Quality

CUTTING-EDGE FURNITURE MAKING

Haworth's sustainable manufacturing practices help give the contract furniture giant an edge in the marketplace.
One of the top three U.S.-based contract furniture manufacturers, Haworth Inc. is renown worldwide for its quality office furniture and innovations. Founded in 1948 in Holland, MI, by G.W. Haworth, it remains a family-owned and privately-held company serving markets in more than 120 countries through a global network of 650 dealers and 6,500 employees. 2014 net sales for the furniture giant were $1.8 billion.

Spurring the company's success is its focus on research and design, which help drive the company's deep understanding of agile workplace needs, said Haworth spokesperson Ryan McCall.

"Globally, Haworth improves workplaces with award-winning furniture, interior architecture and technology solutions to help customers achieve business goals and transform culture, as well as support collaboration and innovation," said McCall. "Haworth is committed to protecting and restoring the environment, creating economic value as well as supporting and strengthening its communities."

As part of Haworth's sustainable manufacturing efforts, the company made changes to the production of its furniture and components. Among the technology upgrades in the panel processing area was the implementation last year of Leitz tooling to the edgebanding line.

"We upgraded our double-sided edgebander with the Leitz WhisperCut EdgeExpert milling head program," said McCall. "We were looking for a sizing tool on the edgebander that would greatly increase finished cut quality and greatly decrease the frequency of tool changes.

"Before developing this tooling program, machine operators were spending an average of 45 minutes every shift changing carbide insert tooling to maintain a quality cut. When we implemented the Whisper-Cut EdgeExpert program, the PCD milling heads dramatically decreased the need for tool change frequency," he said.

Feedback from the lead operator on the double-sided edgebander indicates he is now changing the diamond-tipped knives every six to eight weeks, McCall added.

"Work surface production was specifically targeted with this tooling development. We manufacture over 1,200 rectangular work surfaces per day with standard color offerings or a customer’s own material," he said.

In addition to the edgebanding process, a number of machines are integral to the production of Haworth’s wide range of products. Among the workhorses in
Haworth's Chicago showroom highlights the transition from traditional systems to workspaces that evoke warmth and softness. In addition to office furniture, Haworth also manufactures products for healthcare environments.
The flexibility of Haworth's products enable office workers to move throughout the day, gravitating toward the places that help them perform their best. The Leitz WhisperCut Edge Expert milling program helps Haworth achieve clean, quality edges on components.

use at the company's factories are beam and angular saws for cutting panels and sheet goods to size. Laminating is done in-house, utilizing a hot platen press. CNC routers and machining centers are also used extensively within the production area as the furniture manufacturer continuously looks for ways to improve the productivity and profitability of its products and processes.

The Leitz Tooling program is an integral part of this goal. "The WhisperCut EdgeExpert ROI is well under a year based on labor savings alone," McCall said. "We have had great success with this tooling program."
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