



Cube equals less set-up, fewer passes, more accuracy

Tony Cook from James Cook Joinery in Lower Hutt says the company's policy has always been to "do a good job, on time". With a reputation stretching back 30 years, a core of building companies supplying work in the Wellington region, and a workbook full of orders, it's clearly a policy that works.

Tony's been working in joinery for 39 years, and began James Cook Joinery with one other employee – Lance Smith – who is still working with him today. As work has increased the business has expanded to meet demand, and today the company has 8 staff, and offers a range of products from standard and specialised timber joinery, to kitchens and furniture.

With a workload that is heavy on exterior timber joinery, Tony Cook recently invested in two machines that have got his staff excited. "I went to the Jacks roadshow in Wellington earlier in the year, where I finally saw the machine I'd been looking for," he says. What he saw was Weing's new Cube – the straight four sider that has proved such a hit worldwide since its launch at LIGNA last year that there's now a substantial waiting list to get hold of one. "And the CNC chisel morticer caught the eye of the younger guys". Tony bought both machines.

The Cube offers the renowned quality and efficiency of Weing at a new price point – offering a machine from the German solid-timber specialists that really suit a mid-sized joinery shop such as James Cook. Tony reckons the machine has cut down their processing time by at least 80%.

"After cutting to length, we'd buzz, then thickness the traditional way," he explains. "Often there'd be 10 passes – three on the side, three on the face etc. Now there's one or two – and a whole lot less handling. In fact we've started buying more timber by the pack lot, and one of us – often me – comes out and puts the whole pack through first thing."

Tony had been convinced of the efficiency improvement before buying. But what he says is the biggest time saver is the knife changing. "I changed them myself for the first time the other day" he says. "A full set took me 40 minutes. It'll only take 30 next time I reckon. Compare that to the old days where it could take an hour and a half just to set up the buzzer."

The Centauro CNC chisel morticer is also already proving its worth. "The biggest benefit is the accuracy" says Tony. "When you've got a house-lot of joinery, that meant a lot of time spent on the old Wadkin chain and chisel morticer. Every piece had to be marked out. The chain would break or run off centre. Chisels would get hot and crack. Parts were hard to come by. Now we've got the situation where you programme the job, and the Beta remembers that programme as long as you

want it. And it's easy to use – everyone in the factory can use it."

Staff at James Cook joinery can be working as part of a team, or take a job from start to finish on their own. As Tony points out, the Weing and Centauro machines are designed to suit this flexible work pattern. "With both new machines you can interrupt them with an urgent job, then go back to what you were doing with the push of a button. It means we can cope with urgent jobs really well – which is great for our customers."

Given their production levels the guys at James Cook make very efficient use of the workshop space they have available. So the compact nature of both new machines has meant the workshop is now capable of even more output from the same footprint, which is useful given the order book. Tony also reckons the new machines have contributed to a really good feeling amongst the staff. "I've got good loyal staff," he says, "and now they're racing up to the machines to use them. There's a really good work ethic going on, and our outlook is really positive."

