



## The Power Cell: Store, Saw and Nest

### The ultimate integrated board store and processing center

**All three machines work hand in hand and understand each other right away thanks to the standardised software. This guarantees a smooth and highly efficient production process even for small quantities or batch size 1 production.**

#### Your benefits at a glance

- Intelligent production: High performance and flexibility
- Optimised in all directions: woodCAD|CAM and Cut Rite
- Highly efficient: Parallel working cycles, no waiting times
- Structured cutting, structured de-stacking
- Barcodes allow precise identification of parts at any time
- Efficient feeding by BARGSTEDT storage
- Front panel production: Labeling of reverse sides
- Intelligent sorting and re-stacking



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## Automation boosts productivity

In order to improve productivity and cut increasing manufacturing costs, Sydney-based manufacturer Artline Kitchens, recently invested in new machinery from Homag Australia. This encompasses a large automated board storage and retrieval system in combination with a new beam saw and nesting cell, with the foresight to meet the challenges of today's manufacturing process.

Over the past decade the woodworking industry has seen radical changes with automation becoming the new trend. Both large and small kitchen manufacturers are constantly facing demands from the industry. The demand for shorter lead times whilst still maintaining a high quality and custom made product has supported the decision of Artline Kitchens' owner and managing director Michael Klüber to undertake such an investment, with efficient material handling and machining his focus.

Artline Kitchens' production of high quality custom-made kitchens, combined with demand for more competitively priced modular kitchen cabinets requires the company to be versatile with its manufacturing processes.

Founded over 30 years ago by Michael Klüber, Artline Kitchens has grown to become one of the leading manufacturers of quality kitchen cabinets on Australia's east coast. Originally based in a small factory in the western Sydney suburb of Chipping Norton, Artline Kitchens has experienced steady growth over the past 30 years. After several re-locations as the business expanded, Artline Kitchens is now based in a custom built manufacturing and office facility in Smeaton Grange. The continued growth experienced by Artline has been due to the relentless pursuit of its commitment

to producing a high quality product, with a high level of customer service to match.

#### Investment in automation

Automation is part of the key to manufacturing success and enables companies to remove manual processes, reduce errors and wastage, eventually leading to higher productivity and increased profitability. The recent investment in Homag consists of two nesting machines – Weeke Vantage 200, a drilling machine BHX 055, Holzma beam saw HPP 380 and a large Bargstedt TLF 210 storage and retrieval system. "The reason we invested in the Homag line was to manage our ever increasing volume of work," Mr Klüber explains. "Currently we manufacture in excess of 80 kitchens per week, and in order to increase our manufacturing capacity and efficiencies, we made the decision to invest in the Homag line." For decades, Artline has worked with various machines, each having been up to task, but they were running individually. Mr Klüber says: "Homag was able to offer us a complete solution with an integrated manufacturing cell that meets our demands now and into the future. They are one of the leaders of the industry, especially with the Bargstedt storage system, and are known for their quality and reliability," Mr Klüber lists reasons for the decision to go with the Homag Group.

Manufacturing in an area of 5,500 square metres in two-shifts, a company like Artline Kitchens needs automation which in turn requires minimal space at 400 square metres. The Homag integrated cell is not only space saving but also easy to fit in any production area. There are no single machines anymore, everything is intelligently connected.

Artline Kitchens' recent investment in Homag - two nesting machines - Weeke Vantage 200, a drilling machine BHX 055, Holzma beam saw HPP 380 and a large Bargstedt TLF 210 storage and retrieval system, a smooth and highly efficient production process.





With Homag technology, the manufacturing process ensures minimal waste of raw materials. The Bargstedt TLF 210 feeds the sheets directly to the Weeke nesting cells and the Holzma beam saw.

All networked machines ensure continuous production flow, offer structure, reduce waste, manage offcuts and therefore work efficiently.

Bargstedt, Holzma and Weeke – all production companies of the Homag Group – have put their heads together and developed a combined machine comprising store, sawing and nesting unit that allows an enormous variety of panel processing operations. This combination has been tailored in particular to the needs of producers of both rectangular and free-form components, and is ideally equipped to handle a variety of materials. One of Artline Kitchens' strengths is the wide variety of styles, materials and finishes it offers to its broad customer base. All materials and surfaces are handled comfortably by the cell.

#### All about the software

Mr Kluver knows about the advantages of a good software system: "All work is processed in the office, and as soon as a job has been completed, we are able to feed the machines automatically." Back in the days when Mr Kluver learnt the trade of a cabinet maker, he would have had no idea what the future would bring. The whole trade has surely changed over the years as he admits with a smile: "I have no clue how to operate today's machinery. The whole trade is now very different. When I started as a cabinet maker, we worked with our hands, and needed to take our time to ensure we produced a quality product. In our business today, it's important to have quality machinery and software to allow you to achieve consistently high quality results."

Mr Kluver also credits the staff of his IT Department, whom he says have played an integral role in ensuring the successful implementation of the new software and machinery. "One

of the most important hurdles we had to overcome during the upgrade was ensuring we provided minimum disruption to our customers," he explains. "The team we have working at Artline in IT is one of the most talented in the industry, and the business is fortunate that they have the skills and dedication required to ensure all of the transitions have gone as planned."

Homag Group does offer complete software solutions. Nowadays, the software makes the difference. With a proper flow of data and information, a smooth interaction of all machine processes is guaranteed – even for a small number of work pieces or a batch size one order. Once a design is finished, the software automatically generates a bill of material and the CNC processing data for the sawing and nesting machines, and transmits this data to the Cut Rite optimisation software from Holzma. At the same time, Cut Rite fetches the current information relating to material stocks from the networked Bargstedt storage software. Based on this collated information, Cut Rite optimises the cutting and production plans both for the saw and the nesting machine, and finally, starts the production.

In order to ensure that all machine operators are trained well on the new software, Homag provides after-installation training. Artline Kitchens currently employs five machine operators out of a total staff number of approximately 90. Mr Kluver is extremely pleased with the whole process, starting from the technical advice to the final installation: "Homag's service and training has been excellent."

#### Customised kitchens

The automation of the Homag line supports the various ranges of kitchen cabinetry manufactured by Artline. Not only does it provide consistent high quality components for its custom range, it also supports high volume production and short lead times when required, which sets Artline apart from other kitchen manufacturing companies. Flexibility is vital when servicing such a broad range of customers.

"We supply many kitchen retailers across NSW and other states. We are a kitchen manufacturer that produces each kitchen individually and do not have a warehouse full of stock cabinets and components", Mr Kluver says. 80 percent of its custom-build kitchens go to the renovation market in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. The company also deals directly with leading new home and multi-residential builders - and, consequently, their customers benefit from it. Therefore, Mr Kluver knows about his clients' satisfaction. "Our customers appreciate our commitment to high quality products and levels of service, and the fact that we still have many customers that we've continued to supply for over 20 years is testament to that."

In order to reach the price conscious end of the market, Artline has founded Interloc Kitchens. This is a modular range of fully assembled cabinets, designed for budget minded customers and also suited for DIY renovators or builders.

After leaving school to commence work as an apprentice cabinet maker for a small kitchen company in North Queensland, Mr Kluver has always been involved with kitchen manufacturing. Whilst he was in his 20's a move to Sydney came about and he continued to work in the kitchen industry. "I started a French polishing business and began polishing timber doors for various kitchen companies. I was hearing a lot of complaints from people saying they were unable to source complete kitchens." Starting a kitchen manufacturing company himself, was the logical solution.

As sophisticated as the name Artline Kitchens sounds, the name was derived over a few beers at a BBQ and Artline Kitchens was born.

#### Efficient manufacturing process

Today, the industry is embracing computer-driven machinery, automated material handling and higher volumes. By working hand-in-hand with his general manager Paul Davis, Mr Kluver gets first-hand information about new production processes to meet the market demands. Implementing the right machinery solutions at the right time forms one of the decisions a business owner needs to make. It is fundamental to success – or not.

Artline Kitchens is committed to environmental sustainability. With Homag technology, the manufacturing process ensures minimal waste. The Bargstedt feeds the sheets directly to the Weeke nesting cells and the Holzma beam saw.

Homag Australia's technical sales executive Grant Jones outlines the advantages of the new production facility for Artline Kitchens: "They are now able to manage and identify their entire inventory including all offcuts. Furthermore, they are able to control the production automatically moving the material to each machine at the right moment without manual loading or waiting for material also avoiding scratching on sensitive materials."

Now with greater flexibility Artline is able to alter the production list as required on a minute by minute basis. It can even re-produce single parts if necessary on the fly. This new system has given Artline back its valuable real-estate, dramatically reducing the floor space needed.

#### Starting small and grow big

Mr Kluver still remembers the early days with a smile: "At the very beginning, Artline consisted of three people working in a tiny factory until 3 in the morning, running just a panel saw and a little edgebander." Today, Artline Kitchens has grown



rapidly to employ approximately 90 people and to produce on a total area of 5,500 square metres.

The company now looks forward to further increased growth. "We are mindful of the challenges faced with business growth. It can become difficult to manage without the correct forward planning," Mr Kluver emphasises. "Without the right planning, your quality of products will suffer, you lose customers and eventually end up broke!" He does not face any machine concerns due to his trust in his new investment, but he is more concerned about losing his excellent staff. Most of them have been with the company for many years and so the company credits this as one of Artline's key strategies for success. "Our customers praise our staff. It's a happy work place and I want that to last." Artline Kitchens' Michael Kluver is convinced that he found in Homag a reliable partner for the future who takes his business to the next decade full of growth and success – and even longer.

Founded over 30 years ago by Michael Kluver, Artline Kitchens has grown to become one of the leading manufacturers of quality kitchen cabinets on Australia's east coast.

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