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SEPTEMBER 2025

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How technology is changing CAD/CAM software

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Jennifer Hicks (top, cover)



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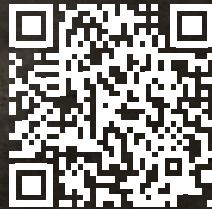


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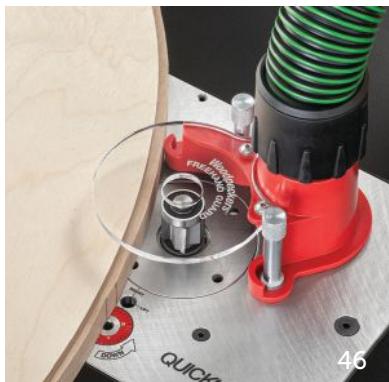


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Talkin' shop with former editor A.J. Hamler

#### 2025 Online Resource Guide

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## CMA re-elects three board members

By Tod Riggio

SEPTEMBER 2025

WOODSHOPNEWS

**Hans Parker of Board Foot Co. (Kalamazoo, Mich.)**, Randy Niewind of Randy's Cabinets & Woodworks (Grand Rapids, Minn.), and Jason Norvell of Norvell Inc. (Slidell, La.) were re-elected by the Cabinet Makers Association's (CMA) general membership to serve a three-year term on the board of directors, effective July 1, 2025.

Niewind was also appointed President. Other officers for the 2025-2026 term are Vice President Amy Thrasher of Price, D & H Cabinets (Lindale, Texas); Treasurer Terry Steffey of Dibbleville Woodworks (Fenton, Mich.), and Secretary Norvell.

"The CMA appreciates the continued commitment of these leaders and looks forward to another productive year under their guidance," the CMA said in a statement. "Their collective experience, insight, and passion for the craft industry are invaluable assets to the organization and its members."

**Rev-A-Shelf** has acquired all rights to the InnovaShelf floating shelf and cabinet bracket systems.

"This strategic acquisition follows the formal partnership between Rev-A-Shelf and InnovaShelf," the company said in a July 8 statement. "Starting August 1st, 2025, as part of this agreement, all orders and distribution of InnovaShelf branded products will now be handled exclusively through Rev-A-Shelf."

"This acquisition reinforces our commitment to expanding thoughtfully engineered solutions for both homeowners and industry professionals," said Steve Jones Jr.,

general manager of Rev-A-Shelf. "The InnovaShelf bracket systems is a natural complement to our Omega National Products by Rev-A-Shelf line of wood floating shelves, and we are excited to fully integrate it into our offering."

**Hettich America** has closed on its acquisition of fellow hardware giant, FGV America.

"The merger represents a key milestone in both companies' shared strategy to strengthen market presence and exposure across the competitive North America market," Hettich said in a statement. "With aligned values, long-term vision, and deep industry expertise, the merger brings together two family-owned businesses with over 200 years of combined experience, signifying a profound and future-focused partnership built on mutual respect and a shared commitment to advancing the furniture fittings industry."

"Hettich and FGV are the perfect match in the functional hardware industry," added Matthias Bertl, CEO of Hettich America. "With this new partnership, clients of both brands will benefit from our different value propositions and efficiencies in our operations, ensuring reliability in the current volatile market."

Bertl was recently appointed CEO of Hettich America.

"In his new role, he will be based at Hettich America's headquarters in Buford, Georgia, where he will oversee the company's U.S. operations with a focus on expanding brand visibility, growing market share, and driving innovation in the North American market," the company said. **W**

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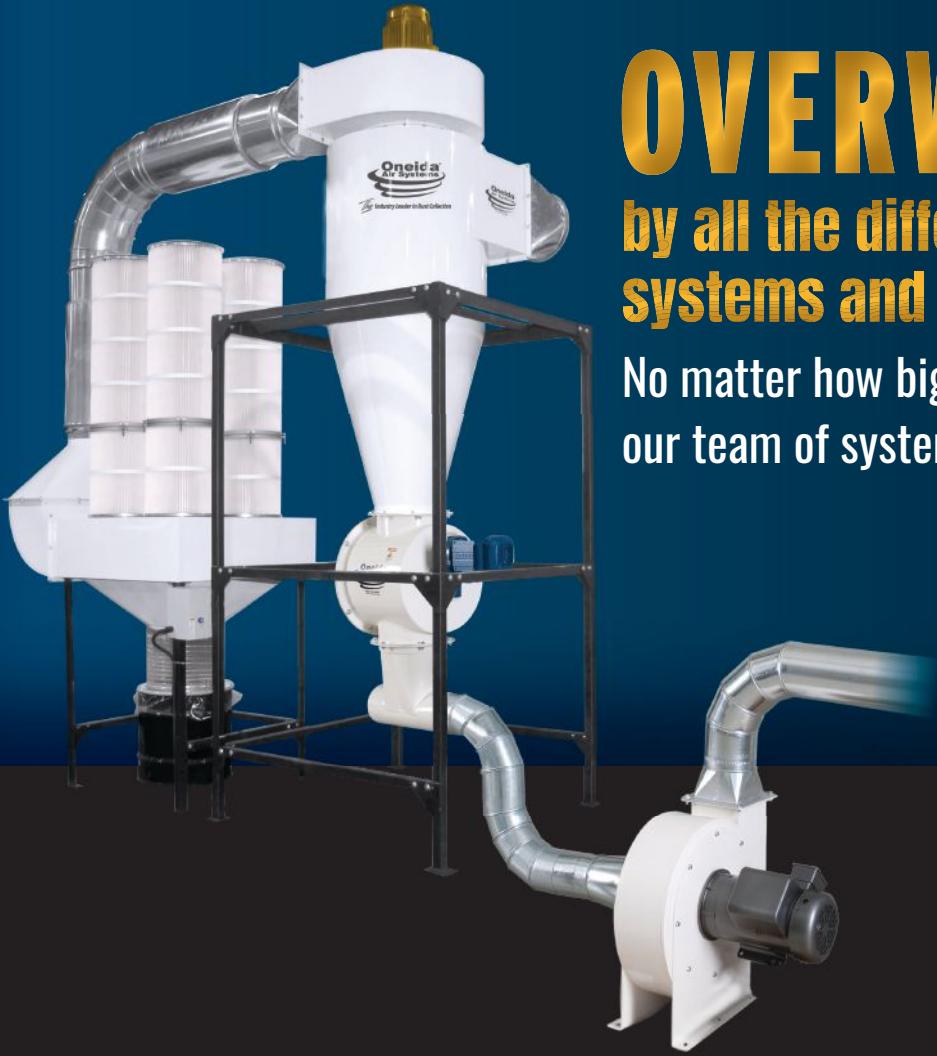
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# Visionary Awards presented at AWFS

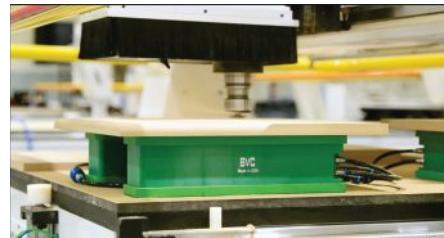
By Jennifer Hicks

**Nine exhibitors won Visionary New Product Awards** at the 2025 AWFS Fair in Las Vegas. The awards recognize creativity and innovation, and are evaluated on quality, production impact, practicality, innovation, and user-friendliness.

Descriptions of the winning products, based on interviews and descriptions provided by the exhibitors, are as follows:

## Components

**Better Vacuum Cups** for the SS Series Vacuum Cup: The double-sided vacuum cups allow shops to maximize the flexibility of their vacuum tables so they can do solid woodwork or edge detail by raising the material off the table on top of an existing spoil board. They work with routers of various sizes. No foam gaskets are needed to use, unless the cup has been damaged. **8** Cups are available in standard heights of 105, 150, and 200 mm. Learn more at [greenbvc.com](http://greenbvc.com).



## Machinery Over \$50,000

**Felder Group USA** for the Format-4 Tempora F1000 edge bander: A high-capacity automatic edge bander that combines durability, precision and efficiency for maximum performance. It's equipped with a belt feed drive on the upper pressure bar to ensure careful material handling of surface materials and has a redesigned corner rounding unit with CNC-controlled positioning



axes to deliver precise results, minimize maintenance and increase efficiency. Other key features include an 18" 'smartouch' control system, centric edge jointing unit, and top-mounted controlled glue pot with cleaning function. Learn more at [felder-group.com](http://felder-group.com).

## Machinery Under \$50,000

**Shaper Tools** for the Shaper BenchPilot: Turns the company's flagship product, the Shaper Origin, into a hands-free CNC machine, capable of vertical or horizontal cutting. Operators can simply remove the Origin from the BenchPilot to go back to portable hand-held CNC machine for making cuts at any scale. Learn more at [shapertools.com](http://shapertools.com).



## Power Tools

**Apollo Sprayers** for the Atomizer Black Edition spray gun: Delivers enhanced true HVLP performance and flawless finishing results with any make turbine or air compressor (3-hp/20-gallon tank or larger). Key features include

improved fan control through the Xpansive Fan Control Ring, all stainless-steel fluid parts, dual air inputs and material inputs, and OS control installed to reduce overspray. Learn more at [hvlp.com](http://hvlp.com).

## Software (tie)

**Advanced Dimensions** for the Leica ICON iCS: The Leica iCS series is a



breakthrough in precision layout technology, bringing seamless digital workflows to the woodworking and construction industries. Designed for ease of use, the system enables direct CAD integration, real-time visualization, and unmatched accuracy on the jobsite. By reducing errors, labor costs, and material waste, the iCS revolutionizes how professionals approach measurement and layout. Learn more at [advanceddimensions.com](http://advanceddimensions.com).

**Hexagon** for Field to Machine: An innovative workflow product that combines an all-new Leica measurement device (from Advanced Dimensions) for templating with integration with Alphacam software that allows manufacturers to drastically reduce the time it takes to perform jobsite measurements and put their job into production. Learn more at [hexagon.com](http://hexagon.com).

## Tooling



**Make it Snappy Tools** for the iCARB Indexable Carbide Countersink: Features a double-sided replaceable carbide insert that doubles the tool's life while reducing replacement cost and waste. Featuring a durable, precision-machined steel body, they're built for high-performance and long-term value. Learn more at [snappytools.com](http://snappytools.com).

(Continued on page 10)

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MASTERCAM RELEASES  
MASTERCAM 2026

Mastercam, a provider of CAD/CAM software, announces the release of Mastercam 2026 with several productivity enhancements, advanced machining capabilities, and AI-enabled CAM intelligence.

"Built on extensive customer feedback and industry research, Mastercam 2026 focuses on eliminating bottlenecks in the programming workflow while providing more precise control over complex machining operations," the company said in a statement.

Learn more at [mastercam.com](http://mastercam.com).

## Fresh Wood winners celebrated at AWFS

By Jennifer Hicks

SEPTEMBER 2025

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WOODSHOPNEWS

**Eliot Childress**, representing the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship in Rockport, Maine, won Best of Show at the 2025 AWFS Fresh Wood student competition.

The biennial competition recognizes top student work from high school through post-secondary level woodworking education programs in the categories of Tables, Seating, Case Goods, Design for Production, and Other. This year's contest included 40 finalist pieces from 16 schools across the country.



Eliot Childress won Best of Show for "The Next Chapter", a cabinet, inspired by the work of James Krenov.

"My heart is still racing a little bit," Childress, from Davis, Calif., told Woodshop News after the awards ceremony. "I didn't expect it because there's a lot of people in my class who have very awesome pieces here, so I feel very honored to be chosen amongst them."

Childress won for a cabinet, titled "The Next Chapter." He says the idea behind the piece was to encompass a transitional point in his life: when he decided to venture into professional furniture making. The curve on the door, for example, represents him turning a page into a new



"The Mentor's Chair", by Dustin Grant, won the People's Choice Award.

chapter. As for technical inspiration, the idea arose from a request by his father, who wanted a cabinet for his home, inspired by the work of James Krenov, founder of the Fine Furniture Program at the College of the Redwoods.

"My father was a student of James Krenov and he requested a specific cabinet to hold a plane given to him by Krenov. So, I had to really go for it with that cabinet. I wanted a rectilinear cabinet, but I wanted every little thing to be curved," says Childress.

Childress is trying to move to Japan to start a furniture making career. He left Japan to attend the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship.

Dustin Grant of Utah Valley University won the People's Choice Award for "The Mentor's Chair."

Post-secondary winners also included Wesley Terrell, Center for Furniture Craftsmanship (Tables); Childress (Case Goods, Open), and Matthew McDermott, Center for Furniture Craftsmanship (Seating).

High school winners were Jacob Hamblin, Corner Canyon High School (Tables); Gavin Richards, Fremont Public High School (Case Goods); Ashton Anderson, Mustang High School (Open), and Ky Frederick, Lincoln East High School (Design for Production). **W**



Fresh Wood featured five students from the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship.



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# Sellers report slower white oak sales

By Jennifer Hicks

**While still a leading hardwood for cabinetry, trim and other woodworking projects, white oak has become slightly less prominent lately, according to suppliers interviewed by Woodshop News.**

Sean Eaton at O'Brien Hardwoods & Specialty Lumber in Portland, Maine, says fluctuation in consumer design trends seems to be the main reason sales are cooling off.

"With white oak, we've been seeing a decline in sales over the last few months. It's kind of leveled off. From about 2015 to 2020, the demand kept growing, and especially the rift sawn. It absolutely exploded. It's still popular, but it has definitely worn out. I'm not sure what's taking its place, but there were times when we had trouble keeping it in stock, and now that's not a problem at all," says Eaton.

Eaton adds that log length and board quality has been a concern, attributed to competition from the whisky barrel industry.

"It's not as common to get longer lengths, and 12' is considered long now. You can still get the 14' and 16', but you've got to really ask for it, and there are a lot of vendors, if not all, that will charge you extra. So, the lengths tend to run a little shorter. I'm going to say 7' to 10' is more average. There's a lot more sap now than there has been over the years, just because of the tree size. There's not as much care put into the drying process, and we do a lot more face checking and end checking."

The whisky barrel manufacturers are buying a majority of white oak. I've been doing this since '95 and just heard from a vendor that about three years ago whisky barrel manufacturers bought two-thirds of all white oak that was cut in the U.S. And because they don't care about the size,



since they're cutting it into small staves, that opens the tree that can be cut and harvested. So those harvesting it aren't really on the lookout for the big mature trees now. They want to meet that demand and being in this industry we get what's left over. It's driven by whoever will pay the most for it."

Alex Wellsfry of MacDonald and Owen in West Salem, Wis., says demand for white oak is steady, but buyers are shifting away from the lower grades.

"The No. 1 common white oak is definitely softening in the market. The demand is not as much as it used to be. Sales in the FAS uppers are firm, but nothing crazy. There's demand, but not over-demand for it, and customers have a bit more availability in it. But they also are a bit more specific as far as color sorting, grading and clarity," says Wellsfry.

Doug White of Doug White Hardwoods in Marissa, Ill., says white oak continues to be his top seller and he's trying to order more.

"White oak's hot. It's a little scarce and still expensive," says White. "It seems like the more the price goes up, the more people want it. I'm waiting to hear back from a mill where we're trying to get a unit of 10's and 14's. I'm not sure if they have those lengths. We've got a lot of it here. It's just that we've been selling quite a bit of it and want to keep it in stock." **W**

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# Wizardry in the woodshop

How technology is changing CAD/CAM software

By John English

Over the past few years, advanced visual technologies such as photorealistic rendering, 360-degree viewability, and real time adjustment that instantly show changes have all become mainstream in cabinet showrooms. Customers can see their completed kitchens or baths before a single saw cut is made, and they can virtually twist and turn casework to examine details such as cabinet interiors, LEDs, or drawer dividers. Designers can move walls or windows and design cabinetry in homes or offices

that haven't even been built yet.

So, with all of that magic happening, how could there possibly be anything new?

## MYSTERIOUS MANIPULATION

Well, most of what's new is happening behind the scenes.

Design and presentation changes are becoming less obvious even as they become more profound. For example, parametrics are gaining ground in new ways that simplify design and make it far more flexible. A parametric design changes

dimensions and shapes by using algorithms rather than mechanical manipulation. What that means is that artificial intelligence (AI) is now changing parameters within a drawing in a domino effect, and it's doing that wherever a single change affects any other parts. The CAD designer no longer has to make a whole series of manual modifications or corrections.

Up until now parametrics meant that, for example, if a drawer front gets taller, the door above it will be resized automatically. But now the

process is much more agile. If the angle on a raised panel change, the stiles and rails can micro-adjust themselves to accommodate the new profile, or a change in hinges can be automatically passed along to a CNC so that the machining for the recess can be modified instantly and the toolpaths are updated. This concept is called dynamism, or dynamic modeling, and it brings advanced levels of automation to computers and design in much the same way that robots are doing so on the shop floor.

Dynamic modeling depends on algorithms, which are sets of rules or guides that the computer 'learns' and then uses to make decisions without any operator input. What's new is that algorithms can be modified by artificial intelligence and even created by AI. For that to happen, the programmer develops an original algorithm that lets the computer create new sets of rules based on unforeseen actions and consequences. So, if a certain thing happens, the software can now search among a vast range of instructions that have been designed as solutions and apply the most appropriate ones. If, for example, the length of a wall is

a certain dimension, then a change in the width of a cabinet, a spacer, a sink, a piece of hardware, window trim, or dozens of other elements can trigger an algorithm that suggests ways to squish or expand something somewhere that makes the most sense. As the database of possible parts and machining expands over time, the number of correct solutions also expands. AI is being used now to choose among the viable options and present the 'best' solution. But that may not just be driven by function as in the past, but perhaps by appearance, or the immediate availability of hardware or other materials, or even by a combination of these factors.

### SPELLBINDING SENSES

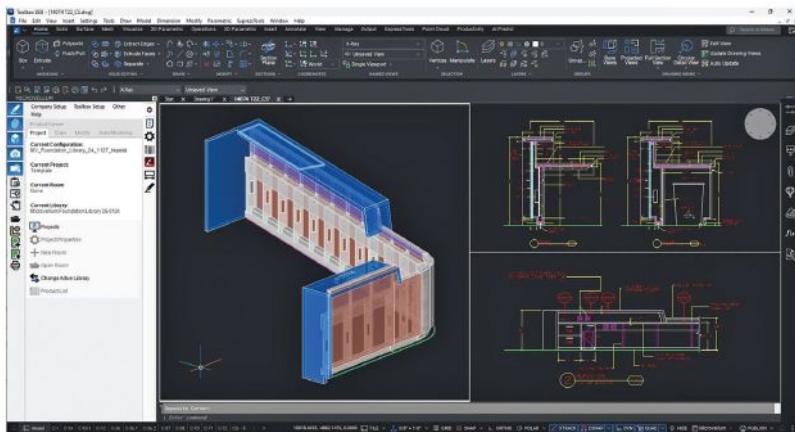
One trend in design that has gained some ground (but perhaps not as much as one might have expected) is virtual reality (VR). The concept of putting on a headset to walk through a completed kitchen is still catching on, but slowly. This type of immersive experience isn't completely comfortable for some clients, which is unfortunate because it's a very valuable tool. It elevates a 3-D model that appears on a 2-D screen

to a tactile, resonant experience that addresses more of the senses, and also allows the programmer to make both structural and decorative changes digitally. That resonance, of course, is the very reason that some people shy away from it: disconnecting from VR is not as simple as just turning one's head from a photorealistic rendering on a computer screen. Virtual reality can involve muscles involuntarily because the brain sees itself inhabiting a physical reality that is at odds with the actual surroundings. We react to objects and spaces that aren't actually there. VR also allows biased voluntary reactions, such as reaching for an object on a shelf that doesn't exist. But it's the involuntary muscle movement that seems to intimidate new users.

Augmented reality (AR) is a version of VR that uses the actual room as a base, and then just digitally overlays changes within that environment. So, it alters what's there, rather than completely replacing it in the way that virtual reality does. AR might let a client see what their existing kitchen would look like with new doors or wall paint, while VR can take them to an entirely different room.



EnRoute Software from Sai lets a designer choose realistic parametric textures such as bamboo or wood.



The new Toolbox BSB from Microvellum unites intelligent engineering tools with a professional-grade CAD foundation in BricsCAD.

There's also a trend toward mixed reality (MR), which is a hybrid of virtual and augmented experiences. The University of Queensland defines this as "a view of the real world — physical world — with an overlay of digital elements where physical and digital elements can interact". So, one could change a drawer pull without, well, changing the drawer pull.

Other common terminology in this arena includes non-immersive VR which is just shown on a 2-D screen; semi-immersive VR which is a mix of reality and VR; and the term 'fully immersive VR' which means putting on the hel-

met and controls.

While overexposure to virtual reality gaming has been known to cause headaches, eye strain, motion sickness and nausea (especially among video gamers), the chances of ill effects in a cabinet showroom are remote. Certain medical conditions are also prohibitive in this area including anxiety, stress, and migraines, so cabinet shops might want to develop a liability policy before introducing VR.

AI is also being used now to suggest a new level of subtlety in design that's based on individual client input. This can make the process very customizable and personal, where elements such as color bias or a preference in furniture style or accents can influence everything from LED lighting to molding profiles. For AI to be able to include this level of intuition, the shop needs to first record the customer's preferences by having them make enough broad selections from online catalogs for the program to be able to discern notions and trends.

#### CHARMING CONNECTIONS

Ever since Covid, cloud-based collaboration has become a growing trend where designers, builders and clients all come together online for design conferences. They use templates and libraries on laptops, tablets or desktop computers to travel through the options. One

Courtesy of Microvellum



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The xShaping module in Hexagon's Cabinet Vision can parametrically shape assemblies and parts while creating CAM instructions.

Courtesy of Hexagon

quirk that's emerging is that the participants often prefer to be connected via cellphone to a group chat, rather than using the conferencing software that became so popular during the pandemic. They still use their computers but they're also on a

video chat at the same time.

This separation of audio and visual elements seems to facilitate more input and more independent contributions to the design session. Video-device-plus-phone conferencing lets a woodshop that's working with an

outsourcing supplier provide technical data, while the client presents decorative and aesthetic preferences, and the factory can simultaneously align those technical and decorative parameters with its own competencies. So, the woodworkers assess

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the space, the customer chooses colors and shapes, and the factory says what's possible — all in a single conversation.

Such consultations take place in real time where the design software delivers instant updates. So, rather than the traditional approach where the woodworker and client have conversations and the outcome is relayed by the woodworker to the outsourcing designer, everything happens all at once. The process requires a level of trust between the shop and the supplier, and the client needs to be assured that the shop still plays a significant role beyond installation. A custom woodshop isn't just a sales outlet for the factory, and it's up to the woodworker to educate the client about the shop's value.

Cabinet and part libraries have come a long way too, and most are now very customizable. Parts such as hardware items can become seamlessly integrated into a shop's CAD programs and CAM software. That allows woodworkers to add more details to outsourced projects, while retaining design integrity. And hardware libraries have expanded exponentially. For example, one of the most useful advances in design software is the ability to order full drawer systems, rather than just slides. Extruded plastic and metal boxes with concealed slide mechanisms are becoming very popular, and not just in minimalist kitchens. That's due to aesthetics on one level, but the physical quality of the latest drawer systems is also quite impressive.

What it all comes down to is this: design and presentation software is evolving faster than ever, and AI is at its core. What CNCs did for production lines, AI is doing for sales and marketing. Despite a much larger catalog of styles and finishes, purchasing casework for a kitchen, bath, office or retail store is actually getting easier.

Customers understand the metrics of buying from a computer screen, and AI is simplifying that process even as it expands their choices. **W**

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# Grizzly's new automatic edge bander offers pre-milling

By Jennifer Hicks

**Grizzly Industrial** presents a new automatic edge bander, model G0985, with a pre-milling function.

Boasting a 10' table, the machine also features a heated fence and trim and buffer units.



"We introduced this to expand on the other two automatic edge banders (models G0774 and G0854) that are smaller and are very successful units for us. This one has all the features and performance you'd expect in a higher-priced edge bander. The pre-milling is probably the biggest upgrade because it makes sure the edge is super smooth," says product manager Pat Raynor.

Raynor adds that the edge bander is ideal for cabinet shops with medium to large production loads, doing commercial paneling, laminate doors, and frameless cabinets.

The pre-milling function features dual diamond cutterheads that prep the panel edge for gluing, while the heated infeed fence prepares it for optimal adhesion. Other key features include the radius scraping unit that removes squeeze out, and the trimming and buffering units to clean up the edges for a polished finish.

The bander also features a PLC system with LED display to let users quickly adjust settings and oversee machine performance with individual controls for each process.

The Grizzly model G0985 sells for \$26,175. Learn more at [grizzly.com](http://grizzly.com). **W**

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The Omech 750CN-C features a powerful 4 HP, 18,000 RPM spindle engineered for optimal performance and durability. Its advanced spindle cover enhances workplace safety by minimizing sawdust and noise, ensuring a cleaner and quieter working environment. Additionally, the Omech 750CN-C pre-scores workpieces to achieve precise, high-quality finishes in every production run. Designed for efficiency, the Omech 750CN-C processes single or simultaneous male and female workpieces, achieving output rates of up to 60 drawers per hour. It accommodates drawer widths up to 20.86" and material thicknesses up to 1.18", making it a highly versatile solution for dovetail production.

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## OMEGA RANGE HOODS AVAILABLE IN PROKITCHEN

Rev-A-Shelf announces that the Omega National Products by Rev-A-Shelf catalog is now live in ProKitchen, software for kitchen and bath design.

"Designers and cabinetmakers can now easily incorporate our full line of wood range hoods and floating shelves into photorealistic kitchen layouts, making it easier than ever to specify, present, and sell," the company said. "Now you can visualize Omega hoods and shelves in your kitchen layouts with realistic color and detail."

Learn more at [rev-a-shelf.com](http://rev-a-shelf.com).

# C.R. Onsrud unveils A-Series at AWFS

By Jennifer Hicks

**C.R. Onsrud** introduced the A-Series CNC router for cutting wood, metal, plastic and composites at the 2025 AWFS Fair in Las Vegas, where it demonstrated a melamine cabinet nest for optimal material yield.

Ideal for starter shops and smaller companies who want high-quality performance without the need for elaborate add-ons, the machine performs all the essential CNC functions in a small footprint at a low price-point, the company said.



The 3-axis machine is offered with a 4' x 8' or 5' x 12' table and has a FANUC control system with a custom HMI (human machine interface) that essentially gives end-users easy button functionality, the company said.

The A-Series starts under \$90,000. The machine arrives fully assembled with a 'plug and play' design and includes on-site training and machine setup.

Learn more at [cronsrud.com](http://cronsrud.com). **W**

## SLOWER GROWTH PROJECTED FOR REMODELING INTO NEXT YEAR

Annual expenditures for improvements and maintenance to owner-occupied homes are expected to soften in 2026, according to the Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity (LIRA) from the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. The LIRA projects that year-over-year spending for home renovation and repair will increase by just 1.2 percent by the second quarter of 2026.

"Weakness in the current housing market is expected to have a dampening effect on home improvement spending," said Rachel Bogardus Drew, Director of the Remodeling Futures Program at the Center, in a statement. "Slowing construction

starts and remodeling permitting activity, which are key factors in predicting future remodeling expenditures, are also putting downward pressure on home improvement growth."

"It will be important to keep an eye on whether the housing market shows any sign of rebound in the second half of the year, to assess if this slowdown is the beginning of a more significant downturn," added Chris Herbert, Managing Director of the Center. "However, federal cuts to incentives for home energy improvements could spur an increase in remodeling activity in the short term, as homeowners seek to take advantage of programs before they disappear."

Courtesy of C.R. Onsrud

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# Felder debuts the compact Finebrush 953

By Jennifer Hicks

**Felder** introduced the Finebrush 953 at the 2025 AWFS Fair in July, the latest edition to its Format 4 line of brushing and brush sanding machines. The model features a space-saving design and the ability to process panels, profiles, frames and more.

"We've had many requests for something with a smaller footprint with the same type of capabilities as our larger models in this type of machine. We worked with our suppliers and this 953 is the result of that, so now we're able to offer a smaller machine at a lower price point that's still reducing lots of labor intensive work," says Felder Product Manager Jesse Maynerich.

The Finebrush 953 is distinct from a wide belt sander as it's not removing material. Rather, its functions include rough brushing and intercoat sanding to break edges and



prep pieces for finishing.

"This machine breaks the surface and gives the homogenous cut on the entire part so that when it gets to the finishing process, that spray lays down evenly. One application that comes to mind is running MDF to make Shaker-style doors. This can break the inner edges of that door panel and outer edges and then it can go straight to paint from there," says Maynerich.

The Finebrush 953 is 5' tall, 5'-1/2" wide and 4' deep, taking up about the same amount of floor space as a cabinet saw. It features three brushing units controllable in counter-clockwise rotation, two longitudinal units, and a disc brushing unit. It has a working width of 950mm, according to the company.

Other features include simple operation thanks to an intuitive control panel, a handwheel to adjust the engagement height, and variable speed control. The machine can also be equipped with roller table extensions on both the infeed and outfeed ends.

The three-phase machine includes a transformer to eliminate voltage conflicts. The Finebrush 943 starts at about \$50,000. Learn more at [felder-group.com](http://felder-group.com). **W**

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# Northtech presents universal material feeder

By Jennifer Hicks

**Northtech Machine** introduced its new Universal Telescopic Feeder at the 2025 AWFS Fair in Las Vegas, designed to simplify and streamline material feeding across a wide range of woodworking equipment.

"At the heart of its performance is a telescopic frame, allowing a wide range of length processing while maintaining a compact design," the company explained.

"This, paired with the hopper and adjustable side-wall design, allows continuous and smooth feeding of parts, minimizing handling, maximizing throughput, and reducing downtime.

"This all results in greater throughput with faster machine feeds and less operator fatigue."

The accessory requires a mounting plate to be fitted to each



of the machines being fed.

The feeder "is compatible with planers, shapers, molders, double surfacers, straight-line and gang rip saws, band saws, brush sanders, and wide belt sanders.

"Whether you're handling short, long, wide, narrow, thick, or thin stock, this feed system is designed to adjust and perform continuous feeding with precision," the company said.

The feeder is also plug-and-play with single-phase voltage and is adaptable to other major brands of machines, not just Northtech's.

"Often, we are seeing shops want automation, but the flexibility and entry cost prevents a lot of them from making the move. This feeder creates a solution for all that," added Brandon Koetter, president at Northtech Machine.

Northtech's Universal Telescopic Feeder, a finalist for the Visionary New Product Awards at AWFS, starts at \$16,500.

Learn more at [northtechmachine.com](http://northtechmachine.com).

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## Sanding goes smoother with the proper tools

By Diane Shattuck

**Choosing the wrong backup pad, sanding block or sander** can add time, expense and headaches to our daily tasks. When components are not properly aligned with one another, our results fall short of what we are trying to achieve.

Remember, sanding is an art and a science. Our primary reason for sanding is to create a profile for our coatings to adhere to. The appearance and performance of our coating depends on the success of the adhesion process. But the tools we use play a big factor.

Sanding by hand allows you to feel what you are doing on a more tactile

and emotional level. It is best for soft detail work but be sure to sand in the direction of the grain for an even and scratch-free result. There are better options for large surfaces.

**Sanding blocks** are made in all shapes and sizes and with different densities. The reason for the selection is that we can choose the proper density that will give us consistent contact with the shape without distorting the profile or character.

**Hard sanding blocks** are used to level or flatten the surface. If there are any slopes, curves, rounds or profiles, a medium density block is a better choice, as hard blocks can

create flat spots and could remove the definition of the profile. Hard blocks also tend to only have small or lower contact points when the paper is applied.

**Medium density blocks** will bend slightly and make better contact for general sanding, allowing the sandpaper to make full contact and create an even scratch. Soft sanding blocks allow for softer contact taking the aggressiveness off the cutting stroke, allowing only the mineral to really do the cutting. Many hand blocks are rectangular, but manufacturers now offer backup pads to fit their 5" or 6" discs.

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Sanding with a sander can eliminate long hours of hand sanding but can also introduce new obstacles to master and be aware of. The rotation or stroke moves quickly and can produce a pattern if not managed correctly. Understand how your sander operates and apply the correct pressure, speed and abrasive to get optimum results.

**Random orbital sanders** are designed to rotate in a random pattern while also moving in an orbital motion. The orbit of the tool — 3/8", 3/16", 5/16", or 3/32" — indicates how aggressive the sander will travel across the workpiece and cut. The sanders are specific to their rotation, so it is important to pay attention to which sander is good for which process. They are available with 3", 5", 6" and 8" discs as electric, cordless or pneumatic models. To properly maintain a pneumatic sander, add one or two drops of air tool oil in the quick disconnect fitting at the end of every

eight-hour day. Then reconnect the airline and press the hand pedal several times to swirl the oil through the tool. Disconnect and set the tool on a flat surface for the night. With electric sanders, blow out any dust collected under the backup pad and around the motor area.

**3/8" orbit** — For aggressive removal, like stripping off paint or flattening uneven surfaces.

**3/16" and 5/16" orbit** — Used for general sanding. It can leave swirl marks if moved too quickly across the surface. The sanding pattern should always be north/south and east/west with a 35 to 50 percent overlap.

**3/32" orbit** — Used for sanding sealers, primers and veneers, or where the need for delicate care is required. This type of sander can give the appearance of sanding slower due to its tighter orbit. But it is likely running at 10,000 to 12,000 rpm like the 3/16" DA.

**3"x4" orbital sander** — Sands in a

continuous orbit. A great size for detail work, as well as sanding corners, profiles and insets.

**Pad savers** — Should be used on every sander and backup pad. They offer a better contact experience and will extend the life of backup pads.

**Interface pads** — Great for roundovers or bullnose without creating flat spots. They are available in different thicknesses to accommodate the curves and pressure points needed.

**Backup pads** vary in their firmness to give the sandpaper different contact and performance traits. There are many manufacturers but be sure to use the size designed for your sander. The weight of the different backup pads is specific to the size of the tool. The wrong size will make the tool unbalanced.

**Firm/hard pads** — Used to level and flatten solid wood. Not a good choice on plywood or veneer. Since plywood isn't perfectly flat, the hard pad can burn through veneer in high spots.



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## FINISHING

**Medium density pads** — Should be used for most sanding tasks. It makes great contact with the surface, especially when there's a need to sand flat without being aggressive.

**Medium density angle pads** — Firm yet soft on the outer edges. Great for veneers, profiles or soft edges.

**Soft backup pads** — Designed to give, relieve or hug the surface. Good for scuffing but not leveling.

Next month we will discuss abrasives. Until then, remember to respect the process because shift happens. **W**

*Diane Shattuck is a finisher, consultant, guest speaker, writer and teacher. She can be contacted at [dianeshattuck@msn.com](mailto:dianeshattuck@msn.com). Questions, suggestions and comments are always welcome.*

### TOTAL FINISHING SOLUTIONS ADDS CERAKURE TO ITS VENDOR NETWORK

Total Finishing Solutions (TFS), a provider of finishing equipment and integrated system solutions, announces a new partnership with Cerakure, a manufacturer of gas and propane-fired catalytic ovens.

Engineered for consistent heat, energy efficiency, and clean combustion, Cerakure ovens offer precise thermal curing ideal for small to mid-sized shops and specialized production lines. This addition allows TFS customers to access a broader range of innovative equipment and supplies, the company said in a statement.

"We are beyond excited to announce that we will be working with Total Finishing Solutions moving forward," added Mike Hernon, owner of Cerakure.

"You'll now find our advanced curing technology alongside their extensive catalog of spray equipment, automation, and consumables."

*Learn more at [totalfinningsupplies.com](http://totalfinningsupplies.com).*

### MICROVELLUM INTRODUCES TOOLBOX BSB

Total Microvellum presented Toolbox BSB, a new BricsCAD-based version of its design-to-manufacturing platform, at the 2025 AWFS Fair in Las Vegas.

"Toolbox BSB delivers the trusted Microvellum experience, now also running within the BricsCAD environment," the company said in a statement. "It brings together intelligent engineering tools and a professional-grade CAD foundation in a bundled installation that's fast, efficient, and familiar to current users."

"BricsCAD is a professional CAD platform supporting both 2D drafting and 3D modeling using the industry-standard DWG file format. With a familiar command structure, a highly customizable interface, and performance tuned for large-scale drawings, BricsCAD is designed for detail-oriented design and engineering work."

*Learn more at [microvellum.com](http://microvellum.com).*

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- Filtration: 99.97% @ 1-Micron, two-stage
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A kitchen (top) and breakroom by Custom Creations, which serves the residential and commercial markets near Nicholasville, Ky.





New owner Brad Blunt (left) with Bill Horine.

## IN GOOD HANDS

With new owners joining the founder, Custom Creations begins its next chapter

By Jennifer Hicks

**C**ustom Creations in Nicholasville, Ky., is forging ahead with business as usual under new ownership. The turnkey company, which specializes in commercial casework and residential cabinetry, was founded in 1987 by Bill Horine, who had a vision of building high quality custom cabinets. In 2022, after years of growth and several shop moves, Horine decided to sell. The buyers, Brad and Renae Blunt, share Horine's same enthusiasm for success.

"My wife and I were looking to purchase a business for stability. I worked as a contractor running IT projects for the state, and she was a CPA. She's since retired. We wanted something profitable but also ethically run, and something that we could learn," says Brad Blunt.

"We met Bill through a business broker, looked at the business and the books, and decided that Bill could run the craftsman side of it and I could do the business side. He had a partner prior to this that ran the business side, and that's really what I do is run the administrative aspects of contracts, insurance, working up quotes, etc."

Horine, who joined Blunt for an interview with Woodshop News, has remained with the company doing field work and estimating. The 14,000-sq.-ft. shop is staffed by four full- and one part-time woodworker, and four full-timers in the office, plus Renae.

### STARTING IN THE BASEMENT

Horine got hooked on woodworking in junior high school and worked at several shops for about 10 years after high school. His first shop was in his brother's basement, then in a two-car garage, followed by three other industrial spaces after employees joined the picture. His previous shop was about 7,500 sq. ft., big enough for digital fabrication machinery.

"That's where we started growing," says Horine. "In 2006, we added our first CNC in that shop. When I first started, I had a Powermatic table saw, then we got the Altendorf sliding table saw and the MultiCam CNC. The CNC increased production, we needed fewer skilled workers, and it could do mortise-and-tenon joints to make things look nicer and more custom."

At that point, the business was focused on laminate projects for commercial jobs and did occasional residential work. Things were going pretty well until Horine faced a health setback that prompted him to make some changes, namely bringing on business partner and co-owner Neal Durnil.

"I was diagnosed with cancer in 2006 and brought on Neal for multiple reasons. One to grow the business, but also if something happened, I wanted to be able to have somebody continue the company as far as employees and



everything because it's family," says Horine.

Once Horine was well and back to work, he and Durnil continued their partnership. By 2016, they needed more space and purchased their current shop in the Nicholasville Industrial Park. The 2022 sale happened because Durnil wanted to retire and Horine wanted to take a step back.

"I wanted the company to grow, and I felt we took it to the level we could, and that's where Brad's knowledge and experience, as far as large companies go, lends itself to growing this company and creating a business plan," says Horine.

#### GETTING ACCLIMATED

Blunt, who's from Lexington, says he and his wife were not dissuaded by a lack of woodworking experience. They had plenty of business experience. He'd been a project manager, implementing lean manufacturing concepts at previous jobs, and Renae had her CPA skills.

Blunt's role includes managing the business and integration aspects of the company, just as Durnil did.

"What I've done, because all successful businesses run on a system and have sales processes, is look at writing down our processes, standardizing them, and looking at ways to get organized. The whole idea is to make this more profitable and efficient," says Blunt.

"This was already a well-run business. It was just a matter of codifying what we do. But I also brought in my analytic skills to look at pricing and track down hours on each job to see if we are meeting metrics based on a consistent percentage spent in each area.

"So, if we come up with a job that takes 200 hours in materials and labor after we price it, then we'll say 30 percent should be assembly, 10 percent design, etc. If we go over, I know where the issues are and ideally address them when I see them going higher than expected."

The business continues to focus on the commercial mar-



A hotel bar (top) and cabinetry by Custom Creations.

ket, producing laminate cabinetry and casework, through contractors and their referrals. Residential work is offered on a limited basis.

"Ninety percent of our business is commercial, and we delve more into residential when we're slower. We might do a kitchen or a lobby room when it's not quite as busy, but we do mostly commercial because our shop is set up that way," says Blunt.

The service area is central Kentucky with many projects going into hospitality, healthcare, and educational settings.

"We like to work in healthcare settings because we're familiar with that space. They have different requirements that we're knowledgeable about so we can build cabinets to meet their needs. Each project is different, and we will never have the same project twice," says Blunt.



Finisher Erin Mills (above) and cabinetmaker Casey Boggs (below).



## WHAT'S IN THE SHOP

Altendorf F 45 table saw • C.R. Onsrud 4' x 8' CNC • Dantherm dust collector • Holz-Her Sprint 1417 edge bander • Kreg DK 1100 pocket hole machine • MultiCam 5000 Series

CNC router • Oneida Dust Gorilla Pro dust collector • Stiles Ironwood jointer • Timesavers Speed Sander wide belt

## SEEING RESULTS

Blunt says the company's best year was in 2024.

"We got our pricing right, and we got jobs that fit us and that we can be profitable at. Each woodworking shop has its own niche or area where they can be more profitable than others, so ours happens to be solid surface because it's something we can do very well. We have employees that can make it very efficient and be successful at it."

"Sometimes we get work that requires a lot of craftsmanship and that's helpful because we have some excellent craftsmen," says Blunt. "But we also try to find work that is distinctive enough that others can't do, but we can do it productively and efficiently."

"There are quite a few small woodworking shops that we compete against. We can't be competitive if they can do it cheaper, so the jobs have to be larger in size and of a certain complexity for us to take on."

Blunt is happy with the size of the company.

"There's a concept called the dip, whereas when you grow larger in size, your own personal income goes down. The dip is you add more employees and your expenses go up, but you're not necessarily seeing more profit. You have to push through that and keep growing, so you can be out of the dip where you can handle more capacity to become more profitable."

"I want to avoid that, and frankly, our work is cyclical and I'm trying to take care of everybody here. If we go through a slow period, which is generally January and February, I don't want to ask people to take time off, close up on Fridays or make other adjustments because we don't have work in the queue."

He's aware of the talent he has on staff and knows it would be difficult to find skilled replacements.

"This is a small town and these skills really take years to develop, so my challenge is everyone really is essential at this point. I do what I can to pay people competitively and make it a great working environment that they would want to stay, offering benefits where I can, and bonuses," says Blunt.

Horine is very pleased with the Blunts' progress and confident that they'll help the legacy he built continue. He will stay on as long as he can.

"I just want Brad and Rena to be successful with the business and employees. It's one of those things that it is a business that is very self-satisfying when you take a sheet of wood and you create furniture, cabinets, whatever. There's no amount of money that you can really express what you get out of the beautiful end product. I thoroughly enjoy the business, and as long as my health is there, and I get up every day, I will continue to be a part of it."

Learn more at [customcreationsky.com](http://customcreationsky.com). **W**



# Bypassing bottlenecks

How software such as ERP can help

By John English

**T**he word 'finishing' suggests a small step that will complete a project, but in reality it can be the most challenging process in cabinetmaking. This is where shops building solid wood kitchens and baths tackle parts that need to be sanded and coated and sanded and coated and... so on. The repetitive process often leads to bottlenecks and that makes sense: this is the only area where reworking the same pieces occurs on a regular basis, so it takes twice or three times as long for parts to be completed.

There's no way to avoid it, but there are ways to manage it. And that's where software comes in.

Almost every woodshop has a bookkeeping program that tracks and arranges expenditures and receipts. The spreadsheet that this generates is used to present a summary to a tax preparer, but it can also be a doorway to a more efficient management system. All those tiresome entries can paint a

very detailed picture of how the business is currently being run, and they can also be used to make it more profitable. The woodshop management is already tracking most of the information that can be used to ease bottlenecks. Expanding the software can make those numbers sing.

The key here is something called enterprise resource planning, or ERP. Basically, it's a way to track and then project numbers, where history is used to predict and alter the future. ERP software looks at everything from payroll and training to supply chain options and production line performance, and it does so through a financial lens. It can measure anything that happens in the woodshop in terms of its potential — where is there room to become more efficient, streamline workflow, or improve the bottom line?

Where bookkeeping only watches money, ERP also watches time and performance. It introduces new ways to communicate data so that the person designing cabinets, or



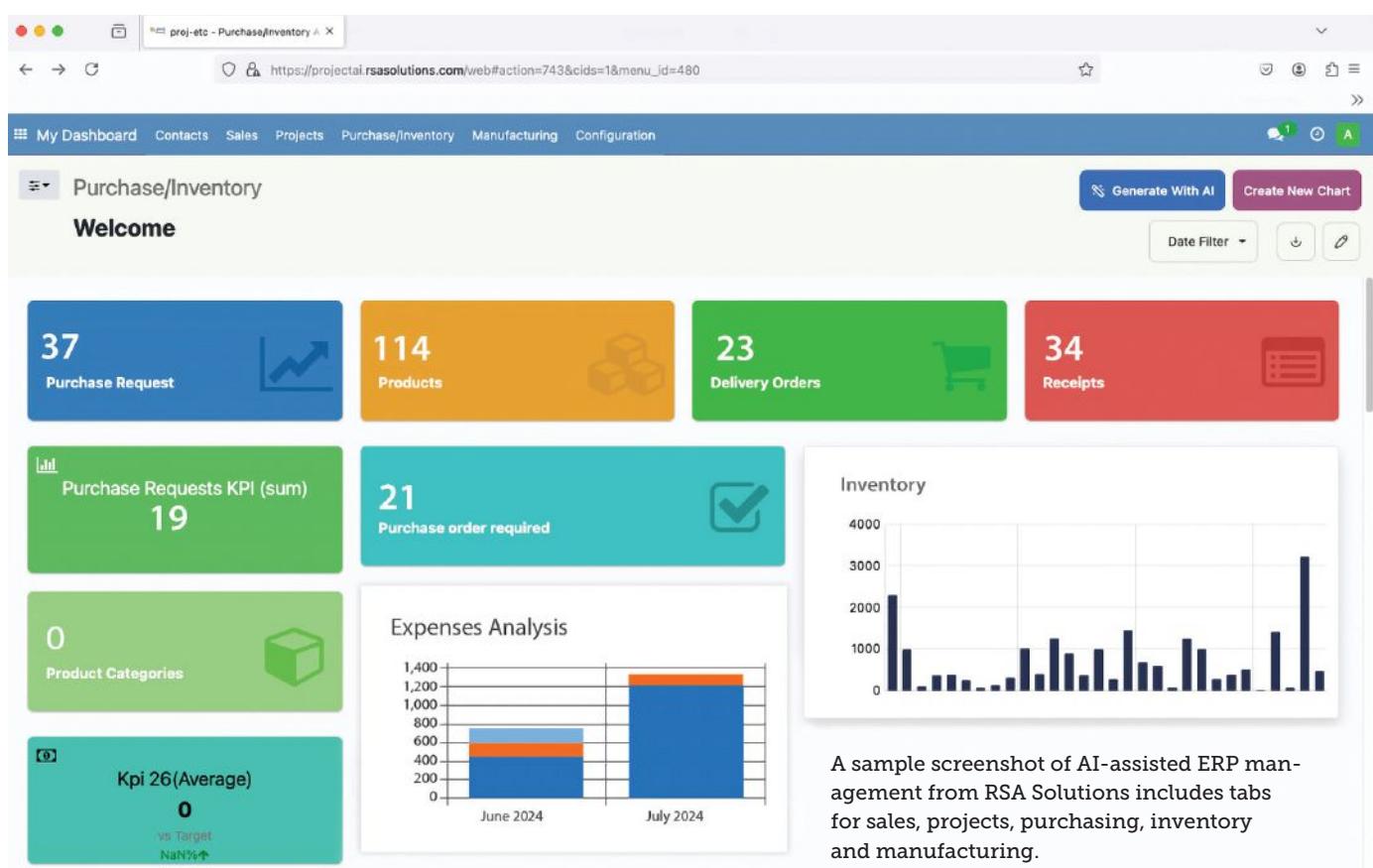
ERP software from Global Shop Solutions helps with labor costs, quality, costing, inventory, sales, pricing, and moving parts through the shop.

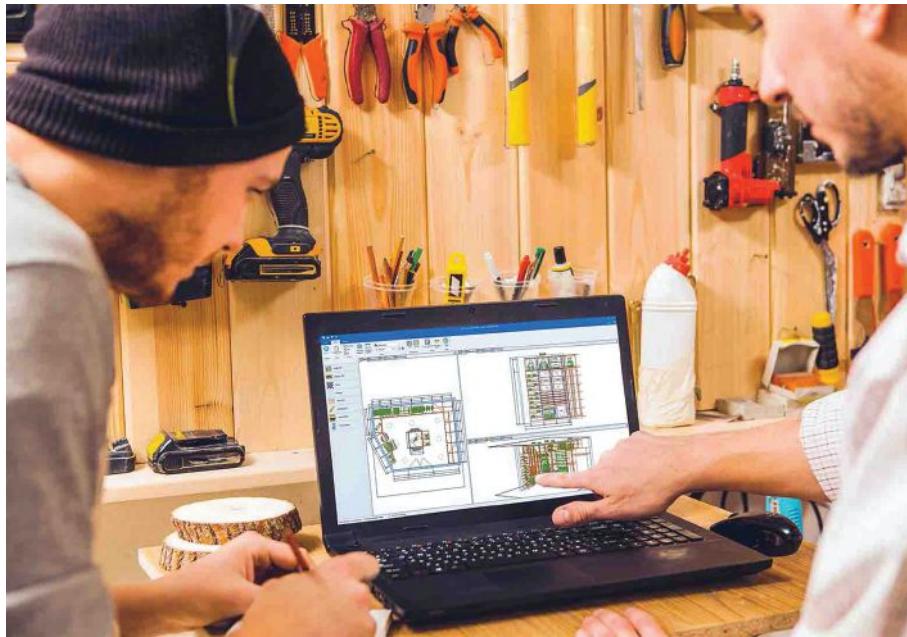
buying drawer slides, or loading the CNC all have the same information available, and it lets them learn how to use it as a cohesive team. Any data that can possibly be shared is available in a central resource, so that anyone can access it easily. And as much as possible, the data collection and organization are automated, so when something changes somewhere, it changes everywhere. That automation also extends to tasks, so for example when an inventory runs low, the employee installing cabinet slides doesn't need to stop what he's doing and find a manager to order more. And it streamlines processes, so an employee who is assembling drawers will know exactly when more parts are coming, and the person producing a job can use optimizing to turn scraps into pieces for the next job.

Of course, access to certain sensitive areas such as bank or personnel records can be limited and controlled.

The biggest effect of ERP is that it's instantaneous. The information is available in real time, so nobody must wait until a production meeting at the end of the week to learn that the shop just ran out of Baltic birch sheets or is running low in oak edge banding. And a manager who is at a meeting with a banker, a client or a supplier always has reliable, instantaneous info at his or her fingertips. There's no more "I'll get back to you on that..."

ERP even manages human resources, and tracks everything from attendance to performance and payroll. When a shop owner is considering an investment in a second CNC or perhaps a new robot, there's no need to create a research project to discover viability. The shop's ERP software already knows what the business can produce, what





EcoSys from Hexagon provides resource planning and management for all types of resources including human, equipment, materials and financial.

so that the shop can steer its production goals in that direction.

But where ERP really shines is in manufacturing and project management. The data it presents can help the woodshop manager plan and track projects in minute detail without expending a lot of time, which consequently makes the most of existing resources and also curtails expense excesses. ERP can minimize bottlenecks and waste because it lets a shop owner manage materials and monitor production processes both in real time and in projection models. Most ERP software can also integrate machine performance programs to schedule maintenance and avoid downtime. And if the shop has several employees, ERP can suggest their best and most efficient task assignments, so that everyone isn't building more boxes as the paint booth backs up.

## SOFTWARE OPTIONS

Beyond bottlenecks in the production sequence, ERP can address some of the new challenges facing woodshops such as robotics, hacking, and artificial intelligence (AI).

**ECi Software** ([ecisolutions.com](http://ecisolutions.com)) creates software with embedded AI that can improve job tracking efficiency and support sales. The company's JobBOSS2 package manages scheduling including rush orders,

net Vision suite offers seamless CNC integration, task automation, labor and material cost tracking, and smart streamlining of workflows.

**KCD Software** ([kcdsoftware.com](http://kcdsoftware.com)) has teamed up with several ERP module suppliers such as Allmoxy and Tractivity to help woodshops become more efficient. **Allmoxy** ([allmoxy.com](http://allmoxy.com)) offers a sales/order taking software system that "can get an order and send it to the shop floor within minutes, with cut-lists and files all ready

to go." And **Tractivity** ([tractivity.com](http://tractivity.com)) offers functions such as time tracking, HR and payroll prep, cost analysis, materials and inventory purchasing and receiving, production scheduling, workflow management, estimating, and product and component tracking.

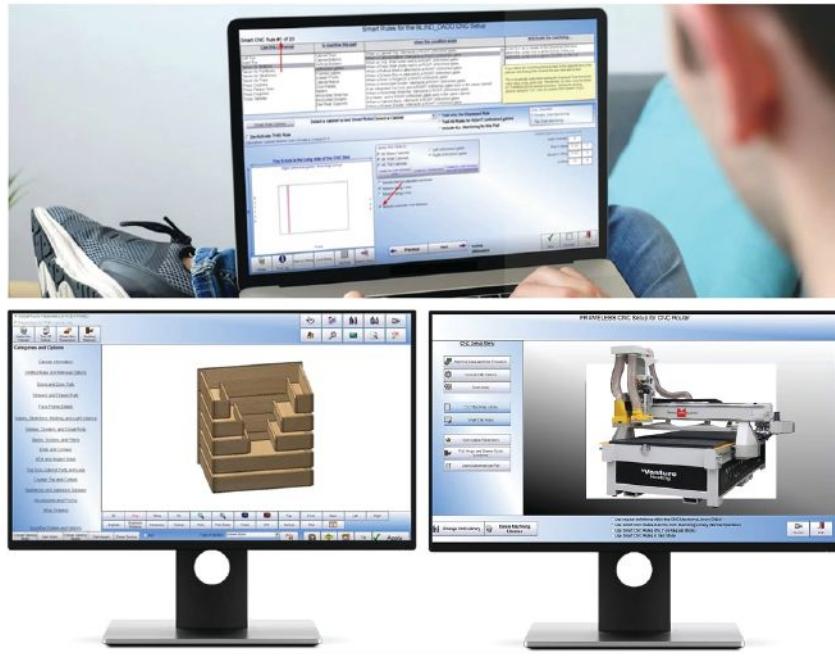
The suite of tools from **Abacus Solutions** ([abacussg.com](http://abacussg.com)) includes IT service management, cyber security, resourcing and staffing services, help in developing, updating and managing security policies and procedures, program management services for oversight and coordination of complex projects, machine learning, and artificial intelligence.

ERP software from **Global Shop Solutions** ([globalshopsolutions.com](http://globalshopsolutions.com)) has integrated software with "all the modules a manufacturer needs to deliver a quality part on-time every time." They include scheduling, shop floor data collection, and reports on quality, inventory, shipping and purchasing, job costing, AR, AP, payroll, human resources, financial statements, and performance indicators. GSS says that its ERP package will let a woodshop owner know the shop's true capacity, ensure that employees know what to work on next, and avoid inventory problems by using automated purchasing. In all, the company offers more than 35 apps.

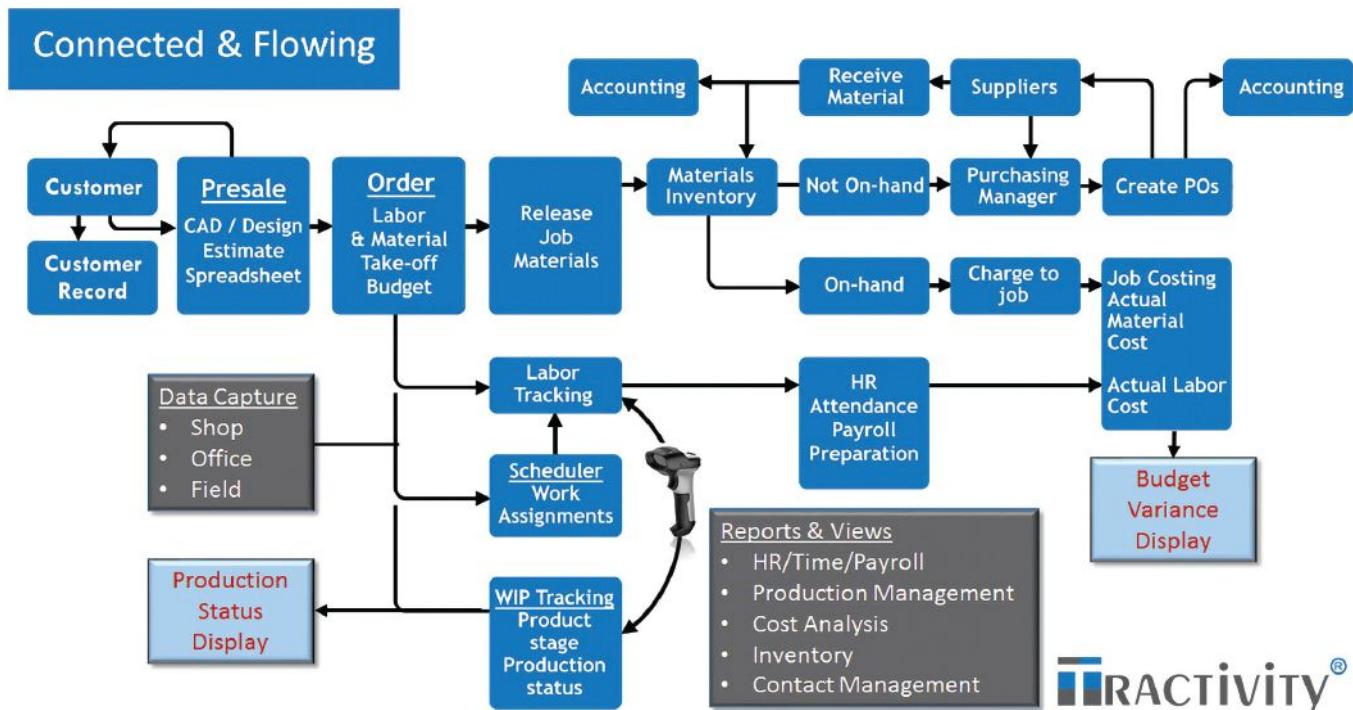
**Koble Systems** ([koblesystems.com](http://koblesystems.com)) offers ERP software to control inventory, sell products, manage



Another benefit of ERP software is more time for the creative side of the business.



Many CAD/CAM packages such as Cabinet Pro use smart rules to avoid bottlenecks by automatically adjusting CNC speed, feed and tool selection.



KCD's design software integrates seamlessly with ERP and shop management software such as Allmoxy and Tractivity (flowchart shown).

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Proposals	Purchasing	Invoices & PO's	Pay Periods	Journal Entry
Invoices & SO's	Serialized Items	Vendor Payments	Timecard Entry	Post All Transactions
Customer Payments	Manufacturing	Bank Accounts	Worker Payments	Depreciable Assets
Deposits	Transfer to Job	Job Costing	Tasks & Work Orders	Reporting

Online Support Email Support Remote Support

**Koble** 8.5

Koble Systems has developed ERP software for small businesses to help control inventory, sell products, manage labor and connect financials.

labor and connect financials. The company says its software is "like having an administrative assistant who can be everywhere in your business at once, improving operational efficiency and supporting your goals for growth."

**Orderwerks** ([orderwerks.com](http://orderwerks.com)) is

another software system built for production shops. This is a B2B (business to business) management suite that creates quotes, tracks and processes inventory, streamlines fulfillment and allows both internal and external user ordering. It seamlessly integrates with tools such as Quick-

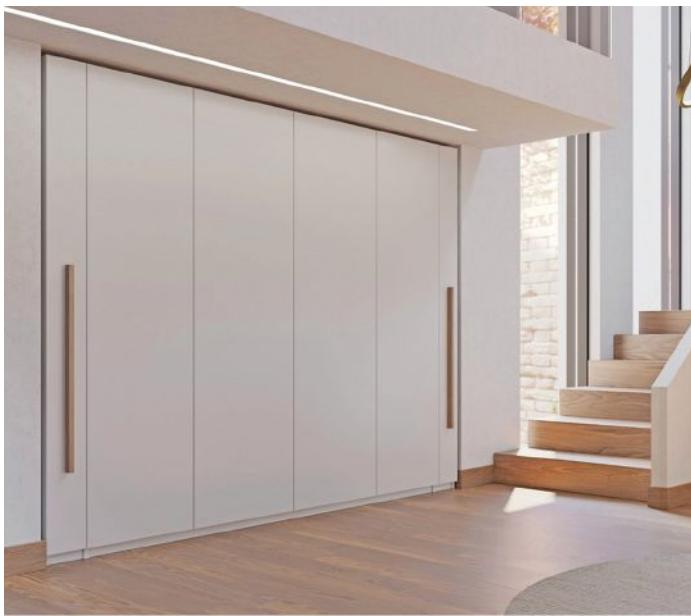
Books and Shopify, and produces reports and interactive dashboards that "turn data into decisions".

**RSA Solutions** ([rsasolutions.com](http://rsasolutions.com)) is business software that covers everything from personnel management and materials handling to deadlines and communication. The company's Projectc.ai is a CRM and ERP package that provides customizable dashboards, activity scheduling, and performance analytics. For shops with bottlenecks in production, RSA's Project Management module "offers a comprehensive suite of features designed to streamline project planning, execution, and tracking. It provides tools for task management, where users can create, assign, and prioritize tasks, while also tracking progress through customizable workflows and stages."

Most cabinetmaking software suites offer some elements of ERP. For example, **CabMaster Software** ([cabmastersoftware.com](http://cabmastersoftware.com)) delivers design tools, 3D drawing, nesting solutions, toolpaths and G-code in a single app, and **Crows Nest Software** ([crowsnestsoftware.com](http://crowsnestsoftware.com)) includes estimating, communication, inventory management, scheduling, milestone tracking, financials, and reporting. **W**



Courtesy of Koble Systems, Adobe Stock



# Turning boxes into custom cabinets

The latest lights, pulls, slides and lifts for next-level cabinetry

By John English

In the August 2012 issue of *Psychology Today*, Dr. Jordan Gaines Lewis wrote that "people dressed conservatively are perceived as self-controlled and reliable, while those wearing more daring clothing are viewed as more attractive and individualistic."

She could have been talking about kitchens!

It's astonishing how well our habitat aligns with our personalities. We decorate rooms in colors, shapes and accents that please us, but those choices also telegraph our disposition and temperament. The funny thing is that most of us absolutely deny the conclusions that such revelations reveal: we rarely think the person looking at our private world really gets us.

So, what can a kitchen say about its owner?

## LIGHTING UP THE ROOM

Illumination has entered a new age and how it is being used says a lot.

LEDs were invented almost a century ago (in 1927) by a Russian engineer named Oleg Lesiev, but it took until the late 1990s for the bugs to be worked out. Light-emitting diodes finally began showing up on billboards and outdoor advertising about 25 years ago, and by 2010 they had become the primary energy-conscious option for homes, commercial spaces and institutional buildings.

LEDs can be up to 90 percent more efficient than traditional incandescent bulbs, but they have two other attributes that cabinetmakers also admire – they stay cool, and they can be quite flexible. Creating bendable strips of LEDs is possible because each light is a separate unit that is independent of its neighbors except for current. So, wherever a wire can go, light can go. The flowing current causes electrons in a semiconductor microchip to release photons in the form of electro-magnetic radiation that becomes visible light. And their color can be changed by simply altering the amount of energy that's required for the electrons to 'jump' across a gap in the semiconductor. We're all familiar with conductors such as copper wire or steel rods that can carry a current. A semiconductor is just a material that allows us to control



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A two-part hanging system from Stronghold Brackets includes one unit that wraps a stud and another that's attached to the load.

that current.

A good example of how versatile these LEDs have become is the new Neon Flexible Lighting from **Task Lighting & Power** ([hardwareresources.com/task-lighting](http://hardwareresources.com/task-lighting)), a brand of Hardware Resources. This is a 24-volt LED that is housed in a bendable silicone housing, so it can deliver seamless, dot-free accent lighting for curved and recessed surfaces. It's available in either Top Bend, which bends up and down for curved surfaces and comes in 120, 225 or 400 lumens per foot (LPF), or Side Bend which delivers 80 LPF. The Top Bend product comes in 16' long rolls and is easy to cut and reconnect. And the Side Bend comes in 3', 10' and 16' lengths, and can be used in surface and recess mount applications.

**HIDDI** is a new lighting system from **Richelieu Hardware** ([richelieu.com](http://richelieu.com)) that's recommended for use in cabinets with drawers or vertical opening systems. It's also ideal for pull-out baskets. The device is only 19/32" thick and comes with an infrared sensor that automatically switches it on and off when the door or drawer is opened and closed. It can be installed on the inside wall of the cabinet. Options include neutral white, super warm white and warm white light colors, and it does require a dimmable or non-dimmable 24-volt power supply, which Richelieu also sells.

**Hera Lighting** ([heralighting.com](http://heralighting.com)) is riding on the crest of the AI wave with its new Spot-AI. The company's first 'fully intelligent' LED product was introduced last year, and it has four key benefits: AI tunable color, foot traffic monitoring, data analytics, and energy management. The system lets a cabinet shop build casework for lighting installation in a retail space that can be completely managed from a phone. With color variance from 2700k to 6500k, it's an ideal complement to cabinetry in department stores and hotels (where the traffic counts can be very useful), or even in dressing and makeup areas in private homes.

Several additions to the FlexTape SMD line from **Tresco Lighting** ([trescolighting.com](http://trescolighting.com)) offer a wide range of spool lengths up to 20 feet, five light colors choices, and 12 or 24 voltages. FlexTape is a high-density LED tape that delivers smooth, even illumination without pixelization. It's available in 2700, 3000, 3500, 5000 and 6500 Kelvin colors, where the lower K values are warmer, more comforting and lean toward yellow, while the higher numbers are whiter and bluish, which is more in line with bright daylight. The latter are usually used in offices and workshops. FlexTape is basically a plug and play system with a wide variety of connectors, which makes it quite flexible for cabinetmakers to hide wiring and follow curves.



Trim Fast is a peel and stick molding kit from Outwater Industries that lets a cabinetmaker add instant architectural details.

#### WELL HANDLED

H25 is a new 81-piece decorative hardware collection from **Häfele America** ([hafele.com](http://hafele.com)), intended to blend with modern, mid-century and industrial styles. A companion line, H23, features a range of handles, knobs and pulls in the latest urban, modern and mid-century styles.

The new Folklore collection from **Berenson** ([berensonhardware.com](http://berensonhardware.com)) infuses modern style with a hint of nostalgia. Looking anything but

dated, it manages to invoke a certain feeling of quality that we relate to an earlier time. The Radial Reign line has also been expanded. Each pull has a knurled metallic rod that's held by clean, contemporary posts. Both the rods and posts come in a variety of metallic finishes, which allows a cabinetmaker to add dash, style, strength and grace.

The designers at **Jeffrey Alexander** ([hardwareresources.com/decorative-hardware](http://hardwareresources.com/decorative-hardware)) have been busy this spring. The line has introduced four new decorative hardware collections:

Fontana, Griffin, Ivan, and Jules. The Fontana collection features a square shape with stepped feet and comes in six finishes, a variety of pull sizes, and one coordinating knob. The Griffin collection merges classic architectural elegance with contemporary sensibilities and includes six versatile pull lengths, two appliance handle sizes, and a coordinating knob, all available in six finishes. The Ivan cabinet pull is available in five designer finishes, including satin brass, and is a complement to mid-century modern and Scandinavian designs. It

Finished kitchen shown, designed using KCD Software® and manufactured by cabinotch® with CADCode Systems



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comes in an array of cabinet pull lengths and a coordinating knob. And the new Jules collection is a striking blend of architectural refinement and classic allure that comes in a satin bronze finish. There are six standard pull lengths, a coordinating knob, and two appliance handle sizes, all available in five finishes.

Modern Metal Pulls is a series of knobs and pulls from Richelieu that were inspired by specific artists where the lines, shapes and colors communicate values such as contrast, emotion, elegance or balance. This is unique, evocative, inspirational hardware that is available in a range of finishes.

The Craftsman Collection of solid wood utensil drawer inserts is coming soon from **Rev-A-Shelf** ([rev-a-shelf.com](http://rev-a-shelf.com)). It addresses several needs including pullouts with foil

**tresco**  
lighting



A whole new range of FlexTape SMD, an LED tape, has been added to the Tresco catalog in a wide range of colors and lengths.

and wrap holders; organizers for jars and bottles; utensil bins with knife block inserts; hairdryer and makeup holders; trash bins; cutlery and utensil drawer inserts; and even deep drawer organizers for base cabinets. The Craftsman Collection features quality construction details that include solid maple and Blum hardware, but it's the design geometry and luxurious looks that are going to attract the attention of cabinet clients.

**Outwater Industries** ([outwater.com](http://outwater.com)) has introduced a family of products called the Trim Fast Hampton Collection. This is peel and stick polystyrene molding that can be used to create the illusion of panels on a wall or a set of cabinet or passage doors. It's a pre-mitered kit of paintable white molding that can be purchased in various sizes.

**Stronghold Brackets** ([stronghold-brackets.com](http://stronghold-brackets.com)) has come up with a bracket for woodworkers who need to hang something especially heavy. The SM-4 was actually designed for hunting mounts, but it can handle a wide variety of residential or commercial loads. It's forged from 10-gauge, cold-rolled steel and is rated for more weight than standard house framing. It's powder-coated in black but can be ordered in custom colors.

#### MAKING MOVES

Late last year, **Grass America** ([grassusa.com](http://grassusa.com)) introduced a new anti-tipping solution for furniture that helps woodshops comply with the 2023 STURDY Act. The Rear Anti-tip System is a simple concept: only one



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drawer can be opened at a time, and the remaining drawers are locked securely in place until the opened drawer is closed. It can be installed during manufacturing, or retroactively. Grass makes its TEC soft-close hinges, Zargen drawer systems, and Epoxy roller slides in the U.S., and the company notes that this means faster response times, reduced shipping costs, and personalized assistance. The hinges have an easy three-way adjustment system, and Grass has developed simple machines to provide rapid assembly solutions for its drawer system.

The past two years have seen some innovative hardware solutions from **Hettich America** ([hettich.com](http://hettich.com)). Among them are the slimline Avosys hinge for glass and mirror doors; the robust SAH 500 heavy-duty cabinet suspension bracket; and an upgrade for the AvanTech YOU Illumination design feature that brings changing light colors to both system and standard wooden drawers. But the idea that has caused the most conversation is FurnSpin, a swiveling fitting that caused a stir in 2023. It has since been updated with the new RoomSpin, which can transform an entire room designs at the swipe of a hand. It allows users to effortlessly rearrange room elements in a curated movement that resembles choreography. So, a meeting room can change into a personal space for a video conference or for focused, quiet work, just by spinning casework and walls around.

Drawer slides from **Fulterer USA** ([fulterer.com](http://fulterer.com)) have a load capacity of up to 441 lbs. and come in slide lengths up to 59". The slides can be color matched with a power coat finish. And the company has developed relationships within its product categories that enhance a woodshop's options. For example, the FR 771A and FR 777A slides can be optionally upgraded with Fulterer's patented Easy Close Device (ECD). Those are progressive action, vertical pull-out slide systems that are ideal for vertical drawers in kitchens,



Neon Flexible Lighting from Task Lighting & Power is used here in Side Bend for curves and Top Bend under the counters.



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tional (accuride.com) that eliminates the need for knobs or handles. It supports loads up to 100 lbs. for drawers up to 24" wide, and is specially opti-

now offers heavy-duty ball-bearing drawer slides that are equipped with its patented Force Management soft-close technology. The 8850FM

is a 200-lb. slide that combines low opening pull force with effective dampening that eliminates drawer slamming. The full-extension slides have traditional and 32mm hole patterns and a lever disconnect for easy drawer removal. They're recommended for drawers up to 42" wide.

The new 180SUS stainless-steel hinge from California-based **Sugatsune America** (sugatsune.com) comes with a built-in damper and is ideal for both high volume and outdoor locations. It has been tested to 30,000 cycles and has passed 72-hour salt spray testing, which is welcome news for boat builders, outdoor furniture manufacturers, and RV cabinet shops.

#### NEED A LIFT?

The latest generation of Aventos lifts from **Blum** (blum.com), the HKi, can be housed in 5/8" thick cabinet sides, making it virtually invisible for that refined, minimalist look in contemporary interiors – even with glass paneled doors when they're closed. It's tough, strong, and most important, easy to install. The system works for top-hinged doors up to 24" tall and 72" wide.

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	SM-236D	6" 9 HEADS	\$52,990.00	
Dovetail Machine	CM-A19	SEMI AUTO	\$10,690.00	
	CM-600	CNC PROGRAM	\$22,690.00	
Wide Belt Sander	WS-A2560	25'x60'	\$11,990.00	
	WS-A3775	37'x75'	\$20,990.00	
	WS-DA3760	37'x60' Two Heads	\$25,990.00	
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Berenson has introduced a new look at old standards by presenting the Folklore collection in popular sizes and finishes.



The clever HIDDI is a lighting option from Richelieu Hardware that turns on and off automatically with an infra-red sensor.



Grass America has developed a clever anti-tipping mechanism that can be installed during assembly, or later at the jobsite.



Fulterer's heavy-duty slide systems such as the FR 771A shown, can be upgraded with the company's Easy Close Device.

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These examples of the new Modern Metal Pulls line from Richelieu were inspired by the late Italian artist Alba Lisca Polenghi.

The company has also introduced a new family of box systems, Merivo-Box, which is flexible, attractive, and easy to build and adjust. For clients who wish to move away from wooden drawer boxes, this very standardized new option can achieve a number of different looks by using just a few basic components.

**Hardware Resources** ([hardwareresources.com](http://hardwareresources.com)) has expanded its HR Max functional hardware product line to include new heavy-duty European lever-top hinges. The new soft-close 700 and self-close 725 Series hinges feature a U.S. patent-pending design that enables tool free installation and removal to

save time and frustration when removing doors for finishing.

Rev-A-Shelf's sleek and trimmable Yo-Yo Pull-Down shelving system is a space-saver that's designed for wall cabinets. It offers gas-spring-assisted operation with a side-mount design that maximizes storage space.

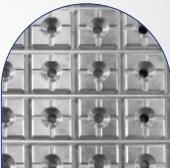
The Exedra system from **Salice America** ([salice.com](http://salice.com)) has been awarded the Best of the Best prize at Interzum 2025, which is held in Germany each year. The prize-winning Salice products, Exedra2 Star and Exedra2 Smart, enable the simultaneous movement of two linked doors using a very smooth, magnetically assisted, motion control system. The system eliminates the need for cables, tie rods, or springs. In the Star version, the mechanism remains concealed behind the cover panel, while the Smart version reveals the door edges when folded in the pocket.

Company contact information is available from our online Resource Guide at [woodshopnews.com](http://woodshopnews.com). **W**

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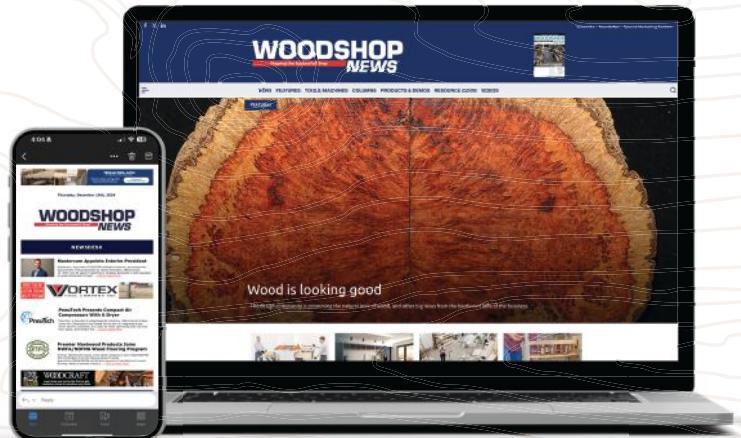
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# NEW PRODUCTS



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introduces new Knurled Brass Foot Rail Kits. They feature 1.5" diameter tubes and fittings, scaled for home bars, kitchen islands, and built-in cabinetry. Available in 8' and 10' kits, each set includes lacquered polished brass components with a knurled texture engraved directly into solid cast brass. Custom lengths and finishes are available upon request. Learn more at [brownwoodinc.com/dod](http://brownwoodinc.com/dod).

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WOODSHOPNEWS

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now offers a selection of hoppers with capacities from 1/2 to 3 cubic yards and Quick Ship convenience. Standard and heavy-duty models are available that can be customized with options like casters and options to allow an operator to dump the contents from the safety of a forklift. Self-dumping and drop-bottom designs are also available. Learn more at [ibullmfg.com](http://ibullmfg.com).



## JEFFREY ALEXANDER

by Hardware Resources introduces the Jules Collection of decorative hardware. "The Jules Collection is a striking blend of architectural refinement and classic allure," the company explains. "Its softly tapered bar and sleek pedestal foot create a sophisticated focal point for cabinets and furniture." The collection includes six standard pull lengths, a coordinating knob, and two appliance handle sizes, all available in five finishes. Learn more at [hardwareresources.com](http://hardwareresources.com).





## WOODPECKERS

presents the new Freehand Guard which quickly mounts to any Woodpeckers router lift and enhances safety while also removing over 90 percent of the shavings, according to the company. "The new and improved Freehand Guard is an update to their original version from a few years ago," the company explains. "This injection-molded version accommodates thicker material up to 1-3/4". Like the original design, the opening directs the chips towards the dust port and provides two fulcrum points to start the cut, much like a starter pin. A crystal-clear acrylic guard keeps your hands away from the bit without obstructing the view. The dust port efficiently removes the chips and is compatible with both 2-1/2" dust collection hose and 2-1/4" shop vac hose." Learn more at [woodpeck.com](http://woodpeck.com).



## GRIZZLY INDUSTRIAL

presents the G0991 Quiet Series horizontal cyclone dust collector that combines 1-micron filtration with a unique horizontal design and lockable casters for both point-of-use and permanent installations. "This collector is engineered for quiet operation and exceptional efficiency, offering features designed to significantly enhance dust management," said Pat Raynor, Grizzly Industrial's Product Manager. Learn more at [grizzly.com](http://grizzly.com).

# Fellowship exhibition in Philly

By Jennifer Hicks

The Museum for Art in Wood in Philadelphia opened "A Plank in a Shipwreck" on Aug. 1, an exhibition created by the fellows of the 2025 Windgate Arts Residency Program in Wood (WARP Wood). It runs through Oct. 19 in the museum's main gallery.



The exhibition represents the culmination of the two-month international residency that supports artistic exploration, collaboration, and collegial exchange among artists and thinkers in wood, the museum explained.

"This year's cohort came to Philadelphia from three continents and five countries, and collectively represent wood-informed approaches including sculpture, performance, marquetry, furniture, sustainable practice, and social engagement, while bridging the gaps between these methods," said Jennifer-Navva Milliken, the museum's executive director, in a statement.

The fellows include Klara Knutsson, a marquetry artist from Stockholm, Sweden; Allen Laing, a sculptor from Pretoria, South Africa; Nifemi Ogunro, a designer, woodworker and sculptor from Brooklyn, N.Y., and Edgar Orlaineta, a sculptor from Mexico City.



Asem Kamal, a multifaceted artist from Giza, Egypt, with experience in motion, design, video, and DIY, is serving dual roles as artist and documentary fellow. Rounding out the cohort as the Student Artist is University of Arkansas MFA recipient and artist Arden Carlson.

The fellows determined the title and curatorial direction of the exhibition during the two-month residency. "The title is a direct translation of the Latin phrase *tabula in naufragio*, which has been used in legal concepts to describe a final hope, a last life-line. The phrase is a metaphor for the bold leap each of the 2025 WARP wood fellows has made, crossing oceans and borders, letting go of safety, and trusting the collaborative, uncertain process," the museum explained.



## PLAYING WITH FIRE

The Museum for Art in Wood is also presenting "Cinders: Burned, Scorched, & Pyrographed Works in Wood" through Sept. 21.

Curated by Amrut Mishra, the exhibition is comprised of 26 objects by 22 artists and drawn from the museum's permanent collection. Its purpose is to delve into the enigmatic tension between permanence and fragility that materializes in fire-treated wood, the museum said.

It includes works of installation, sculpture, and woodturning by artists who experiment with generative possibilities of fire.

Learn more at [museumforartinwood.org](http://museumforartinwood.org). **W**

Organizations sponsoring meetings, classes or shows of interest to professional or hobbyist woodworkers are invited to submit items to [editorial@woodshopnews.com](mailto:editorial@woodshopnews.com).

Include name, dates, location, description of event and a contact address or telephone number. Calendar items, which should be typed or printed clearly, must be received at least 60 days before the event.

Please note that fees, as listed, might not include materials or shop fees. Check with a specific class for further details.

— Compiled by Jennifer Hicks

## ARIZONA

**Nov. 9-11** — Specialty Tools & Fasteners Distributors Association (STAFDA) annual convention and trade show. Location: Phoenix Convention Center. [stafda.org](http://stafda.org)

## CALIFORNIA

**Monthly** — San Fernando Valley Woodworkers meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Balboa Sports Center in Encino. [sfvw.org](http://sfvw.org)

**Monthly** — Society of Wood Manufacturing, a chapter of AWFS consisting of educators, manufacturers, hardware and industrial suppliers, and machinery dealers, meets during the second week of each month. For location and dates, visit [awfs.org](http://awfs.org).

**Monthly** — San Joaquin Fine Woodworkers Association meetings are open to all experience levels at members' shops. For locations and dates, visit [sjfwa.com](http://sjfwa.com).

## IOWA

**Oct. 10-11** — Woodworking in America, hosted by Woodsmith, Popular Woodworking and Fine Woodworking, featuring presentations from experts, networking opportunities, product vendors, and more. Location: Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines. [finewoodworking.com](http://finewoodworking.com)

## MAINE

**Ongoing** — The Center for Furniture Craftsmanship offers year-round classes in woodworking to the highest degree of craftsmanship. One- and two-week workshops from June through October; 12-week Furniture Intensives; a nine-month Comprehensive; eight-week Turning Intensives, and Fellowships. [woodschool.org](http://woodschool.org)

## MASSACHUSETTS

**Oct. 11-13** — Paradise City Arts Festival Fall Show, featuring handmade work from over 200 juried artisans and makers. Location: Three County Fairgrounds, Northampton. [paradisecityarts.com](http://paradisecityarts.com)

**Nov. 21-23** — Paradise City Arts Festival Fall Show, featuring handmade work from over 200 juried artisans and makers. Location: Royal Plaza Trade Center, Marlborough. [paradisecityarts.com](http://paradisecityarts.com)

## MICHIGAN

**Oct. 1-3** — Cabinet Makers Association's National Conference featuring keynote presentations, educational sessions, plant tours and more. Location: Westin Book Cadillac Detroit. [cabinetmakers.org](http://cabinetmakers.org)

## MINNESOTA

**Oct. 11** — Sixth annual Woodworkers Expo, hosted by the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild, featuring over 70 exhibitors showcasing custom work and products, demos, and more. Location: Minnesota State Fairgrounds Progress Center in St. Paul. [mnwwg.org](http://mnwwg.org)

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**Nov. 9** — Third annual New England Woodworking Competition hosted by the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers, featuring Tom McLaughlin as Master of Ceremonies, and keynote speakers Jeffrey Cooper, a professional carver, and Mike Pekovich, Editor of Fine Woodworking. Location: Granite State Room, MUB Center, University of New Hampshire in Durham. [gnhw.org](http://gnhw.org)



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**NEW JERSEY**

**Monthly** — The North Jersey Woodworkers Association meets the third Monday of every month. [njwewoodworkers.org](http://njwewoodworkers.org)

**Monthly** — The Professional Woodworkers Guild of Upper New Jersey meets the third Wednesday of every month. [njwoodguild.com](http://njwoodguild.com)

**NEW YORK**

**Nov. 1-6** — The Art of Chairmaking: Dolese Rocking Chair with Alexis Dolese. Craft your own rocking chair from start to finish while learning advanced techniques like shaping elegant arms and mastering slip-tenon joinery. Fee: \$1,100, plus \$100 materials. Location: Wendell Castle Workshop in Scottsville. [workshop.wendellcastle.org](http://workshop.wendellcastle.org)

**Nov. 15-16** — Introduction to Wood Veneering with a Unique Chessboard with instructor Scott Grove. Create a highly-figured chessboard with a mother of pearl inlay with a water fall edge and a creative Wendell twist. Fee: \$385, plus \$50 materials. Location: Wendell Castle Workshop in Scottsville. [workshop.wendellcastle.org](http://workshop.wendellcastle.org)

**NORTH CAROLINA**

**Oct. 25-29** — Fall High Point Furniture Market. The

furniture industry trade show features showroom tours, vendors, speakers, educational seminars, and networking events. [highpointmarket.org](http://highpointmarket.org)

**RHODE ISLAND**

**Nov. 7-9** — 30th annual Fine Furnishings show featuring fine handcrafted furniture and other artwork for the home. Location: WaterFire Arts Center in Providence. Learn more at [finefurnishingsshows.com](http://finefurnishingsshows.com).

**TEXAS**

**Oct. 1-3** — National Hardwood Lumber Association's annual convention. Location: Marriott Rivercenter in San Antonio. [nhla.com](http://nhla.com)

**Oct. 19-21** — Architectural Woodwork Institute's annual convention. Location: Hyatt Hill Country Resort in San Antonio. [awin.net.org](http://awin.net.org)

**VIRGINIA**

**Oct. 10-13** — Society of American Period Furniture Makers' annual conference, featuring presentations, networking opportunities, and the Cartouche Award banquet. Location: Colonial Williamsburg. Register and learn more at [sapfm.org](http://sapfm.org). **W**

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# Expanding the historic preservation trades

**The Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN)** and Sam Beauford Woodworking Institute (SBWI) in Adrian, Mich., have announced a partnership aimed at revitalizing historic preservation trades education in Michigan.

This collaborative initiative will offer a series of specialized hands-on workshops, covering essential preservation skills such as historic sash window construction, wood bending techniques, and timber frame engineering.

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"This partnership represents a major step forward for preservation trades," Luke Barnett, president of SBWI, said in a statement. "Skilled trades are the backbone of heritage conservation, yet many of these critical skills are at risk of disappearing. By teaming up with MHPN, we are providing accessible, high-quality training opportunities, preparing a new generation of craftspeople to preserve and protect Michigan's historic architecture."



Students learning a variety of preservation skills at the Sam Beauford Woodworking Institute.

The initiative is funded in part by a grant from the Michigan Arts and Culture Council.

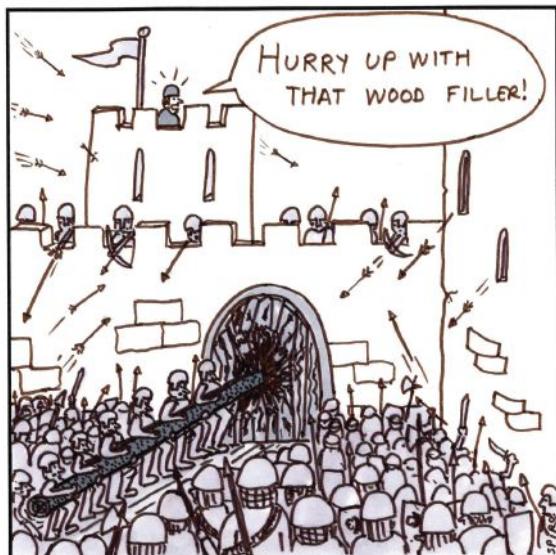
"MHPN is proud to partner with SBWI, an institution known for excellence in trade education," said Brenda Rigdon, executive director of the MHPN. "Together, we're not just preserving historic buildings, we're preserving the specialized knowledge that makes such preservation possible."

Learn more at [sbwi.edu](http://sbwi.edu) and [mhpn.org](http://mhpn.org). **W**

—Jennifer Hicks

## 60 Grit

Rough humor by Steve Spiro



Courtesy of MHPN

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