

Why invest in zero joint

Quality expectations in the furniture industry are becoming ever more stringent as well as the trend towards an invisible joint. With the AirTec system, Homag has developed an ideal solution package to enter into the zero joint technique for woodworking shops and medium-sized enterprises.

With the Ambition AirTec series, Brandt - part of the Homag Group - offers different sized machines to achieve the zero joint. In order to get up to speed with production, two companies from the Northern Territory and Western Australia have recently invested in hot air edgebanders from Homag Australia. While AKC - based in Darwin and Alice Springs - has purchased a Brandt Ambition 1440 AirTec, the Western Australian company Busselton Furniture Products decided to invest in the smaller Brandt Ambition 1230 AirTec model.

"We always want the best quality product and to achieve this, we need to find the right machines and tools to output that product," says Christian Slavik.



AKC: on top of the market in the Northern Territory

Since having opened a second branch in Darwin, the quality joinery shop AKC from the Northern Territory saw the need to invest in new machinery in order to establish the branch in the top end.

"We always want the best quality product and to achieve this, we need to find the right machines and tools to output that product," says Christian Slavik, project manager at AKC in Darwin. Based on his credo that machines should output a quality product without the influence of people, AKC has invested in a hot air edgebander Brandt Ambition 1440 AirTec.

First seen at the AWISA exhibition in 2014 and installed in October last year, AKC can clearly see the benefits of having a hot air edger. "We don't touch the board anymore; it goes straight into the cupboards of a kitchen," Christian says. With its new ability of producing boards with no visible glue lines, AKC advertises with AirTec technology, in particular as Christian says, "The look of the edges is outstanding."

AKC began in Alice Springs over 15 years ago and has been growing from strength to strength ever since. Owner Dennis Puckett employs 9 staff in the Darwin branch, including Christian who relocated from the centre to the top end.

With a remarkable showroom in Darwin, AKC offers a variety of commercial and domestic work. The company constructs custom cabinetry to meet individual requirements, aiming to offer a personal touch with each customer.

Whether taking the DIY approach, choosing a flat-pack or leaving it up to its skilled tradesmen to install, AKC offers great flexibility. It is able to provide a service throughout the Northern Territory, from Alice Springs to Darwin, and all townships between, including remote communities.

Setting high standards for itself, AKC want to continue satisfying its clients by delivering good quality at an affordable price. "Without the new machine, it would hardly be possible," Christian admits.

The increasingly popular white gloss has become attractive for commercial clients as well. "Now with AirTec you can really see the difference even on natural coloured boards," Christian says.

to achieve the best quality
product we need to find
the right machines



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. "We can get any colour we want taking into account, of course, there is a minimum quantity you need to buy," Christian says.

Furthermore, AKC recognise a big improvement in the production process. "We can now adjust the heights of the scrapers via the screen which means we don't need to change it inside the machine. The preset settings make it easy for the operators, too. All in all, little maintenance is needed, and if we needed it we got great support from Homag."

Even though edgebanders featuring hot air technology are still relatively new to the Australian market, AKC does not automatically support a wait-and see attitude. "You have to be on top of the market," Christian says, "and we can now say that we have moved a step forward."

Busselton Furniture Products: more output and less labour

When Aaron Tucker and Rodney Manning founded their company Busselton Furniture Products back in 1999, they didn't know in which direction the company would develop. What they always knew was staying ahead of the game is key to success.

Choosing a hot air edgebander goes hand in hand with Aaron and Rodney's forward-thinking approach.



We have to be well-prepared for future developments

► Starting off in a small shed in Busselton, a city two and a half hours south of Perth, they have worked their way up to employing 11 staff and producing on 850 square metres floor space. After having built their own factory in the Vasse business park, Aaron and business partner Rodney were in a good position to further grow the business.

Investing in a new edgebander was on top of their list. Choosing a hot air edgebander goes hand in hand with Aaron and Rodney's forward-thinking approach. "We have to be well-prepared for future developments of the industry, because the industry is changing so much," Aaron says.

The Brandt Ambition 1230 AirTec has helped Busselton Furniture Products to take on more jobs. "Previously, it took us 4 to 5 hours just wiping the edges," Aaron says. "We never had an edgebander where the finish is that nice and clean." It easily adds up: "We have a higher output and were able to reduce our labour - owing not least to the easier maintenance. This saves us a lot of time. Therefore, we can now offer our products at an even more competitive price".

Busselton Furniture Products specialises in the design, manufacture and installation of custom made cabinets and solid timber furniture. It commenced operations primarily working for local builders in the upmarket segment, has built a strong reputation and client base.

Customers that "are happy to spend a bit more on a kitchen" expect quality that is better than anyone else's. To show customers the different edge quality that comes off the Ambition 1230 AirTec machine, clients can find AirTec samples in the showroom. "They like them straight away as they can hardly see a line," Aaron says.

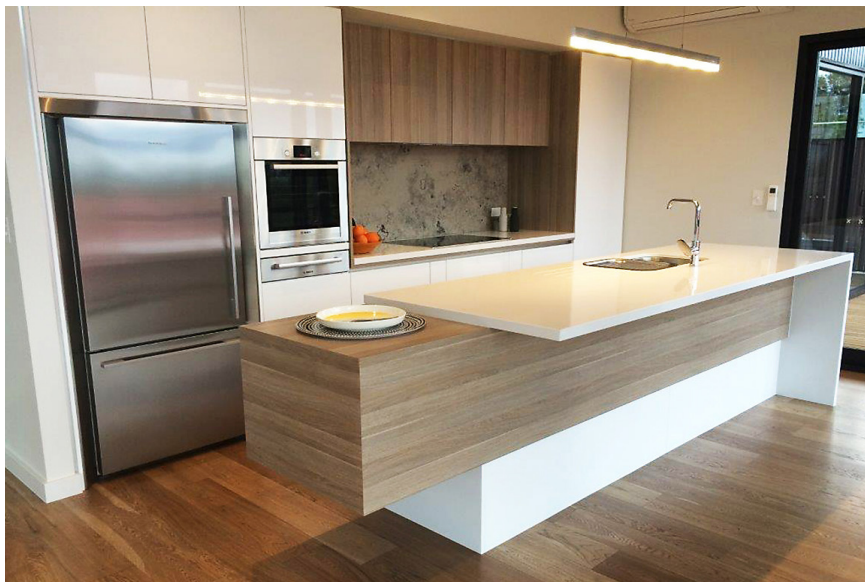
Most of the company's products are produced in-house, which means it can provide fast turn-around times, especially for post form tops, vinyl wrap doors and Corian bench tops.

With their recent investment Aaron and Rodney are looking positively into the future as long as "we can offer products which are competitive priced to keep ahead of competitors".

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

AKC
Darwin Phone 08 8984 3262
Alice Springs Phone 08 8952 4418
www.akcnt.com.au

BUSSELTON FURNITURE PRODUCTS
Phone 08 9755 0388
www.busseltonfurniture.com.au



Three questions

To Peter D'Adamo, Homag Australia's sales representative for Western Australia and Northern Territory

How does AirTec technology work?

Hot air systems 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.

Is it possible to turn off the AirTec unit on a Brandt?

Yes, it is. If the AirTec unit is not needed, it can be easily switched off. 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. With the EcoPlus technology from Homag it is possible to save up to 30 percent energy. Also little maintenance is needed although we recommend regular cleaning of the heating nozzle and hood.

Who will be interested in AirTec?

Anyone working with a lot of white gloss and having the demand in achieving seamless edges. Brandt's AirTec is both an industrial and craft-oriented solution. If you're looking to be the market leader in your field and want to stand out as a manufacturer of quality kitchens and furnishings the quality and finish you will get from the Brandt airTec edge banders is second to none.