

In Bed with MSL

Ashcraft Furniture at Toddington, near Cheltenham, make beds and occasional furniture and 18 months ago they installed a Morbidelli Author 660 throughfeed point-to-point machine from UK distributor Machine Sales for drilling, routing and grooving in a single pass.

Among the benefits that works manager Colin Cook had been seeking was reliable technical back up. By drilling, routing and grooving panels point-to-point on a throughfeed system he has increased his panel volume by around 75%, he estimates.

Colin says: "Matt Long at Machine Sales promised us that they would respond to technical support calls within 24 hours which was a prospect I found most interesting - so you could say that the Morbidelli Author 660 was bought on a promise. But that was 18 months ago, the promise has held good and we've also learned a few very useful lessons from the experience."

One of them is that conventional throughfeed technology for drilling only operations has moved on as batch sizes have begun to shrink. Although their original throughfeed drill was faster for drilling only operations, by getting drilling, routing and grooving all computer controlled for point-to-point operation in a single pass, Colin Cook has also eliminated the logistical headaches of moving drilled panels to other dedicated machines to achieve what the Morbidelli Author 660 does automatically in a single pass.

Drilling, routing and grooving is a specification common to many Ashcraft Furniture bed panel components. With the Morbidelli Author 660, as well as greatly reducing logistical problems on the shop floor Colin Cook has virtually eliminated the hour long set up breaks that Ashcraft were increasingly seeing to change drilling patterns in order to stay abreast of larger numbers of diminishing batch sizes.

"The Machine Sales technical support promise holding good as it has," he says "has encouraged us to return to Italy in November '06 to see the latest technology on offer from Morbidelli. We were very impressed," he adds, "and we would look in the future to buy more when the need arises."



Shown point-to-point drilling, routing and grooving narrow rails in a single pass is the Morbidelli Author 660 from Machine Sales at Ashcraft Furniture



Since supplying the Morbidelli Author 660, Machine Sales have also supplied a Mahros Runner panel stacker on the end of the line at the Ashcraft Furniture factory.

Colin Cook and company founder at Ashcraft Furniture, Martin Bowell, first spotted the Morbidelli Author 660 package at Woodmex in 2004, when Machine Sales had their own stand at the show, and they placed their order for the first machine as a result. At the last W6 exhibition, the Ashcraft team went to the High Tech Panels Division stand of SCM Group and saw the latest technology from Morbidelli there.

As a result, in November 2006 Ashcraft Furniture accompanied Matt Long of MSL on a visit to the Morbidelli factory at Pesaro, in Italy, where they saw the latest Author systems and also the Italian market leader's new Planet work centre. For a production team newly switched on to the benefits of multi-function point-to-point working, Morbidelli's latest Planet technology, which also introduces edgebanding for shaped components into the mix, has provided

Colin Cook with all the pointers he needs for 2007, he says.

As a visit to the Ashcraft Furniture website shows, their bed range is nothing if not smart, trendy and eminently practical. All beds go out in flat pack form.

Key issues like quality control and reliability of supply are much easier to deal with in an exclusive relationship. And from the Ashcraft Furniture viewpoint, the dependability of call-out attendance by Machine Sales engineers within the agreed working time frame has paid handsome dividends.

Colin Cook summarises: "In my view, Morbidelli technology stacks up against the best in the world but you can't odds the fact that all machines have technical problems at some time or other. When it happens, the technology is only as good as the technical back-up you get from the supplier - and the back-up we've had from Machine Sales has been second to none in my experience."

For more information:

Tel: 0113 256 8883

Fax: 0113 256 8031

Email: john@machinesales.co.uk