

The HOMAG logo consists of a stylized blue 'H' on the left, followed by the word 'HOMAG' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. To the right of the logo, the words 'Press News' are written in a large, black, sans-serif font.

HOMAG Press News

HOMAG's woodCAD | CAM software improves presentation and drives automation for contract furnishing manufacturers

There was a time, in the not too distant past, when the contract furniture industry seemed to be somewhat of a gravy train. The demand, by corporate and government clients, for acres of cubicle and panel systems provided good margin work for large and small manufacturers alike. That time has past and now, to be successful in this ultra-competitive market, producers have to ensure that every element of their businesses is run efficiently and professionally.

To achieve this, contract furniture manufacturers are investing in advanced woodworking machinery that can be automated and linked together in production cells that deliver efficient, high quality production. The control of this advanced machinery is handled by specifically developed software that performs a multitude of tasks for their businesses quickly, accurately and consistently.

Global market leader, HOMAG, is at the forefront of development for this software with its wood CAD | CAM product. This software enables manufacturers to do everything from detailed 3D room planning for quotations to parametric design, drawing output, part lists and automatic CNC programming.

"HOMAG's wood CAD | CAM software has given a more professional edge to our business," claims Andrew Duncombe, a director at Leicestershire based Wreake Valley Craftsmen. He continues, "We've been in business since 1951 and are committed to combining traditional craftsmanship with modern manufacturing methods.

"Our mantra has always been to invest in the best machinery and systems available; as a consequence, we have been a customer of HOMAG UK's for many years. With the increasing competitiveness of the contract furniture market, we

recognised the need to invest in software that would not only help us automate our processes, but also provide us with a more professional presentation capability.”

Making the right choice

“Clearly, we had to make the right choice for the business as this software was going to become the foundation for the design and manufacturing processes within the company for the foreseeable future. As part of our due diligence, we evaluated the leading solutions in the market before deciding on HOMAG’s wood CAD | CAM software.

“There were two key reasons we selected HOMAG’s solution. Firstly, with woodCAD | CAM the drawing and programming of the machines is integrated, unlike the competition where they are two separate processes. Secondly, we knew that the HOMAG software had been developed in conjunction with the HOMAG Group machinery and therefore the compatibility was guaranteed. That was really important to us, because we didn’t want a situation where one supplier was blaming the other for any issue that might arise.”

Streamlining processes

“The software has enabled us to streamline our processes and increase our capacity whilst maintaining the high quality standards of finish and service we demand. The 3D rendering of products has enabled us to create a much improved standard of presentation drawings for clients. Instead of the old 2D drawings, these 3D renderings not only make it easy for them to see exactly what they will be getting, but they also facilitate changes to be made quickly and easily, providing clarity and eliminating potential miss-understandings.

“As part of the investment in the software we took on a graduate who, whilst having little experience in cabinet-making, is an expert in CAD | CAM software. He has found the HOMAG software to be intuitive and easy to get to grips with. He was also impressed with the training he undertook both at HOMAG UK and here on site,” concludes Andrew Duncombe.

Whiteleaf Furniture converts to HOMAG

Based in Thame in Oxfordshire, Whiteleaf Furniture was founded in 1870 and has become one of the leading contract furniture specialists in the country. The company is committed to exceptional customer service and delivers the highest level of customer satisfaction.

The company first bought machinery from HOMAG in the early 1990s. Its plant list now includes two edgebanders, three WEEKE BHX 050 drilling and routing CNCs and a HOMAG BMG CNC, plus another BMG already on order. In early 2016, the decision to invest in four of the machines at the same time was made. This decision was driven primarily by the choice of software.

Neil Thompson, production director at Whiteleaf Furniture takes up the story, "These days there is such a wide choice of machinery available for businesses like us and all will do a job, however, it was the build quality and most importantly the software that made us commit to HOMAG machines."

HOMAG woodCAD | CAM and e-solutions

"We looked at various software solutions from the other main CNC suppliers, however, the HOMAG woodCAD | CAM and e-solutions package stood head and shoulders above the rest. It was by far the easiest to use and the demonstration by Chris was excellent, easy to understand and very comprehensive.

"It was clear that with a minimum of training we would be up and running within three months and the addition of e-solutions meant we would be able to programme everything from the office straight onto all the machines.

"With e-solutions, we can design full kitchens, do costings for estimating, optimise board usage and programme the machines. In short, you can pretty much run your whole factory if you've got e-solutions.

"The software does everything we want. It alone has increased our productivity by at least 10% because it gives us the versatility of programming single bespoke items and large batches with ease.

“Our main business is manufacturing student accommodation and we might, for example, have to produce one reception desk and 400 or 500 studio fit-outs; the HOMAG software allows us to do this, whereas it would appear that none of the other software packages available would.”

Parametric design drives efficiencies

“When you design a cabinet using e-solutions you can set certain parameters. So let’s say you’re making a cabinet that’s one metre tall, so it will have two hinges for the door. Anything from one metre to two metres might have three hinges and anything over two metres will have four hinges.

“The when you draw a cabinet, it works to these parameters and actually draws the hinges complete with the drilling positions for them. If you’re putting shelves in it, it adds all the drilling for the shelves. So basically, we draw a cabinet, and the software marks out exactly where all the fittings have to go.

“If we put extra shelves in it will highlight any potential snags, for example, if the shelves are going to interfere with any hinges. This enables you to adjust the design accordingly. So, once you’ve set your parameters, you can design your products and it works out where everything goes for you. Then, you just send it to all the machines and they’re automatically programmed to do the necessary drilling.”

Customer confidence

“Since we’ve had the HOMAG equipment and software installed, we have been able to bring clients to the factory to prove to them what we can do. Within half an hour, what they have seen gives them the confidence to believe that what we say we can deliver, we definitely will deliver.

“We can say to them, sit here with our designer and create a cabinet you’d like in your project. Then, by the time we’ve finished the factory tour with them, we can show them the cabinet they designed as a finished product – it is very impressive,” concludes a very happy Neil Thompson.

If you would like more information or a demonstration of the HOMAG CAD | CAM or e-solutions software, please contact Adele Hunt at HOMAG UK on 01332 856424.

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