

Big impact for small series production

Jela in Serbia backs ultramodern production from the HOMAG Group

A wide selection of individual products, small series and an ultramodern production plant from the HOMAG Group – these are the factors which make Serbian-based manufacturer Jela stand out from the crowd among Europe's modern furniture producers. Working with short set-up times of between 20 and 30 seconds and achieving premium product quality, this company has been enjoying the benefit of a KF line for highly automated series production since March 2010.

At Jela in Serbia, everything clicks perfectly into place: A long-established local workforce, sound expertise and a production line which can be reset for new products within just seconds. This is the magic formula that allows CEO Mirosljub Radovanovic and his team to produce small series economically in record time - and to an impressive standard of quality.

Jela is making its mark across Europe

The product spectrum of this Serbian firm established in 1990 encompasses furniture for children's rooms, bedrooms, living rooms and recently also kitchens, all characterized by premium quality. With over 200 different items of furniture, 35 decor finishes and 600 varying measurements, Jela is among Serbia's most flexible furniture manufacturers. Around 150 employees work to produce top-quality furniture in a production space of 9,000 m² which will enhance people's living experience right across Europe.

In its own showroom encompassing an exhibition area of almost 700 m² with a huge selection of ultramodern examples of their production, customers can gain a hands-on impression of the quality and selection of furniture on offer. The company's main clients include over 200 furniture

stores in countries like Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Germany, Switzerland and Greece. These account for around two-thirds of Jela's total sales. The remainder is exported to wholesalers predominantly in Croatia. The company itself organizes the majority of its deliveries - using its own fleet of five trucks to transport products through every part of Serbia to their final destinations.

Outstanding: Three pillars for premium quality

There are various aspects of Jela's production which stand out from the crowd: After every work step, the responsible employees perform a quality check of workpieces. The information flow to all work steps is controlled by job tickets and barcode identification. After each work step, the process has to be signed off by the operator in charge. This provides a permanent record of which operator performed which work step.

Another bonus: A skilled team with the backing of excellent training. Young and dynamic employees with an average of 30 and in many cases over 10 years of service with the company provide a sound expertise base. CEO "Miki" Radovanovic attaches great importance to the transfer of knowledge and professional training of his staff. An above-average amount of time is invested in this area – and production employees are also heavily involved in major investment and purchase decisions. Particular importance is attached to integrity, honesty and frankness in the company's everyday dealings with its workforce.

And importantly too, the quality of the machine outfit has a decisive role to play. Jela aspires to the very highest quality standards and premium end products with the support of machines from the HOMAG Group.

First spark at the LIGNA 2009

It was after making initial contact at the LIGNA 2009 that CEO Mirosljub Radovanovic went away unable to stop thinking about the HOMAG Group

technology he had witnessed at the show. After an intensive thought and consultation process involving his qualified workforce, and professional advice from HOMAG Group Engineering, he took the decision in March 2010 to invest in the new KF edge banding line from the HOMAG K320 series. "We consider HOMAG to be the undisputed industry leader in the field of edge banding. We were particularly impressed by the service provided by HOMAG Group Engineering. From the planning stage, through implementation, installation and training to commissioning, the contact between the HOMAG Group and our staff has been exemplary. The level of cooperation has been ideal. My staff and their contacts at Homag Engineering complemented each other perfectly, ensuring that we achieved optimum production results without wasting any time", says Radovanovic.

The workpiece flow through the ultramodern production plant starts with a BARGSTEDT TBH 270 feeding system and continues with a roller conveyor. After edge processing in the HOMAG KFL 325, the workpieces are transferred by a rotary station to the downstream KFL 326. Generally speaking, all workpieces are edged on four sides at Jela.

Jela also uses drilling technology supplied by the HOMAG Group, benefitting from the multifunction capability of the BST 100 from WEEKE. Jela uses its additional HOMAG BAZ 222 processing center primarily for processing shaped components. "We offer our customers a wide range of different products in large and small batch sizes - our fully automatic line and the extremely small resetting gap of just 20 to 30 seconds allow us to cope with this diversity extremely well. The investment was without question the right decision. We would do it again tomorrow!" confirms Radovanovic.

Great combination: Smart machine outfit, smart concept

As regards the production of its furniture, Jela has a few smart ideas of its own: 80 % of its production is performed just in time within 3–4 days, the

remaining 20 % are standard parts which wait ready packaged in the warehouse. For this manufacturing process, the Serbian company makes flexible use of seasonal fluctuations - for example during periods of slack demand in winter. If an order for 30 products lands on the doorstep, Jela boosts the number of items produced to 90 - creating a buffer stock of 60.

In terms of its cooperation with suppliers and partners, Radovanovic has opted to work almost exclusively with names such as Egger and Hettich in the German-speaking countries. The company stocks raw material for around 7 - 10 days' worth of production, for instance, and processes around 30 truckloads of chipboard a month.

Relaxed about the future

Looking at current market developments, Radovanovic can only confirm his previous statement: "In our present times, the market is highly volatile. Batch sizes are shrinking and customer requests are growing ever more individual. The available decor finishes are improving all the time, in particular in terms of their feel and design. It is often difficult to distinguish from veneer. Using the HOMAG Group KF line, we produce small batch sizes economically and extremely quickly. Even when trends change from one trade fair to the next, and the market becomes ever more fast moving, we are relaxed about the future."

Looking to the medium-term future, Radovanovic envisages the possibility of investing in the HOMAG **laserTec** process. He is particularly impressed by the high process reliability and edge quality offered by **laserTec**. "The appearance of the edges produced with the **laserTec** method is truly impressive!" enthuses Radovanovic.



Fig. 1:
New KF line of the HOMAG K320 series



Fig. 2:
Highly flexible series produced workpieces



Fig. 3:
One of Jela's many products: A contemporary children's bedroom

For more information, contact

HOMAG Group AG
Homagstraße 3–5
72296 SCHOPFLOCH
GERMANY
www.homag.com

Alexander Prokisch
Head of Central Marketing
Tel. +49 7443 13-3122
Fax +49 7443 13-8-3122
alexander.prokisch@homag.de