

COMPONENT COMPANY SEES SAVINGS WITH WATER-HEATED PRESSES

W

ood and wood veneer manufacturing is at the heart of Craftwood Industries Inc.'s business. Founded in 1995, the Zeeland, MI-based company supplies many of the top office furniture manufacturers, including Herman Miller, with veneered OEM products and a variety of components such as worksurfaces, drawer fronts, file fronts, doors and overhead storage cabinets. The company also produces custom conference tables and customized wood window blinds.

The very nature of its high profile client base makes it essential for Craftwood Industries to maintain its high standards of quality production, said Mike DeVries, vice president. For the 50-person-sized company, whose sales average \$5.5 million annually, this meant upgrading and replacing equipment, including its older oil-heated feedthrough hot presses with two new water-heated veneer presses purchased from Joos USA; a 4-foot-by-8-foot stationary veneer press was installed in October 2001 and in January 2002 Craftwood purchased a 5-foot-by-10-foot feedthrough press.

In its 80,000-square-foot production facility, Craftwood performs all processing of its products, from veneer selection and layup through finishing "to control quality and lead times," DeVries said. The new presses utilize Elkom's patented Ökotherm water heating system, replacing the need for oil heating and thus offering a significant energy savings. "Our oil presses ran 24 hours a day," said DeVries. "Because the Joos presses can be brought up to temperature within 20 minutes, they can be shut down when not in use. Another welcome feature is the adjustable platen temperatures, which can be lowered or increased throughout



To improve its efficiency and quality in the pressing area, Craftwood replaced its older oil-heated hot presses with water-heated ones from Joos USA. The 4-foot by 8-foot stationary press, pictured left, was purchased by Craftwood in October 2001.

Craftwood Industries supplies many of the top office furniture companies with veneered OEM components, which it produces using two Joos water-heated veneer presses.



Below, after the great quality it received from its Joos stationary veneer press, Craftwood purchased this 5-foot by 10-foot feedthrough press in January of this year.



the day to accommodate the various materials being laminated."

The flexibility of the new presses also has virtually eliminated delaminating and warping issues that plagued the previous, less-flexible presses, DeVries added. "The new presses also give us the ability to step-press large panels. We also find that the Elkom Ökotherm water heating systems are much cleaner than oil heat and require little to no maintenance. The temperatures on the platen surfaces are consistent to within 1 to 2 degrees, and there is less noise generated by the new presses, which creates a much more pleasant work environment."

DeVries said his company chose the Joos presses for their design, engineering and quality. They are also simple to operate and service, he added. "We have received excellent technical support during the installation, which made the switch to the new machinery much easier.

"I came to Craftwood Industries after running the wood veneer operation of a large office furniture manufacturer, so I am used to using sophisticated, high-end presses. I give the Joos veneer presses high marks for quality and ease of use. We are very pleased with both veneer presses." ■

SEE THE JOOS PRESSES AT IWF BOOTH #8622