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Message from the Editor

By Joy Crane

The future lies in science and technology

We are often asked why the magazine has so many pictures of people standing in front of machines. Yes, maybe it is partly because the stories feature advertisers and their clients. More significantly it is because all the machine installation and process upgrading information and pictures we print have one thing in common: the investment in new technologies by business owners who are confident about the future they have planned for their company.

We are in an age of increasing artificial intelligence and automation in the workplace where improved productivity needs digital transformation and skills. It does not matter whether the machine is second hand, the latest version of a traditional machine, or an Industry 4.0 processing centre, the business owners knows that it will result in employees having to understand and operate new technologies.

Value chain

Striking the balance between automated work activities and employee involvement is the challenge. This month we feature a superb example of a forestry sector value chain that is completely driven and underpinned by science, technology, concern for the environment and, importantly, the development of people.

A value chain describes the full range of activities that employees and machines do to bring a product from its conception to its end use and beyond. This includes activities such as growing the raw materials or designing a product, to production, marketing, distribution and support to the final consumer, and its impact on downstream suppliers and on the community. The parts that comprise a value chain can be contained within a single company in a single location or divided among a number of companies spread over a wide geographical area.

The value chain we are focusing on in this issue of the magazine is that of MTO and its southern and Eastern Cape activities. Please do make time to read the account of how precision silviculture, precision harvesting, lean processing in the log yard and wet and dry mills, and biomass conversion has transformed the lives of the people associated with MTO’s Longmore – George value chain.

A key decision made by MTO’s management during this process of renewal was to take their employees with them on the technology-driven journey. For example, five employees were sent to Finland to receive hands on training on their new sawmill equipment before it was shipped to South Africa. In an interview with Wood SA, they could not contain their enthusiasm to start working with the new machine.

Innovation

Despite the current shortage of qualified and highly experienced technicians in the country there are many people who continue to innovate. In this issue we also report on the development of new machines and processes by local entrepreneurs. In the forestry section you can read about Willem van der Merwe’s patented mulch spreader, in the transport section we feature Andy Hossack’s FireFox fire detection and suppression system, and in woodworking Jamie Smily explains why he has introduced cross laminted timber (CLT) building systems in South Africa.

National Minimum Wage

In previous editions of the magazine we have discussed the proposed National Minimum Wage Bill. Forestry South Africa recently joined 39 other organisations who made submissions to parliament. The organisation recommended that the implementation of the NMW be put on hold. Their submission explains a number of reasons, including:

• the state of the economy should be considered
• the phasing in period should be extended over a minimum period of three year
• the annual review of the impact of the NMW on employment levels and that representation thereof include those who can speak on behalf of the unemployed
• the exemption process be made considerably easier and allow for non “employers’ organisations”, such as FSA, to apply for “blanket exemptions.”
• The definition of “farm worker” should be extended to include workers working in “on site” primary forestry processing facilities (eg sawmills, mining timber mills, pole treating plants and charcoal plants). This will allow their wages to be set at the same level as those currently applicable to “forestry workers” working in plantations.

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An Ambrosia Beetle Working Group was established in February 2018 during a meeting between government officials and the research team at the Forestry & Agricultural Biotechnology Institute FABI.

A tiny ambrosia beetle, the Polyphagous Shothole Borer (PSHB) or Euwallacea fornicatus, made the news after a scientific study by FABI confirmed its discovery in Pietermaritzburg in 2017, and subsequent reports suggested that it is killing many trees in Johannesburg.

It was discovered in the country for the first time by Dr Trudy Paap, a postdoctoral fellow at FABI at the University of Pretoria. During a survey for diseases in the KwaZulu-Natal Botanical Gardens in Pietermaritzburg, Paap found a lane of infested plane trees. The identity of the beetle was subsequently confirmed and the tiny beetle – they are each about 2mm long – has been found at work in gardens and road sides in Johannesburg.

The problem is the beetle isn’t alone. It carries several fungal species with it when it infests living trees. One of these, Fusarium euwallacea, seems to be a permanent associate of the beetle. The beetle bores through the bark into the sapwood of the trees and inoculates the fungus into living wood. The fungus grows in the galleries of the beetle and serves as food for the beetle larvae. In susceptible trees the fungus can spread through the sapwood causing disease and eventually death of the tree.

The beetle and the fungus have devastated trees in California in the United States and in Israel. Insecticides aren’t effective because the beetles bore deep into the wood. The only known method of managing the spread is to cut down infested trees and burn them. But research is underway to find more effective methods.

The Ambrosia Beetle Working Group currently includes:

• JanHendrik Venter and Julie Mokwele of the Plant Health Early Warning Systems at the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF)
• Vukosi Baloyi, Forestry Scientific Services at DAFF
• Adelaide Chokoe, arboriculturist of Johannesburg Citiparks & Zoo
• Wilhelm de Beer, Brett Hurley, and Noelani van den Berg of FABI

The Working Group will co-ordinate research efforts, monitor and consolidate data on the spread of the beetle and host tree reports in the country, investigate possible control strategies, and advise government bodies, industry, and the public on treatment of infested trees and wood.

Although the PSHB beetle and its Fusarium fungus have been suggested as the causal agent of tree deaths in Johannesburg, the research team at FABI, under the leadership of Prof Wilhelm de Beer, is still in the process of confirming the identity of both organisms from specimens collected from infested trees in the Sandton area with DNA sequences.

Any enquiries with regards to the presence of the beetle in South Africa, can be directed to JanHendrikV@daff.gov.za or diagnostic.clinic@fabi.up.ac.za
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Even with the new name, they're the same Bandit hand-fed drum-style chippers customers know and love. That said, there are some design changes and enhancements that have been implemented in the last year on Bandit hand-fed chippers that make these chippers even better.

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In just 18 months, Willem van der Merwe’s biomass processing and equipment hire company has doubled its manufacturing footprint and capacity, is providing full time employment for an additional 60 people and is playing a key role in rehabilitating riparian zones; and these are only some of the reasons why he was recognised as the Entrepreneur of the Year in 2017.

Africa Biomass Company (ABC) is considered by the sponsors of the Entrepreneur of the Year award, Sanlam and Business Partners, to be the country’s leading expert in land clearing, wood chipping, and wood recycling. The business revolves around the concept of grinding up unwanted trees on site, with the use of wood chipper machines, to create biomass that is then either sold back to the site owner or onto a secondary market, thereby generating value from waste wood.

This resourcefulness stood out to the judging panel. “Willem is supplying an excellent service of removing unwanted trees and has taken this idea one step further by creating something useful out of these trees. He is therefore not only getting paid to supply a removal service but is also able to capitalise on that service by reselling what he has removed. This is true entrepreneurship.”

Van der Merwe, managing director of registered company WP Chipper that trades as ABC, says an employee entered the company in the competition and he thought nothing of it until he received a Skype call from the judges who interviewed him and later informed him that he was one of the 15 finalists.

“The week of the award was one of the most emotional of my life. Four days before we had to fly to Johannesburg for the gala dinner, Rudolf “Versadig” Marais a best friend and the manager of our Eastern Cape branch, passed away suddenly. I immediately went to Port Elizabeth and only attended the event because I knew he would have wanted me to.”

Van der Merwe has framed a letter of congratulations from Gys du Toit of Du Toit Agri, one of the largest fruit and vegetable growers in the country and winner of numerous business awards. Du Toit said, “Yours is a wonderful story of innovation, tenacious determination and hard work.”
Rapid decision making
Van der Merwe compares a successful business with a winning sports team. “You need to be aware of your business environment, gather and understand all your information as quickly and efficiently as possible, and make decisions rapidly. Split-second decisions need to be made all the time based on information at hand and not on emotion,” he advises new business owners.

What sets Van der Merwe apart is that the existence and success of ABC is based solely on innovation. Frustrated by having to spend time and money on carting away or burning debris and logs produced by the small tree-felling business he took over in 2004, he decided to do something about it. After studying what was being done in other countries, Van der Merwe decided to apply the concept of wood recycling in his own business.

By the beginning of 2016 the business was unrecognizable. The company employed 90 people in a factory in Worcester’s industrial area and Van der Merwe says it was entirely “focused on the needs of our customers. Some want their own equipment, others want a contractor to do it for them. We have worked hard to be the preferred supplier.”

Bandit agency
In the last quarter of 2016, the company was approached by their long-time chipping equipment supplier, Bandit, to become the 35-year-old American manufacturers’ agent. “Bandit approached us because we were their biggest client and had the most spares in stock. We currently supply, service and maintain and stock spares for Bandit’s machines in countries in southern Africa.”

Since then their relationship has matured and grown, and today the two companies are exploring various avenues that will allow them both to grow their market share while remaining focused on their core businesses.

Control your business
When you meet him, Van der Merwe is a charming and relaxed man, however this calm and down-to-earth exterior hides a creative and competitive business man who is not afraid to swim against the tide. “There is a tendency in business and industry to run as lean as possible on stock. I disagree, if you want to control your destiny you need to have the solutions at hand.”

For this reason, ABC carries more than R120-million of inventory in Bandit and other machine. It has branches in
Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and Western Cape. ABC will soon be able to assist its clients in KZN when it signs an agreement with a local equipment manufacturer. “Our teams and those of our clients should not have to experience undue delays caused by waiting for parts to arrive.”

He may not agree with “just-in-time” principles when it comes to stock keeping, but he does need to know what is going on in his factory every minute of the day. His unimposing office on a temporary mezzanine floor in the middle of the noisy workshop has a huge white board covered in rows and columns of figures that at a glance gives him an update on the state of his business. The time lag bothers him, and he is working with a small IT firm to develop a fully comprehensive customised logistics monitoring system for the business.

“I agree with the experts who say, ‘if you can’t measure it you can’t manage it’. It is going to take at least three years of development over multiple platforms to give me what I believe is necessary to control the destination of the business,” says Van der Merwe. “I believe that desperation becomes the destination, which is why we are constantly reinventing ourselves but always focusing on our core business.”

Riparian zone clearing
A very important part of the business now is working with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) and regional and local municipalities to do riparian zone clearing and rehabilitation along the Western Cape’s Berg and Breede Rivers. So far ABC’s teams have removed about 40 000 tons of eucalyptus red river gum and other invasive trees from the banks of the rivers. 75% were recycled into a useable form including mulch, biofuel and timber and a small percentage into firewood.

Mentor
“I believe every business owner should have a mentor, someone they trust, respect and can rely on. Johan du Preez of Môreson Grondverskuiwers is both, my mentor and a shareholder in WP Chipper, which we have now converted from a close corporation into a company. We have been working together since 2008 and I acknowledge his stewardship,” Van der Merwe comments.
WOOD CHIPS USED AS A SUSTAINABLE SOURCE FOR BIOFUEL IN BOILERS TO...

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The lack of a suitable vehicle to spread mulch in orchards and vineyards prompted Africa Biomass Company (ABC) to design and manufacture a heavy-duty mulch spreader.

Willem van der Merwe, founder of ABC, explains that five years ago the company realised it needed a bulk mulch spreading machine. “We began the process of researching, designing and prototyping our own labour and time saving machine. It has come through our stringent trials with flying colours, and we registered our patented spreader mechanism and it is ready for the market,” says Van der Merwe.

There are currently two versions of the machine, one with a capacity of five cubic metres and the other with a capacity of 10 cubic metres. It has a single side delivery chute and provides uniform and targeted ground coverage with very little waste. It is ideal for mulching for weed control, fertilisation or moisture evaporation.

The machine can deliver up to 500 cubic metres of mulch a day and is pulled behind a tractor. It uses the tractor PTO for the discharge belt drive, and the tractors hydraulics run the floor chain.

ABC launches purpose-built and patented South African mulch spreader

These bulk mulch spreaders, designed, manufactured and patented by ABC, do mulching operations in an orchard in the drought stricken Western Cape.
The unprecedented fires that raged between George and Port Elizabeth in June 2017 destroyed tens of thousands of hectares of plantations, including 6000ha of Longmore and demolished Longmore Sawmill. MTO firefighters, who at one stage were fighting the fires on several fronts 100km apart, were assisted by Working on Fire, community firefighters and municipal firefighters, many brought in from other provinces. They lost the sawmill but managed to save the lives and homes of their staff living in the “Bosdorp” next door to the sawmill.

Reeling from the shock of the events and faced with the huge losses in terms of the hard work and capital in getting Longmore off the ground after the 1998 and 2005 fires, it may have been understandable if MTO decided to shut down the operations. But forestry companies never give up and this was not an option for the company.

They immediately began to roll out their proven strategy for brownfields operations. It is now nine months later, and the sawmill has been rebuilt, the trees that needed to be harvested immediately were cut down and markets found for them and replanting according to the new silviculture regime is in full swing.

MTO Solutions’ Karl-Heinz Niemand says the setbacks are severe and although they were insured, the impact of a burnt plantation resource has a knock-one effect for at least the next ten years. “Fire causes loss of income and adds additional, difficult to foresee, costs of harvesting, replanting and follow ups.

On the other hand, it also gives us an opportunity to refine our strategies, improve our operations to work more efficiently and mitigate risk, and further develop the skills of our staff.”
Harness STIHL power with comfort and ease

The new STIHL ADVANCE X-TREE forestry harness offers an ergonomic, practical design for operators using brushcutters and clearing saws for extended periods. This lightweight harness allows for excellent freedom of movement thanks to the freely suspended hip pad and is comfortable to wear due to the length-adjustable back section and infinitely variable load distribution between the shoulders and hips. The harness can also be easily adjusted to perfectly fit the shape and size of the operator’s frame – both male and female. A quick release carrying ring on the leg allows for attachment and removal of the clearing saw. Textile parts are made of breathable material for maximum ventilation and cooling and can be removed for cleaning. Individual components can be replaced if worn or damaged. An innovative, well-constructed harness designed for professional operators working for long periods.

Like any premium item, STIHL products are only available at specialised dealers nationwide, for expert advice and superior after-sales service.
Longmore plantation and sawmill, initially a sub-optimal millstone for MTO Forestry, reinvented itself into a new company that offers services to a wide range of markets, including construction timber, wildlife preservation, recreational facilities, wetlands protection, carbon sequestration and biomass energy solutions.

Willie Brink, MTO’s forestry technical services manager, says the case study is significant because it demonstrates how the combination of science, precision silviculture and harvesting, and traditional and new markets can revitalise existing or previously developed “brownfield” poor performing plantations.

He says the implementation of a successful brownfields project requires an appreciation for the value chain, from the soil to the final product that is driven by changing market needs.

“Generic barriers to entry for greenfield forestry projects include high initial costs and long lead times for income from harvesting mature trees to commence,” he says. “In South Africa there are additional legal constraints such as the planting permit system under which it is extremely difficult to obtain permission to plant up new areas. Brownfield areas with existing planting permits are a more attractive value proposition.”

Although Longmore, which covers 10 000ha planted in the Eastern Cape to the left of the N2 between Humansdorp and Port Elizabeth, has unique challenges, Brink says it includes aspects that affect all plantations, albeit to a greater extent:

- Very low mean annual increment (MAI) values
- A detailed soils and site productivity evaluation of Longmore in 1998 found the soils were generally shallow, with 82% of trees having a rooting depth of 60cm or less
- Steep slopes that add to harvesting costs and complexity
- A range of timber species with 36% under P.pinaster with end diameter logs from 19cm – 45cm sold as saw logs to local and Tsitsikamma clients, 36% P.elliottii, 24% P.radiata, 1% other pine species, and 3% temporary unplanted areas.
- High harvesting costs due to low volumes, small tree sizes and high piece count of logs
- Low rainfall (average of 750mm or less per year)
2005 Fire

In 2005 a fire raged through 90% of Longmore plantation in 10 days and damaged another 5000ha of trees in the neighbouring Tsitsikamma. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise for Longmore because it presented the opportunity for MTO to take stock and to review its approach.

However, the company had to react immediately to implement a post fire action plan to harvest the burnt timber before it deteriorated further, and to meet the shortages in the local capacity to deal with the salvage of smaller dimension sawlogs. The pattern of replanting followed the fire damage classification system that dictated the salvage order. “Constraints imposed by the previous silvicultural approach and the targeted final crop influenced the initial decision making and prospects immediately after 2005,” Brink explains.

This included the erection of a sawmill in 2006 to cut the small dimension logs to sell wet-off-saw. In 2007 the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC’s) EC Biomass (ECB) pellet manufacturing plant in Coega came on line and Longmore was contracted to provide 60% of the biomass raw materials it needed.

Back in the forests, intense harvesting took place to salvage as much of the burnt stands as possible after the fire destroyed 6000ha of Longmore plantation last year. The remaining trees that were affected are being carefully watched to see whether they will survive.
management project was launched in 2006 that included redesigning the plantation layout to improve the placement of fire breaks and reduce the estimated maximum potential loss for major fire events.

**Site specific species selection**

In 2007 it was found that the best species for the Longmore Sawmill was *P.elliottii* because the *P.pinaster* logs had excessive butt-flair and sweep. The available *P.elliottii* stands were examined and the ideal timber was found in stands with stocking levels more than 1000 stems per hectare (spha).

MTO needed to find a market for the mill’s products, and after intensive research it was decided to commission an additional kiln at George Sawmill to dry some of the Longmore volumes.

“Over time various factors created a path of evolution to a new type of strategic thinking that gained momentum after 2010 when the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) bought shares in MTO,” explains Brink.

It was around this time, in 2012, that MTO established a dedicated unit to investigate ways in which to ensure the sustainability of the Longmore – George ecosystem. MTO Solutions was established and the company released its experienced wood technologist, Karl-Heinz Niemand, and mechanical engineer Johan Dekker to work with Schalk Kapp of GEF to find solutions.

This spearheaded a new strategic approach for Longmore’s foresters. They began factoring in site species matching, the site dynamics at Longmore, changes in the value chain and forestry growth design. At this time about 9000ha of Longmore plantation consisted of young un-enumerated compartments with estimated growth rates derived from previous stands. This resulted in underestimating growth results as it was based on unproductive species (*P.pinaster*) with conservative growth rates (about 50% to that of *P.elliottii*).

**DBH sweet spot replaces MAI**

Previous enumerations from stands with an area of about 10 000ha in total was then used in GIS, with the soils data, to recalibrate the site productivity data. The fact that the soils are mostly shallow, with 36% of the area having an effective soil depth of 30cm or less, and 46% having an effective soil depth of 60cm or less became the main driver of the process.

In shallow soils good initial growth is produced by trees, but it then slows down when the effective rooting depth has been utilised. The facts confirmed that a short rotation crop of small saw logs or poles are ideal for these growth sites because a short rotation cycle can be used and turned around rapidly. Importantly, it also confirmed that the HewSaw small log processing line at Longmore sawmill was perfect for the job at hand.

When these value chain factors were added up it became the pivot point for a new approach to silviculture for the plantation. This resulted in the switch from age-based yield regulation to diameter at breast height (DBH) based yield regulation.
Brink explains that harvest scheduling is now crucial. “There is a sweet spot for the DBH value and we are careful not to overshoot the dimension target of 19cm. This target is ideal for the growth of the trees and for the Hewssaw chipper canter at the sawmill.”

**Precision silviculture and harvesting**

In 2014, MTO commissioned Dr Brand Wessels of Stellenbosch University to research the influence of silviculture strategies on timber quality. The research showed that high initial planting stocking enhances the wood quality benefits by influencing the distribution of juvenile timber in the trees.

These results, and those of Dr Horst Kassier, a Microforest expert who revised and updated the growth model components for P. elliottii, were used by MTO’s technical team to improve simulations of thinning regimes, volume forecasts and financial returns.

Between 2015 and 2017 the new silviculture regimes were implemented. All planting espacement is 3mx3m because this closer spacing results in wood with better structural properties and supports the production of smaller logs. All the seedlings/cuttings are from improved genetic material.

The harvesting system to be used is determined by the raw material to be processed and the terrain. For level areas with uniform tree form stands, a fully mechanised system is used where saw logs production is the main product being processed. Harvesting systems are specified, matched to compartments and compartments scheduled to have minimal environmental impact. Felling is done by means of a harvester and processing is done at stump.

Primary transport to a roadside landing is completed with a forwarder where products are sorted and stacked using a three-wheeled logger. Where the terrain does not allow mechanised systems, processing is done manually. Felling is done either with a feller buncher or motor-manually. Primary transport is done by means of a skidder or a high lead system.

**Value chain evolution**

Brinks says success in turning around a forestry operation is often only measured in terms of changes in MAI and / or changes in sustainable volume levels.

He explains that an evaluation of the Longmore value chain evolution shows the following gains in efficiencies:
- Gain in sustainable volume levels
- Improved growth site utilisation by concentrating on short rotation smaller dimension crops
- Increase in forestry volume recovery made possible by the sawmill processing smaller dimension logs that increases the sellable proportion of the sustainable forestry volume. Even at marginal costing there are additional gains in profitability.
- DBH-based log dimensions maximise the recovery in the sawmill

He concluded by saying that it is essential to ensure that not only single components of the value chain are optimised. “This case study demonstrates that a brownfields project can be a viable alternative and that the full value chain must be considered to achieve sustainability.”
The importance of driver and operator safety in vehicles working in conditions where an engine fire is a real risk is paramount, and a local manufacturer has a solution which, when fitted in an engine compartment, can detect and suppress fire.

The FireFox system from Failsafe Fire Projects has proven itself in mining and construction applications and Andy Hossack, the owner of the company says it is a perfect solution for the forestry and sawmilling industries.

Hossack knows what he is talking about because he has worked in the timber industry for some years. “After completing school and studies at Technikon, I started out in the timber industry and managed a sawmill operation in Knysna. From there I got involved in pallet manufacture working for a pallet plant based in Howick. A few years on I worked for another larger timber operation milling and manufacturing cut to size pallet parts (shooks) for the export pallet market,” he explains.

The export market piqued his interest and he became involved in the import and export of furniture and other hotel goods. Realising he liked the business world, Hossack decided he wanted to own and operate his own company and from then on, a lot of lessons were learnt!

“From my experience in the timber industry, fire has always and continues to be a major concern. This prompted me to take over Failsafe Fire Projects in 2013,” recounts Hossack.

The company was established in 1996 by Guy Ewins to meet the need for a local manufacturer and supplier of vehicle fire suppression system in the mining and construction industries.

“Over the past five years a huge amount of product development work has been done and we now offer a fully electronic system that can be installed alongside a mechanical system if so desired.” Hossack believes FireFox is a success because it is locally designed and built for a wide range of harsh local conditions. As far as possible Failsafe supports other local businesses and stock for servicing and re-charging the systems at competitive price points, without having to wait for imports or make allowances for exchange rates.

Risk mitigation

“Failsafe’s greatest passion is saving operators’ lives. We have seen occasions where the operator does not know his vehicle is on fire, for example an excavator has the engine behind the operator’s cab, so a fire could go unnoticed for some time,” warns Hossack.

“Protection of the asset is obviously also vital in today’s economy and we work closely with the OEM, insurance industry and owner / operator of these vehicles. Finally, the loss of production is also a factor to consider if a machine is no longer operational.”

Made in South Africa vehicle fire suppression system gains ground
All vehicles can be fitted with a fire suppression system. For smaller machines such as three-wheel loaders or skidders the company offers a small system that is compatible. There is even a protection solution for bakkies. The systems are specifically engineered for fires that initiate in engines, turbochargers, transmissions, hydraulic areas and brakes.

Hossack says that to his knowledge, there is no legislation enforcing the use of fire detection and suppression systems.

“In many instances the large forestry companies are specifying safety equipment that their vehicles and those of their contractors must have. I don’t think it will be long before products like FireFox will be compulsory. This may also be driven from the insurance perspective for the standing trees as well as for the vehicle asset for the contractor.”

How does it work?

• A multi-purpose powder is stored in pressurised cylinders with a discharge distribution piping system to protect the engine and hydraulics. For high powered systems ABC 90 dry chemical powder can be used. All systems can be refilled and recharged on site.
• The Failsafe product has a unique mechanical device whereby each powder agent tank can be tested mechanically, including the pressure gauge without any loss of pressure. This device also allows for the safe lock-out of the suppression system when the vehicle undergoes maintenance.
• A unique self-monitoring detection system is also available. It is a pneumatic mechanical device and is not dependent on an electrical supply.
• The FireFox V FSSS 3000 early fire warning status indicator is the company’s solution to remote electronic (GPS) monitoring of vehicle fire detections systems.
• Clean-up after discharge is simple. Sections of the engine can be hosed down with water. Compressed air is useful for electronic cabinets. In certain circumstances air filters may need to be dusted out.

The Failsafe heavy-duty vehicle suppression system technically ranks with the world’s best and leads the field in respect of automatic detection and optional actuation devices.

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“Safety never takes a day off!”

The Firefox system has detected a spark in the engine and immediately starts to work.
Hossack says there is absolutely no harm to the environment as MAP 90% dry chemical powder is monoammonium phosphate (garden fertiliser). “This ensures there are no hazardous chemicals left in the forest. After discharge we have service exchange units available and ensure a quick turnaround time to perform a service and replace the cylinders, thus minimising machine downtime.”

Hossack says his company actively seeks solutions for difficult and complex fire hazards while engineering suitable fire detection and suppression systems.

Failsafe Fire Projects is a member of the South African Fire Services Institute and Fire Fighting Equipment Traders Association.
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Longmore Sawmill is tenacious. It was born in 2006 out of the devastating fires of 2005 that burnt 90% of Longmore plantation; and was decimated by fire in June 2017. Now, less than nine months later, the sawmill is rapidly rising from the ashes and will soon be operational.

The owner of the sawmill and its feeder plantations, the MTO Group, is well prepared. Between 2005 and 2017 they have extensively reviewed, developed and tested, redeveloped and retested every value-adding scenario to ensure that the sawmill, its feeder forests and its output customers are seamlessly integrated while generating as little waste as possible.

The sawmill is seen as part of a larger process, it is the centrepiece of an on-demand system with foresters, trees and loggers on one end, and markets and transportation on the other. It is a pull system.

**2005 -2016**

Karl-Heinz Niemand, general manager of MTO Solutions, explains that in 2005 the company had to react immediately to implement a post fire action plan to harvest the one million cubic metres of burnt timber before it deteriorated further. They also had to meet the shortages in the local capacity to deal with the salvage of smaller dimension sawlogs.

This plan included the erection of a sawmill in 2006 to cut the small dimension logs to sell wet-off-saw to local customers. The first iteration of Longmore Sawmill was equipped with a log sorting system, an inline debarker and a HewSaw R200 chipper cantor line, and wood flow started in July 2006. Everything was sold wet-off-saw, and the mill started to accumulate waste in the form of biomass due to lack of market for biomass. In 2007 the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC’s) EC Biomass (ECB) pellet manufacturing plant in Coega came on line and Longmore was contracted to provide 60% of the wood chips and bark needed to feed the pellet plant.

“The idea was that once the mill had cut the burnt materials it would be mothballed,” explains Niemand. “Instead it continued to run because the size of the burnt area and the wide variety of sizes and species of logs caused the process of recovering the fire damaged timber to take longer than planned. We also needed to cut the large volumes of small logs arriving at the mill due to thinning operations in the Tsitsikamma plantation.”

The bottom line, however was that the sawmill on its own was not sustainable. MTO knew it could no longer look at
forests and sawmills as “silos”. It had to find a better market for the mill’s products and decided to change its approach to that of viewing its operations as a forestry value chain. After intensive research it was decided to commission an additional kiln at George Sawmill to dry some of the Longmore volumes. Two-thirds of the Longmore sawmill’s output was sent for drying at the George sawmill at a rate of about 90 cubic metres of wet-off-saw timber per day.

In 2010 the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) bought shares in MTO, and this brought important different perspectives and approaches to the forestry value chain. By 2011 Longmore sawmill was starting to battle with the deteriorating quality of the burned timber it needed to process, and the problems were exacerbated by the inconsistent off-take of wood chips by the ECB. The IDC eventually shut down the ECB plant in 2012 citing, among other reasons, a lack of international markets for its products. This left Longmore Sawmill with no market for its biomass.

In 2015, MTO decided to establish a dedicated unit to investigate ways in which to ensure the sustainability of the Longmore – George value chain. MTO Solutions was established Niemand and mechanical engineer Johan Dekker working with Schalk Kapp of GEF to search for innovative solutions that would result in a sustainable value chain.

On the forestry side extensive silvicultural research confirmed that a short rotation crop of small saw logs or poles are ideal for the plantation because a short rotation cycle can be used and turned around rapidly. The biggest
mindshift was moving from a mean annual increment (MAI) harvesting regime to one of diameter at breast-height (DBH). Importantly, this confirmed that the HewSaw small log processing line at Longmore sawmill was perfect for the job at hand.

2017 – the present

In June 2017 disaster struck and the mill was badly damaged by the inferno. Niemand explains that when MTO and the insurance companies had completed their assessments it was agreed that it would make good business sense to re-establish the wet-off-saw mill. They immediately got to work to salvage and refurbish what they could and to replace equipment that was beyond repair.

Log yard and scanner

By the beginning of March the log yard’s log deck and singulator were refurbished and ready to feed the new Limab Log Profiler 3D scanner. This is a laser and camera-based system to measure the geometrical dimensions of each log. The system consists of two sequential laser units that can compensate for sideways movement logs when determining the exact log shapes. The entire log yard process is run by an operator in a centralised air-conditioned control room who can monitor every aspect of the progress via cameras and a user-friendly computer system.

Niemand says the log scanner is highly accurate with 5mm tolerances and Longmore is using it for lineal sorting of logs for optimal cutting patterns between 10cm – 25cm diameter and by lengths of 2,4m, 3m and 3,6m. After scanning and sorting the logs are batched into diameter classes as per optimal cutting patterns.

Debarker and HewSaw

The sorted logs enter the wetmill where they are first debarked and then pass into the new state-of-the-art HewSaw R200 A.1 chipper cantor single pass machine. It has a mechanical pre-feeder to orient the logs for curve sawing. Longmore’s value chain is geared to optimise logs with a DBH not exceeding 25cm, and the HewSaw has been specified accordingly.
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Byron Brown is the HewSaw operator. He has worked for MTO for 12 years and is proud of his responsibility of overseeing the new machine, which he says is bigger and quicker than the previous model. He was given specialist training on the machine at the HewSaw factory in Finland and he says this has made him excited about the future of the mill. Brown sees the saw as the primary client of the plantations, with the saw’s products going to two main clients; the planks go to the George Sawmill for further value-adding and the chips and bark go to the biomass client, Woodlands Dairy.

**Biomass**

In 2015 Longmore Sawmill entered into a partnership with Woodlands Dairy near Humansdorp. The dairy uses the mill’s excess biomass to generate steam from their boilers to replace Eskom and oil energy. Both MTO and Woodlands economically benefit by the energy supplied and the environment also benefits with 90% of Woodlands energy needs supplied by this project.

Niemand says that the fire did have an initial impact on the supply of biomass from the sawmill. “We decided to see if we could unlock the potential in the 150 000 tons of stockpiled old sawdust, bark, wood chips and other biomass surrounding the mill. With some tweaks of this product and slight adjustments at the boiler the delivery of biomass to the dairy is on track.

**Training in Finland**

Brown was accompanied by four colleagues when he went to Finland. Wayne Potts the electrician has seven years of service with MTO, with the last three years at Longmore. Walter van Rensburg, is a new addition at the mill. He is qualified millwright with extensive mechanical and electrical engineering experience who left Denel to move to Longmore. “We are proud of the opportunity to be part of building a brand-new factory filled with the most modern machines and we need to keep waste to the minimum,” says Van Rensburg.

Keenen Thys, a Saasveld graduate who has worked in various positions in the company’s sawmills and is now a key member of MTO’s Concordia training centre says the trip was fascinating and that he will be ensuring that ongoing training will take place so that operators remain at the top of their game.

The production manager, Emmanuel Pieterse, also visited Finland. He has been with MTO for 20 years. Two years ago, he was transferred from the George sawmill and this background is invaluable for both mills. He says the biggest challenges facing him and the mill are to get production processes running smoothly so that they can meet their production targets, and to implement their maintenance plans and procedures.

Pieterse says he learnt a lot in the short time in Finland however there are two specific management strategies he is going to apply at Longmore. “I was impressed by the skills of the machine operators. They are all highly trained and multi-skilled and I believe multi-skilling will ensure that Longmore will remain competitive and sustainable,” he says.

“The other important factor is good housekeeping. We want everyone to feel respected and they in turn must respect their workstations. A clean mill is a safe mill and from the start of the rebuilding of the mill we have implemented daily housekeeping and maintenance routines in addition to the weekly and monthly routines”.

He and the teams are all working towards 1 May when the mill will be brought online, and they don’t want anything to go wrong. When completed the new mill will have a capacity of 100 000 cubic metres per annum. A single shift with 40 people will produce 70 000 cubic metres and 100 000 cubes with 55 people on a double shift.
Longmore’s sawmill team took advantage of every opportunity to improve on the layout of the old sawmill. This is the central lubrication room for the machines.
Longmore Sawmill has installed a new HewSaw chipper canter to replace their previous machine that was damaged beyond repair by the fire that swept through the mill in 2017.

The new single pass machine is the HewSaw R200 A.1, with a mechanical pre-feeder to orient the logs for curve sawing. Tuomo Kauppinen, sales manager for the manufacturer of HewSaw machines, Veisto Sägemaschinen, says the HewSaw R200 is designed to process logs from 8cm up to 24cm in diameter and the maximum large end diameter up to 35cm. The log lengths that can be processed by the HewSaw are from 2.5m to 6.6m.

HewSaw draws on its technical expertise and its knowledge of extreme conditions like the heat in South Africa and the cold of Siberia in Russia to develop their own chipper heads and chipping knives. Kauppinen says various wood species have different characteristics when it meets metal, and this is an area where HewSaw excels and can assist its clients to use the right cutting materials with their wood species.

HewSaw sawing machines are made in Mäntyharju, Finland. “We design, manufacture, install and start them up all around the world. We do this ourselves so that we can learn from each project and apply this knowledge so that we continuously improve our service and back up to our clients,” explains Kauppinen. “We have only one style of doing things at HewSaw, and that is to apply the best practices to every new project.”

He says the company invests heavily in research and development. This applies to everything in and around the saws. “As an example, from the mechanical side, the HewSaw service access levels were introduced to all HewSaw sawing machines three years ago. The new machine at Longmore is fitted with it and they are there to improve maintenance procedures by making it easier to access all parts of the machine. It even has fixed stairs for overhead service access.

A group of Longmore staff attended a week-long training session in Finland. Kauppinen says training forms an essential part of the HewSaw delivery process. “It is an essential part of making the operators and managers understand the HewSaw operation, the thought processes needed when working with the machine, and knowledge of the support we as an organisation offer from Finland,” he says. “This is usually done in Finland ahead of delivery where customers meet their machine for the first time and have an opportunity to learn its ins and outs before it is shipped out.”

André Odendaal, HewSaw’s project manager and agent in South Africa, accompanied the Longmore sawmillers to Finland and made sure that there were no language barriers and that they understood all aspects of the machine.

Odendaal says while the operation procedures are important, the factory and site visits to sawmills and electrical and mechanical services were just as significant. “Each HewSaw sawmill is different, and a lot of information can be learned from them to use in the future,” says Odendaal.

Kauppinen says they also like to introduce their customers to Finnish culture, and the South Africans were pleasantly surprised when they experienced their first sauna.
Small Log Specialist

www.hewsaw.com

HewSaw Africa (Pty) Ltd.
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Choose the Original – HewSaw Grey
HewSaw Africa has service personnel and spare parts in stock in South Africa, and operates in the same way as the eight other international HewSaw warehouses. “HewSaw has been designing and building sawing machines for over 50 years and have been operating in the South African market for 17 years. This has taught us a lot about the conditions local sawmillers experience and the challenges they have with wood supply and quality. The company continuously develops its machines and has a sawing solution for every challenge in South Africa,” explains Odendaal.

Even though high speed high volume machines are not in demand in South Africa, HewSaw is proud that it has produced a saw that can cut over 500,000 cubic metres per annum, another one that can cut over 60 logs per minute, and a third that converts logs at a feed speed of over 300 metres per minute into boards and planks.
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Wood-Mizer has broadened its range of edgers with the recent release of the EG100 twin-blade board edger.

The affordable and durable EG100 was designed for sawmillers who want to improve the overall production and efficiency of edging their sideboards and slabs.

“This is the cost-effective solution and a valuable addition to small to medium saws like the LT15, LT20 or similar size saws*, says Krzysztof Kropidlowski, the sales director of Wood-Mizer Industries in Poland. “Using an edger is one of the easiest way to boost the productivity of your sawmill and with the EG100 this can be achieved on an affordable budget*.

The standard specification includes two circular blades; one of them is fixed, and the other is adjustable. The control panel allows the operator to start and stop the machine, start and stop the circular blades and adjust the speed of the conveyor belt. The edger is generally operated by two people, one to feed the edger, and the other to remove the finished product.

The blade adjustment is done manually. Boards that measure up to 520mm can be fed into the unit, and it can produce board widths of between 40 and 300mm. The maximum cutting height is 50mm.

The scale on the infeed hold-down roller lets the operator see what width boards can be cut and how to line the board up properly. A removable board fence makes it easy to trim boards that already have one straight side.

The EG100 edger is available in two power options: 7.5kW electric or 14HP petrol. The in and outfeed conveyors feeds the board evenly through the unit at the set through-feed speed, and the in and outfeed rollers keep the board stable and flat on the conveyor belt while it is cut.

A sawdust collection point on the edger directs sawdust out of the unit and into a dust extraction unit.

Two Wood-Mizer tungsten carbide-tipped circular blades come standard with the unit. The anti-kickback fingers prevent boards from being kicked out of the unit and assists with feeding the boards precisely and consistently through the unit.

The unit is shipped on one pallet and requires minimal assembly once onsite. All extra components are securely packed in a wooden box for protection during transportation. Four conveniently located holes on top of the unit cover makes it easy to position the unit with slings. Alternatively, a forklift can be used to move the unit into position.

The new EG100 further expands on already wide range of Wood-Mizer edgers that includes the EG250, EG300 and EG350 models as well as new TITAN industrial edgers.
Increase production with the Affordable and Durable EG100 TWIN BLADE EDGER

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from forest to final form
The Institute for Timber Construction South Africa (ITC-SA) has launched an Online Certification Programme for the timber roofing industry. The ITC is the SAQA-accredited professional body and watchdog for the timber building industry, recently launched its Online

Designed to offer study materials and tests to improve skills in the timber roofing sector, the programme was initiated to support people who want to establish and build a career in the roofing sector, as well as roofing professionals who want to enhance and update their current knowledge base.

Amanda Obbes, ITC-SA National Coordinator explains that timber engineered structures are highly specialised and there are very few skills development and training programmes available that support the profession.

“The ITC-SA drives the development and offering of training programmes within the timber roof truss industry to ensure upliftment of skills in the sector and to encourage young engineers to take an interest in timber as a viable construction material. This forms part of our mandate, as a professional body, to ensure continuous professional development in the industry,” she says.

“We are offering affordable entry-level skills training that is available when it is needed for everyone in the industry, including local authority building inspectors and NHBRC inspectors.”

Course content
The online course conforms to the ‘deemed to satisfy’ requirements of SANS 10243 for the manufacture and erection of timber trusses. Remember that when circumstances require, these details may be overridden.
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South African Wood Preservers Association
Sawpa to host prestigious international conference

The International Research Group on Wood Protection will be hosting their 49th annual conference, IRG 49, in Sandton, Jhb, in April. This is the first time that this prestigious conference has been held on African soil.

The conference, set to take place from 29 April to 3 May at the Hilton Hotel in Sandton, is this year hosted by the South African Wood Preservers Association (Sawpa). It will, in addition to its normal presentations, feature a special session on innovation and challenges in wood protection against termites and wood beetles.

The International Research Group on Wood Protection (IRGWP) is the leading global organisation for the dissemination of scientific information on wood protection.

Structure

- **Section 1:** This section will feature biology research on natural durability and all aspects of biodegradation that affect wood performance, including the ecology and physiology of decay mould and sapstain fungi, marine borers, and termites and other insects.
- **Section 2:** This section will cover test methodology and assessment study of test methods and analytical methods relating to physical, chemical and biological means of protecting wood from bio-deterioration and weathering. It also covers harmonisation of international standards. Special emphasis is given to service life prediction of wood applied in different commodities.
- **Section 3:** This section will be wood protecting chemicals research to improve the understanding of the interactions of chemical wood protection systems, both existing and under development, with wood or wood-based materials, with particular emphasis on performance evaluation against fungi, bacteria and insects.
- **Section 4:** Processes and properties research into processes for the preservative treatment and/or the modification of wood and wood composites and their resultant properties, remedial and repair treatments, and techniques for applying chemicals to the surface of wood.
- **Section 5:** Sustainability and Environment Research into all aspects of the sustainability and of wider environmental matters of wood protection. A strong focus on improving the life cycle credentials of wood in use.

Presentations and awards

Oral presentations of full papers will be given 20 minutes. Poster presenters are given three minutes for a short oral introduction. The organisation provides a best student presentation award in the form of the Gareth Williams Award with a prize of $1500 and a best poster award in the form of the Rich Ziobro Award with a prize of $1000 for the best presentations.

“It is a huge honour for us as Sawpa to be able to host this prestigious event,” says Bruce Breedt of Sawpa. “The fact that it is being held in Africa for the first time makes it so much more special. We look forward to the conference and to learning about the latest in research on the preservation and the protection of wood and wood products.”

Registration as a delegate at the conference can be done through the IRG-WP website at www.irp-wp.com. The site also contains information on how to do manual bookings.

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It’s all about confidence
Tried, tested and trusted preservative protection for timber.
Cross laminated timber (CLT or X-Lam) has finally arrived in Africa with XLAM South Africa opening their production facility in Cape Town. Previously only available as an imported item, CLT is now being manufactured locally using pine and eucalyptus sourced from South African plantations. Seen as the green alternative to structural concrete and masonry, CLT can be produced as a carbon neutral material, and importantly in Cape Town’s current drought crisis, it is a water free construction system.

The use of CLT in Europe, North America and New Zealand is gaining momentum as architects, engineers and developers are seeing the possibilities it offers for the construction of multi storey buildings. With CLT being used in buildings of up to 18 storeys, and construction time being slashed by 30-40%, it is easy to understand why this sustainable building material is garnering so much attention.

Jamie Smily, XLAM’s director, believes South Africa is primed for the use of CLT. “We have a very innovative building industry, great forestry and clientele who are forward thinking. With CLT we have the benefit of off-site manufacturing combined with a sustainable resource, making it very fast and accurate.”

Smily is an architect and is fascinated by wood and wooden structures and the impact of construction methods and technologies on the environment. “I have been researching CLT and its applications for two years and decided to enter the fabrication market when I couldn’t source it locally,” he explains.

Not only has he had to start his own factory, Smily is also designing and building his own machines because the equipment is not available locally. He makes CLT panels 3m x 3m with his first press and is building a second press to make 9m x 3.5m panels. The panels are available in thicknesses ranging between 60mm and 315mm.

According to Smily; “CLT is part of a new wave of construction technologies that are set to shake up the building industry.”

He explains that project delivery times are fast because the walls are manufactured off-site and can be simply delivered and bolted together. CLT can provide safer, cleaner and quieter building sites and speeds up the follow-on trades. It has a lower carbon and overall environmental impact than other construction materials and helps resolve difficult-to-build scenarios. It is also possible to save on construction costs because the foundations will be carrying less weight and the speed of construction reduces the building time.

Smily recently erected South Africa’s first locally manufactured CLT structure at the Sun Met for HaveYouHeard Marketing and their client Jameson Irish Whiskey. He says Jameson chose CLT because it fitted with their corporate ethos, embodying innovation and sustainability.

“Interest in the product is growing. I have recently quoted on a variety of projects from small isolated cabins to multi storey urban apartments blocks. Local architects and engineers are excited by the possibilities the material offers.

“Our biggest hurdle is the South African perception of timber, which often views it as an inferior product. A lot of this is because we have never had a strong culture of timber construction, unlike in Europe and North America, but timber construction has too many benefits to ignore. I think we as South African’s are open to change and embarrass new ideas and don’t think it will be long before we see multi storey timber buildings in our cities,” he says.

Smily is working with Dr Brand Wessels of Stellenbosch University to research and verify the structural, load bearing, and fire-resistant properties of XLAM’s CLT.
products. The registration of the product with the SABS is in progress.

What is cross laminated timber?
CLT is a wood panel typically consisting of three, five, or seven layers of dimension lumber oriented at right angles to one another and then glued to form structural panels with exceptional strength, dimensional stability, and rigidity.

It is lightweight yet very strong, with superior acoustic, fire, seismic, and thermal performance, CLT is also fast and easy to install, generating almost no waste onsite. European testing has shown that CLT offers advantages in fire resistance when compared to concrete or steel. As with other timber materials, during a fire a charred layer will form around the material core which helps it to retain its load bearing capacity and delay the charring rate. The charring rate of CLT will be dependent on the base timber lamella used, the higher the density of the timber species used, the lower the char rate.

CLT offers design flexibility and low environmental impacts. For these reasons, CLT is proving to be a highly advantageous alternative to conventional materials like concrete, masonry, or steel, especially in multi-family and commercial construction.

Smily is convinced South Africa and Africa are ready for CLT, and points out that an additional advantage of the product is that it offers the opportunity for job creation and skills development in a new industry.

from page 37
South Africa’s first producer of CLT begins operations

from page 32
Online certification programme...

by the competent person, who is the designer or engineer. In the event that the roof truss manufacturer does not provide adequate information regarding truss erection, the details shown in the handbook will enable the erector to comply with the requirements set out in SANS 10243 with confidence.

The course covers the basics of roof erection, including:
- Tools of the trade
- Basic connections
- Hip, valley, crank and geyser details
- Bracing systems
- Checklists for
- Drawings on site
- Spacing
- Top & bottom chords
- Plumb & level trusses
- Trusses are tied down & wedges nailed
- Girders (correct ply) & fully nailed
- Hangers fully nailed
- Battens/purlins correctly spliced
- Hips correctly installed
- Valleys installed
- Top & bottom chord bracing installed
- ‘T’ bracing on webs installed

It is not necessary to be a member of the Institute to participate in the programme. The current course on offer is the Roofing Specialist Level 1 Course, which was specially designed to boost skills in this niche field.

“We’ve made applications and engagement with this platform quick and easy for users; all they need to do is register at http://portal.itc-sa.org, log in, pay the minimum fee of R285 via EFT, download and study the course materials in their own time, and take the online test when they feel ready,” explains Obbes.

The course material is drawn from the ITC-SA’s comprehensive Volume 1 Handbook and was developed by a professional ITC-SA accredited engineer with extensive knowledge of the timber roof truss industry. The Institute aims to build on this educational resource by developing further skills programmes so that the Online Certification Programme becomes South Africa’s go-to portal for skills training and development for the timber roofing and construction sector.

Not all courses will include official certification, but a certificate of completion will be issued upon successful completion. To register for the ITC-SA’s Roofing Specialist Level 1 Course, visit http://portal.itc-sa.org and follow the prompts.
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MARTIN’s new T60C is a compact class sliding table saw that meets the requirements of the modern growth and future-oriented workshop.

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Ease of use for every woodworker

“With the new premium compact-class T60C we fill the gap between the entry-level T60A and the substantially heavier T65,” says Michael Mühldorfer, marketing manager at MARTIN. The new model features a 3.5” keypad controller at eye level for cutting height and angle. The cutting width can be comfortably set from the operating position by digital display via a hand wheel. “This way cutting height, cutting angle as well as cutting width can be adjusted quickly, safely and accurately.”

A maximum cutting height of 130mm and a standard cutting width of 1350mm also meet sophisticated users’ demands for highest flexibility. According to Mühldorfer, the T60C is a brilliant example of the perfect balance between price and performance available at MARTIN even in the range of premium compact class machinery. Typically, each and every key component is solid and durable as you have come to expect from MARTIN.

Made in Germany

Mühldorfer says MARTIN has once again set high quality standards with its T60C. From construction, assembly, quality control to packaging and delivery – over 90% of the production processes of a T60C are performed “in-house” at the plant in Ottobeuren, Germany. With the vast majority of the T60C’s production happening here, MARTIN machines have every right to earn the quality label “Made in Germany”.

The T60C is equipped with a sliding table with replaceable table lip, which is a feature shared by all MARTIN sliding table saws. The table guide system is “tried and true” for over 50 years makes sure that the table is guided smoothly and precisely.

Optional scoring unit

For precise and repeatable cuts at the cross-cut fence, the machine is equipped with two stop elements with micro-
adjustment. With the optional two-axis scoring unit, scoring height and scoring position can be adjusted directly via the controller while in operation.

Optional motorised rip fence
The T60C Automatic’s motorised fence is guided on a wear-free grooved ball-bearing guiding system like all rip fences manufactured by MARTIN. The axis “cutting width” is completely integrated in the efficient controller and powered precisely by a modern CANBus motor.

Otto Martin Maschinenbau
The Otto Martin Maschinenbau company is based in Ottobeuren, Allgäu, Germany, and has a long tradition of being one of the leading suppliers of high quality saws, spindle moulders and planers. The family enterprise was founded by Otto Martin in 1922. Over the following eight decades, what started with basic and solid machinery eventually became a standard for quality and functionality in the woodworking machinery sector.

High quality manufacturing as well as user-friendly operating concepts that make life easier for the woodworker have always been of great importance. 150 employees are working at the company’s head office in Ottobeuren, Germany, at present.

MARTIN’s range of woodworking machinery is available from and supported by Hüster Machinetool Co.
The annual Wood Conference was recently held in Cape Town and once again brought local and international experts together to share insights into the extensive possibilities of timber in design and construction.

The conference covered a range of topics, from the state of the local forestry sector to the benefits of marrying building information modelling/management (BIM) with timber for better workflow, efficiency and engineering. The takeaways from the range of talks were clear: we need to use more timber in design and construction; and digital design and timber make a formidable combination in creatively solving a host of design and architectural challenges. In addition to being well positioned to play a role in housing, design work, global green economies and more, timber can also play a significant role in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions.

Werner Slabbert Jnr, managing director of Eco Log Homes, delivered a talk focusing on local and global issues of pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the push to lower and mitigate these by way of various carbon tax laws. He argued that timber construction, which it is estimated accounts for around 70% of all housing stock across developed countries, has excellent potential to be a frontrunner, not only in lowering the carbon footprint of public and private buildings, but in sequestering carbon during its ‘manufacturing’ stage.

Slabbert emphasised the need for continuously educating both the trade and consumer because it is important to grow the market for timber frame building locally. What better way, he asserted, than to reach ordinary South Africans through public infrastructure buildings built of wood, and for representatives in the sector to act as ambassadors not only for their own brands, but for the timber construction sector at large.
SIX PACK 2018

Six focused decor statements for international market success.

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SIX PACK 2018

SIX SELECTED DÉCORS FOR CURRENT HOME TRENDS

Interprint is presenting its new décor collection: the Six Pack 2018. The company sees special, international market potential in the six selected surfaces for furniture design and interior design. The look of the six on-focus décors covers a wide range of materials: wood, concrete, stone and steel.

ARTISAN OAK

Material: Timber framing wood.
The goal of the technical reworking was to obtain the character of old wood.
A warm and authentic contrast to the cool, industrial look.

AURORA

Following the metal trend:
A cold-rolled steel plate with traces of the grinding process. Metallic effects with a cool look reminiscent of the northern lights.
Smart materiality, also available in a brass look.
DELIOS

An old larch from the Alpine region. Smoked, rough, cracked and planked. The white oil treatment creates a unique colour effect. Natural and handcrafted influences give it recognition value.

GARBO

The walnut interpretation of a fruitwood. Soft core and sapwood elements give the decor its elegant look. Timeless and universal: harmonises with styles ranging from modern Nordic to traditional Italian.
HANSEN
A blond wood in the Nordic style. A typical Scandinavian feature is that the material has been reduced to the essentials. Cut flowers and variable striped parts support the simple look.

GRID
A material mix with the look of concrete and stone. The geometry of the grid reveals floral details up close. A flexible design in both function and style: can be cut any way and used anywhere. At home in urban spaces.

SIX PACK 2018
www.interprint.com
Interior designers, homeowners, kitchen cabinet makers and installers, and building contractors in and around Hermanus now have access to Totally Board’s quality cutting and edging services with the new partnership between Totally Board and Divvies Furniture.

Bolstered by the supply of quality boards and the installation of the computer controlled Biesse Selco beam saw and Jade edge bander, the Divvies Furniture factory in Hermanus has expanded and restructured, with the board processing section upgraded and renamed Totally Board Hermanus.

Precise panel cutting, and faultless edge banded surfaces have always been available from Izak “Divvie” van Deventer because of the knowledge and experience of his machine operators and the heavy-duty machines he uses.

However, this excellence requires boards of uniform thickness and quality and some patience because the operator needs to take a little extra time between boards to check that the panel saw fences are still completely square before cutting.

The increased demand for a knowledgeable local supplier who can deliver cut and edged panels of consistent quality was the tipping edge for Divvie, and he contacted Chris Hugo at Austro to say that the time had arrived for him to invest in a more technological solution with better and advanced machines.

Divvie met Chris 12 years ago when he decided he needed to buy professional woodworking machines and move his sleeper-wood furniture making business out of his garage and into a factory. Originally from Touws River, when he moved to Hermanus Divvie says his woodworking hobby kept him busy in his garage until he realised that he either had to disappoint his clients or grow his business.

“I needed single phase machines at that time and decided that Austro was the best supplier for me because of the quality of their machines and the type of advice and service I got. Chris always takes the time to work with me to analyse my business present and future needs before suggesting what machine or combination of machines will do the job best,” says Divvie.

“For example, when I set up the factory my customers were ordering solid wood furniture from me and a rip saw was all I needed. When my furniture customers started to come back and ask for help in upgrading their kitchens and for built in cupboards, I contacted Chris to ask for an extension table for the rip saw. Chris advised me that a panel saw would do a better job and once it was installed a new market in cut and edge products opened up for me, which is what Chris said would happen.”

Hermanus is a quiet, picturesque coastal village that wakes up slightly on Fridays when the weekenders arrive from Cape Town and becomes a thriving economy during holidays and the town’s annual Whale Festival. The influx of people investing in and retiring to the Western Cape, and the attraction of Hermanus in particular, has once again resulted in a shift in requests from his market.

The demand for cabinetry and board-based products, combined with Divvie’s love for designing furniture and interiors soon had him chatting with Chris about the pros and cons of CNC machines.
But, the town is associated more with coffee shops and relaxed eateries than industrial premises, and this, Divvie says makes it very difficult to find a factory bigger than 380 square metres with constantly available three phase power. “The lack of available large workshop space is a problem, but an even bigger problem is the fact that bigger advanced machines like the beam saw and edge bander machines need three phase power and the municipality cannot guarantee a constant high amount supply,” explains Divvie.

Even though he bought the machines in August last year, they could not be delivered until he sorted out the power issue. Luckily, Divvie managed to come to an agreement with his neighbour and procured additional three phase power from him. The “original Divvies Furniture” factory and its solid wood and cabinet assembly machines was moved into new premises; the existing workshop was redesigned and Totally Board Hermanus started to take shape.

At first glance it seems impossible that such a small factory can accommodate a beam saw, however the compact footprint of the refurbished Selco EB 80 beam saw and the creativity of Divvie’s now Totally Board team made it possible.

Chris explains that although beam saws seem to be large and bulky they often take up less space than the two or more panel saws they replace.

“I was really impressed by the level of precision used by Austro’s technicians when they installed and commissioned the machines. The process of calibrating the saws and table of the beam saw was fascinating and for the first time I realised that there was a new animal in my workshop that is going to raise our quality and productivity far beyond expectations,” Divvie says.

The automatic single-sided Biesse Jade 225 edge banding machine is designed by Biesse for companies looking for user-friendly and customisable solutions in a limited space. The Jade is a compact and solid edge banding machine that Chris recommended for Divvie to meet his needs.

The machine is equipped with a pre-milling device, hotmelt glue pot, three pneumatic pressure rollers, end trimming unit, top and bottom fine trimming unit for the glued edges, edge scraper to finish thicker PVC / ABS edges and a glue scraper that removes the excess glue on the panel edge to produce smooth edges. The Jade 225 can handle 0.4mm, 1mm, 2mm and even 8mm solid edging should the need arise.

Divvie says Totally Board Hermanus is open for business and offers precision cutting with the beam saw, and perfectly edged panels. He is enthusiastic about the Biesse design software that lets him offer his cut and edge clients their own standardised sizes and designs and cutting lists.

In addition to the quick turnaround times, pre-drilling for adjustable shelving and runners, and carcase drilling for quick and easy assembly are also offered.

Totally Board Hermanus is running launch specials and invites customers to come into the factory to see the new beam saw and edgebander in action.
The Jade is a single sided automatic edgebanding machine equipped with pre-milling unit, two motor corner rounding unit and glue scraping unit. Anti-adhesive units can be equipped with this machine. Designed and built to meet the demand for flexibility and easy set-up for every kind of user, it also features uniquely solid structure. It allows the working of banding materials in rolls or strips.
The world’s largest home furnishing retailer has 355 stores in 29 IKEA Group countries and at the end of FY17 it also had 24 pick-up and order points in 12 countries, 43 shopping centres in 15 countries, 31 store distribution sites in 18 countries and 26 customer distribution sites in 13 countries.

This Swedish organisation impresses not just its consumers with affordable furniture, but also competitors and companies around the world, especially with its unique supply chain and inventory management techniques. It has 780-million customers, employs more than 149 999 co-workers has more than 2.1-billion visits to its website.

Each IKEA store is huge and holds more than 9 500 products across the IKEA range. It is a very high-volume retailer that buys products from more than 1,800 suppliers in more than 50 countries and uses 42 trading service offices around the world to manage supplier relationships. They negotiate prices with suppliers, check the quality of materials, and keep an eye on social and working conditions.

IKEA designs products that incur low manufacturing costs while meeting strict requirements for product function, efficient distribution, quality, and impact on the environment. The company’s business model is based on employing its own designers to work with manufacturers to find ways to make furniture using the suppliers’ existing production processes. Its buyers look for suppliers with the most suitable raw materials and then buy in bulk on a global scale so that it can get the best deals. It has proved...
that volume and low costs create reduced overheads, better logistics, better quality and lower prices.

It is the company that introduced the concept of knockdown or assemble-it-yourself furniture to the world. Pricing is geared around this strategy and consumers have the choice of it doing it themselves or paying a little more for IKEA to do it for them. Most IKEA furniture is designed and sold in pieces for the customer to assemble. The pieces are placed into convenient and efficient, flat packages for low-cost transport because they take up less room in trucks, maximising the number of products that can be shipped.

The packaging also takes up less space in warehouse bins and reserve racks, allowing for more room to stock additional items for order fulfilment. Flat packing of goods allows customers to easily be able to take home products which may hold back other home furnishing stores sales due to prebuilt furniture being bulky and therefore hard to transport.

Every IKEA store has a warehouse on the premises. On the main showroom floor, customers can browse for items. They then obtain the products themselves from the floor pallet location with racking as high as the typical person could reach, where furniture can be purchased and taken home. Additional products are stored in reserve racks above these locations. Forklifts and pallet jacks are not used during store hours for safety reasons.

Having customers select the furniture and retrieve the packages themselves is an inventory management tactic called ‘cost-per-touch’ so that costs are kept low because fewer hands touch the product.

IKEA employs in-store logistics personnel to handle inventory management at its stores. The duties of the logistics personnel are to monitor and record deliveries, carefully check delivery notices, sort and separate the goods, and get them off to the correct sales area or designated overstock locations. The in-store logistics managers use an inventory replenishment management process developed by IKEA called minimum-maximum settings to respond to store-level inventory reorder points and reorder products.

Due to the fact that all IKEA inventory is only stocked at night after opening hours, the logic of its min/max settings is based on the number of products that will be sold from the reserve stack of bin in a single day or two-day period. The process meets customer demand while minimising ordering too few or too many products.

Logistics managers know what is sold through point-of-sale data and how much inventory comes into the store through direct shipping and from distribution centres through warehouse management system data. From these data, they forecast sales for the next couple of days and order in the suitable number of products to meet that demand.

If the sales data doesn’t match the projected number of items that should have been sold that day, the logistics manager goes directly to the pallet and bin to manually count the product stock. IKEA believes its process and system allows for the right goods to be in the store with greater certainty, and at a lower cost, than the traditional retail forecasting and replenishment process.

These and other strategies have made IKEA the world’s most successful furniture retailer with low operating costs and high product demand. This allows the company to stay competitive in the industry as it continually seeks more advanced methods to streamline supply chain management.
Machinery is in our DNA

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Gauteng
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Email: cmcjh@cmcsa.co.za

CAPE TOWN
Tel: 021 555 0852
Email: cmcct@cmcsa.co.za
Don’t miss CMC’s woodworking and aluminium machinery exhibition in April

The CMC Group is inviting everyone interested in the latest woodworking and aluminium processing machinery on the market to attend their exhibition that will be held at its Durban head office on 18 to 21 April, 2018.

The show will feature all the group’s international and local machinery suppliers who are sending their technical engineers to showcase their latest products. Clients will have an opportunity to discuss the latest developments and see live demonstrations of all the machinery on display.

The idea of bringing the newest technology to South African manufacturers and affiliated companies stems from the urgent need for knowledge and understanding that will drive the industries to a higher level. Most medium and small business owners simply do not get the time or opportunity to explore different products and world trends in these highly competitive markets.

“We, as machine dealers in South Africa, felt the need to bring the technology to our clients to see, experience and learn how the modern craftsmen apply their skills. Many people see these amazing machines in operation on social media and dismiss the idea of ever actually having these machines in their factories saving them time and money,” explains Cecil Schickerling, CMC’s national sales director.

The vision of the CMC Group, says chief executive officer Pieter Olivier Snr, is to make dreams a reality. “At this moment, with the current state of our nation we need to focus on the positive aspects of our country. We believe in the talent of our business people as well as our tradesmen and women. South Africa is at the brink of an industrial revolution and it is up to all of us to create opportunities to reach our goals,” he says. “As a proud South African I look forward to welcoming everyone to our exhibition and look forward to networking and discussing ideas to improve business in our country.”

The managing director of the group, Deon Olivier, will also be available to promote the wood industry and the latest affordable and competitive aluminium and composites materials machinery and products on the market.

“This growing industry will prove to be highly productive in the years to come as the attendance at recent international exhibitions has shown. An example of this extends to the cladding of buildings with the latest composite board materials and designs. The use of alternative materials creates an opportunity for creating jobs and income potential. The technical and commercial experts from Europe will explain this revolution during the course of the show, explains Deon Olivier.

Schickerling will introduce everyone to all the dealer principals and, with the help of CMC’s sales force, direct clients to the correct points of interest for information on the products and services they are interested in. He says he is proud to announce that the suppliers have “done us proud” and all the equipment on display will be available at special show and introductory pricing structures.

In addition, clients who are travelling from different provinces will be assisted with their travel costs if they purchase machines at the show.

“In the past our clients have told us that recent trade shows proved to be a waste of time, due to the lack of technology and the same-old year after year displays. The senior management of the CMC group assures everyone that this show will prove to be the one we will all talk about and we hope to set a benchmark on how to showcase the industry in future,” says Schickerling.

“There are many amazing machines available and this show is the ideal opportunity for our clients to discuss their needs and challenges with us and our dealers. We will not only be able to discuss solutions and scenarios and do the sums, we will able to demonstrate the advantages to them.”

The machines and systems on display will include:

• CNC nesting and work centres from AES, with the amazing new features introduced in Europe.
• Ribbex Roco vacuum forming machinery
• The KDT range of edge banding drilling and cutting machinery that are popular with our furniture and kitchen manufacturers
• Office furniture and shopfitting technology and software products
• Screen-to-machine network and design technologies and software platforms

Pieter Olivier Snr says he is looking forward to welcoming everyone to this unique show for the woodworking, aluminium and affiliated industries, and says, “We are all masters of our own destiny – let’s make it happen!!!”

Contact your nearest CMC branch to find out more about the show and to confirm your attendance for catering and planning purposes.
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facebook.
The Cape Town-based shop fitting business, Stuart’s Joinery, has installed a Biesse Selco beam saw and Rover A CNC machine at the factory in Ottery in Cape Town to support its manufacturing and installation services in South Africa and throughout Africa.

The company provides employment for 84 people, with the 30 machinists and their helpers working in the factory while the installation teams do their work off-site. The general manager, Jodi Bleekers, says that for the past eight to nine years he and Chris Hugo of Austro Cape have met regularly to chat about manufacturing technologies and developments. In 2008 they bought a second-hand edge bander from Austro.

“We discussed the pros and cons of CNC point to point and nesting machines and beam saws for many years,” says Jodi. “We moved into larger premises in Ottery, and last year we felt the time had arrived for us to upgrade our manufacturing processes. Our clients use us because we can make a wide variety of products either once-off or in small batches, and Chris convinced us that a point to point machine was the best solution with the most flexibility. We placed orders for Biesse Selco Sector 350 beam saw and the Biesse Rover A-1432 CNC machine from Austro.

“We did not make this choice lightly and are confident that it is the right machine combination from the right supplier for our needs.”

The company was established by Stuart Hopley, a qualified boat builder who began doing some joinery and built in cupboards from his garage, and he soon found he had to employ people to keep up with the requests from his clients. One of these clients was the national retail group, Woolworths who used his services to do minor repair work like shifting doors and repairing counters for them.

When Woolworths launched their enterprise development programme Stuart embraced the opportunity and in 1980 he formally moved Stuart’s Joinery and its four artisan employees into their first 2000 square metre factory in Ottery in Cape Town.

While still at school, Jodi could not stay away from the factory. “I took every opportunity I got to do something in the workshop, even if it was cleaning or hand sanding products.” Faced with the decision of whether to study or to work when he finished school, Jodi tried his hand at civil engineering but could not ignore the pull he felt from the factory. “I decided to start at the bottom and try to work my way up into management of the company.”

Woolworths continued to grow and to rely on Stuart’s Joinery to meet its quality standards and tight deadlines. Soon Stuart’s Joinery found itself designing, manufacturing and installing shop fitting work in every province in South Africa. “We learnt a lot and were ready when we were called on to do shop fitting in Botswana, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia, Mauritius, Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique” explains Jodi.
The Biesse Rover A represents the latest technological advancements and versatility in machining centers designed for the processing of engineered and solid woods, plastics, non-ferrous metals, like aluminum and composite materials.

Key features include:

- Machine customisation depending on different production requirements
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Although Woolworths is still a major client, their capacity and experience is widely used. “We work with a variety of materials like metals, glass, solid wood and board products, and operate across a range of sectors including retail, corporate, financial and leisure. Like our clients’ needs our innovative work is also diverse and varied.”

A lot of preparation took place before the machines arrived. Two panel saws were removed, spindles, overhead routers and other traditional woodworking machines had to be moved out of the way, and dust extraction systems had to be installed. The machines are presently being commissioned and the operators trained by Austro.

The Biesse Sektor beam saw allows them to cut multiple jobs squarely and accurately at the same time and with the help of the optimising software, have few off-cuts and waste. The OptiPlanning software of the beam saw also allows stock management and costing of in-house products, and the saw’s label printer helps with product sorting and keeping track of all the different components being cut.

“We are not yet in full production and are already seeing and experiencing the difference in the quality and speed of our work, and the decrease in offcuts and waste,” says Jodi. “We spend less time in planning and making jigs and more time on value-adding activities. We now have more control over our production and have been able to move some outsourced operations back into the company.

Our designers are enjoying working with the BiesseWorks software and it is helping us become even more flexible.”

from page 56
Stuart’s Joinery invests in Biesse beam...
Think Weinig at Holz-Handwerk and Fensterbau Frontale

Under the slogan “Think Weinig”, the international manufacturer of machines and systems for solid wood and panel processing will demonstrate 30 exhibits live at the trade show in Nuremberg, Germany on 21 – 24 March 2018, all of which have been specifically designed to secure competitive advantages for businesses of all sizes.

Both, traditional artisanal operations and digitised companies will find the right solution for their production requirements on the Weinig stand in Hall 9. Visitors will be able to experience networked solutions of the highest W 4.0 digital standard in action, and modern, stand-alone machines with automation at every performance stage.

All exhibits share the Weinig philosophy of ensuring optimal manageability of increasingly complex technology via simple operating concepts. The international hot topics of “flexibilization”, resource efficiency and predictive maintenance will be in the spotlight. Smart-tech and system integration will also be high on the agenda.

New entry-level moulder
In the Product Unit: Planing and Profiling, the new Unimat 217 will celebrate its world premiere. Weinig says the compact craftsman’s machine for four-sided solid wood processing is considerably more user-friendly than comparable machines in its performance category and offers significantly greater added value than its predecessors. This is particularly due to many features being adopted from the next largest Powermat series.

Holz-Handwerk / Fensterbau Frontale: Nuremberg 2018

Wooden furniture, windows, doors and facades will be the focus of the week of 21 – 24 March 2018 in Nuremberg, Germany when Holz-Handwerk and its parallel trade show, Fensterbau frontale takes place.

Holz-Handwerk
Holz-Handwerk is a must event for everyone wanting to keep informed on the trends in wood and wood-based materials, wood finishing and woodworking machinery. You will find the latest trends and innovations for the woodworking & wood processing sector for carpenters and joiners in the European region. In 2018, around 490 exhibitors will present their product innovations and cutting-edge technologies for you to try out and experience at first hand.

With German associations like VDMA Holzbearbeitungsmaschinen, Fachverband Scheinerhandwerk Bayern and Fachverband des Maschinen und Werkzeug-Großhandels as powerful partners, Holz-Handwerk is geared for the needs of carpenters, cabinetmakers, joiners, parquet layers and other representatives from the wood crafts more than almost any other exhibition. Here you not only see what is practicable but can usually test and discuss new technologies on the spot, because some 60% of the visitors come from the woodworking trade.

Fensterbau Frontale
The product range at Fensterbau Frontale reflects the worldwide innovations in windows, doors and facades. Every two years, architects, carpenters, window and facade manufacturers, and the specialist trade attend to get updates on the latest profile systems, glass in architecture, fixing equipment, safety equipment, machines, installations and many more products.

Fensterbau Frontale originates from the post-war years, when glaziers and window makers could barely afford to...
The Powermat 700, the world’s highest selling Weinig profiling machine, will also be shown in Nuremberg. Stand visitors will have the opportunity to see demonstrations of a six-spindle version for various profiling work as well as a machine especially equipped for window manufacturing requirements.

For larger requirements in terms of performance and flexibility, Weinig offers the Powermat 1500. The solution is aimed at semi-industrial production requirements. An automated Powermat 1500, equipped with the SmartTouch digital set-up aid and connected to the Weinig System Plus work preparation, will also be put through its paces. This highly-efficient solution covers fully-automated tool grinding, tool measurement and virtual set-up of the moulder.

‘And, of course, we could not go to Nuremberg without the successful Cube Plus. The easiest four-sided planing machine to operate on the market offers automatic positioning via touchscreen display and completes planing work 10 times faster than a straightener and planer,’ explains Weinig.

Fascinating Weinig world of windows

The Conturex Compact on the stand will include the new Weinig machine control (WMC), which celebrates its premiere. The virtual tour in Weinig Solid WF promises to be exciting in the high-performance segment. Stand visitors will have the opportunity to look inside a Conturex system using 3D glasses.

Cutting-edge technology, integrated production and networking in the Weinig W 4.0 digital standard will come together to provide a spectacular experience. The individual visual experience will be broadcast live to spectators outside the black box. Demonstrations of the Weinig Service App are sure to attract great interest. In the new version, Weinig is taking monitoring to the next level.

Improved cutting efficiency for small operations

When it comes to cutting, Weinig’s ability ranges from floor-mounted saw and high-speed cross-cut saws to scanner systems and rip saws.

Highlights will include the OptiCut S 260 through feed cross-cut saw with a feed speed of up to 250m/min and camera-based detection of three qualities. The OptiPal + OptiResult software package is particularly attractive to small businesses. Demonstrations will show how the tool makes cutting more efficient from single-item batches upwards. The software offers a range of functions from product and parts list management, order entry and cutting list creation, pre-optimisation of cutting lists for optimal yield and creation of picking lists to screen-supported machine operation and parts identification after cutting.

Another exhibit in Nuremberg will be the EasyStop automatic positioning system for the OptiCut C series as an optimal entry to automating manual processes for smaller operations. The system can also be integrated into existing cross-cut saws.

A new addition to BKS band resaws is SplitAssist laser width measurement. An optimized surface facilitates operation. The proven FlexiRip 3200 now has cutting height recognition, ensuring that the material is always ripped optimally with an allowance.

New gluing press with simple handling

The new ProfiPress LB combines all Weinig’s know-how in high-frequency gluing and press technology in a single machine, and significantly simplifies the production of window scantlings, beams and panels. Particularly high forces exerted from the side and above ensure perfectly sealed glued joints.

Nextec for small businesses

One of the outstanding Weinig trade fair exhibits making its debut in Nuremberg is the new Nextec technology from Holz-Her, the panel processing specialist within the Weinig Group. The Weinig Conturex Compact will include the new Weinig machine control (WMC) system at Nuremberg.
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Why Use Kreg Screws?

Kreg screws are engineered with a square drive, flat-bottom head, smooth Shank, case-hardened steel, and self-tapping tip and provide the best results when used with the Kreg pocket hole joinery system. Kreg is a major brand in the Vermont Sales stable of suppliers and the company says it is a firm favourite for increasing numbers of woodworkers.

Unlike common wood screws, the Kreg screw has a square-drive head that lets the square-drive bit fit deeply into the head. With an ordinary screw, the driver can easily slip, and this will prevent you from driving the screw all the way in or, worse yet, strip the screw head.

A Kreg screw looks different from an ordinary screw at the other end, too because it has a self-tapping tip. This indentation allows the tip of the screw to work almost like a drill bit, boring its own pilot hole as you drive the screw in.

A Kreg screw doesn’t have threads along its entire length like an ordinary screw does. As you drive the screw in, the threads bite into the mating piece. In the pocket hole, the smooth section of the screw can turn freely so the joint pulls together tightly. With an ordinary screw, the threads on the upper portion of the screw can prevent the joint from drawing tight.

The Kreg screw is flat under the screw head. That flat area fits perfectly against the ledge at the bottom of the pocket. During the screwing action the screw’s force is in a straight line with the screw and draws the Kreg joint tightly together. With an ordinary screw, the flared shape of the head directs force outwards, which can prevent a tight joint, and even split the base of the pocket hole.

A hidden important property of these screws is that they are case hardened. They are treated to have a hard-outer shell that gives them toughness, sharp threads, and a head that doesn’t strip out. Case hardening allows the inner part of the screw to be a bit softer and in that way prevents the screws from being brittle, which can cause ordinary screws to snap.

from page 60

Think Weinig at Holz-Handwerk and....

Group. The technology is a complete solution for a modern furniture finish, efficient production and effective sales.

Nextec can produce made-to-measure furniture in just three steps. The series is on the market in a range of models and has various automation components. Two versions will be on display at Holz-Handwerk: Nextec 7707 and Nextec 7735 lift. The latter comes equipped with 5-axis technology and a lift table. The integrated 5-axis head allows all angles and miters to be processed with CNC precision. With a processing height of up to 300 mm, the machine opens up entirely new areas of application.

Holz-Her will be presenting another 13 machines on the Weinig stand beside the pioneering Nextec. These include solutions for CNC processing and edge banding with Holz-Her zero-joint technology.

The Lumina series, which will be exhibited in Nuremberg, is equipped with the GluJet glue application system for series production with PUR adhesive, and Ltronic, the fully-integrated laser edging unit for processing laser edges. Panel saws and the Store-Master intelligent panel store and material handling system will complete the Holz-Her line-up.
FX Group increases market share in 2018 with new HDS branches

The FX Group has recently opened the latest branch of their HDS (Home Decor Solutions) Cut and Edge stores in Ladysmith, KZN and is set to take the woodworking and woodworking accessories market in the area by storm.

The chain of stores, now numbering 27, is aimed at the local kitchen and cupboard manufacturing sectors and has proven to be a winning formula for The FX Group, seeing the company expand from a wholesale board upgrader and supplier, into the wider retail board and accessory supply market.

This is the second of four new stores planned from late 2017 into 2018, the first having opened in Middelburg, Mpumalanga just prior to the Ladysmith branch and the balance of stores to follow within the next few months.
In addition to supplying the full line of FX Group products, the Ladysmith branch also sports brand new board processing machinery supplied by FOMA Southern Africa, which enables HDS Ladysmith to meet all of their diverse clientele’s cut and edge needs on site.

According to store manager Abdul Karhim, the store, now open just over three months, has already made quite an impression on the local market.

“The first week or so was very quiet, but then, as soon as we started getting a few walk-in clients, the word spread like wildfire and business has picked up nicely.

“Opening this store in Ladysmith was a daunting task and quite stressful considering the amount of direct competition we faced in the area, but we were confident that our competitive pricing, quality, and wide range of products for the cupboard manufacturing industry would get the clients in the door.

“Our focus on providing an excellent service combined with our attention to detail and our willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to assist our clients in their needs, have ensured that most of those walk-ins have become regular customers, and the resultant word of mouth recommendations have ensured that we were able to establish ourselves within the area in short order."

The Ladysmith branch sports a brand new FOMA Southern Africa HD 610 edgebander as well as a MJ 320 C panel saw, which, together, allows Karhim and his team to take on nearly any job, big or small, and still manage impressive turnaround times for their clients.

According to Karhim, they are currently working at a capacity of approximately 60 boards per day, with ample room to grow.

“The FX Group’s Chrometree high gloss range as well as our Innowood melamine range have proven to be very popular in the area,” he says. “And I think the fact that we carry a wide range of colours in these ranges has also helped assure that we have become a go-to for the local industry.”

HDS also carries FX Group’s Innoceiling range, as well as Da Vinci furniture fittings, and a range of other board products and accessories.
Solid wood and custom design making a comeback

When resident of the sleepy KwaZulu-Natal town, Vryheid, Arthur Sharpe ‘took the package’ 22 years ago he was already well known locally for his solid wood creations, having made the manufacture of custom designed solid wood cupboards, kitchens and furniture, as well as the restoration of antique solid wood furniture, his hobby some years prior.

“I was lucky in that it was not a very big step for me when I ventured into the woodworking industry full time,” says Sharpe. “I was already known for the various projects that I have done over the years for friends and acquaintances and the risk was only whether I would have enough work to keep me busy full time.”

According to FOMA Southern Africa and FX Group representative, Indran Kundon, this latest store is yet again proof that there is definitely space for competition and diversification within the market.

“The HDS stores have definitely filled a gap in the market and the fact that we are now on our 27th branch is a clear indication that we are doing something right.”

Kundon says that part of the secret of the success of the HDS concept, is in the way in which the stores are run. “We don’t simply install a manager and workers,” he says. “A lot of preparation goes into the store, with the biggest focus being on training. We don’t just train our machine operators to run the machines and the managers to manage the stores. We ensure that the manager also receives training on the running of the machines so that they are knowledgeable when it comes to checking for quality, dealing with any technical issues that operators may be experiencing, while at the same time being realistic in terms of output capacity.

“The beauty of running the FOMA Southern Africa machines lies in the fact that the machines are easy to operate and easy to maintain. Our managers have sufficient knowledge on the running of the machines to help operators spot any variations in quality and to help solve any problems that may occur on a day to day basis.”

“The machines are also of an excellent quality and thus helps ensure that our clients are always satisfied in terms of the quality of product that they produce for their customers.”
Sharpe, having slowly but surely accumulated most the machinery that he would need in a workshop over the years, rented a small space in the industrial area of town and placed some advertising in the local papers, has not looked back since.

“I’ve loved working with solid wood ever since high school, but I found myself becoming a fitter and turner after school. But when the opportunity came along to work for myself, I grabbed it with both hands. Luckily, he was able to spot where things would end with his previous career, and he started getting his affairs in order a good five years before he finally took the plunge. “It was a bit tough in the beginning, but then I started getting some orders and I have just been working ever since,” he says. By way of word of mouth, he has, over the years even gained a reputation in neighbouring towns, as well as having furnished and fitted a number of lodges in places as far afield as Botswana, where he shipped all his machines to the lodge and built and fitted the furniture on site.

He has since upgraded his machinery compliment to include a stroke sander, purchased second hand from Geerlings in 1998, as well as a thicknesser and a surface planer, in addition to the old edgebander that he had been using for years. “I find that despite most of my equipment being old, I have been able to get very good quality work from the machines. It is all about how you look after them.”

According to Sharpe, the demand for solid wood furniture has risen dramatically as people associate solid wood with quality. “I find that when I speak to clients, many of them have become sick and tired of what they view as sub-standard because they are made of board that tends to chip and break after a time, and tends to not be very water resistant.

“While newer technologies like high gloss and foils have become more popular, I still see a definite trend toward solid wood taking place currently. ”

“Access to information and different styles, due mostly to the internet and sites like Pinterest has also influenced the industry quite a lot, as you will see clients coming in knowing exactly what they want.”

Sharpe specializes in working with solid wood, but also manufactures and provides board furniture when this is what his clients request. “One has to give the clients what they want and in some instances, making what they want in solid wood would be either impossible, or too expensive.”

In terms of colour trends Sharpe says that there has been a sharp increase in requests of lighter colours like white and grey with wood grain textures over the past few years.
Vermont Sales open trade days break all previous attendance records

The 18TH showing of the annual Vermont Sales open trade days was their most successful trade event yet, breaking all previous customer attendance records.

“We can put this success down to many reasons including extending the show by a day, the many new brands and range of additional products that were on display this year,” says Ryan Hunt sales director for Vermont Sales. “Our sales staff were all on hand to assist customers and demonstrate the products. We also had many more international suppliers come out for the show and they enjoyed the opportunity to talk with and demonstrate their products on a one on one basis to our customers.”

“For us this is a key event for our success, as we have a lot more time to spend with the sales guys, get a lot more insights on all the brands and products and view the live demonstrations,” commented a leading retailer. “I was blown away this year. We had decided to attend for a day but my whole team decided we needed to go back for second day.”
Despite a general positive outlook – at least more positive than it has been for a while – the local woodworking sector is coming back from an already low base and a number of very hard years indeed.

And while I am sure it is the dream of every professional woodworker out there to own and operate some of the top European woodworking machines in their factories, it is a dream that for many, will have to wait until business has picked up to a point where the enormous cost of such awesome technology can be justified.

The Chinese have in recent years been coming up with some really good, generally lower cost alternatives, with a number of local machinery suppliers now also carrying reputable Chinese and Taiwanese machine ranges and providing full technical back-up for these ranges, but these also come at a price, albeit significantly less than their European counterparts.

Recent years have seen an upsurge in smaller woodworking specialists, from small local cut-and-edge operators, to bespoke furniture designers and manufacturers. And for a smaller operation to splurge on an expensive new machine sometimes just does not make sense.

It is often more viable to look at acquiring refurbished a second hand machine at a fraction of the price than to splurge on an expensive machine that is likely to take much longer to pay itself off, so to speak.

According Iain Fuchs, who is at the helm of Donald Fuchs Woodworking Machinery, the second hand machine market in South Africa has always been quite robust. Especially with the recent rise of smaller operators within the furniture and board manufacturing markets.

"Many of the smaller operators opt to start out with refurbished machines as this obviously means a lower initial capital outlay for them. Most do, eventually upgrade to new machines as their businesses develop and they start getting some market penetration.

"The second hand machine market in South Africa has gotten a bit smaller in recent years as the economy was under pressure and even investing in refurbished machines became a significant capital outlay for companies already under pressure, but is starting to pick up nicely again."

According to Fuchs, there are times of the year when refurbished machines are more in demand than new machines, especially in the opening months of a new year when the industry tends to be fairly quiet. "It is typically around March and April that we see the demand for new machines start to take off.

"This is when business starts recovering from the holiday period and consumers tend to start spending again. Thus, furniture manufacturers see a bit of a pick-up in business and with that, the demand for machines also grows."

During a recent visit to Vryheid in KZN, a chat with a local bespoke furniture manufacturer resulted in a frank discussion about second hand and refurbished machines. Owner of Arthur’s Woodcraft, Arthur Sharpe, says he bought most of his machines second hand and refurbished and
that he has never had any significant issues with his small but very versatile stock of machines.

“The older machines did tend to be more sturdy, and I have found that if you look after them well, they will last and last.

“The capital outlay, while still significant as an initial investment, is not nearly what I would have paid for brand new machinery, and while one is not able to provide the latest technologies out there, I am able to easily still make whatever my clients require of me.

“If they do require something like high gloss or foil wraps etc. I can just order the panels that I need to finish the job from someone who does have the latest in technology. This still works out cheaper that having to buy the machine. Especially since I do mostly bespoke solid wood furniture.”

Indran Kundon, representative for FOMA Southern Africa, which imports and distributes Chinese woodworking machinery to the Southern African manufacturing market, says that while there is a robust market for second hand and refurbished machinery in South Africa, there are a number of factors to consider before undertaking the refurbishment and sales of second hand machinery.

“Obviously the cost and availability of parts for older machines is a factor,” says Kundon. “And then one also has to look at the availability of space in your workshop to facilitate the refurbishment and sales of second hand machinery.

“It is very easy to end up with a bunch of machines that are not selling and are just taking up additional and valuable space in your workshop.

“Lastly, one has to look at the availability of technical staff to do ongoing maintenance and repairs on these machines. It is easy to sell a machine ‘voetstoots’, but in South Africa the market is quite small and it only takes one bad experience for a client to decide to move on to the next supplier.

“The chances of something going wrong with a second hand and refurbished machine is obviously much higher than with a new machine, and this can become a nightmare if it not managed correctly.”

But, while the market outlook for 2018 is mostly positive among machine suppliers in the country, consumers remain under pressure. And this is not likely to change soon.

The increased rate of value added tax is sure to make a mark on the economy and economical uncertainty is still fuelled by political uncertainty in the country in the wake of, to name but one, widespread fears in terms of the looming property crisis and questions about land ownership currently gripping the country.

This, in turn, will have its effect on the industry, meaning that some manufacturers at least, will turn to second hand machines.

“I have never had a problem with any of my machines that I could not sort out,” says Arthur Sharpe of Arthur’s Woodcraft, adding that he has machines that are more than 20 years old still in operation at his Vryheid, KZN workshop.

“If you look after them, they will look after you. I have saved hundreds of thousands over the years by opting not to buy new machines. I am able to fill my orders and keep my clients happy.

“So yes, one has to take some extra precautions in looking after your refurbished machinery and ensuring that your machines are always in top notch condition, but it is definitely worth it.”
Sawmilling suppliers to exhibit at WoodEX for Africa

With less than five months to go, several well-respected global brands have committed to showcasing their latest wood processing and tooling brands at the expo taking place from 11-13 July 2018 at Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand.

WoodEX for Africa is a niche biennial trade exhibition offering visitors and exhibitors an exclusive business and networking stage to connect and grow the African timber, tooling and machinery industries. Since its inaugural show in 2012, the show has gone from strength to strength and has enjoyed the participation and backing of well-respected international names in wood processing, machinery and tooling.

Stephan Jooste, WoodEX for Africa Organiser, remarks, “We’re delighted to once again be playing host to a number of global brands in the sector who recognise the unique and lucrative opportunities inherent in doing business in Africa.”

Newsaw

Louis du Plessis, director of Newsaw, says they are excited to be exhibiting again. The company will have information available on a wide range of products, from forestry to biomass, including:

• Holtec log yards and pallet C-cuts
• Vantec sawmilling equipment
• biomass equipment
• peelers and lamination equipment
• reclamation equipment and forklifts
• Nardi kilns
• Newcoming planers
• Dryzone products
• Dieffenbacher equipment
• Vantec infield chipping machines
• Chain-sharpening equipment from Franzen

“Visitors and fellow exhibitors can look forward to becoming better acquainted with Newsaw’s own in-line grader that is locally designed and built. We represent many more brands and look forward to sharing insights and information about these with visitors to our stand.”

FENES

FENES is a Polish manufacturer of machinery and cutting tools for wood. This will be the first time they are joining WoodEX for Africa. Machinery will include:

• a horizontal band saw mill
• sharpening and setting machines for band saw blades
• band saw blades
• circular saw blades
• gang saw blades
• end mills

“We look forward to networking at the show, meeting our existing clients and fostering new relationships with the African trade,” says a spokesman from FENES.

FOMA Southern Africa

FOMA will be attending its first WoodEX for Africa this year. According to Roddy Payne, general manager, “The expected traffic of visitors will enable us to showcase our machinery to a wide Southern African audience; showing them the quality and reliability of our machines as well as the competitive nature of our full value offer.”
YOUR GATEWAY TO AFRICA’S TIMBER TRADE

Woodworking machinery, laser cutters & CNC machines, furniture manufacturing technology, timber processing, tools, fittings & accessories, forestry and sawmilling.

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Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand

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“Africa offers great opportunities for growth and development, now and into the future. A growing population and income means that there will be an increasing demand for wood and panel processing equipment for many years ahead,” remarks Payne.

“Thanks to WoodEX for Africa, we will be able to showcase our machines in a working context, by running demonstrations and allowing visitors to interact with the equipment and sales staff in a very encouraging environment.”

Visitors can expect to see an exciting and comprehensive range of
• edge-banding machines
• table saws
• beam saws
• CNC technology

“We will be offering amazing show specials as well as a product interface that is personalised and engaging, and also look forward to showing off some of the newest technology from the China Interzum show of March 2018 – come and be fascinated!”

Wood-Mizer Africa

Wood-Mizer Africa is the only sawmilling equipment manufacturer that has exhibited at every WoodEX for Africa show since the inaugural event in 2012.

Etienne Nagel, the PR and marketing specialist says; “Consistency over time and market-leader role in narrow bandsaw and recently also wide bandsaw industrial sawmilling technology, has contributed towards Wood-Mizer Africa’s goal of becoming South Africa and Africa’s timber processing equipment supplier of choice.”

Jooste says WoodEX for Africa aims to offer a high-value niche platform for people looking to learn more about timber products, tooling and machinery available on the market, to access special trade deals and foster lasting ties in the sector. “We are proud to be hosting well-renowned international names at the show as well as newcomers to the market, and look forward to producing yet another world class event where exhibitors can build on their past successes and make their mark on Africa’s timber industry.”

QUALITY SECON HAND MACHINERY FOR SALE

IMPORTED FROM GERMANY

Schumacher Log Edger

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<th>Type</th>
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Price: ZAR 198,500.00

Briquetting Press – GP Genius 2/50

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<td>Cabinet:</td>
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Price: ZAR 375,000.00

Reconditioned Haas Chipper

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Price: ZAR 325,000.00

Weima Shredder WL 4 – New

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Price: ZAR 375,000.00

Sawmilling suppliers to exhibit at WoodEX for Africa

Wood-Mizer Africa will be showcasing their range of narrow and wide band saw mills and other equipment.

All prices exclude VAT

Delivery ex-stock, subject to prior sale

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