

## **Toni Gasser is a convert: 60% time-savings thanks to horizontal cutting**

**He has a firm grasp of his figures: Toni Gasser from Switzerland analyses, checks and evaluates. He muses and puzzles. And then he has yet another good idea of how he can make his business even more efficient. And so it was his cool, rational calculations that moved him to convert from a vertical saw to a horizontal saw. And to date he is still fully behind his decision.**

In 1985, Toni Gasser, a Swiss, founded his family-run business in Giswil, not far from Lake Lucerne. He predominantly produces individual, high-quality kitchens. But he also produces interior furnishings and bathroom fittings as well as front doors and room doors. Today he works together with his two sons and 19 further employees.

"We are a small business," says Toni Gasser. "This means we can't amortise our investment costs very easily, as we have a relatively short production time in comparison with large companies. But I'm certain that if we optimise the use of our machines and structure our processes well we can occupy a niche and secure our existence." According to Toni Gasser, this also predominantly includes avoiding unproductive times. "If I have to move a stack of panels from A to B with a forklift truck, that's wasted time. For when it arrives at B, it's still the same stack of panels." It's this mindset that drives him on. His aim: As little movement of parts as possible, as little need for information as possible.

In terms of the need for information in particular, he has recently made further reductions: Toni Gasser is trying to do without labels or barcodes where possible. "We think in coordinates x, y and z. With these coordinates alone and the information that our PPC system needs anyway, our machines know what part they are dealing with. This means we no longer need to label each individual part

and so save a lot of time."

EDP is Toni Gasser's best helper. In the meantime, he has developed a proprietary program that meets his personal requirements. "We have now invested over CHF 400,000 in our PPC system alone," says Toni Gasser matter-of-factly. "But we're starting to get a return on our investment!" For example, he is benefiting from the fact that work preparation can be completed automatically at the same time as the order confirmation: "The purchase price, specified production time and a sales text are saved for each component. We have 315 available variables for each kitchen and cabinet element – it would be hard to picture any more variance than that. But thanks to a careful preselection of the products, we can complete the work procedure for a complete kitchen in 45 to 75 minutes, including material ordering."

For Toni Gasser, regular checking of work procedures is a given: "Many people don't look to see where the money comes from and where it goes." Not so the resourceful Swiss businessman. Around three to four times a year, he and his sons evaluate the business figures and data. "We then act through an order at the weekend. When we do this, we time the individual element production times. This means we know our handling and production times as well as the time required for gathering information."

It's no wonder that Toni Gasser also demonstrated this same meticulousness when the purchase of a new saw came up. "We already had a vertical saw, so we had the exact cutting times." With HOLZMA, on the other hand, there was no guideline value at that time – unlike today with the Triple Mix standard. So, Toni Gasser wasn't really able to make a time comparison between vertical and horizontal saws. That's why he found it very difficult to decide on a total investment of this magnitude: "If I'm honest, I wasn't initially convinced that the investment in a horizontal panel saw would be worth it." In the end he took the risk. And he even built a new production hall for the purpose.

Today Toni Gasser is happy: "The HOLZMA saw now runs around 1000 hours per year. Had we chosen a vertical saw, we would soon have had to replace it, because it wouldn't have been able to deal with the current production volume."

Gasser is certain that many colleagues only see the costs of an investment. For him, however, this purchase price is comparatively unimportant: "A machine costs or brings in money, if you have it." That's why he recommends always highlighting the overall process. After all, in the end "many small components recover the money."

Thanks to the new saw and software, he is posting significant successes: More free time, better quality and fewer employees. "We have a 'super-fast' operator who used to cut the parts on the vertical saw from memory or based on a panel optimisation pattern. Another operator helped him," says Gasser. "Today, there is just one machine operator working at the saw, who can take on additional or other tasks in free times." In addition, in his opinion, it is no longer relevant whether a professional or an apprentice operates the machine. This has no impact on the speed or quality. And optimisation is reliably completed by the HOLZMA Cut Rite software.

According to Gasser, the cutting quality has already improved significantly with the new HOLZMA saw. "I can have finished cut quality as needed, eliminating need for profile trimming on the edges," says Toni Gasser. "In addition, I have significantly greater angle accuracy. With the vertical saw, we always had to readjust on the CNC processing centre."

He's also saving time now. Essentially through cutting in books, the omission of manual turning and rotating of the panel and significantly less positioning per part. And Toni Gasser wouldn't be Toni Gasser if he wasn't able to prove the time saving accurately with figures. According to his calculations, he's achieving a

time-saving of 60% for each square metre cut.

Of course, the improvement process at Gasser will never reach at an end. The latest change is the relocation of the office block. And Toni Gasser has made allowances for future measures too by purchasing two adjacent buildings as a precaution. "We always try to think out of the box. I think we're on the right track. But we're not there yet."

## Pictures



**Picture 1, number 4233:  
Toni Gasser**



**Picture 2, number 4237:  
Toni Gasser**



**Picture 3, number 4240:  
HOLZMA HPP 72 saw**



**Picture 4, number 4266:  
Peter Niederer (left), Managing Director of HOMAG Switzerland, and Toni  
Gasser (right) in a meeting**



**Picture 6, number 4571:**  
**Space-saving: superstructure above the saw and simultaneous use under the saw**

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