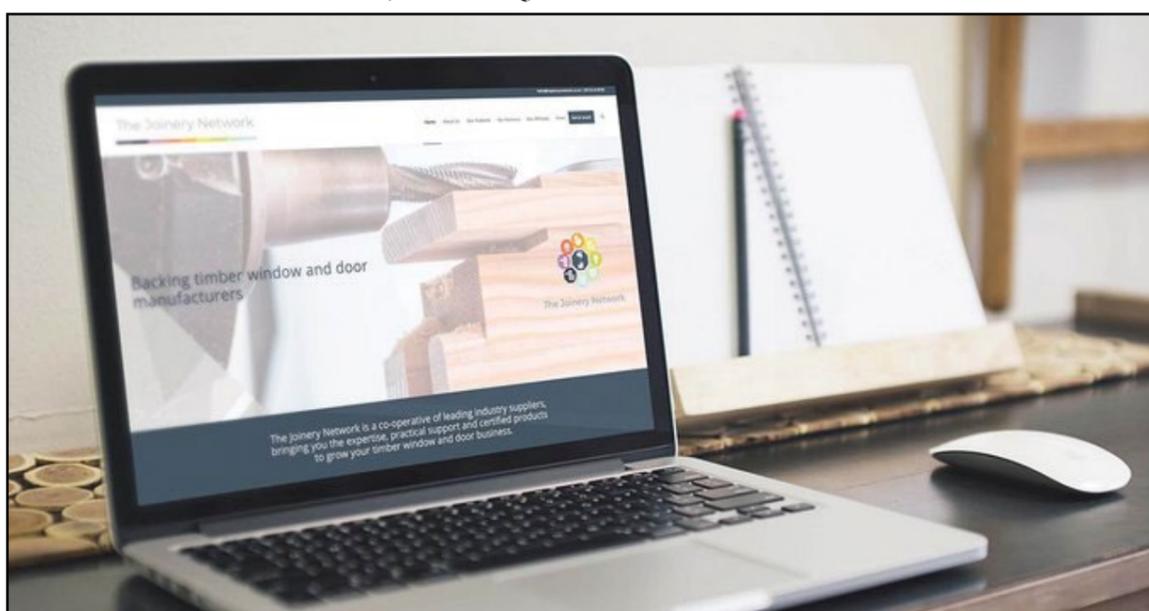
'Lignum is the exciting new window system for the timber window and door industry. Fully accredited and designed for UK homes, Lignum is perfect for joiners as a low-cost entry system through The Joinery Network licences,' says Mr Dare.

'They also don't have the expense of spending upwards of £60,000 on testing products themselves, as The Joinery Network has already made that investment. It's an easy way for joiners to show that their products comply with Building Regulations and win more sales,' says Mr Dare.

Joinery manufacturers can also find information on each of The Joinery Network's founder partners and affiliates.

'We've carefully selected our founder partners and affiliates to offer expertise through every step of the supply chain. Many of them offer exclusive benefits to The Joinery Network licence holders,' concludes Mr Dare.

For further information visit www.thejoinerynetwork.co.uk



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Now's the time for the all-rounder.

The T60C is ideal entry model into the Premium Compact Class. It offers the perfect balance between price and performance, as all key components of the T60C are designed as you would expect from a MARTIN machine. In an area where a higher price does not necessarily mean better performance, the T60C is deliberately intended to be a more compact offering. Purposeful machine construction, paired with control technology that is reduced to the fundamentals make the T60C an excellent partner for anyone looking for a cost-effective way to enter the premium saw class.



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MARTIN

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FEIN UNVEILS NEW ACCESSORIES TO MAXIMISE PRODUCTIVITY, PROFITABILITY AND EFFICIENCY

FEIN - the leading power tools and accessories manufacturer, has released a range of new Starlock accessory kits that are compatible with its recently-launched MultiMaster 300, 500 and 700 series.

With the brand-new Starlock accessories, the MultiMaster range offers 1,000 blade possibilities, including sawing, sanding and polishing. The new accessories are available now at Fein stockists across the UK.

'We understand that productivity is one of the biggest priorities for our customers, which is why we're excited to extend our popular accessories range even further. Thanks to the multitude of possibilities MultiMaster now offers, completing a job quickly and proficiently has never been easier,' says managing director of Fein UK, Raphael Rudolph.

'Whether it's a large-scale project, or a quick job, we have no doubt that having the ability to complete 1,000 different types of tasks with these machines will significantly increase

efficiency and, in turn, profitability for our customers,' adds Mr Rudolph.

The new accessory kits are available in a range of combinations and can be matched according to application and material, whilst also offering savings for anybody looking to purchase a Fein combo set.

The MultiMaster 700 series is ideal for all levels of the construction process.

The MultiMaster 500 series can be adapted to complete a range of interior jobs, such as sawing wood, whilst the MultiMaster 300 series is designed for sawing wood, metal, plasterboard and plastics.

Fein's multi-tools also use the Starlock blade mounting system, with the result that users benefit from up to 35 per cent more work progress and greater precision thanks to 100 per cent power transmission without losses.

The tool mounting comes in three performance classes: Starlock, StarlockPlus and StarlockMax, protecting the tool from overload and damage.

As part of the product range expansion, the company will also be offering up to £100 in Amazon vouchers to any customers trading in their old non-Starlock Fein tools for the new MultiMaster 300, 500 or 700 series, when they register for the three-year Fein Plus warranty.

'We're anticipating the launch of these new Starlock accessories to further increase the popularity of our already renowned MultiMaster range, thanks to the endless possibilities and continued innovation to consistently offer more options with these machines,' concludes Mr Rudolph.

For further information tel Fein on 01327 308730.
Visit www.fein.com



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ADAPTING TOP A NEW NORMAL

FITTED furniture components manufacturer and distributor, Hill's Panel Products (HPP) is marking its 30th anniversary, as the sector, wider economy and society at large continues adapting to the "new normal" post-lockdown life.

HPP, which is a doors, boards and fittings specialist, is celebrating its history and growth with some anniversary publicity and activities this year.

However, ongoing Covid safety precautions mean that physical events, such as staff celebrations to mark the anniversary, are being pushed back to in 2022, provided that circumstances allow.

HPP was founded in 1991 in a single industrial unit in Oldham, Greater Manchester, measuring 11,000ft² unit.

Over the years, its head office site has grown to 11 units measuring over 250,000ft² – there is now also a second UK distribution centre in Sheffield and the company operates nationally.

Today, the company has over 2,000 trade customers and supplies over 7,000 products, including its own brands of doors and cabinet components, full and processed sheet materials, vinyl-wrapped furniture doors and furniture fittings.

Its own brands include Avanti doors, Glide sliding doors and Aspect and Aspire kitchens and bedrooms.

It also supplies products by other UK and European brands, including Egger, Blum and Kronospan.

In recent years, its turnover has risen to over £34m and it currently employs just under 200 people.

The company undertook a major investment programme in manufacturing equipment and warehousing in recent years – just before the pandemic began in 2020.

The company is headed by brothers, Martin and Stephen Hill and managing director, Keith Wardrobe.

In this anniversary year, three new directors have joined the board, representing a new generation of future leaders.

Other appointments have been made right across the business. The company is also investing in staff training and development across all departments.

Investment and growth before the pandemic

Between 2017 and 2019, HPP grew on multiple fronts and had a multi-million-pound investment programme.

Overall sales grew by 16 per cent in 2018, on top of 15 per cent previously. Door sales rose by 30 per cent and 11 new staff were trained for manufacturing in 2019 - the year its second door production line was opened.

The £3m second production line increased the company's capacity to manufacture bespoke vinyl-wrapped doors for trade customers across the UK and Ireland.

It enabled increased output from 30,000 to 45,000 units/month in the short term. In the longer term, output can rise to 50,000/month, or more.

The new line contains automated routing, cleaning, glue-spraying and vinyl-wrapping machinery supplied by Wemhoner and Sittex. The Italian-made Sittex equipment was the first in the UK.

'HPP is now one of the leading vinyl-wrapped doors and kitchen and bedroom component manufacturers in the UK,' says managing director, Keith Wardrobe.

'All our doors are manufactured to bespoke orders, with options on shapes, sizes, routing patterns, hinges and decors,' continues Mr Wardrobe, speaking about the increased manufacturing capacity.

'The new production line manufactures doors across 40 styles and 70 colours, offering 2,800 possible combinations.

'Between 70-80 per cent of our vinyl-wrapped doors can now be manufactured on the second production line, while our first production line will focus on more intricate orders,' adds Mr Wardrobe.

'The new production line shows the continuing importance of the company's agenda of moving forward through automation, whilst also securing jobs for people.

'Some may worry that automation leads to job losses. However, HPP is using automation to secure jobs and to grow for the future,' explains Mr Wardrobe.

'Automation allows us to be competitive in the door manufacturing market by making production easier and more accurate.

'In addition, because we have been becoming busier over the past few years, we also needed to recruit extra staff,' he adds.

'We must emphasise that our employees have contributed hugely to our success over the years and we want to reflect this in our 30th anniversary activities.

'We have a number of long-serving staff with really strong skills and experience. We are also attracting good young recruits across a range of roles and departments,



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HILL'S PANEL PRODUCTS A NEW NORMAL IN A

which promises a great future for our company and furniture manufacturing in the UK,' says Mr Wardrobe.

Other investment over recent years has included a new £2.5m 19,000ft² warehouse to support the expansion of manufacturing. The building is the biggest free-standing warehouse at the company's headquarters in Oldham.

The triple-fronted warehouse stores worktops and panel products. Its construction freed-up other space for the second door production line. It was the fifth warehouse to be built at the Oldham base.

In addition to equipment and facilities, HPP has increased its value-added services through bespoke offers for customers and

partnerships with other brands, such as Egger, Kronospan and Blum.

Examples include a customer order service to turn advanced sheet materials into doors and cut-to-specification orders for doors and panels with a wide décor choice and the optimised use of sheet materials, thus reducing waste.

HPP also launched a new service offering pre-assembled Blum drawers. Flat pack Blum components are assembled at HPP then delivered in boxes directly to installers, offering ultra-convenience to the trade customer. This service is being extended and HPP wants to increase its trade customer services across all its activities.

Although full national lockdowns have been lifted, the pandemic's impact continues to be felt and evolve, creating new challenges for businesses of all types and making the future difficult to predict.

However, HPP says a priority is to assist the fitted furniture industry's recovery from the impact of the lockdowns and to transition to "the new normal".

The company has developed a number of support offerings for retail showrooms, along with digital resources to help the kitchen, bedroom and bathroom (KBB) fitted furniture sector in the new environment.

When the first national lockdown of 2020 loomed, like other businesses, HPP had to act swiftly. After discussions with staff, both sites in Greater Manchester and Sheffield were closed within two days in March 2020.

However, HPP was also very conscious of customers' needs during the ensuing lockdown. In the early days, the company contacted trade customers with an email survey and asked if they needed any specific help.

A click-and-collect service was offered to help smaller installers finish jobs they had been working on, such as fitting kitchens, or bedrooms inside empty houses.

Later in the spring of 2020, HPP opened its warehouses very minimally to receive some large deliveries, then slowly



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LEARNS TO ADAPT TO POST LOCKDOWN WORLD

re-opened manufacturing, despatch and office functions on a restricted scale.

Once new Covid safety measures were enacted, a very small group of staff returned to work in mid-May 2020.

The lockdown era was not without pain.

'Sadly, we had to make some redundancies, but those were fewer than we feared. Some staff were subsequently re-employed, which was great,' says Keith Wardrobe.

'We had to adapt to the impact of the pandemic and tried to respond positively to diverse new challenges and opportunities,' explains Keith.

'We gradually became fully operational and demand became quite strong, with the boom in home improvements with home working, home schooling and the other big changes of 2020.'

'We have seen signs of growing economic confidence, but it's a complex picture with different factors at play. However, many people are still spending considerable time at home and investing in property one way or another.'

'Likewise, commercial property is seeing changes as a result of changed working, commuting and leisure patterns.'

'We are seeing re-purposed commercial spaces, more mixed-use of office and retail properties and more flexible planning regulations.'

'All these developments and trends will feed into architecture, interior design, interior specification, furniture and fittings,' concludes Keith Wardrobe.

Showroom packages and online support

In order to support the fitted furniture sector's recovery and development, HPP is launching physical product packages for showrooms and enhanced online resources.

'We believe that our retail showroom package is quite a unique offer, due to us being the only company that can cover all these bases,' says HPP's director of marketing and business development, Dan Mounsey.

'We aim to offer free HPP kitchen and bedroom displays to retail showrooms and a contribution towards the fitting cost,' says Mr Mounsey.

'Our plan is for our packages to cover worktops, kitchen and bedroom doors, Blum hinges, HPP's Blum ready-made drawer boxes, door handles, lighting, wire-work and bins,' says Mr Mounsey.

'We'll also assist with showroom point-of-sale aids, handle display boards, our Unique Choice kitchen and bedroom brochures, discounts on showroom accessories and the Easycab range and access to marketing and merchandising aids,' he adds.

New online resources for trade customers include an Egger Inspiration Centre on HPP's website.

'We are an Egger Diamond Distributor and have enjoyed a great relationship with Egger for many years.'

'The Inspiration Centre brings together all Egger's digital resources and tools in one location, including enhanced 3D visuals, which capture advanced décors.'

'The new Egger Decorative Collection, door ranges with Egger decors and Egger worktops are also highlighted. Physical samples can also be ordered by trade customers,' he adds.



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ADAPTING TOP A NEW NORMAL



Sustainability is increasingly important for the furniture industry and in consumers' purchasing decisions, according to HPP.

The Egger worktops are PEFC-certified and use renewable material.

The 38mm worktops can all be recycled and the range has won the FIRA Gold Award for product testing and quality.

By highlighting such features and measures, it is believed that furniture showrooms and installers can help to distinguish themselves in the market, especially to younger, environmentally aware consumers.

In keeping with its promotion of the sustainability agenda in furniture, timber trades and forestry, HPP has been a sustainability partner at the annual KBB Design Awards and supported a range of tree planting and environmental programmes in the UK and overseas.

Programmes include tree planting in Manchester schools and the Royal Horticultural Society's new 156-acre Garden Bridgewater in Salford and sustainability projects in Africa and India.

New directors, appointments and training

In addition to Dan becoming a director this year, HPP has appointed Andrew Evans and Gareth Evans as IT director and sales director respectively.

Andrew, 45, joined HPP in 2004. His first role was continuous improvement manager. Later he became IT systems manager, which diversified to include company data management systems, including Business Intelligence.

He then progressed to IT manager with extra

responsibility for hardware, infrastructure and enterprise resource planning.

'Becoming a director at HPP is a great step forward for me. I want to add extra weight to all areas of the business and to use my skills and those of the IT Department team to advance the company,' says Andrew.

Gareth Evans, also 45, first started at HPP aged 17 in sales. He said the opportunity to work across many different departments was invaluable for his knowledge and development.

'I've spent all my career in the KBB sector. I've now been with HPP



for 20 years and seen a great deal of positive change,' says Gareth.

'I'm really pleased to become a director with Dan and Andrew. Our combined knowledge can help ensure the continued success of HPP,' adds Gareth.

Also, this year, Gary Kinder has joined the company as purchasing manager. The 53-year-old has extensive industry experience. His CV includes roles with Eurospace Furniture, Symphony, Richmond Cabinets and JT Ellis.

In other staff developments, HPP is investing in workforce development with 17 staff members joining an ILM Level 2 qualification course for leadership and team skills.

The qualification is designed to help individual staff improve their performance as team members and assist their transition from working in a team to leading a team. It also helps practising team leaders to be more effective and confident in their work.

The aim is to enhance the company's operations at all levels in order to improve efficiency and service to trade customers.

'Our business is committed to skills and training right across all departments and at all levels. It's great to see 17 staff involved with this Level 2 programme,' says Dan Wardrobe.

'It will enhance our operations in many ways by giving staff more insight, skills and understanding of business needs and issues.

'It will boost both individual and team communications, direction, productivity, planning, problem-solving and development. We are also looking to progress staff on to the next Level 3, building on this,' adds Dan.

Two groups of staff have already taken part in the training sessions held at Oldham Events Centre at Oldham Athletic FC.

It is also helping to address the industry's growing skills gap by providing work, training and mentoring opportunities for six young people at its Oldham HQ and second UK distribution centre in Sheffield, under the Government's Kickstart programme.

This provides funding to support placements for 16 to 24-year-olds, who are at risk of unemployment, but keen to gain experience, skills and an income.

HPP has a history of supporting young people. This includes speaking at careers fairs to raise awareness of the furniture industry, supporting an Oldham youth centre and hosting educational activities.

In summary, HPP is very busy on all fronts, as it looks to the post-lockdown future. Hopefully, there will be some time for it to collectively celebrate its 30th anniversary safely in the coming months, as it and other furniture businesses adapt to "the new normal".



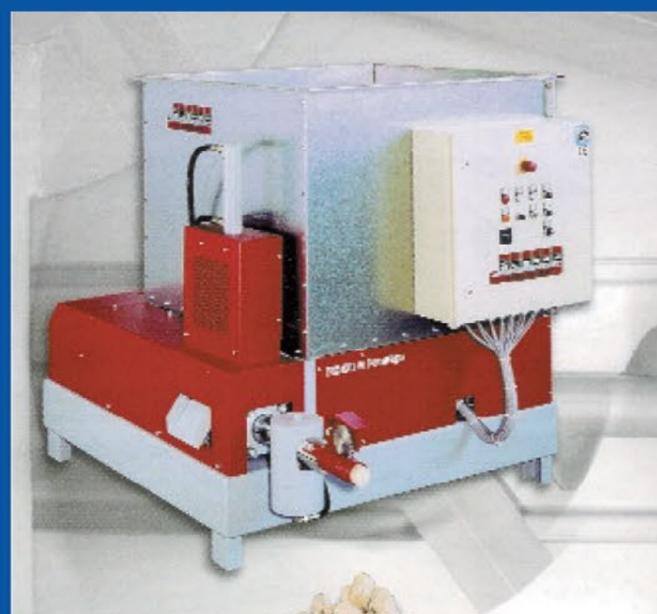
For further information tel Hill's Panel Products on 0161 628 1147. Visit www.hpponline.co.uk

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GIBBS SANDTECH OFFERING LOW-COST SOLUTIONS & CUSTOM-MADE MACHINES

OVER the years, UK sanding technology manufacturer, Gibbs Sandtech, has successfully developed a range of machinery and ancillary items for the UK woodworking sector.

Having been successfully supplying the industry for the past 60 years, the company is continually advancing new ideas and technologies in to the product range.

The latest development is a unique throughfeed denibber, called the CB. It is available in 630mm, 930mm and 1,330mm widths.

It has a very low entry level price tag, yet Gibbs says that it comes with all the features of high-end machines. The CB boasts full variable speed control for all functions, along with electric rise and fall for the brush sanding heads.

'The unique oscillating sanding brush system is capable of sanding and denibbing complex raised and fielded doors and Shaker style doors, as well as flat panels,' explains Gibbs

Sandtech director, Warren Gibbs.

'The machine can even be fitted with wire brushes to give a grained effect on solid wood frames and complete doors, as well as flat veneered panels.

'The heart of the system is a very special brush and abrasive system, also manufactured at the company's factory premises – the abrasive system is available in the full grit range and different length brushes and abrasives. This gives the user great flexibility in achieving the desired sanding.

'The CB also has very low running costs, with customers only having to replace the abrasives around once every three to six months.

'Being a fully UK-produced machine, at the company's factory in Hertfordshire, quality and precision are guaranteed and, to ensure peace of mind, all machines are sold with a full 12 month-warranty,' says Warren Gibbs.

Gibbs has also invested time in designing optional extras, such as side sanders for the edges and cleaning blow bars which, according to Gibbs, leaves the exiting panel 100 per cent dust free for spraying.

'The CB's denibbing results are second to none, as demonstrated by the numbers of machines that have been sold over the past few years,' says Mr Gibbs.

'We have also developed a great range of mobile drying racks and spray tables. They are suited for small and large operations alike.

'All the racks and spray tables are designed and manufactured in-house and fit budgets and requirements from one man workshops to large finishing departments,' adds Warren Gibbs.

Along with a standard range, Gibbs also offers custom-designed racks and spray tables to suit customer's individual requirements.

In addition, the company also offers custom-made machines, providing a one-stop shop, from in-house design, manufacturing and installation.

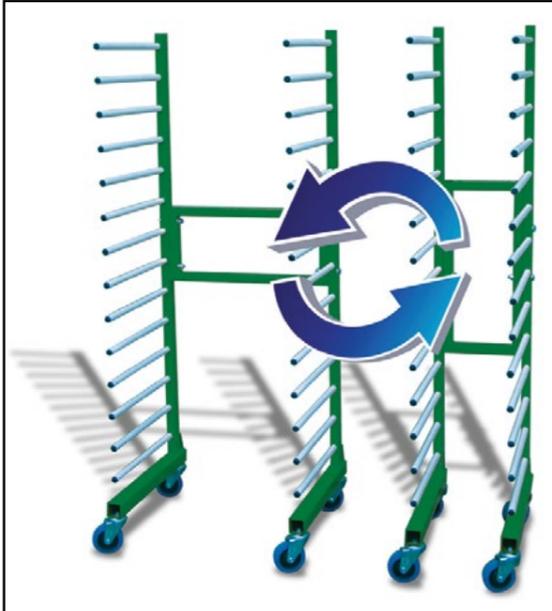
Having been manufacturing custom-built machines for over 40 years, Gibbs has a wealth of knowledge and experience in many areas – customers from small companies to multi-national PLC's have had machines built by Gibbs Sandtech.

'Projects generally are never the same. We work with a blank sheet of paper at the initial concept stage, so the finished design can meet every detailed requirement of the customer. Most are truly unique designs suited to individual processes incorporating handling, machining, clamping, or sanding processes,' says Mr Gibbs.

Gibbs also has a wealth of experience in RF (high frequency) used for rapid glue curing – sometimes combining several processes in to one machine.

'Custom designed machines can sometimes be a stand-alone unit, or form part, or even an entire production line.

For further information tel Gibbs Sandtech on 01920 822404. Visit www.gibbsfinishing.com



NOW YOU CAN CONTINUE ABB ROBOTICS MASTER CLASSES WITHOUT LEAVING THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME

ABB continues online versions of its popular classroom-based robot training courses, helping organisations ensure that staff still receive training on robots

ABB Robotics range of robot training courses have been available online for almost 12 months. Built on the same materials used in its popular classroom-based courses normally run at ABB's robot training centre in Milton Keynes, the virtual classroom training programme is ideal for beginners and experts alike, covering topics including programming, safety and operation.

Each course is instructor led, with options pitched at different competency levels running from two to five days depending on the course topic. Participants will receive the same certificate as the normal Milton Keynes classroom-based courses.

The following courses are available:

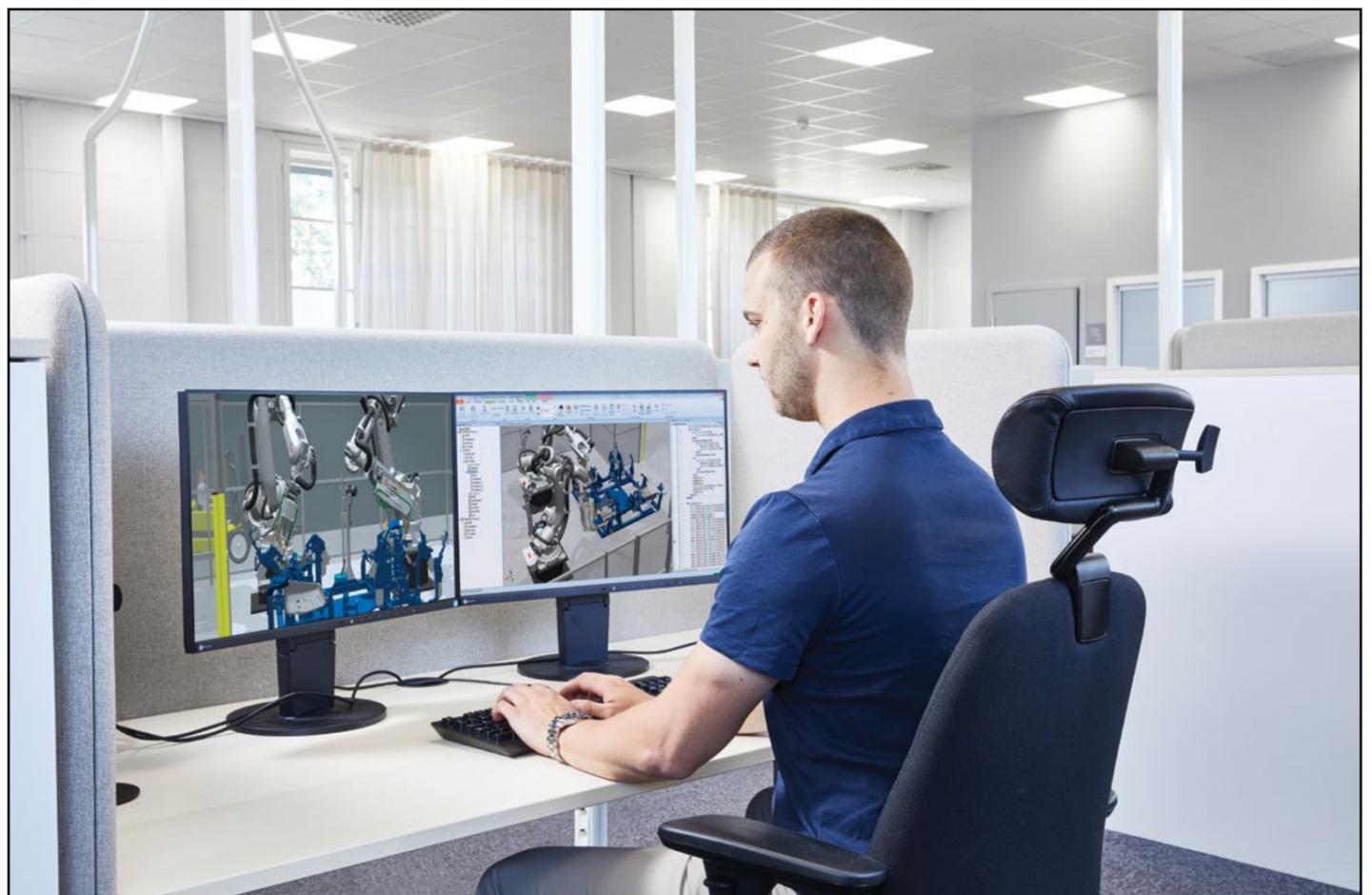
- IRC5 Operator Course (2 days).
- IRC5 Programming and Operation (4 days).
- IRC5 Advanced Programming, Stage 1 (5 days).
- IRC5 SafeMove Second Generation (3 days).
- RobotStudio Offline Programming (5 days).

In order to take part in the course you will only need a computer with internet connection, webcam, headset with microphone and RobotStudio, which can be downloaded free of charge via our training portal page at https://bit.ly/ABB_VCT2021. A whole range of courses are available, including classes that can be attended at the Milton Keynes facilities.

These virtual training courses provide the ideal opportunity to keep staff up to speed on robotic technology during these unprecedented times. They play a key role in helping to future-proof businesses for when operations are allowed to operate at maximum capacity post the pandemic.

These virtual training courses provide a hands-on experience, to gain the required skills set to operate modern manufacturing systems from the comfort of your very own home.

For further information tel ABB on 01908 350481. Visit https://bit.ly/ABB_VCT2021.



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2020 WAS THE YEAR THAT WE CONFIGURATION AS WELL AS

‘THE word “unprecedented” has become synonymous with the year 2020,’ says head of marketing at Häfele UK, Natalie Davenport.

‘Actually, that description doesn’t even scratch the surface. The past 12 months and the ramifications of Covid-19, have arguably been the single biggest challenge this sector – and many others – have ever faced and, hopefully, will ever face again.

‘We consider ourselves an agile business and one which can adapt to support our customers. So, it became obvious early into the pandemic that it was almost our duty to focus on services and products, which would make it easier for manufacturers and installers to get back to business as efficiently and as soon as possible,’ says Natalie.

‘We spoke to customers across the country to understand the new challenges they were facing in terms of new ways of working, costs, supply and demand and more.

‘Then we considered how we could bring together and refine some of our own services to make a real difference to their operations during those truly difficult days of early lockdown,’ says Natalie.

‘In response to the pandemic and our customers’ needs, we launched Häfele “Here to Help” - a dedicated package of support for our industry. The programme was designed to help installers, joiners and manufacturers to increase sales and enquiries, as well as deliver projects on time and to budget, despite the financial, operational and logistical challenges presented by the pandemic.



‘As well as offering price freezes on our products and extended free delivery, we also amalgamated several value-added services.

‘Our free-of-charge Lighting Design Service and “Häfele to Order” – our bespoke, made-to-order manufacturing service that allows customers to order personalised packed and assembled products for their project – were, and still are, on offer, along with a newly launched technical specification support programme for sliding door gear.

‘The ultimate aim was to give installers and manufacturers all the technical elements they needed to access the right hardware, materials and specification to support customers who needed to continue to work to keep up with orders and projects, by making our processes as efficient as possible.’

‘It transpires this was very much welcomed by the industry, because the demand was there and it continues to grow.

The lockdown forced home-owners to stay inside their properties and the result was that many started thinking of all the things they could do to improve their space.

‘The niggling parts of their homes, which they could live with when they weren’t confined to it 24 hours a day, were no longer niggles – they needed resolving. And with many having more disposable cash, due to a decrease in commuting, socialising and travelling, the most sensible option was to re-invest it into their home.

‘Order books started filling up quickly – some of our customers found themselves booked up well into 2021 as early as August 2020 and the trend hasn’t slowed since,’ confirms Natalie.

‘Despite very gloomy initial forecasts, the home improvement industry – and the kitchen sector particularly – has done better than expected.

‘This has been further supported by Government initiatives, which have ensured that the manufacturing and construction industries can continue to function, with them having acknowledged the key role both play in the rebuilding of the economy and job creation.

‘What’s been an interesting movement, is the increased focus on the configuration of internal spaces. It’s no longer enough to improve the face of a room – consumers are increasingly interested in using furniture, fixtures and fittings to make spaces work harder for them, today and into the future.

‘It’s partly because our homes became – without warning – much more multi-functional than they ever needed to be before, when we were told to immediately work, educate, exercise and socialise at home,’ points out Natalie.

‘As a result, the need for a dedicated home office space

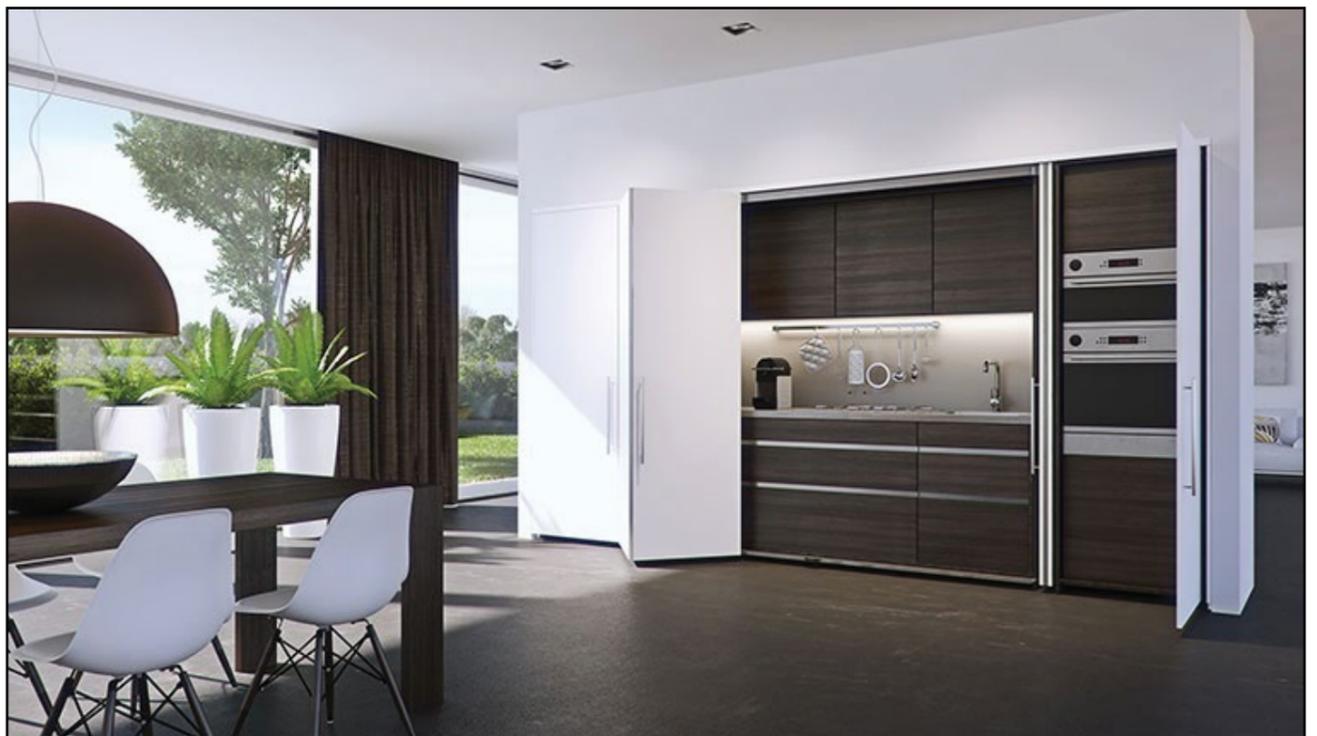


or a larger property with a room that can be updated to create a more spacious office to work from every day, joiners are being called on to add value with really creative ideas.

‘Sliding doors, for example, are being used to break up and reconfigure existing rooms to give home-owners a dedicated working area without sacrificing space elsewhere in the home.

‘Meanwhile, multi-functional fittings, such as table top swivel fittings – which double up as a sideboard and L-shaped workstation – are being fitted to create temporary desks, which are also useful for other residents outside of working hours.

‘There has also been an increased focus on storage within properties, with installers being tasked to create useful areas in



became – and still is – a pressing issue for much of the UK’s working population.

‘The dining table was a fine temporary measure, but people quickly became tired of sore backs, disturbed video calls and a lack of distinction between the work and home environment.

‘In turn, joiners saw, and are still seeing, an upsurge in requests for clever adaptations to rooms that help create the perfect office area, whatever foot-print is available.

‘Whether it’s a home that’s restricted on space, one where a worker needs a dedicated area for a day, or two a week,

formerly “dead space” within homes, to prevent a build-up of clutter, which comes naturally with more people being at home, for more hours of a day.

‘Additionally, home-owners on a budget have been hiring installers to make small changes, which spruce up a space and give it a new lease of life to improve their mental well-being. As well as a lick of paint, they’re changing door handles, replacing worktops, updating hinges and retro-fitting lighting to their furniture to complete low-cost upgrades.

Traditionally lighting has been an area that joiners steer away from, but thanks to innovation in this area – and a new willingness from tradespeople to add new strings to their bow to keep their order book full – it’s becoming easier to provide.

‘This year has seen three life-changing things take place – a major climate emergency, social and economic rising and, of course, the pandemic. In combination, they have given us the ability to slow down and think about the things we want in our life. Humans are very adaptable creatures – we can change easily, but we don’t necessarily like doing so,’ explains Natalie.

WITNESSED SOME CREATIVE UNPRECEDENTED UPGRADES

Looking forward to next year, Natalie says:

'For Häfele, a major focus in 2021 will be continuing to empower installers, joiners and manufacturers to help their customers achieve the changes they want to make in their homes.

'The pandemic has re-inforced how we all live in unique circumstances – no-one's life is the same and, therefore, everyone needs different things from their properties.

'Products and services which enable that will continue to be in demand in 2021, especially as so many businesses have committed to permitting home working for an extended period of time – even if that goes beyond an effective Covid-19 vaccine being developed and made available across society.

'For Häfele, collaboration, being adaptive and putting our customers first has never been more important. As the long-term impact of Covid-19 continues to emerge into 2021, we're committed to working with manufacturers and installers to understand what we can bring the market to support them – because whether it's technical, specification, or design support, we want to be a true extension of their team.

'Just as, in the same way, consumers need joiners and installers to be part of their team – they want their homes to bring joy and we'll be doing everything we can to make the manufacturing industry central to that,' concludes Natalie.



For further information tel Häfele on 0800 171 2909. Visit www.hafele.co.uk

QUICKFIT TL5 DOWELS COMBINE VERSATILITY WITH PERFORMANCE

THE new and innovative Quickfit TL5 Full Metal Jacket dowels from cabinet hardware expert, Titus provide strong, reliable joints in all types of wooden materials, including MDF, chipboard and solid wood.

This means that it is no longer necessary to use different dowels for different materials, or to re-inforce joints by adding supplementary wooden dowels.

In addition, the new dowels – which are part of the Titus "Engineered for Your Kitchen" programme – offer fast, tool-free insertion, reducing assembly time by up to -50 per cent for home-assembled furniture.

Alternatively, for maximum efficiency in volume production applications, they can be inserted automatically using Titus FastFit machines.

Quickfit TL5 dowels, which are used in conjunction with Titus Cam5000 cams, incorporate an expanding steel sleeve that provides high resistance to torsion and pull-out.

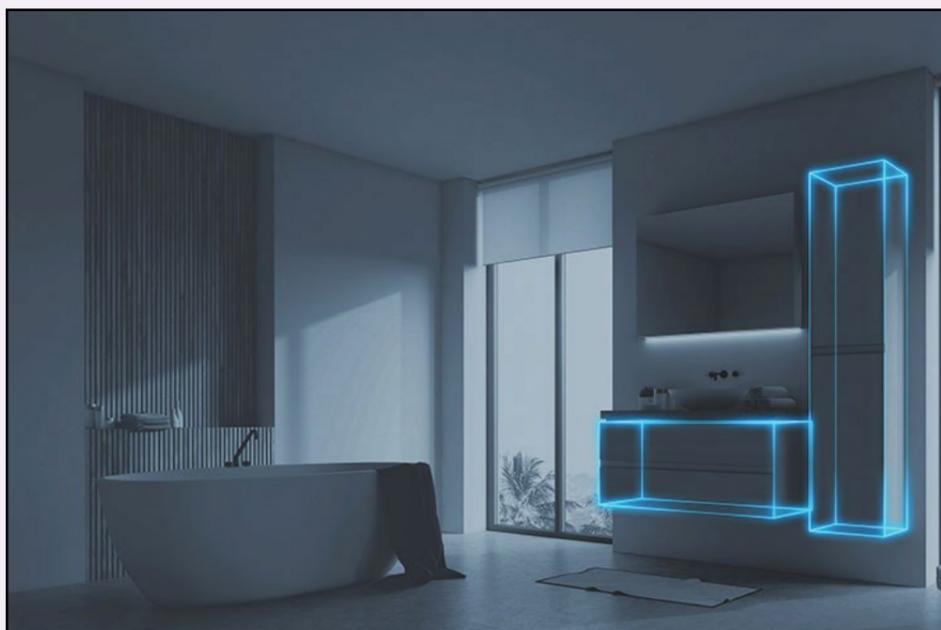
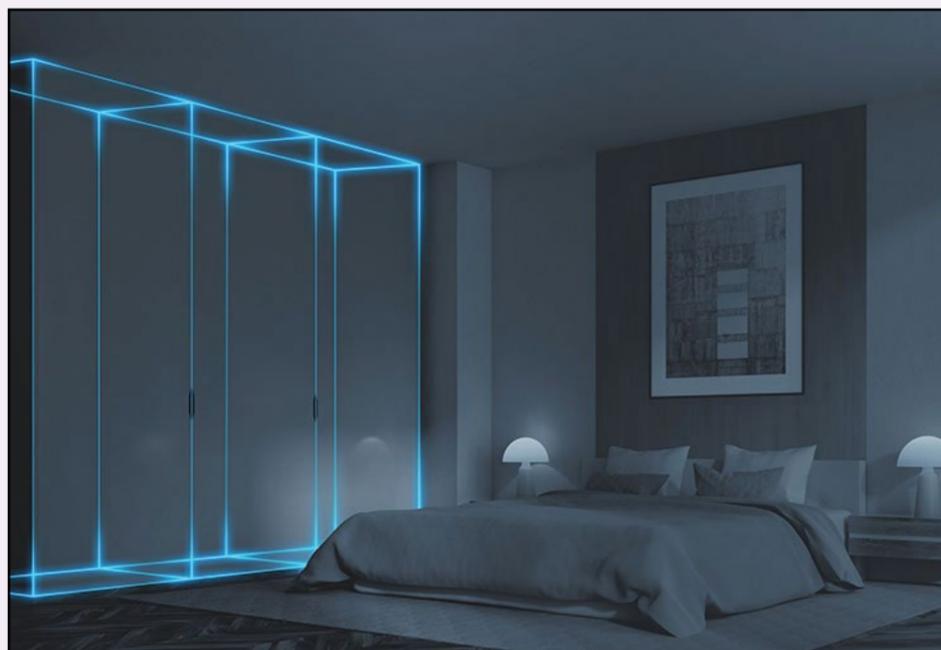
This ensures rigid furniture construction, with complete freedom from the tendency for joints to loosen over time. Furniture using

the dowels can also be disassembled and re-assembled repeatedly without compromising joint integrity.

The dowels are designed for insertion into a 5mm hole and, on insertion, they positively and reliably engage with the hole, greatly simplifying subsequent assembly steps. When edge-inserted, the dowels immediately engage with the cam and remain securely positioned until the cam is tightened.

A further key feature is that the special design of the dowel head adopted for these innovative and time-saving products means that the performance of Quickfit TL5 dowels is unaffected by edge-to-hole-centre (ETHC) tolerances of up to $\pm 1\text{mm}$. Therefore, they easily accommodate not only drilling inconsistencies, but also the natural movement of wooden panels.

The dowels can be supplied in versions to suit ETHC dimensions of 24mm and 34mm. The required hole diameter for the face board is 5mm and for the edge board 8mm. The minimum hole depth in the face board is 12.5mm.



For further information tel Titus on 01977 682582. Visit www.titusplus.com



NEW T-TYPE HINGES FROM TITUS

IN RESPONSE to the fast-growing demand for black cabinet hardware, Titus has launched its TeraBlack product range, which includes new versions of its innovative and highly successful T-type hinges, TL5 “full metal jacket” dowels, shelf supports and push latches.

The new Tera (Titus Enhanced Resistance Application) versions, which are particularly well suited to applications in premium kitchen furniture, have a dark-grey, non-reflective finish that is not only visually appealing, but is also highly resistant to scratching.

‘TeraBlack represents a very exciting step forward in the evolution of our product range,’ says, general manager at Titus UK, Phil Beddoe.

‘It’s been specifically developed to complement and enhance all types of cabinet furniture, but we believe that it will appeal particularly to the kitchen market,’ he adds.

‘TeraBlack is much more than just another colour option, it’s a unique finish that’s great to look at and will retain its good looks throughout the whole life of the product.

‘These features, combined with the outstanding quality and performance that characterise all Titus products, make the new TeraBlack items an attractive option for all top-tier furniture manufacturers,’ concludes Mr Beddoe.

Particularly well suited to applications in high-end premium kitchen furniture,

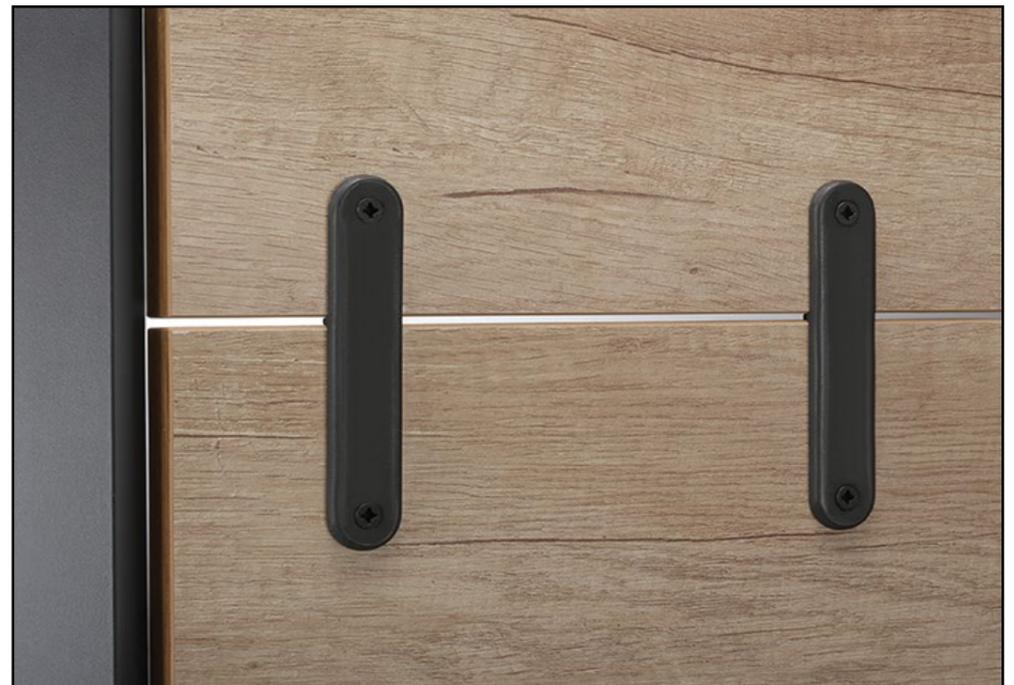
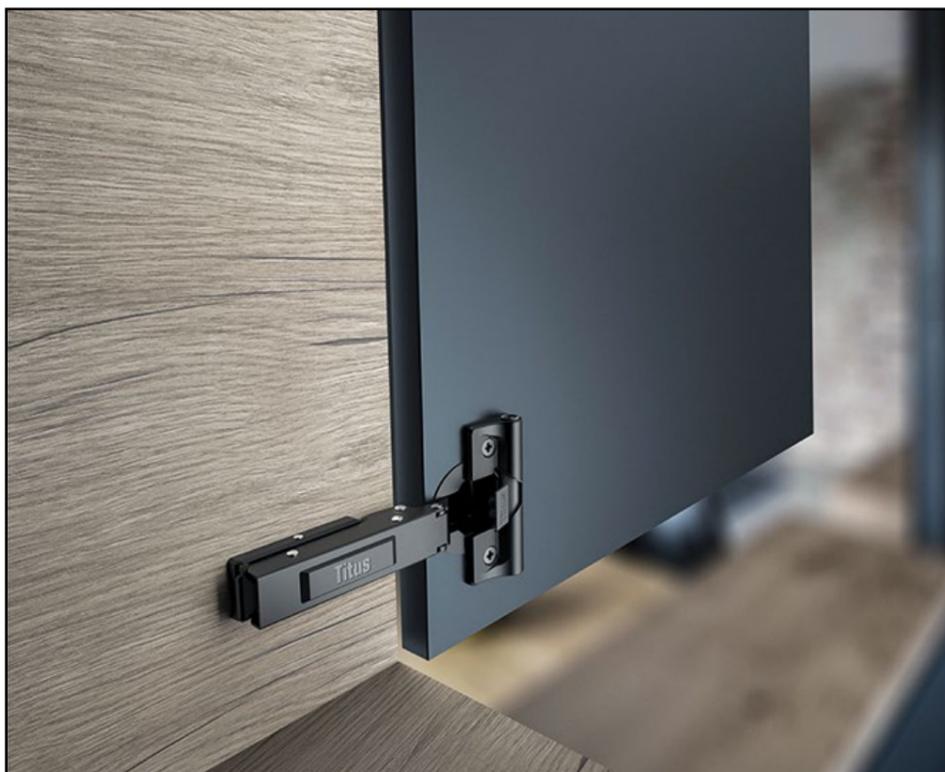
Titus TeraBlack products fully meet the requirements of designers and consumers looking for unobtrusive yet attractive cabinet hardware.

Titus TeraBlack products have highly uniform smooth surfaces, with a velvet feel that emphasises their innate quality and reinforces their consumer appeal.

They are dependable, Titus-engineered solutions supported

by tightly controlled, repeatable, efficient, flexible and scalable manufacturing processes that provide the performance, consistency and quality rightly demanded by high-end furniture producers.

For further information tel Titus on 01977 682582.
Visit www.titusplus.com



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Email us at: bill.willowe@gmail.com

FAST, FLEXIBLE & EFFICIENT ORDER HANDLING

FLEXBUFFER supports consumer choice, shorter delivery times for ecommerce with fast, flexible, efficient order handling.

Its highly adaptable modular application cell stores, buffers and sequences a wide variety of items. It also enables the efficient handling of smaller batch sizes, mixed pallets and individual customer orders.

ABB is responding to the growing consumer demand for choice and fast delivery with the launch of its FlexBuffer application cell.

FlexBuffer brings new levels of flexibility, offering a highly adaptable multi-functional solution for then handling a variety of tasks, such as sequencing, buffering, storage and order consolidation.

'The constantly changing nature of today's consumer landscape and the explosion of ecommerce is challenging the conventional systems used for processing and delivering orders,' says group senior vice president managing director consumer segments & service robotics at ABB, Marc Segura.

'The FlexBuffer helps our customers meet these challenges by bringing automated storage and retrieval and goods sequencing to all facilities. Now any size operation can achieve maximum efficiency in handling a wide range of items,' says Marc.

'With FlexBuffer, our customers will have the flexibility to store and retrieve goods as they want, in any sequence to suit their operation and customers' needs, as well as the ability to quickly scale up their operations if required,' adds Marc.

Operators across multiple industries are facing a range of challenges in meeting consumer expectations for faster delivery of an expanding range of goods, including labour shortages and the need to provide direct-to-consumer (D2C) delivery services in a flexible, fast manner.

Automated goods handling is the key to solving these challenges, yet most systems available today are large, expensive to install and lack the flexibility to provide the buffering and

order sequencing capabilities that companies need.

FlexBuffer answers these challenges. Comprising of an ABB robot, a suite of grippers, a software package, storage racking and infeed and outfeed conveyors that feed and dispatch goods, FlexBuffer provides a flexible and cost effective multi-functional solution for quickly processing a wide variety of customer orders.

Incoming orders are managed by software that interfaces with WMS, ERP and AMS systems. The software suite manages the storage and retrieval of mixed items, avoiding collisions and optimising storage use.

Information from the software is used by the robot to store goods in the appropriate rack positions, based on the sequence in which they need to be dispatched.

When objects need to be retrieved, the robot can select the requested goods in the right sequence and place them on the outbound conveyor, ready for dispatch.

Ordering goods according to pre-defined sequences ensures that companies can achieve delivery times and fill customised orders with the correct item weights, item temperatures, or specific order related attributes.

The FlexBuffer can also help companies form an Order Consolidation Buffer (OCB), allowing the temporary storage of goods before further processing.

The FlexBuffer is available in both single and mixed item versions. The single item version is designed to handle standard boxes used to transport items, while the version for mixed items offers added flexibility through an adjustable gripper that can handle items, including parcels, trays and crates.

FlexBuffer can handle a total payload of up to 50kg. The solution can store up to 600 totes and conduct sequencing operations at up to 500 cycles/hr.

Additional flexibility is enabled by FlexBuffer's configurable

storage management software, which can be used to optimise the system for buffering, storage and sequencing operations.

Able to control single, or multiple FlexBuffer cells, the software ensures that operations can easily be scaled up to meet changing demands.

This scalability is especially ideal for smaller facilities needing a more adaptable and flexible storage and retrieval solution.

The software also helps to meet the growing requirement for live order tracking, with customers able to continuously track the progress of their order.

In order to ensure that customers can achieve maximum production, ABB offers a full range of value-added services designed to increase the performance, uptime and life-time of FlexBuffer and its portfolio of modular cells.

ABB can also now offer fully autonomous mobile robots (AMRs) to greatly improve the flexibility of logistics operations.

With the recent acquisition of ASTI Mobile Robotics Group (ASTI), a leading global manufacturer of AMRs, ABB is claimed to be the only company able to offer a complete portfolio for the next generation of flexible automation.

The benefits that FlexBuffer can bring are already being proven in applications across the world.

Pilot installations include an order picking system for British retailer, John Lewis & Partners.

ABB is a leading global technology company that energises the transformation of society and industry to achieve a more productive, sustainable future.

By connecting software to its electrification, robotics, automation and motion portfolio, ABB pushes the boundaries of technology to drive performance to new levels.

With a history of excellence stretching back more than 130 years, ABB's success is driven by approximately 105,000 talented employees in over 100 countries.

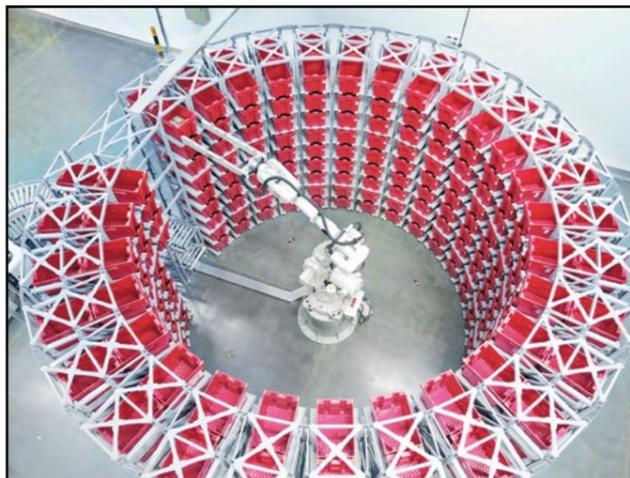
ABB Robotics & Discrete Automation is a pioneer in robotics, machine automation and digital services, providing innovative solutions for a diverse range of industries, from automotive to electronics to logistics.

As one of the world's leading robotics and machine automation suppliers, the company has shipped more than 500,000 robot solutions.

ABB helps customers of all sizes to increase productivity, flexibility and simplicity and to improve output quality.

ABB supports their transition towards the connected and collaborative factory of the future. ABB Robotics & Discrete Automation employs more than 11,000 people at over 100 locations in more than 53 countries.

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TITUS DEMONSTRATES GROUND-BREAKING TECHNOLOGIES

TITUS combines customer-led research and development with lean processes and state-of-the-art manufacturing to deliver solutions that provide outstanding customer benefits.

For those who wish to see first-hand Titus' innovations, the company will be exhibiting on Stand B44/C45 in Hall 2 at the SICAM trade show which runs from 12-15 October 2021, in Pordenone, Italy.

Among the new developments that visitors to the Titus stand will be able to see are TeraBlack products with a matte black finish and light absorbing microstructure, the new System 6 connector family of performance-engineered connectors for simplified cabinet assembly and state-of-the-art dampers for cold environments, which operate reliably in temperatures as low as -30 deg C.

TeraBlack is much more than just another colour option. It is a unique black, non-light reflective matte finish with a highly uniform surface. It provides a perfect response to the modern trend towards the use of black cabinet hardware. The flagship product in the TeraBlack range is the award-winning T-type hinge with integrated damping.

Key features of these hinges are simplicity of assembly, wide tolerances and a totally consistent performance on a wide range of doors.

B-type-i3 is a third-generation slide-on hinge with integrated damping, which can be relied upon to deliver consistent and reliable opening and closing performance throughout the entire life of the furniture.

The extended lifecycle of B-type-i3 hinges make them an appropriate solution for a wide range of cabinet applications, including kitchens.

Quickfit TL5 "Full Metal Jacket" dowel connectors have been designed with strength and performance in mind.

They deliver reliable connections in all common wood-based materials, including MDF, chipboard and solid wood, without

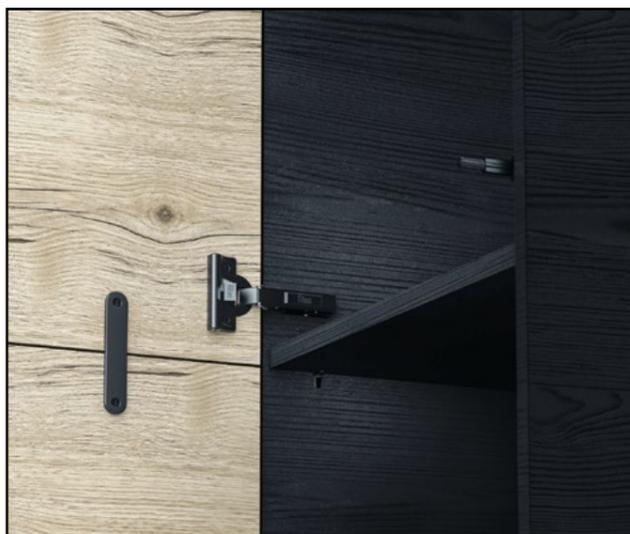
the need for additional wooden dowels.

Thanks to its unique expandable steel sleeve, the Quickfit TL5 is the only dowel on the market that reliably engages in a 5mm dowel hole.

System 6 connectors feature an elegant square design that allows a large surface area of the product to rest on the panel when tightened, thereby ensuring optimum positioning.

Anti-rotation ribs prevent cam rotation and panel shift, while the angle-drive feature on the cam makes these connectors an ideal choice for applications where space for assembly is limited.

Tekform Slimline Tacto drawers incorporate runners with an integrated Tacto activator that ensures effortless touch opening. The new drawers are the most recent development in the



popular Tekform Slimline range of thin-wall drawers and use the same drilling and fixing positions as previous versions.

This makes it easy to update and enhance existing designs to offer convenient and reliable opening of drawers with handleless fronts.

Slidix products are novel damping solutions for use with sliding doors. The range includes a complete family of soft-closing systems with a damping stroke of 50mm or 100mm that assure efficient damping at any closing speed for applications from 5 kg to 120 kg.

A unique feature of the range is Slidix Centro, which is specifically designed to control the motion of and centring of middle doors in applications that involve three or more sliding doors.

Dampers for cold environments are the latest product of Titus's "Engineered for a Purpose" philosophy.

By providing reliable damping at temperatures down to -30 deg C, these offer convenient and affordable solutions to challenges that include the damping of doors in freezers, wine coolers, mobile equipment and automobile applications.

'At Titus, our aim is always to offer innovative and practical solutions that will give our customers the maximum possible competitive advantage,' says owner and executive chairman of the Titus Group, Robert Appleby.

'I believe that the new products on show at SICAM confirm that we are successfully meeting this aim. I hope as many visitors as possible will take the opportunity to see our new developments and to discuss their potential applications and benefits with the Titus experts on our stand,' concludes Mr Appleby.

For further information tel Titus on 01977 682582. Visit www.titusplus.com

To find all the latest news online go to www.industrialwoodworking.co.uk

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