

Different edge quality to everyone else

Zero joint technology is not some fad; it is the latest technology in edgebanding. It's being taken seriously and an uptake around the world is accelerating. At Ligna last month in Germany, one of the highlights was without doubt edgebanding processing in order to achieve the optimum zero joint. One of the leading suppliers in zero joint technologies is the worldwide Homag Group. The world market leader from Germany offers AirTec and LaserTec, which open up a whole new dimension in edgebanding.

The more affordable hot air system "AirTec" is both an industrial and craft-oriented solution. To achieve a zero joint finish, the function layer on the edging material is reactivated by compressed hot air, providing seamless adhesion. The German machine supplier Brandt, part of the worldwide Homag Group, offers trade solutions with AirTec.

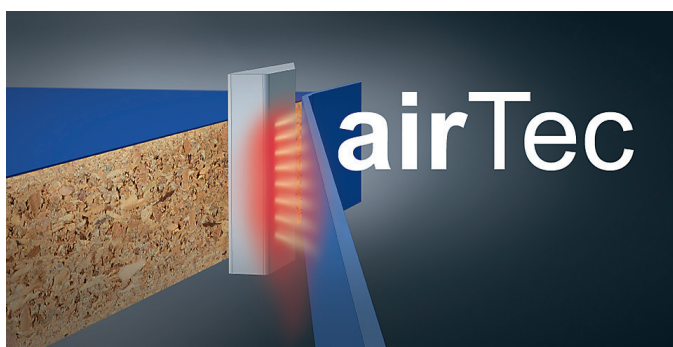
"There is a lot of noise out there at the moment in regards to zero joint technology," says Peter D'Adamo, Homag Australia's sales representative for Western Australia and Northern Territory. He has delivered the first Brandt Ambition 1440 AirTec machine in Australia to his Perth client Ikal Kitchens – and more machines of its kind are following all over Australia.

Brandt Ambition AirTec – unique selling proposition for Perth company

The Perth based company Ikal Kitchens with its owners Joe Grassi and Paul Kingston pride themselves as being pioneers in this cutting edge of technology. "This is going to be the technology you need to have if you want to differentiate your products from the competition," Joe Grassi says confidently, partly because the investment is already paying off. "We sold a kitchen within 24 hours only by showing them the AirTec sample. The customer was so impressed from the edge quality. There are no black lines and even no visible lines at all. It is a major difference compared to edges done on machines without AirTec. We now use it as a selling feature for our products."

The award winning kitchen and bathroom specialist is proudly West Australian owned and built, and they started operation in 1993. Located in Perth's north western suburb Osborne Park for 22 years, Ikal has been delivering custom designed kitchens, bathrooms, laundries and cabinets throughout Perth and regional Western Australia.

Ikal cater to a different end of the market with bespoke kitchens in new homes and renovations. "Every kitchen is unique and made with the best technology, materials and fittings", Joe explains. With the Brandt Ambition 1440 AirTec edgebanding machine, they can offer even higher quality products "where the edge is different to everyone else's." Joe continues, "The finishes are much higher end, and this is where we see our products."



Left: Michele Kingston and Joe Grassi (right) are proud of their awards they have won in the past. Ikal Kitchens has been delivering custom designed kitchens, bathrooms, laundries and cabinets throughout Perth and regional Western Australia for 22 years.

Below: Joe Grassi, here with business partner Paul Kingston, says, "We sold a kitchen within 24 hours only by showing them the AirTec sample. The customer was so impressed from the edge quality. There are no black lines and even no visible lines at all. It is a major difference compared to edges done on machines without AirTec."



Simple technique for perfect results

Hot air systems, such as Brandt's AirTec, are simple techniques where the edge and work piece are joined together by using hot air. Special edge materials which consist of a hard décor layer and a meltable functional layer need to be used. The functional layer is melted by the AirTec activation unit and the edge is pressed onto the work piece. Temperature and pressure are adjustable via control; and it all can be adapted to different work piece thicknesses from 8 to 40 mm via a gate inside the air nozzle.

When it comes to the edging material, AirTec can be used to process all types of currently popular, laser suitable edging types, such as ABS, PP and PMMA that are equipped with a functional layer on the backside of the edging material.

If the AirTec unit is not needed, it can be easily switched off. Peter from Homag explains, "The way the AirTec reactivation unit is installed makes it possible to either work with the standard glue application unit or with the AirTec system, and therefore is highly flexible due to the specific requirements. Also the energy and air consumption is surprisingly low." The Homag Group has introduced EcoPlus technology that can deliver energy savings of up to 30 percent.

Long-term investment to stand up from competition

Apart from the AirTec activation unit, the Ambition 1440 basic machine also features a joint trimming unit, an EVA gluing unit, an end trimming unit and a two-motor corner rounding unit. The perfect finish is obtained by a radius scraper, a glue joint scraper and a buffing unit.

Not to mention the PowerTouch controller which allows users to swipe, tap, zoom and scroll. The PowerTouch operating concept from the Homag Group combines design with function to create a totally new generation of control that feels like the tablets and smart phones we use every day.

The system centres on a large multitouch monitor which allows operation of the machine functions by direct touch. New on-screen helps and assistant functions significantly simplify working – while standardised operating elements and software modules ensure a uniform operating experience at any of the Homag Group machines.



The Brandt Ambition 1440 AirTec machine offers Ikal Kitchens long-term competitive advantages and a variety of innovations. Using Brandt's AirTec technology, virtually any design requirement with a range of material, colour and print can be met. Ikal Kitchens prides itself on offering seamless edging that is hard to detect giving doors the lacquered look.

"AirTec provides a long-term and seam-free bond; it enhances an aesthetic appeal with no joints to collect dirt or yellow and it increases the resistance of the finished board to heat and moisture," Peter cites further benefits of AirTec.

Loyalty and good service

Before stepping up with a Brandt AirTec machine, Ikal Kitchens had purchased two edgebanders from Homag Australia; the first one was installed in 2004, followed by a second Brandt machine in 2008. Additionally, they have owned two Weeke CNC nesting machines.

"The time was just right for an upgrade," says Joe, "Peter knew what we wanted and which machines were available at the time." He has helped Ikal a great deal over the years with great service and advice. Every machine breaks down at some time, but Homag is always prompt in fixing the problem."

Apart from the zero joint edge quality, an investment in AirTec adds more value to any business as Peter emphasises, "It reduces set-up times as well as cleaning and maintenance times; it eliminates time required to match primer and adhesive and increases process reliability."

These had been all winning arguments for Ikal Kitchens to invest in the new technology. Ikal delivers products mainly to Perth clients but due to their good reputation they also installed the 27th order in a small town in regional WA. Joe says, "We benefit greatly from word-of-mouth. Customers have returned 3 and 4 times for their future requirements and recommended their family and friends."

Zero joint technology opens a whole new dimension in edgebanding



► Making dreams a reality

The company from WA highlights their ability to transform kitchens and bathrooms into beautiful and functional spaces that truly represent the individual personalities and lifestyles of their clients. Ikal Kitchens want to remain to be known as one of the market leaders for excellent design. Three staff, including owner Joe, are responsible for the design, and they use 3D computer software to make the design even more appealing to their clients.

Joe is passionate about designing kitchens, “we listen to clients’ ideas, wants and needs, and put them into shape. We make their dreams a reality – even though every dream is different.”

While Joe does see many new trends in colours and materials, most clients desire the ‘lacquered look’. “They want quality edges without visible joints. With our Brandt Ambition AirTec machine, we can now fulfil their wishes.”

HOMAG AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Phone 1800 355 635
www.homag-australia.com

IKAL KITCHENS
Phone 08 9242 6666
www.ikal.com.au